

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 8 September 2025 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Cllr W Fredericks (Deputy Chair) Cllr L Shires
Cllr T Adams (Chair) Cllr H Blathwayt
Cllr L Withington

Members also attending:

Cllr J Boyle, Cllr C Cushing, Cllr V Holliday, Cllr N Dixon, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive, Director for Resources (S151 Officer), Director for Service Delivery, Assistant Director for Finance & Resources and Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr A Brown
Cllr C Ringer
Cllr J Toye
Cllr A Varley

35 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th July were approved as a correct record.

36 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

38 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

39 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Chair advised Members that they could ask questions as matters arose during the meeting.

40 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr V Holliday, confirmed that there were no recommendations made to Cabinet by the Committee.

41 REPORTING PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE PLAN 2023-27

DELIVERY AGAINST ACTION PLAN 2024/25 AND 2025/26 - TO END OF QUARTER 1 - 30 JUNE 2025

The Chair introduced this item. He began by saying that Local Government reorganisation (LGR) was impacting on the achievement of targets and consequently, Cabinet had agreed the need to re-prioritise and focus resource on a smaller number of actions in the 2025/26 Annual Action Plan.

This report detailed the progress made to the end of June 2025 in implementing both the 2024/25 Annual Action Plan and Qtr1 of the 2025/26 Annual Action Plan and identified any issues with the delivery of individual actions as well as putting forward proposals for how these would be addressed.

The Chair then outlined the actions that were listed as 'amber' in the 2025/2026 Action Plan.

He invited members to speak:

Cllr V Holliday referred to page 22, item 10 from the Action Plan 2024/2025 – 'with external partners we will urgently pursue funding opportunities to develop initiatives which proactively and reactively support our communities prioritising health, wellbeing and financial inclusivity of our most vulnerable and hard to reach residents from April 2024' and said that this was marked as completed. However, for the current Action Plan 2025/2026, under item 8 – an almost identical action was listed as being 'in progress' and 'amber'. The Chief Executive explained that this related to the changes to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and more specifically the changes taking place at national and regional level with the ICBs and the Norfolk & Waveney ICB was being incorporated into a wider Norfolk & Suffolk ICB and so alongside LGR, consideration was also being to an area structure below the new ICB model and the Health & Wellbeing Partnerships were therefore evolving. It was considered appropriate to give this an amber status to reflect this.

The Chair then highlighted Action 7 – Neighbourhood plans which was also impacted by changes being introduced at national level. He then provided updates to the following where there was some uncertainty or changes on the horizon:

Action 21 – High Street Banks and access to cash. Discussions were taking place with the remaining high street bank branch provider in respect of ATM and service availability Fakenham and Sheringham and work was moving at pace to secure permanent banking hub locations in Cromer, Holt and North Walsham.

Action 26 – Workforce Strategy. There was some slippage here but it would be coming to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the next couple of months.

Action 30 – Asset commercialisation. A lot of recent work had focused on rent reviews to assist in meeting this target.

In conclusion, he highlighted key achievements such as securing funding to proceed with outdoor learning facilities at Holt Country Park and ongoing work on the new leisure centre at Fakenham.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED

To receive the report.

42 BUDGET MONITORING PERIOD 4 2025/26

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She began by welcoming the new Director of Resources, Mr D McCallum, to the Council and thanking the officers for their hard work and support.

Cllr Shires that a small surplus was currently projected for the end of the financial year, however, there were two more budget monitoring periods to go through and the situation could change.

It was proposed by Cllr L Shires, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED

To recommend the following to Full Council:

- a) Approval is requested from Full Council to decrease the 2025/26 capital budget for the Mundesley Coastal Defence scheme to £1,139,806 to reflect the apportionment of £250k from external contributions to the Cromer Scheme.
- b) Approval is requested from Full Council to increase the 2025/26 capital budget for the Cromer Coastal Defences scheme to £1,096,067 to reflect the apportionment of £250k from external contributions from the Mundesley Scheme.
- c) Note the contents of the Q1 Treasury Management update report, appendix F.

Reason for the decision:

To update Members on the current budget monitoring position for the Council.

43 EXTENSION OF THE PROCESSING OF CO-MINGLED RECYCLABLES

The Chair introduced this item in the absence of Cllr C Ringer, Portfolio Holder for Environmental & Waste Services. He read out a statement from Cllr Ringer setting out the reasons behind the proposals to extend the current contract for the processing of co-mingled recyclables. He explained that this option provided the ability to use Norse Environmental Waste Services (NEWS) for services without further procurement. Market positions were currently uncertain due to recent changes in law on Simpler Recycling, Deposit Return Schemes and Extended Producer Responsibility. If an external procurement was undertaken, it was considered that material risks and price risk would lead to a less favourable position for the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED:

- 1. To agree the extension of the Processing of Co-mingled Dry Recyclables contract (the Contract) with NEWS Ltd through to 31st March 2030 on its current terms is agreed.
- 2. To extend the scope of the services provided by NEWS Ltd to under the Contract from the year 2026/7 to comply with the change in law introducing Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility requirements is agreed conditional on such changes being approved in accordance with the Shareholder Agreement with NEWS Ltd.

Reason for the decision:

- To ensure a continuation of the current JV through the period of local government reorganisation to provide consistent recycling services to residents of Norfolk and North Norfolk
- High risk for the council to undertake a procurement exercise at a time of high uncertainty due to material mix in the recycling system associated with Deposit Return Scheme and associated price uncertainty

44 PROVISION OF KITCHEN CADDY LINERS TO SUPPORT FOOD WASTE SERVICE ROLLOUT

The Chair introduced this item in the absence of Cllr Ringer, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services & Waste. He read out a statement from Cllr Ringer which explained that he supported Option 1 – the provision of a single roll of 26 bags per household as a starter kit only. This option would be a one-off distribution at service launch and would support households in adapting to the new service. He went on to say that usage of the service should be reviewed so that the Council could consider the provision of further liners in the future if this encouraged further take up and reduced contamination. Local retailers would be informed in advance of the coming changes so that replacement liners could be adequately stocked.

Cllr W Fredericks commented that she felt it was a combination of option 1 and option 3. The Chair replied that it could be a mix of all options depending how it played out. It was a new process for residents and option 1 would assist with engagement and compliance. Over time, if contamination and drop-off rates increased then consideration may have to be given as to the provision of additional liners.

Cllr L Withington said that this would be a good opportunity to educate people. It was important to get the message out to encourage residents to put plastics into the recycling system, so it could be used again. The Chair said that there would be a communications plan alongside this project.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr L Withington and

RESOLVED

To agree to support:

Option 1: Provide a single roll of 26 bags per household as a starter kit only. This option will be a one-off distribution at service launch and will support households in adapting to the new service. There will be limited cost exposure to the council with no ongoing commitment.

Reason for the decision:

To provide clear direction which will allow for the future planning of the service and the procurement of services.

45 ENDORSEMENT OF THE UPDATED JOINT NORFOLK STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Chair introduced this item in the absence of Cllr A Brown, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement. He read out a statement that set out the background to the Joint Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework and said it was a wider component

to the continued progression of the Council's Local Plan, which should be adopted by the end of the year. Conversely, if the Council did not endorse the updated strategic framework, then the emerging Local Plan would be put at risk due to a failure in the duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities. Cllr Brown then set out the risks associated with not having an up to date Local Plan in place.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED:

- 1) To endorse the updated Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework.
- 2) To give delegated authority to the Acting Planning Policy Manager to make necessary minor/factual amendments, following the progress of the framework through other local authorities, prior to signature & publication

Reason for the decision:

The updated Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework is a key piece of evidence supporting Local Plan production. The framework is a Statement of Common Ground which sets out how strategic cross-boundary matters have been considered and provides much of the evidence that is required to demonstrate compliance with the 'duty to cooperate'.

46 JAPANESE KNOTWEED - OVERSTRAND CLIFFS

Cllr H Blathwayt, Portfolio Holder for Coast, introduced this item. He began by thanking officers for their work. He explained that an area of the cliff and slope at Overstrand was contaminated with Japanese knotweed, a highly invasive plant species that had strict legal responsibilities associated with its control, disposal, and the prevention of its spread.

The Council had a responsibility to address the issue, and this was made even more critical due to the nature of the area it inhabited. The cliffs were inherently unstable and the slip material appearing on the sea wall contained knotweed, the disposal of which was very expensive.

The Council had therefore commissioned a specialist report into the issue, seeking advice on its legal responsibilities as well as a management approach for addressing the problem.

The Chair agreed with Cllr Blathwayt's comments and said that this was a very challenging issue to deal with. He commended officers for their innovative approach to solving the problem.

It was proposed by Cllr H Blathwayt, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

RESOLVED:

To provide a total budget of up to £120,000 from the 'reactive coastal works' budget (approved by Cabinet in March 2025) and the CTAP budget, to undertake the actions recommended in this report to address the knotweed issues over the period between autumn 2025 and autumn 2027.

The actions will include:

1. Complete a programme of four containment foliar sprays by lance/stem

injection between 2025 and 2027, for a 3-metre strip at both the base and the top of the coastal slope

2. Complete works for clearance of promenade and licenced disposal of slump material containing Japanese Knotweed
3. Complete works to stabilise the base of the coastal slope, landwards of the top of the sea wall in the immediate proximity of promenade clearance works, to inhibit further encroachment of slump material potentially containing Japanese Knotweed
4. Further investigate the potential for annual foliar spraying, utilising appropriate methods, across the entire area containing the Japanese Knotweed infestation, then implement treatment by the most appropriate means (potentially between 2025 and 2027)
5. Implement and promote stakeholder engagement and community awareness, through stakeholder coordination, raising public awareness and education of the knotweed issue
6. Investigate approaches to maintaining vegetative cover during treatment of Japanese Knotweed and re-establishing vegetation post-treatment of Japanese Knotweed, in order to reduce the potential impact of rainfall-induced surface water run-off upon cliff instability
7. Implement long-term monitoring of Japanese Knotweed infestation, covering 2025 to 2027 treatment period and subsequent treatment/post treatment periods, as required. Long-term monitoring to track changes in infestation size and vegetation cover and review and refine initial treatment approaches, potentially including further foliar spraying and/or stem injection.

Reasons for the decision:

To ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to meet the Council's legal responsibilities and allow other works to proceed.

47 FAKENHAM LEISURE CENTRE AND SPORTS HUB PROJECT

The Chair advised members that there was an exempt appendix for this item and said that the meeting would have to go into private session if they wished to discuss anything within that document. He then welcomed Chris Ames, Business Development Manager at Alliance Leisure, to the meeting.

He invited the Portfolio Holder for Community, Leisure and Outreach, Cllr L Withington, to introduce the item. She began by thanking everyone involved in the project, especially the Design and Development Team. She said that this was a very exciting stage of the project and she asked the Director for Service Delivery to outline the current status of the scheme. He began by saying that the project began in July 2022, following approval by Full Council and there had been a further report agreeing to proceed, following confirmation of funding from the Government. The last report included a 'gate' point, which stated that before the award of contract was made, it should come to Cabinet for decision as to whether to proceed. This report set out the progress that had been made and sought authority to proceed with the award of contract. He went on to say that costs were £56k over the budget but it was anticipated that this could be managed and he was confident that it would remain within the agreed budget envelope, which included contingency funding.

The Chair invited members to speak:

Cllr C Cushing thanked everyone for their hard work on this project and said that he welcomed its progression and hoped to see it completed over the next 12 months.

He went onto say that he had received a question from a Fakenham Town Councillor, regarding the Trap Lane lease that NNDC had to re-sign. He said that they were very frustrated about how long it was taking to resolve the various issues that had occurred. He said that he had two questions, firstly did the delay in signing the lease jeopardise the work being progressed and secondly when would the Town Council receive a lease that they could sign.

(the meeting was interrupted by a fire alarm. It recommenced at 10.45am)

In response to Cllr Cushing's questions regarding the lease of the Trap Lane site, the Director for Service Delivery said that the Town Council (TC) had been provided with a standard lease agreement initially and they needed to reach a point where they were comfortable with the terms being offered. Essentially, the current lease had to be surrendered and a new lease was required for the extended area. In addition, there were a number of sub-leases within this due to the arrangements with the leisure operator. He acknowledged that it was a complicated situation but added that the TC had sought to introduce a number of new clauses to the lease to fully protect themselves and he shared their frustration around the amount of time it was taking to resolve. He added that it was not the lease itself that was being discussed at the moment but the agreement to lease and it was important that the TC understood the decision around the agreement. Regarding any delay, he said that there was a 'standstill' period following the decision by Cabinet, so there would not be an immediate impact, however, there would be a point at which it would start to have an effect but the TC was aware of this and he hoped that they would work to this timetable. He added that the Council was applying for funding from the Football Foundation and the lease document would need to comply with their standard format. This was the next stage of work.

In response to a further question from Cllr Cushing, as to when the TC would see the final version of the lease, the Director for Service Delivery, said that they had seen the final agreement to lease several times now. He added that he would contact them again after the Cabinet meeting to see if the matter could be progressed.

The Chair said that the TC was a key driver in ensuring the project was progressed and he was hopeful that the issues would be resolved soon.

It was proposed by Cllr L Withington, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

RESOLVED:

To approve the award of contract for the build phase of the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub project by appointing Alliance Leisure Services Ltd from a framework agreement, who will appoint DDI Projects Limited and any necessary complementary appointments within this Stage.

Reason for the decision:

To enable the award of contract for the build phase of the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub project

48 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

49 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.55 am.

Chairman