

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

December 2025

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period November – December 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Funding and Programmes

The delivery of all programmes under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) for 2025/26 are on course. The funding continues to support businesses and communities in north Norfolk to address identified local challenges as outlined below.

Addressing Fuel Poverty

As reported previously at the mid-year monitoring, 215 households have already received energy advice and 89 eligible households have been referred and supported in making grant applications through the ECO4 scheme. Residents have also accessed energy efficiency advice on the Council's website [Home | Energy saving tips](#) and the energy efficiency advice and local and national grant schemes have been promoted by the Energy Officer. This work is continuing and will be reported again at the end of Q3 in the New Year.

Business Support and Engagement

This programme encompasses a number of separate activities, delivering a range of business support and engagement activities across a number of key sectors within the District.

The following business training workshops and partner networking events have been delivered.

The **Visit North Norfolk Annual Conference** was held at the Lady Elizabeth Wing, Holkham Hall on 6 November. The conference saw a total of 142 delegates attend. Speakers included Lord Leicester and Kev House from the Art of Brilliance.



In collaboration with the Council, the Growth Hub delivered a *'How to use Data to produce a Winning Marketing Strategy'* workshop on 12th November at the Council Offices. The session was delivered by Footprint Digital with nine local businesses attending.



The next workshop in the programme, *'Creating Great Online Content'* was held on 2nd December at the Council offices and was fully booked.

A co-branded North Norfolk Networking event with the Federation of Small Businesses was held on 26th November at Fakenham Racecourse.



This event was attended by 33 businesses. Candy Richards from the FSB facilitated the round table session, followed by a talk from guest speaker Denise Markham Wroe. The FSB were pleased with the event and we are looking to organise another co-branded event in the next quarter.

Supported by the Growth Hub, specialist business support is also available for local businesses. This includes bespoke services such as one-to-one engagement, advice, business planning & growth services, grant support, workshops and training. As reported previously, by mid-year 145 local businesses had received business support and advice, 9 businesses had been engaged in the Scale Up programme, and 11 businesses were engaged in the High Growth programme.

Further business case studies are being finalised, to illustrate the activities, experiences and successes of some of the amazing businesses in the District. The initial cuts of the video profiles and written case studies have been shared with the businesses they feature, for checking, and the feedback has been very positive. The videos will be shared on Invest North Norfolk, the e-bulletin, social media etc. and will be launched at the Inspiring North Norfolk event in the new year, most importantly, to shine a light on the amazing local business activity and success stories.

High Street and Town Centre Support A package of support has been developed for the towns/retail centres across the District, utilising the brand 'North Norfolk High Streets Matter'. It was designed to support initiatives that help drive footfall and increase dwell-time; it includes projects such as signage & wayfinding and small-scale physical improvements.

Two small grant schemes, the 'Town Ambition Programme' and 'Love Your Market Town' have been delivered to fund town centre projects. To date, eight Love Your Market Town and eleven TAP grants have been awarded. This has been complemented over the past few months by a separate 'Retail

Excellence' skills scheme, with workshops held with retailers in North Walsham/Stalham and Fakenham. Thirty-one town centre businesses have participated in these, and small Retail Excellence grants have been awarded to support their business plans. In addition to the workshops and grants, other complementary resources have been made available to businesses including a [Christmas guide](#) for businesses, [Marketing Toolkit](#), a [Retail Toolkit](#).

A 'Wayfinding & Signage' improvement scheme is being developed across the town centres. This involved audits and consultation with key stakeholders in October and November, and plans for each town are being produced. Building on this work a further project to provide electronic tourist information points at key gateways and high footfall areas is being developed.

REPF (Rural England Prosperity Fund Rural Business and Community Grants) Twelve grants have been approved (six community projects and six business growth projects) and the total 2025/26 RBCG grant scheme budget of £407,537 has been allocated. Progress on the delivery of the grant funded projects is being closely monitored to ensure they are completed within the financial year. Grant payments are claimed in arrears by applicants on completion of their projects and submission of grant claims.

Skills & Employment

Chaired by NNDC's Economic Growth Manager, North Norfolk Skills & Employment Forum brings together a range of stakeholders from the public sector, Higher/Further Education, school academies and training providers etc. The initial focus of the group was understanding shared agendas before commencing a deeper dive into the data and understanding some of the critical issues facing north Norfolk from an employment and skills perspective, e.g. aging workforce/lack of succession planning, aspirations, brain drain, access to training etc. The group provides not only a forum for sharing ideas, good practice and updating each other, but also the information from this, feeds into the wider Norfolk Skills & Employment Board and the development of the Get Norfolk Working Plan.

This, together with other business support revenue work streams, will be packaged up in the hope it will be delivered through the Mayoral Combined Authority.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

PAIN or GAIN: How will AI impact on your business?

Monday 1 December 2025

6.15pm to 8.30pm

Merchants Place, 16 Church Street Cromer, NR27 9ES

This workshop is now fully booked. More info [here](#)

Creating Great Online Content

Tuesday 2 December 2025

9.15am to 12.45pm
North Norfolk District Council, Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN
This workshop is now fully booked but New Anglia Growth Hub managing a waiting list. Register [here](#)

Festive Networking Event

Thursday 18 December 2025
6pm to 8pm
The Three Horseshoes, West End, Briston, NR24 2HY
Register [here](#)

Exploring AI in Tourism: Small steps, big possibilities

Thursday 29 January 2025
9am to 11am
Jarrols Letheringsett, Fakenham Road, Holt, NR25 7JJ
Register [here](#)

Inspiring North Norfolk

10 February 2026
Invitation only

North Norfolk Annual Business Forum

10 March 2026
Details to follow

North Norfolk Networking with Invest North Norfolk and the FSB

Following the successful networking event held at Fakenham Racecourse on 26 November, in partnership with the Federation of Small Businesses, a second event is planned. This will be held before 31 March 2026. Details to follow.

3 Meetings attended

Key Accounts visited:
5-Nov Swift Aircraft
10-Nov Crisp Malt
10-Nov SJS Group
13-Nov Kelling Heath Holiday Park
14-Nov Naked Kitchens
21-Nov Structure Flex
21-Nov Morston Hall
03-December Transport East
10-December Norfolk Business Board