

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 1 June 2026 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Cllr L Shires (Deputy Chair)	Cllr T Adams (Chair)
Cllr H Blathwayt	Cllr C Ringer
Cllr A Varley	Cllr J Boyle

Members also attending:

Cllr C Cushing
Cllr V Holliday
Cllr L Vickers

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive, Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer, Director of Resources & Democratic Services Manager,

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr A Brown
Cllr J Toyne
Cllr L Withington

45 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14 April 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

46 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

48 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

49 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

None received.

50 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no recommendations to Cabinet from the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd April.

51 REPORTING PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE PLAN 2023-27 DELIVERY AGAINST ACTION PLAN 2024/25 AND 2025/26 - TO END OF

QUARTER 4 - 1 JANUARY 2026 TO 31 MARCH 2026

The Chair, Cllr T Adams, introduced this item. He highlighted action points which were rated as 'amber' and referred members to the explanatory text in the Action Plan. He corrected a repetition error for action 8 and went on to say that the referral system for the heating oil scheme had been working well and feedback had been very good.

Cllr Adams then spoke about Action 11 – 'sports pitches', saying that the 3G pitch at Fakenham was progressing well and discussions would continue regarding the North Walsham pitch.

Action 14 – 'second homes council tax premium', the Chair said that although there had been a modest fall in the overall number of second homes, the collection rate remained high.

Action 21 – 'Banking and post office services', the Chair highlighted that plans had been lodged for a new ATM outside the former Nationwide building in Fakenham, which he welcomed. He thanked former County Councillor for Fakenham, Cllr T FitzPatrick, who provided valuable support in persuading the provider to consider installation in the town. Banking hubs continued to operate well in North Walsham, Cromer and Holt.

Action 25 – Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), as stated at the Full Council meeting on 20th May, the Chair reiterated that he did not feel that the legal challenges that were underway would be successful. The County Council's current position on LGR remained unclear.

Action 27 - 'Service Reviews', continued uncertainty around the LGR process had caused some delays to work regarding service reviews. The focus would now be reviewed to ensure that the alignment of services met the LGR agenda and timetable as well as the future boundaries and responsibilities of the successor authority.

The Chair concluded by referring to potential refurbishment work on the Cromer Pier Pavilion Theatre, which was on the agenda for discussion.

He invited Members to speak:

Cllr V Holliday, referred to Action 29 – 'Tourism infrastructure assets safeguarding' and asked if the system for arranging the transfer of assets would be publicised, specifically for parishes so that they could engage with the process. The Chair replied that discussions were currently focused on specific issues such as surveyors allotments. Cllr Holliday clarified that her query was about when the parishes would be made aware of the process and next steps. Cllr Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, said that parishes which had been proactive in seeking to transfer assets had already been engaged in discussions and forms had been sent to them. The focus was on ensuring that parishes could maintain the assets going forward and this was part of the evidence gathering stage of the process. Any parish councils or community groups which were interested in taking on NNDC assets but had not yet come forward should be encouraged to contact the Council.

Cabinet agreed to note the report.

52 COUNCILLOR COMMUNITY GRANT FUND

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She began by thanking members across the Council for their support and engagement. The establishment of the Councillor Community Grant Fund had been agreed as part of the budget setting at the February meeting of Full Council. Feedback from members had been taken on board and the process had been kept as streamlined and simple as possible. The terms of reference set out how the grant fund would operate and details were provided on the Councillor Review Panel which would provide oversight and ensure good governance.

Cllr Shires invited Cllr Cushing, who had been involved in the collaborative discussions regarding the operational framework of the fund, to speak. Cllr Cushing said that his group was fully supportive of the fund and was keen to see it up and running. He asked how quickly it could get under way. The Democratic Services & Governance Manager confirmed that it did not need to go back to Full Council and that the process could commence as soon as Cabinet had approved the terms of reference.

Cllr Shires referred to section 7 of the report and the reference to three elected councillors. She said that it was proposed that the Review Panel would be comprised of two Liberal Democrat members and one Conservative member, with the Independent Group taking one of the Liberal Democrat substitute positions – to reflect the make-up of the Council allow for flexibility and bring in balance, if needed.

The Chair thanked Cllr Shires and said that feedback so far had been very positive and people were keen for the scheme to get underway.

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

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the Councillor Community Grant Fund Terms of Reference and its appendices as set out at Appendix A.
2. To delegate authority for the operation and administration of the Fund in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference.

Reason for the decision:

To enable the Councillor Community Grant Fund to operate with clear eligibility criteria, governance arrangements, and financial controls, providing assurance over the appropriate use of public funds while supporting local community projects within each ward.

53 ADOPTION OF THE NORFOLK COAST NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (2025-2030)

Cllr H Blathwayt, Portfolio Holder for Coast, introduced this item. He explained that This report seeks the formal adoption of the Norfolk Coast National Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030). The Council, along with other relevant authorities, had a statutory duty to publish a Management Plan for the conservation and enhancement of the designated landscape and to update the Plan every 5 years. Cabinet had approved the draft version on 1st December 2025, before it went out to consultation.

The Chair invited Members to speak:

Cllr V Holliday asked if the actions were available to cross-reference as the document presented was quite aspirational and process-heavy and she would like to see something more concrete. Cllr Blathwayt replied that there was nothing else available currently. He went onto say that the Memorandum of Articles (MoA) for the Norfolk Coast Partnership had recently expired and was due to be reviewed, in addition, the existing Chair was staying on as a lay member to ensure some consistency. Once the new MoA was in place, then further information on the action plan would be shared.

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

RESOLVED

To formally adopt the Norfolk Coast Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030)

Reason for the decision:

- 1) The publication of a Management Plan for the Norfolk Coast National Landscape every 5 years forms part of the statutory duty of the relevant authorities (of which NNDC is one) in managing the area.
- 2) This Plan will complement and support the Council's Local Plan planning policies.

54 REFURBISHMENT OF THE PAVILION THEATRE, CROMER PIER

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She began by saying that the Administration had the intention of ensuring that all the Council's assets were fit for purpose and available beyond LGR. The tourism assets were the main reason for strong local economies in coastal areas and this was demonstrated via car parking income which was able to support discretionary services such as public conveniences. There had been significant investment in the structure of the pier and other investment into the businesses that were hosted there. The Pier had been in place for 125 years and it was important to invest in its future. The intention was, where possible, to apply for grants but the initial aim was to ensure the project was in the capital programme.

Cllr A Varley said that it was an important project and was a continuation of the ongoing review of the council's assets with a focus on net zero. Insulation would be a really beneficial aspect of the project. It would ensure that it was comfortable as well as energy efficient.

The Chair said that this was the missing piece to the ongoing structural work and the completed work to the dressing rooms and bar area. It would ensure the longevity of the pier for many years to come. He was hopeful that grant funding would become available.

The project would involve a significant closure of the theatre following the end of the Christmas show period, with the aim of reopening in time for the summer season.

Members were invited to speak:

Cllr Cushing said that he was surprised that there was no business case included in the papers. He said that the financial benefits of spending £2.4m on this project

should be clearly set out, especially as it was being funded by borrowing. This amounted to approximately 10% of revenue income for the Council.

Cllr L Shires sought clarification as to whether Cllr Cushing wanted to see the business case or whether he felt that the financial information in the report did not provide enough detail. Cllr Cushing replied that he would like to see the business case for justifying £2.4m of borrowing.

Cllr Shires reiterated the argument that she had already set out and which was included in the report, that the work would benefit tourism and support local businesses. Cllr Cushing said that there was no information setting out the anticipated return on the investment. It was a substantial amount of money that was being invested and the financial payback should be demonstrated. He acknowledged that there would be non-material benefits such as a boost to the local economy but said that it was important to set out specific gains such as the financial benefit of being able to open the theatre for an extended season. There was nothing that he could see in the papers which set out clearly the anticipated increase in revenue generated by undertaking the work.

Cllr Shires sought clarification that Cllr Cushing wanted additional information beyond the profit share arrangement with Openwide, increased car parking income and a boost to tourism and the local economy. Cllr Cushing said that the report implied that there would be an increase in the number of people attending the shows at the theatre and he would like to see the projected financial gain for this.

The Chair said the wider impact of such assets should be looked at. He referred to the performance of the Council's car parks during the recent bank holiday period and said that the additional income generated was able support discretionary services such as public conveniences and additional street cleansing activity.

Cllr L Vickers acknowledged that Cromer Pier was an important asset that brought a lot of joy to locals and visitors but £2.4m was a significant amount of money and she agreed with Cllr Cushing that there should be a business case to support the proposals. More importantly, she was concerned that there would be enough money available for other areas of the district to ensure an equitable distribution of resources. She added that in some areas, there seemed to be a lack of political will to proceed quickly and in others, projects were expedited. The Chair replied that the largest capital project being undertaken by the Council was the new leisure centre in Fakenham. He also outlined other projects across the District. It was likely that the pier would have a greater financial impact in terms of return than the FLASH project in the long term.

Cllr V Holliday referred to page 125, section 2.5 of the report and suggested that the various points that were referred to were 'monetised' so it was more of a comprehensive business case that was being presented to members.

Cllr Shires replied that most of the Council's assets were in Cromer and there had not been the same amount of focus on the Fakenham Leisure Centre project, which was also of significant value. She asked what Cllr Holliday would like to see specifically. Cllr Holliday said that she would like to see the business case for the project adding that she wouldn't expect to have to state what she would like to see included in a business case but rather that it would be presented to members if they requested to see it.

The Chair said that he accepted that it was a significant amount of money but it was

hard to quantify the financial impact on the visitor economy in the long term. He reminded members that options for external funding would continue to be explored.

Cllr Holliday pointed out that funding for the Fakenham Leisure centre was predominantly from central Government and not via external borrowing as was proposed for this project.

The Chief Executive said that he may be able to clarify some issues. He began by saying that the project was proposed by the Administration and involved investment in Cromer Pier, particularly the Pavilion theatre. There was a degree of choice in the matter and at this stage, it was for Cabinet to decide. He said that the exempt appendix set out the cost estimates to improve the environmental performance of the theatre and comfort for the audience.

The Chief Executive went onto explain that there was a revenue implication from the investment. It was anticipated that ticket sales would increase due to more performances and a profit share arrangement with Openwide, the theatre operator, was proposed. He said that the choice to invest in the pier pavilion needed to be set in the context of other decisions made by the Administration across the District. This included investment in public conveniences as well as supporting infrastructure to facilitate affordable housing provision in Fakenham. Capital investment had also been made in supported housing projects in both Fakenham and Stalham. He concluded by saying that it was the Council's duty to maintain its assets and strengthen them ahead of Local Government Reorganisation.

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

RESOLVED

1. to recommend that Full Council increases of the capital program by £2.400m funded by borrowing.
2. That delegated authority is granted to the Assets and Property Programme Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and Property Services and the s151 Officer, to award a contract for the delivery of the works up to the approved budget.

Reason for the decision:

To ensure the viability and efficiency of the Pavilion Theatre, Cromer Pier for the benefit of residents and the tourism economy.

55 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

56 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.45 am.

Chairman