

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

23 September 2026

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period July to September 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Town Centres

Town centre visits were made to the town centres of **Cromer** (on 11th August) and **Fakenham** (on 25th August) accompanied by the Business Development Officer to undertake visual audits of vacant retail premises and engage directly with local businesses and property owners to better understand prevailing trading conditions.

The audits identified approximately eleven vacant retail units in Cromer and fourteen in Fakenham town centres. Vacancies will be monitored and where appropriate follow-up actions will be taken to determine any underlying issues, reasons for concern, or potential solutions.

The visits provided valuable intelligence on local trading conditions and opportunities for future investment. Moving forward, the Economic Growth Team will work proactively with commercial agents and other key stakeholders to support the marketing and occupation of vacant units, with the aim of strengthening town centre vitality and reducing vacancy levels.

The High Streets and Hospitality Matters programme has begun to deliver initiatives in collaboration with Norfolk County Council. Visits have been made to the currently eligible towns (Cromer, Holt and Wells) to raise awareness and solicit project ideas for Love Your Market Town grants, many of which are coming forward.





Visit to Wells-next-the-Sea with NCC LYMT officer

Skills

Skills and workforce development will be a key priority over the next two years. An appointment has been made into the role of Business Skills Support Coordinator; a post hosted by NCC but based in and predominantly working in North Norfolk, connecting business needs to education and skills providers, strengthening awareness of local career opportunities, and helping businesses access relevant skills and recruitment support. She started on 7th September.

Economic Growth Manager

Stuart Quick, the Council's Economic Growth Manager for the past ten years (and Business Development Officer for three years prior to that), leaves the Council on 15th September (although due to leave commitment, his effective last day was 3rd September). Stuart managed the Economic Growth Team with aplomb and contributed hugely positively to a wide range of initiatives with which the Council has been engaged. His departure will obviously have a significant impact but he is leaving us for a role for which he is ideally suited – Chief Operating Officer at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The momentum of the proactive programme of work undertaken by the Economic Growth team, and in partnership with other organisations, will be maintained while suitable arrangements are made for Stuart's replacement.

Business Visits

Visits made in July and August included the following key accounts:

- Oyster Yachts, soon to complete its consolidation at its Hoveton site
- Place UK, which had a very good season, with the sunshine helping to improve size and volume of fruit harvest; however, water supply challenges remain, despite having a dedicated reservoir.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Forthcoming Activities and Developments

1:1 Business Accounting Advice with Larking Gowen

Thursday 10 September 2026

Various times

Fakenham Library, Oak Street, Fakenham NR21 9DY

Register [here](#)

Business Resilience in Focus Workshop

Wednesday 16 September 2026

8.30am to 10.30am

Black Shuck Distillery, Fulmodeston Road, Hindolveston, NR20 5BP

Register [here](#)

North Norfolk Cultural Partnership Meeting

Tuesday 22 September 2026

10am to 1pm

Wells Maltings, Staithe Street, Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1AN

Register [here](#)

1:1 Business Accounting Advice with Larking Gowen

Tuesday 22 September 2026

Various times

Holt Library, 9 Church Street, Holt NR25 6BB

Register [here](#)

Getting Started with Microsoft Copilot Workshop

Thursday 24 September 2026

9.15am to 12.45pm

North Norfolk District Council, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN

Register [here](#)

Women Talk Business: The Sticky Note Marketing Plan

Friday 23 October 2026

10.30am to 12.30pm

Fakenham Library, Oak Street, Fakenham NR21 9DY

Register [here](#)

Visit North Norfolk 2026 Conference

Thursday 12 November 2026

10am to 2.30pm

The Lady Elizabeth Wing, Holkham Estate, NR23 1AB

Register [here](#)

Women Talk Business: The Sticky Note Marketing Plan

Friday 27 November 2026

10.30am to 12.30pm

Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer NR27 9HS

Register [here](#)

3 Meetings attended
Visits to local businesses, including: Purple Carrot Pubs, The Grove Cromer, Byfords, Oyster Yachts, Place UK Clean Tech East. Norfolk and Suffolk joint business board Transport east meetings.