

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

23 September 2026

COUNCILLOR ADAM VARLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

For the period July to September 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Communications:

The Summer season has helped to deliver another strong period of growth for NNDC platforms. Seasonally themed pieces of content including beach safety, resort carnivals, lifeguard provision, wildfires, drought and littering helped to drive 2.32m hits across all platforms and added 1517 new followers across all channels including 870 on our most popular platform Facebook. The annual Battle of the Beaches contest again proved popular with our community, in all registering total engagement of 443,196. The BOTB campaign supported messages on water safety, the coastal economy, resort facilities and amenities.

Despite a slight summer slowdown in follower growth, efforts to build Instagram and TikTok and thereby reach a wider demographic are delivering numbers in line with set targets.

The Communications team has facilitated media coverage across a wide range of issues including a BBC special on Coastal Erosion, beached whales in Mundesley, FLASH project progress; banking hubs in Fakenham; FPNs on litter; summer wildfires and LGR. We responded to requests from BBC tv and radio, ITV, EDP, Lynn News, Daily Mail, Telegraph and Guardian.

The team has also supported officers across the council on a variety of issues including coastal works at Overstrand; Coastwise projects including the Happisburgh digital church; mobile connectivity; economic growth events and grants; energy efficiency; parks and recreation; healthy ageing; and a variety of planning issues.

We're very grateful to colleagues in IT and the webteam who have collaborated closely with comms and HR to develop and launch the new look intranet.

Climate Change

Engagement

Promotion of energy saving technology has taken place at the Holt 'Positivitea' event, signposting residents to information, grants and easy

adaptations they can make to their homes.

Decarbonisation

The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant-funded works to Fakenham Sports Centre are almost complete following the successful installation of the air source heat pumps for heating and hot water, removal of the gas boilers and improved insulation for the existing building. Measures to provide photo voltaic cells to help power the centre and the new swimming pool are in development.

Information

In response to frequent enquiries about solar panels and the need for planning permission, and the apparent lack of such information on-line, the team has collaborated with planning staff to produce a guide. This document, which will be accessible from our website, will hopefully help answer the increasing numbers of questions from north Norfolk residents about the regulations and procedures regarding solar panel installations, especially in Conservation Areas. The hope is to help residents to take quick informed decisions on any such investment, removing the inertia brought about by uncertainty, or the fear of red tape, and providing the confidence to install solar PV on properties where no permission is required. It should also reduce the number of enquiries both the Planning and the Climate team need to respond to, reducing delays for those hoping to make such energy efficiency investments. Further guides will follow on the subjects of air source heat pumps and double glazing.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

An air source heat pump and solar panels are to be fitted to a newly acquired residential property to be used as temporary accommodation (TA) which requires a new heating system. The aim is to reduce tenant's bills, but it is intended also to treat it as a demonstration project, showing how such home energy improvements can be applied to a standard semi-detached house. It will also help inform the Council's approach to future decarbonisation of the Council's TA stock.

Team members attended a virtual screening of the **National Emergency Briefing**, a UK public awareness campaign designed to treat the climate and nature crisis with the same urgency as a wartime threat or a pandemic. It began with an expert-led briefing to politicians and business leaders in Westminster, which has since been turned into an educational film for local communities. The goal is to secure a prime-time, televised national broadcast where independent scientists can directly inform the public about the urgent risks facing UK food systems, health, and national security without political filter. There is a local screening of the film at Sheringham Community Centre on Friday 25th September at 7:30pm hosted by [Sheringham Town Council](#) which is free to attend and all are welcome.

3	Meetings attended