

Cabinet

Date: **Monday 4 March 2024**

Time: **10 am**

Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Martineau Lane,
Norwich NR1 2DH**

Membership

Cllr Kay Mason Billig

Cllr Andrew Jamieson

Cllr Bill Borrett

Cllr Penny Carpenter

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury

Cllr Fabian Eagle

Cllr Jane James

Cllr Graham Plant

Cllr Alison Thomas

Cllr Eric Vardy

Role

Chair. Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance

Vice-Chair. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships

Cabinet Member for Economic Growth

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation

Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

It will be live streamed on YouTube and members of the public may watch remotely by clicking on the following link: [Norfolk County Council YouTube](#)

We also welcome attendance in person, but public seating is limited, so if you wish to attend please indicate in advance by emailing committees@norfolk.gov.uk

Current practice for respiratory infections requests that we still ask everyone attending to maintain good hand and respiratory hygiene and, at times of high prevalence and in busy areas, please consider wearing a face covering.

Please stay at home if you are unwell, have tested positive for COVID 19, have symptoms of a respiratory infection or if you are a close contact of a positive COVID 19 case. This will help make the event safe for attendees and limit the transmission of respiratory infections including COVID-19.

A g e n d a

1 To receive any apologies.

2 Minutes

To confirm the minutes from the Cabinet Meeting held on 29 January 2024

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3 Members to Declare any Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

4 Matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council.

5 Updates from the Chairman/Cabinet Members

6 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by 5pm on Tuesday 27 February 2024. For guidance on submitting a public question, please follow this link: [Ask a question to a committee - Norfolk County Council](#)

Any public questions received by the deadline and the responses will be published on the website from 9.30am on the day of the meeting and can be viewed by clicking this link once uploaded: [Click here to view public questions and responses](#)

7 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by 5pm on Tuesday 27 February 2024.

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| 8 Director of Public Health Annual Report for Norfolk 2023: Smoking, Tobacco Control and Vaping | Page 35 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services | |
| 9 Adult Learning Annual Plan | Page 98 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |
| 10 Climate Policy for Norfolk County Council | Page 155 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |
| 11 Climate Action Plans - Tranche 2 | Page 169 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |
| 12 Highways Capital Programme 2024/25/26/27 and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) | Page 181 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |
| 13 Highways Parish Partnership Scheme 2024-25 | Page 237 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |
| 14 Progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan and Objectives 2023-2026 | Page 254 |
| Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services | |

15 Finance Monitoring Report 2023-24 P10: January 2024	Page 281
Report by the Director of Strategic Finance	
16 Norfolk County Council Company Business Plans	Page 319
Report by the Director of Strategic Finance	
17 Disposal, Acquisition and Exploitation of Property	Page 408
Report by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services	
18 Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting:	
To note the delegated decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting.	

Decisions by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

- [King's Lynn, Hillington Square – Waiting Restrictions and Permit Zone](#)
- [Additional Highway Maintenance Funding](#)
- [Extension of Civil Parking Enforcement Powers Delegated to Norwich City Council](#)

Decisions by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

- [Schools Catering Contract 1 year Extension](#)
- [Grant Agreement between Norfolk County Council and the Eastern Learning Alliance Multi-Academy Trust responsible body for Downham Market Academy](#)

19 Exclusion of the Public

Cabinet is asked to consider excluding the public from the meeting under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the item below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet will be presented with the conclusions of the public interest test carried out by the report author and is recommended to confirm the exclusion.

20 Disposal, Acquisition and Exploitation of Property: exempt annex A

Tom McCabe
Chief Executive
Norfolk County Council
County Hall

Martineau Lane Norwich
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 23 February 2024



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Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 January 2024 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am

Present:

Cllr Kay Mason Billig	Chair. Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing
Cllr Penny Carpenter	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships
Cllr Fabian Eagle	Cabinet Member for Economic Growth
Cllr Jane James	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation
Cllr Graham Plant	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport
Cllr Alison Thomas	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Deputy Cabinet Members Present

Cllr Greg Peck	Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Shelagh Gurney	Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Executive Directors Present:

Harvey Bullen	Director of Strategic Finance
Debbie Bartlett	Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Grahame Bygrave	Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Kat Hulatt	Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Tom McCabe	Chief Executive
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Children's Services`

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 No apologies were received

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 04 December 2023

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 04 December 2023 as an accurate record.

3 Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4 Matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council.

- 4.1 No matters were referred.

5 Update from the Chair/Cabinet Members

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care gave an update:

- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care stated that no Cabinet Member or Councillors wanted to have to make such challenging financial decisions which would impact residents, however, would have to make decisions requiring savings to be made, falling against the backdrop of rising demand and falling government settlements.
- Some of the budgets in Adult Social Services would be worrying for residents.
- Cabinet would be asked to consider and recommend the budget for 2024-25 to Full Council. One proposal included a request to start a consultation on changes to the Adult Social Services charging policy, including a reduction in the Minimum Income Guarantee. This would generate recurrent savings because the funding from Government was falling but costs were increasing.
- A meaningful consultation would be undertaking on changes to the Minimum Income Guarantee, which would start on the 19 February 2024 and run for 12 weeks. This would give time for people to respond, and to give support to those who would be impacted, and work with the charging reference group.
- After the consultation period, responses would be analysed, and an Equality Impact Assessment would be completed. After this, Cabinet would consider proposals in light of this and other factors to decide whether to proceed with the proposal or seek savings elsewhere in Adult Social Services.
- Recent Government funding announcement was welcome but was for one year only. The conditions and fine details would not be clear until the final Government settlement was announced. Cabinet would not consider lowering Minimum Income Guarantee below the national statutory minimum which was £171.75 per week for people aged 25-65 and £150.25 per week for people aged 18-25.

6. Public Question Time

6.1 The questions received from members of the public and responses to them are published in appendix A of these minutes.

6.2.1 Nick Taylor asked a supplementary question:

- Mr Taylor thought that the Government's announcement for more funding for Adult Social Services would encourage Cabinet to defer their decision to make changes to the Minimum Income Guarantee, especially given the impact this would have on disabled people in Norfolk.
- He asked, if a 10% cut to people's money was necessary to save Norfolk County Council money, whether Cabinet Members would agree to a 10 % reduction in their allowance, as Cabinet Members were able to supplement their allowance with income, which not all disabled people were able to.

6.2.2 The Vice Chair replied that it was the decision of all councillors to do what they would like to with their allowance. The budget which Cabinet would consider would demonstrate the challenging financial position of the council which was also replicated across the country. The Government's funding announcement

was welcome but the full detail of this was still being waited for. The Vice Chair clarified that there was a need for the Council to make sustainable and long-term savings balanced alongside statutory responsibilities, meaning that difficult decisions would need to be considered alongside the services the Council supplied. It was right to carry out a consultation as set out in the budget report, and no commitment could be given about the proposals at this point. No final decision would be made about Minimum Income Guarantee at this point and the Vice Chair encouraged everyone to respond to the consultation when it was launched.

- 6.2.3 The Chair noted Mr Taylor's passion and that the Council was listening to the public; she encouraged Mr Taylor to take part in the consultation.

7 Local Member Questions/Issues

- 7.1 The questions received from Members and responses to them are published in appendix B of these minutes.

8. Fee Levels for Adult Social Services providers

- 8.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting proposals for the fee levels provided to Adult Social Services providers by Norfolk County Council for 2024-25.
- 8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This report introduced an annual process which set out the annual support for the care market by the Council.
 - Norfolk invested £415m in Adult Social Services processes. There was a proposal in the report to give £23.2m to the care market this year in addition to the £48m given over the previous 2 years. This was in context of wider challenges that the market faced.
 - The Council had a duty to support the wider care market as well as its own services. The impact of in-year and one-off funding was challenging.
 - If any provider felt that the uplift be provided to them was not enough, they could go through an open book process, but the Council were keen to engage with providers about wider support that the Council could provide that would reduce costs.
 - The rise in national living wage was welcome but would also impact the budget of the Council and providers. The settlement in the paper mitigated this increase for providers, while retaining some funding in the Council to meet demand related to this.
- 8.2 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention endorsed the report which gave an additional £23.2m for the care market in addition to the increases given in previous years. Vulnerable people relied on services provided by this market.
- 8.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:
1. Agree to award a £23.2m fee uplift, as set out in section 3.
 2. Note the risks presented in this paper due to the need to balance financial pressures for the market alongside affordability to the County Council.
 3. Note mitigating actions as part of wider County Council budget setting decisions including the need to lobby Government for fair funding for Norfolk.
 4. Agree the implementation of the fee uplift exercise described in section 3 of

this paper.

8.4 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 5 of the report.

8.5 **Alternative Options**

The option recommended within this report is affordable within the Council's budget planning approach and alternative options are not presented. However, Members could choose to make different budget decisions as part of the County Council budget process.

9. **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding**

9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out changes to the distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2024 in line with the Department of Education's (DfE) National Funding Formula arrangements.

9.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This report outlined changes for distribution of Dedicated Schools Grant in line with the National Funding Formula. Each year the Government provided funding for all schools that ensured funding was fair and met pupil needs.
- School funding was provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant and ringfenced through Local Authorities and distributed through local authority formulae following consultation with local schools.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services thanked the Norfolk Schools' Forum for their help in reaching the decision set out in the report.
- The Local Authority was also responsible for setting the formula for Early Years Funding. Government changes to Early Years Parental Funding details were shown on page A4 of the report.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

9.2 The Vice Chair also thanked Norfolk Schools Forum for their work on this.

9.3 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention supported the proposals set out in the report noting that it was important to focus time and investment at those in the most need of support. The extra money for the high needs block was welcomed.

9.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree:

1. the Dedicated Schools Grant funding including
 - a. the changes to the schools funding formula;
 - b. the changes to the early years funding entitlements formula;
 - c. agreeing the high needs block budget, noting that it has been assessed to meet our statutory duties and it adds to the Dedicated Schools Grant cumulative;
2. to delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Lead Member for Children's Services, to agree the final unit values, whilst still mirroring the National Funding Formula, once the final Dedicated Schools Grant calculations of individual

school allocations are known and in line with the principles of Cabinet's decision.

9.5 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Please see section 4 of the report.

9.6 Alternative Options

Please see section 5 of the report.

10. Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy 2024-25

10.1.1 Cabinet received the report which presented the Council's borrowing and investment strategies for 2024-25.

10.1.2 The Vice Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This was the most important treasury report to Cabinet of the three which were brought each year.
- This report covered future capital investment plans along with the prudential indicators to ensure the Council was not over-borrowing, the minimum revenue provision policy and the investment strategy.
- The council was required to operate a balanced budget, meaning what the council raised it could spend. The treasury function helped the council do this by monitoring cashflow to ensure money was available when needed and surplus was invested in liquid, low risk assets, and via treasury management which helped facilitate planned investments and meet repayment obligations over the long-term.
- All prudential indicators were being met but capital financial requirements were the most significant were shown at paragraph 2.2 of the report. The Council was under-borrowed as shown in the graph on page 85.
- Higher interest rates meant that all capital bids had been reviewed. Using cash balances and delaying capital programme requirements which were not externally financed would reduce the net financing need for the current year from £60.064m to £0. This was due to cash balances held by the Council, shown at paragraph 2.4 of the report, which had allowed funding of expenditure through the use of cash balances rather than borrowing. The cash balances were due to Government funding of key projects.
- The strategy remained consistent with capital strategy set out in 2023; slippage had been included into calculations to account for the ongoing gap between aspirations and the actual completion of projects. As interest rates rose, a threshold of 3.5% had been set before adding to borrowing.
- More emphasis had been put on strategically managing timing of borrowing and management of the cash position.
- 2024-25 treasury management strategy was linked to the capital strategy with both projecting the same slippage, with an aim of giving a clear target in management of contracts and projects.
- Advice from external advisors was to not borrow and allow cash balances to fall to £180m. This would mean borrowing need to be increased eventually, but cash balances would allow under borrowing to be maintained in the medium-term. The council would borrow only £50m per year when interest rates dipped. This may be revised in future years.

- The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy was the same as in previous years. Due to revenue budget constraints, there had been no more voluntary Minimum Revenue Provision set aside since 2021-22. This reflected use of capital receipts to finance assets with low useful economic lives such as IT equipment and vehicles.
- This report was to be taken in conjunction with the Capital Strategy, at item 11 on the agenda.

10.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree and to recommend to County Council the Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy for 2024-25 as set out in Annex 1 of the report, including:

- The Capital Prudential Indicators included in the body of the report.
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2024-25 in Appendix 1 of the report.
- The list of approved counterparties at Appendix 4 of the report.
- The Treasury Management Prudential Indicators detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.

For inclusion within the policy framework

10.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 4 of the report.

10.4 **Alternative Options**

In order to achieve sound treasury management in accordance with the statutory and other guidance, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendation in this report.

11. Capital Strategy and Programme 2024-25

11.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the proposed capital strategy and programme and including information on the funding available to support that programme.

11.1.2 The Vice Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The capital programme was set prior to each financial year, which focussed on the delivery of core objectives set out in Better Together for Norfolk, which were all connected.
- The Vice Chair was grateful to the Council for taking full advantage of the County Deal to get significant additional funding for Norfolk County Council. This would be the first step on the road to increased devolution for Norfolk and would give significant ring-fenced capital funding to improve infrastructure as part of the Norfolk Investment Fund.
- Until 2022, it was appropriate to increase prudential borrowing, however, the change in borrowing rates meant that more control was needed on capital spend. The prioritisation model was set out in the report and ensured that the Council would not exceed £50m borrowing per year.
- As local authorities became more complex, it was important for Government to understand the long-term context that investment decisions were made in and financial risks. Decisions not to underwrite spending on external investments by Norfolk County Council had been

wise. The relative success in dealing with an inadequate funding regime was had by transforming and renewing services using best practice and technology. The Capital Programme supported this long term view.

- This report showed that the council took capital expenditure and investment in line with service objectives taking into account stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.
- Development of the Capital Strategy was in the context of ensuring the overall strategy was complemented and ensuring that governance procedures and risks were understood by all Members.
- The Council would look to contain capital borrowing within the £50m limit going forward and had introduced slippage into spending departments to relate the proposed programme into what can be achieved and reschedule programmes over a longer period or discontinue plans which did not meet the prioritisation programme.
- This Strategy would allow the Council to deliver on its manifesto pledges including:
 - investing in libraries, through maintaining current ones and developing community hubs such as those in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn
 - investing in museums such as the Norwich Castle Keep project.
 - £2.1m spent on cultural heritage facilities across the county.
 - £44.7m investment in housing with care schemes and £13m in integrated equipment community services.
 - Rollout of the fibre network across rural Norfolk.
 - Building new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities schools, mainstream schools and Special Resource Bases .
 - Investing in physical infrastructure to help people get to work and home quickly and cheaply and allow investment in the county such as new road schemes.
 - Key industries such as supporting the operations maintenance facility in Great Yarmouth and development of business hubs at Scottow and Hethel Engineering
- All Government agencies were feeling the effects of cuts but through effective joined up working, efficient targeting of funding and resources could be brought forward.
- The Devolution deal would add to the successes brought to Norfolk. The latest tranche of levelling up saw good bids from Kings Lynn. New schemes to be added to the 2024-28 programme included work on County Farms, Norfolk Fire and Rescue, road resurfacing, Norse energy and other small corporate property schemes.
- Children's Services continued to develop Special Educational Needs and Disabilities schools and upgrade mainstreams schools, or build new ones where needed.
- Adult Social Services continued with its housing with care programme to give 11 new care villages in Norfolk.
- Development and maintenance of the transport network would continue, including projects such as the Long Stratton Bypass, Norwich Western Link and West Winch Housing Access Road. £34.5m was planned to be spent on road safety and public transport initiatives.
- The revenue budget provides resources to build on Children's Services following its good Ofsted report and development of the transformation programme for Adult Social Services and enhancing services through Community and Environmental Services, this capital programme set out

the long-term commitment to put in place infrastructure to deliver services by reducing future expense and providing better services.

- 11.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted the road programmes included within the strategy such as Transforming Cities Fund which would provide improvements to roads, cycling and walking facilities in Norwich, as well as Active Travel improvements and the road resurfacing fund.
- 11.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care thanked the Council for the financial commitment to the Long Stratton Bypass. Work had begun and was welcomed by the community. She also welcomed the commitment to the housing with care schemes which would help people to remain living in a secure environment with independence. She hoped that nutrient neutrality would be solved soon which was delaying some of these schemes.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention noted that the capital programme was £203m for the next year, and over 1bn in the next 5 years. It included the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities transformation programme, investing in infrastructure and roads, ambitions around big infrastructure projects such as the Long Stratton Bypass and Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing. Pressures in spending were because of demographic changes of people living longer meaning that people needed support for longer. The projects in the strategy would make the best use of investment.
- 11.5 The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation welcomed the strategy which showed the Council was committed to providing a forward-thinking property portfolio through replacing outdated assets; this would save money in the long run and provide quality assets for the community.
- 11.6 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care noted the pressures faced across the county with the aging population and changing demographic, and the wide-ranging issues seen.
- 11.7 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships pointed out the reprofiling of investment for Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service equipment and vehicles, as well as work which was taking place to ensure gender compliance. She also mentioned the funding for libraries and development of community hubs which was key.
- 11.8 The Vice Chair discussed that relationships had been developed with Department for Transport and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to bring increased funding into the County, and when combined with work with the Department for Education and other departments the funding could be used to deliver substantial projects. The Vice Chair commended officers for their work obtaining funding.
- 11.9 The Chair noted that the Government had confidence that Norfolk could deliver major road building schemes to reduce air pollution and improve people's lives. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service improvements were essential with the recent incidents of field and agricultural fires. The development of with care schemes was a positive way to provide people with independence for longer. The capital schemes set out in the report would provide positive changes for the people for Norfolk. Devolution would provide more funding for more infrastructure

improvements.

11.10 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To agree the Capital Strategy at Appendix A of the report as a framework for the prioritisation and continued development of the Council's capital programme;
2. To agree the proposed 2023-28+ capital programme of £1,134.982m, subject to the planned slippage of £253.0m and additional amounts for schemes yet to be re-profiled from 2023-24;
3. To agree to recommend the programme to the County Council for approval, including the new and extended capital schemes outlined in Appendix D of the report;
4. To agree to recommend to County Council the Council's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2024-25 as set out in Section 5 of the report;
5. To note known grant settlements as summarised in Section 3 of the report and agree that future capital grants will be added to the programme when confirmed;
6. To note the forecast of estimated capital receipts to be generated to achieve the target of £21.37m, subject to market conditions, over the next four years to support schemes not funded from other sources, as set out in Table 8 of the report.

11.11 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The attached Annex to the report summarises the development of the proposed capital programme, including proposed new schemes, and a summary of forecast capital receipts.

11.12 **Alternative Options**

The papers appended to this report represent the culmination of the process to develop capital schemes to be recommended to Full Council which will improve services, promote efficiencies, and address deficiencies. However, at this stage it remains the case that new capital proposals have not been agreed and could be removed from the proposed capital programme.

12. Finance Monitoring Report 2023-24 P8: November 2023

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2023-24 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2024, together with related financial information.

12.1.2 The Vice Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The forecast set out in the report showed that the Council was in balance and the Vice Chair was confident that this would continue to be the case. This had been achieved through significant use of reserves. These one-off measures would not be available next year so ongoing savings would need to be found from all parts of the budget.
- In Children's Services, social care placements and home to school transport continued to cause pressure. Overspend for social care placements was £7m due to an increase in the average unit cost for external residential accommodation seen over the past year of £4.24m

and the cost of supporting a small number of children with extremely high needs of £2.42m.

- The Secretary of State recognised the difficulties seen in Children's Services across the country and this was why there was a steer towards Children's Services in the announcement of more funding from Michael Gove MP.
- Home to school transport was forecast to overspend by £6m despite additional resources allocated in 2023-24. This was due to supply-side factors such as inflationary costs on fuel and vehicles as well as reduced supply increasing the cost per child for both Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and mainstream children. Action was underway to impact demand and supply but a change in primary legislation was needed to reduce the spend on home to school transport.
- Adult Social Services' in-year position had deteriorated as the care market had seen increased pricing, especially in learning disability provision. The budget for older people's care was showing pressure due to rising costs and demand. Waiting lists had been reduced however this had increased the demand on home care with more people now requiring support. If demand was constant the pressures could be offset, however increases in demand which were being seen meant this was not the case.
- £30m had been invested into Adult Social Services as part of the 2023-24 fee uplift and an additional £23m would be invested this year.
- One in four people in Norfolk were over 65 and North Norfolk had the highest proportion of people aged over 65 in England and Wales. By 2040 it was estimated one third of the population of Norfolk would be over 65, which would mean more people living with conditions such as dementia, with a prediction that there would be 28% more people with dementia by 2030.
- Community and Environmental Services budgets had been affected by high electricity prices, with a £1.5m overspend, although this had been offset by savings elsewhere.
- The cost on the museums service had been affected by lower income during the Norwich Castle Keep project.
- Finance would have an underspend due to interest payable being £2.254m less than budgeted caused by timing of borrowing and low interest rates on borrowing. Interest receivable was now forecast at £4.558m which was higher than budgeted.
- The Minimum Revenue Provision for 2023-24 was £1m lower than planned due to capital programme slippage. £1.1m accumulated surplus business rates would be returned to the Council as part of the Business Rates Pool fund.
- The Council had healthy cash balances, which were forecast to be at £179.7m by the end of the year. If including additional borrowing budgeted for, balances would be at £244.7m. As there were healthy cash balances, no additional borrowing was anticipated in the calendar year.
- The capital programme would be £281.31m after slippage. Departmental breakdowns were shown in table 2 of the report.
- Table 4 of the report showed that £66.4m would be funded by prudential borrowing.
- Changes to the capital programme since December 2023 were shown on page 217 of the report which were mostly due to external funding in particular increased funding for museums projects. The Vice Chair

thanked the Chair of the National Lottery Heritage Fund for funding received.

- 12.2 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention was pleased to note that a balanced budget was predicted at a time of financial pressure.
- 12.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care pointed out the increase of demand seen in Adult Social Services. Reducing the interim care list had a knock-on effect by increasing the cost of care to be provided to people who had been waiting. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care noted that many providers in the learning disability sector were struggling; if a provider closed and new services needed to be found at short notice this could result in higher costs.
- 12.4 The Chair noted the fluctuation seen in this year in Adult Social Services and commended staff for their work. Extra money received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund had been a success and would help bring extra people into Norwich and boost the county's economy.
- 12.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**
1. To agree and to recommend to the Council the increase of £6.259m to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements funded mostly from various external sources as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 1.4 and 4.2 of the report as follows:
 - £0.189m increase in External Funding for various Highways schemes
 - £0.26m allocation of NCC Capital Receipts to support the compulsory purchase of land for County Farms
 - (£0.160m) reduction in External funding for various Children's Services Schools schemes to reflect actual expenditure in projects nearing completion
 - £1.579m grant funding for 24-25 received from the Department of Education for the expansion of Childcare provision in the County
 - £0.330m external funding the Corporate Property scheme at Chapel Road
 - £0.074m for the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services (NFRS) Vehicle Replacement Programme
 - £0.053m for the LMS Schools Based capital maintenance programme
 - £0.460m additional S106 developer contribution to Dereham, Docking, Hopton and Holt
 - £0.105m additional external funding from Department of Transport and S106 for various Highways maintenance schemes
 - £0.260m additional DfT grant allocated to the Long Stratton Bypass
 - £0.195m additional contribution from Revenue and Reserves for the Hethel Improvement Commission
 - £2.821m funding received from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to offset the inflationary cost pressures on the Castle Keep Museum project
 - £0.018m contribution from Revenue and Reserves to fund the purchase of a new car for the ASC Road Safety Scheme
 - (£0.075m) other minor adjustments to capital schemes.
 2. To agree and to recommend to Council the approval the following amendments to the P10 Capital Programme for the following schemes as set out in Capital Appendix 3 paragraph 4.3 of the report as follows:

- £4.51m additional funding from the Department of Transport from the Road Resurfacing Fund for local highways maintenance in 2023-24 and again in 2024-25 alongside additional funding for the next 10 years as set out in Appendix 3 paragraph 4.3 of the report.
3. To note the revised current and future 2023-28 capital programme as set out in Appendix 3 of the report including the significant reprofiling undertaken to date.
 4. To delegate to the Director of Procurement and the Director of Property to undertake the necessary procurement and tender processes to deliver this revised capital programme in accordance with the delegated authority awarded on 6 March 2023 in the Authority to enact Capital Programme paper - Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com).
 5. To agree the period 8 general fund revenue forecast of a balanced budget, noting also that Executive Directors will take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
 6. To agree the period 8 forecast of 97% savings delivery in 2023-24, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
 7. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2024 of £25.410m.

12.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 4 of the report

12.7 **Alternative Options**

To deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in this report. In terms of financing the proposed capital expenditure, no further grant or revenue funding has been identified to fund the expenditure, apart from the funding noted in Appendix 3.

13. **2024-25 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-28**

- 13.1.1 Cabinet received the report and appended papers which set out an overview of the Council's strategic and financial planning for 2024-25 to 2027-28 and detailed information to support Cabinet's Revenue Budget and council tax recommendations to the County Council, including the Director of Strategic Finance (Section 151 Officer's) statutory assessment of the robustness of the overall budget.
- 13.1.2 The Vice Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:
 - Last week's announcement of additional funding for local authorities by Government was the result of a successful campaign by Norfolk County Council, MPs and by the County Council Network. The extra funding would help protect frontline services, but difficult decisions were still needed when setting the budget for 2024-25 and in the medium term.
 - Service reductions would be necessary in some areas to balance the books and Norfolk County Council would need to propose a maximum council tax increase.
 - At £46m the budget gap in the medium term financial strategy was one of the largest the council had to bridge, second to the one for this year. This could be achieved but had left the council with fewer means to achieve this in the upcoming year, 2024-25. Savings of £26m were presented to Cabinet in October 2023 and a further £20m had to be found. Interest rates and better than expected tax from district councils meant that a

- modest list of savings was needed to produce a balanced budget.
- The council was facing a further increase in the in year budget for Adult Social Services and Children's Services social care forecast at around £30m. the in-year position was mostly mitigated in Adult Social Services and partly mitigated in Children's Services by use of reserves, but these measures would not be available in future years.
 - The original provisional settlement from Government was disappointing as it didn't address systemic pressures in Adult Social Services and Children's Services, but unexpected cuts to the service grant meant a £4.3m reduction in anticipated funding. Core spending power was expected to increase by 6.8 but, this was predicated on charging a full 4.99% increase in council tax. Council tax represented 56% of the council's assumed core spending power.
 - In addition to unfunded costs such as increase in National Living Wage increase, this meant £33m additional savings needed to be found after the provisional settlement announcement made on the 18 December 2023.
 - After the announcement of additional funding made on 24 January 2024 the additional £500m social care funding would be given to local authorities using the social care grant formula, and this was mainly for use in Children's Services but could also be used for Adult Social Services
 - This would help ease pressure such as increasing demand and cost of social care and home to school transport but was for one year only.
 - The Secretary of State announced an additional £15m for the Rural Services Delivery Grant. The national allocation was known but the final level of funding was unknown and the final settlement would be given by the 8 February 2024.
 - Royal Services Delivery Grant was more predictable and £600,000 was expected, targeted towards Community and Environmental Services. The department was currently discussing areas in most risk of sustainability and deliverability.
 - It was important to ensure savings were recurrent and ongoing.
 - There would be a requirement to increase the adult and general precept of council tax by the maximum available; this would raise £24.926m.
 - The Secretary of State's statement meant that the position was better than stated in the short term and the Council would spend more in Norfolk than last year. Since last February's budget, changes had been seen in the economy and public finance which had increased costs to the Council. The budget faced difficult decisions.
 - All upper tier authorities faced difficult financial pressures from inflation, increased demand and growth in national living wage. Despite the funding from the final settlement this would result in a tight financial situation for local government.
 - Economic and inflationary pressures were £9m higher than forecast. The impact of the national living wage had the highest impact on Children's Services and Adult Social Services.
 - £25m provision had been set to allow for demographic changes, but changes to home to school transport and changes in Adult Social Services have increased above this. Table 4 showed the result of these increases.
 - The net budget showed resident what council tax was spent on and the gross budget showed what the council spent as a whole.
 - 14 authorities have issued bankruptcy notices since 2018 and some had

applied for emergency assistance. Norfolk, after using 70% of the net budget on Adult Social Services were still providing a huge range of non-statutory services. These were services such as subsidised bus services, footpaths, environmental work, museums and libraries. Despite one year funding allocations, the council took a long-term view of funding allocations and did not shy away from hard decisions and did not invest in commercial projects.

- In addition to funding, the Secretary of State said councils should publish productivity plans. Connecting communities was key to Adult Social Services' transformation plan and was on course to deliver £20m savings per year. Children's Services had worked on transformations based on practices proven to work elsewhere and most savings were therefore shown via transformation programmes. Making these efficiency programmes available for all residents to examine was good for accountability.
- After the report to Cabinet in October there were no items for consultation other than a consultation on the level of council tax; appendix 5 showed the results of the consultation on council tax. Less than 50% agreed with a decision to raise general tax, over 50% agreed with the decision to increase the social care precept
- A consultation on the items shown in para 10.6 of the report would start soon, including savings around recycling centres. The consultation would go ahead despite promised funding as there was no detail on the funding allocation which will come available after publication of the final settlement.
- Adult Social Services strategy Promoting Independence was the second stage of the strategy and had clear ambitions shown in the report. These were to deliver Adult Social Services in a sustainable way and in a way which would put prevention at the heart. The Financial strategy was on development of promoting development and demand management.
- Additional funding of demand led Children's Services meant it had increased as a percentage of net budget. The increase seen in the home to school meant that an increase had been built into the cost base going forward.
- In a meeting with a minister, the Vice Chair heard that an advisory board would be set up to reform the 1948 Education Act and review the 1914 Care Act. The Local Government Association and County Council Network analysis showed that by 2024-25 there would be an additional £15bn cost of delivering council services since 2021-22.
- Community and Environmental Services covered a huge range of services from libraries, museums, road maintenance, fire response and waste disposal. The services were used by most residents and visitors every day. Through this department, Norfolk was focused on as a place; a key milestone was reached last year when Norfolk agreed to proceed with a level 3 County Deal which included a Norfolk Investment Fund of £600m over 30 years to support economic growth which would be drawn down from September 2024. £15m of additional projects had been agreed for delivery across the County.
- The business transformation and smarter working team were key to the drive to reshape the organisation during transformation using lessons learned to de-silo where possible. Delivering change in an organisation as large as Norfolk County Council was difficult but it was important to take service users, residents and staff with us.
- Table 14 on the report set out the starting £46m gap, further £31m

legislative requirements and £27m demographic pressures. The savings necessary had been made helped partly by a better Government settlement, which required a 4.99% increase in council tax. the Vice Chair believed that in February 2024, a robust budget could be presented to full council which helped the council prepare for the future council landscape.

- Can present a robust budget to full council which prepares us for
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy primary objective was to show a balanced position over 4 years; further savings needed to be identified and a balanced budget for 24-25 was proposed with gaps remaining in future years. Next year, 25-26 had a slightly lower gap at £43m. Sustainable savings were therefore important to make rather than one-offs.
- Ongoing reforms were expected in the coming financial year due to cultural shifts in practice; Adult Social Services preventative measures to reduce costs were not statutory but would be important if services could be maintained.
- Most council services were delivered through partners, third parties and wholly owned subsidiaries Norse. Demographics meant demand continued to rise and Cabinet would review a procurement strategy with more challenge on reprocurement and better use of technology.
- Longer term certainty was important for robust decision making. The Local Government financial settlement continued to provide one-year settlements and one-off grants making this difficult.
- Cabinet would continue to advocate for Norfolk, press for reforms from Government and the next stage of devolution.

13.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport was pleased that the letter sent by the 44 MPs had resulted in additional Government funding. Norfolk County Council was providing for its citizens in a cost-effective way with an ambition to grow Norfolk's Economy. He felt the Medium-Term Financial Strategy was positive, but more work was needed to encourage Government to give local authorities more funding.

13.3 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste was impressed by the work shown by the Vice Chair and officers to come up with an effective balanced budget. Proposed changes to opening times of recycling centres would go to consultation. Where changes had been made in other parts of the country there had been no impact on fly tipping levels. There was also a proposal to introduce a booking system at recycling centres; a Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) survey found over 40% of all local authorities had a booking system in place. At centres where a survey was carried out there was an overall positive response to the booking system.

13.4 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships thanked the Vice Chair and officers who had developed the budget.

13.5 The Chair also thanked the Vice Chair for his work alongside Officers who had worked on this budget. Council was working smarter and using technology and this work would continue through transformation. The Chair thanked MPs and the County Council Network for the lobbying they did through central government to achieve the additional funding announced on the 19 January. Not all councils were equal, as shown by those who had to declare a section 114. Norfolk County Council would do its very best for the people of Norfolk and go to consultation when needed. There would need to be difficult decisions.

- 13.6 The Vice Chair thanked finance officers for their work and the support from all spending departments for developing a balanced budget.
- 13.7 the Vice Chair put forward an amendment to recommendation 1a to encompass the changes from the additional funding announcement from Government, as shown in italic:
- a) that any additional resources which become available should be used to delay the use of one-off funding from reserves from 2024-25 to 2025-26, or to establish a budget contingency *to add further growth items and consider the scope to remove or defer savings, or*
- 13.8 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**
- 1) To note the statements regarding the uncertain planning environment, robustness of budget estimates, assumptions and risks relating to the 2024-25 budget, and authorise the Director of Strategic Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, to make any changes required to reflect Final Local Government Finance Settlement information (if available), or changes in council tax and business rates forecasts from District Councils, in order to maintain a balanced budget position for presentation to Full Council. In recognition of the budget gap forecast for 2025-26 and to enable a final balanced Budget position to be recommended to County Council, Cabinet agreed the following principles:
 - a) that any additional resources which become available should be used to delay the use of one-off funding from reserves from 2024-25 to 2025-26, or to establish a budget contingency, to add further growth items and consider the scope to remove or defer savings, or
 - b) that any income shortfall should be addressed from the Corporate Business Risk Reserve (to the extent possible). Where the Corporate Business Risk Reserve is insufficient, to note that the ultimate source of funding to balance the Budget will be the General Fund.
 - 2) To note that a number of further savings have been developed to support the preparation of a balanced budget since the initial list of proposals considered by Cabinet in October 2023, some of which may require consultation or equality impact assessment that will be undertaken as soon as possible.
Cabinet:
 - a) agreed that the proposals subject to further consultation will be brought back to Cabinet for final decision making during 2024-25;
 - b) agreed that in the event that proposals cannot be implemented in 2024-25, either following consultation and equality impact assessment, or as a result of subsequent member decision making, the following approach would be adopted:
 - i) One-off options would be sought to deliver a balanced Budget.
 - ii) In order to achieve a robust and sustainable financial position, service departments would be asked to identify alternative recurrent proposals to replace the one-off measures in-year; and
 - iii) In the event that recurrent 2024-25 proposals cannot be found, service departments will be asked to bring forward ongoing replacement savings at the same level for 2025-26 and proposals that enable the one-off resources used in 2024-25 to be replenished.
 - 3) To note the findings of public consultation as set out in Section 14 Appendix 1 of the report, and in full in Appendix 5 of the report, and considered these

- when recommending the budget changes required to deliver a balanced budget as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 4) To note the findings of equality impact assessments, as set out in Appendix 6 to the report, and in doing so, noted the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - 5) To note that the Council has responded to the consultation undertaken on the Provisional Local Government Settlement for 2024-25 as detailed in Section 3 of Appendix 1 of the report.
 - 6) To note that the Council will continue to operate a Business Rates Pool for 2024-25 in partnership with Norfolk District Councils on the same terms as the existing 2023-24 Pool and as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 1 of the report and approve the use of 2023-24 Pool funds as set out.
 - 7) To agree to recommend to County Council:
 - a) The level of risk and budget assumptions set out in the Robustness of Estimates report (Appendix 4 of the report), which underpin the revenue and capital budget decisions and planning for 2024-28.
 - b) The general principle of seeking to increase general fund balances as part of closing the 2023-24 accounts and that in 2024-25 any further additional resources which become available during the year should be added to the general fund balance wherever possible.
 - c) The findings of public consultation (Appendix 5 of the report), which should be considered when agreeing the 2024-25 Budget (Appendix 1 of the report).
 - d) To note the advice of the Director of Strategic Finance (Section 151 Officer), in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report, on the financial impact of an increase in council tax and the sustainability of the Council's medium term position.
 - e) That the Council's 2024-25 Budget will include a general council tax increase of 2.99% and a 2.00% increase in the Adult Social Care precept, an overall increase of 4.99% (shown in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report), as recommended by the Director of Strategic Finance, and resulting in an increased overall County Council Net Revenue Budget of £527.748m for 2024-25, including budget increases of £116.024m, budget savings of £45.022m, and funding changes of £36.961m as set out in Table 15 of Appendix 1 of the report, and the actions required to deliver the proposed savings, subject to any changes required in line with recommendation 1 above to enable a balanced budget to be proposed. This would result in a budget gap of £45.927m to be addressed for 2025-26, and £132.428m over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
 - f) The budget proposals set out for 2025-26 to 2027-28, including authorising Executive Directors to take the action required to deliver budget savings for 2025-26 to 2027-28 as appropriate.
 - g) With regard to the future years, that further plans to meet the remaining budget shortfalls in the period 2025-26 to 2027-28 are developed and brought back to Cabinet during 2024-25 as soon as possible and in line with the proposed timetable.

- h) Noting Government's assumptions that local authorities will raise the maximum council tax available to them, and that the final level of council tax for future years is subject to Member decisions annually (informed by any referendum principles defined by the Government), to confirm, or otherwise, the assumptions set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS Table 2 in Appendix 2 of the report) that the Council's budget planning for 2024-25 will include for planning purposes:
 - i) general council tax increases of 1.99% from 2025-26;
 - ii) Adult Social Care precept increases of 1.00% 2025-26 and 0.00% from 2026-27); and
 - iii) that if the referendum threshold were increased in the period 2025-26 to 2027-28, or any further discretion were offered to increase the Adult Social Care precept (or similar), the Section 151 Officer would recommend the Council take full advantage of any flexibility in view of the overall financial position.
- i) That the Director of Strategic Finance be authorised to transfer from the County Fund to the Salaries and General Accounts all sums necessary in respect of revenue and capital expenditure provided in the 2024-25 Budget, to make payments, to raise and repay loans, and to invest funds.
- j) To agree the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, including the two policy objectives to be achieved:
 - i) Revenue: To identify further funding or savings for 2025-26 to 2027-28 to produce a balanced budget in all years 2024-28 in accordance with the timetable set out in the Revenue Budget report (Section 4 Appendix 1 of the report).
 - ii) Capital: To continue to provide a framework for identifying and prioritising capital requirements and proposals to ensure that all capital investment is targeted at meeting the Council's priorities.
- k) The mitigating actions proposed in the equality impact assessments (Appendix 6 of the report).
- l) Note the planned reduction in non-schools earmarked and general reserves of 36.72% over five years, from £175.232m (March 2023) to £110.880m (March 2028) (Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report);
- m) Note the policy on reserves and provisions in Section 3 of Appendix 3 of the report;
- n) Agree, based on current planning assumptions and risk forecasts set out in Section 5 of Appendix 3 of the report:
 - i) for 2024-25, a minimum level of general balances of £26.660m, and
 - ii) a forecast minimum level for planning purposes of
 - 2025-26, £27.910m;
 - 2026-27, £29.160m; and
 - 2027-28, £30.410m.

as part of the consideration of the budget plans for 2024-28 and supporting these budget recommendations;

- o) Agree the use of non-school Earmarked Reserves, as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report.

13.9 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Please see section 4 of the report.

13.10 **Alternative Options**

Please see section 5 of the report.

14 Reports of the Cabinet Member and Executive Director Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting

- 14.1 Cabinet noted the delegated decisions which had been taken, as set out in the agenda.

The meeting ended at 11:49

Chair of Cabinet

Cabinet
29 January 2024
Public & Local Member Questions

	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question from Eleanor Laming</p> <p>Pharmacy services have a role in promoting health and addressing inequalities but are operating in an increasingly challenging environment. The growth in online pharmacy services and supply chains can exclude certain groups of residents. What is Norfolk County Council doing to support the ongoing provision of in person pharmacy services, particularly in rural areas?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question. As Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing I believe that easy access to pharmacy services is a key part of protecting our population and promoting good health. As you know, Norfolk County Council does not have responsibility for commissioning pharmacy services, this is done by the NHS via the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board (ICB).</p> <p>Public Health does however undertake a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) and this is published by the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). The PNA is reviewed quarterly and maps the provision of pharmacy services against the needs of Norfolk's population and is available to be used by the commissioners to help inform their decisions.</p> <p>Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) updated - Norfolk Insight</p>
6.2	<p>Question from Tom Lyons</p> <p>The uplift should be reviewed up on the basis that it does not adequately support the sustainability of the market. 4.3 highlights that the uplift does not meet all business models, realistically this uplift does not meet any sustainable model without reducing wages of those on the lowest incomes. This is not in a sector that can reduce staffing levels without further risk to quality, which is already at a low - 1.6.2. 5.1 applies an uplift of 7.5% in respect of pay, which is too low considering living wage increases and is flawed to apply the same level of uplifts to LD and OP given higher ratios in LD.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The work of the social care market and those that deliver care within it are a priority for the Council and we recognise the importance of this sector to both us as a local authority and to residents across Norfolk. We also acknowledge the significant challenges faced by individual providers due to the economic climate and ongoing workforce challenges and we need to balance this within the finances available to the Council to ensure we can provide all our statutory responsibilities. The recommendations for Cabinet today include increasing the budget by £23.2m to manage increases in fees, building on the £48m budget increase over the previous two years.</p> <p>As set out in the Cabinet paper and detailed within the Market Sustainability Plan, we will continue to push for higher wages for care workers in order to be competitive with other labour markets.</p>

	<p>Our assessment of the fee rates for Older adult care homes and domiciliary care provision (18+), is that the pay rate included within our current (23/24) usual fee and framework rates were set at levels above the National Living Wage (NLW). The % increase relating to the pay uplift (7.5%) would enable providers to still pay a rate that is above NLW.</p> <p>Regarding Learning Disability residential provision, we are currently undertaking a project focusing on re-developing the residential care market for working age adults and a request for data to support this review is due to be sent to Learning Disability (LD) Providers in February 2024. This review will include cost of care activity, and support the design of a strategy for the future of LD residential services for working age adults in Norfolk. We would encourage Providers to take part and help inform this key area of work. It is also important to note that we have prioritised use of the funding via the Market Sustainability Improvement Fund, on Working Age Adults</p> <p>Lastly, providers can contact the Council at any time to discuss any financial concerns.</p>
6.3	<p>Question from Nick Taylor</p> <p>Is any Cabinet member aware that, if they decide to cut Norfolk's Minimum Income Guarantee to the legally allowable minimum, it will mean that the most vulnerable people in Norfolk, some of whom are already in despair and debt, will have 10% of their income taken away by the council in care charges?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question. This is certainly not a decision that the Council will take lightly, but we do need to consider this as part of managing our finances to ensure that we are in position to meet our statutory duties for all residents of Norfolk not just this year, but into the future. We know that there will be continued financial constraints, and the Council needs to manage the financial challenges from growing demand, greater complexity of need and higher costs brought about by both inflation and the increase in the National Living Wage. We are proposing to start a consultation on the Adult Social Care Charging Policy including the level of the Minimum Income Guarantee for non-residential care next month. We want to encourage as many people as possible to engage with and contribute to this consultation. We will of course be contacting people that will be directly affected, but we also welcome the support of wider groups and organisations to help share this message.</p>

Cabinet
29 January 2024
Public & Local Member Questions

	Member Question Time
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy I note with concern that the number of County Farm tenants has reduced over the past ten years from 130 in 2014 to just 95 in 2023. With the recent changes discussed at the NCC Corporate Select committee which sought views on amending the policy to make tenancies even larger, can the Cabinet Member confirm how many tenancies there are likely to be available in the future?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation The amount of County Farms land (let to tenants) has remained stable over the last ten years at over 16,000 acres. However as was also discussed at the Corporate Select Committee Cllr Jermy refers to, larger tenancies are required for an arable farm to operate economically, given fixed costs such as machinery like tractors and combine harvesters.</p> <p>Over the last ten years, County Farms has adapted the size of tenancies to ensure they provide tenants with economically viable tenancies along with a clear route of progression farms to help people into agriculture and to grow their businesses in a managed way. We will continue to work with our tenants to ensure holdings are viable and will be responsive to their needs, as well as the external environment throughout the life of the County Farms strategy.</p> <p>We will continue to make sure that holdings are viable agricultural businesses in the heart of our rural community – providing high quality, Norfolk food.</p>
7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale There are calls for a criminal investigation of the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust into the 8440 “unexpected” deaths between April 2019 - October 2022 all of whom were either under their care, or had been up to six months before they died. With 45 deaths a week in 2022-23.</p> <p>As this could be the largest deaths crisis in the history of the NHS could Cllr Bill Borrett, who is also chair of the Integrated Care Partnership, share with us what is being done about such horrifying statistics and to end the revolving door of CEO’s to the trust, who invariably claim they will turn the situation around.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. As you are aware Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (NSFT) is not run by Norfolk County Council or the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). The Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), which has County Councillors on it, is looking at this and had it on its Agenda back in September 2023. I hope that you do not mind but I have passed the Chairman of HOSC a copy of your question.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Paul Neale</p>

	<p>The Minimum Income Guarantee is just £187.13 per week, a meagre amount for those with various complex needs. The recipients of this allowance, and their carers, are really worried that the amount could be reduced in the ever increasing budget cuts review.</p> <p>To take away the anxiety for those who have a hard enough life already, can the Cabinet member for Finance reassure recipients that no cuts will be made in this year's budget.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question. I would refer you to my answers to the questions raised by Nick Taylor and Cllr Blundell in particular.</p> <p>Unfortunately, as the budget paper sets out, the financial position facing the Council now and for the medium term and specifically facing Adult Social Services means that we need to look at all aspects of our spending and our income. As a Council we need to ensure that we can deliver our statutory responsibilities to all residents of Norfolk, including continuing to the support the 25,000 people that we reach and continue to commission care for them or provide direct payments and for this reason we have proposed that we carry out full consultation about our charging policy.</p>
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Ben Price</p> <p>Across Norfolk there were 11,058 cases of waste being dumped illegally, compared to 10,761 in 2021-22. Norwich was 28th worst in the country for fly-tipping by population out of 309 local authority areas, with 36.7 recorded incidents per 1,000 people. What assessment has been made to understand how closing all of Norfolk's recycling centres on Wednesdays to save £200,000 a year <u>and introducing booking slots to get rid of waste to save a further annual sum of £200,000</u> will increase fly-tipping rates in Norwich, and is it really fair to put the costs of this saving onto the district council?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>Fly-tipping is criminal behaviour committed by a small minority of people who flout the law and blight Norfolk's countryside. The majority of fly-tipping is committed by rogue traders offering cheap waste clearance and over 80% of fly-tipped materials in Norfolk could have been taken to one of the County Council's Recycling Centres for free.</p> <p>Any increase in fly tipping is concerning, although it is noted that the question offers a narrow comparison between one year and another. A more robust assessment of Norfolk's fly-tipping data looking back over the last decade shows no evidence of upward or downward trends in Norfolk. Whether the County Council has been providing newer, bigger and better Recycling Centres or increasing the scope of charges for DIY waste, as it did in 2018, there has been no evidence of associated changes in fly-tipping behaviour.</p> <p>The real responsibility for fly-tipping belongs to the fly-tippers and elsewhere around the country where booking systems are commonplace, government studies have shown no link to incidents of fly tipping.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Ben Price</p> <p>To produce a balanced budget for the 24/25 cycle, the council needs to draw down nearly half of all reserves set aside for adults and children's services. With no firm commitment from the Government or the opposition to increase funding for these areas, we should</p>

expect the same scenario for 25/26, depleting all reserves. Can this council remain a going concern for the 26/27 cycle, while also meeting our statutory obligations?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance

Thank you for your question. I have been clear that we face difficult decisions in setting the 2024-25 Budget. As a Council, we are also acutely aware of the risks of over reliance on reserves to produce a balanced budget and this is something which we scrutinise closely each year to ensure that our financial plans are robust and sustainable. The judgement on the adequacy of reserves is provided in the 2024-25 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 report as part of the Statement on the Adequacy of Provisions and Reserves 2024-28 (Appendix 3 on pages 405 to 432). This sets out in detail the level of reserves and provisions held by the Council both centrally and within individual departments. Table 4 (page 419) lists the department level balances and demonstrates that, whilst we are anticipating a year on year reduction, these are not forecast to be depleted by 2026-27. As part of this statutory report, the Section 151 Officer advises that *“The proposed level of reserves and balances set out in this report is considered to provide a prudent and robust basis for the Revenue Budget 2024-25 and will ensure the Council has adequate financial reserves to manage the delivery of services and the proposed savings in the financial years covered by the associated Medium Term Financial Strategy.”*

Further, as part of the preparation of the Budget, the Director of Strategic Finance is required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to report on the robustness of the overall Budget, which includes taking a view of the medium-term position. This is described in Appendix 4 from page 433 of the Cabinet report. It should be noted that there remains a significant degree of uncertainty about the level of funding for Local Government from 2025-26 onwards. Indeed, on 24 January, we have seen that Government has listened to the concerns raised by the sector and confirmed a welcome and significant uplift in social care funding for 2024-25, which will be set out as part of the final Settlement in early February. This serves to highlight the potential for change in future year funding, which is certain to have a bearing on the County Council's overall financial position. The County Council continues to engage with Government, MPs and other stakeholders to campaign for adequate and sustainable funding for Norfolk to maintain delivery of vital services to residents, businesses and visitors. In this context, the Budget setting process each year seeks to take into account the wider environment in which the Council is operating in order to inform plans about reserve usage and the level of savings required. The Council has a strong track record of setting a robust and balanced Budget, and we will, as always, be monitoring closely during 2024-25 to ensure that this is achieved. On this basis I believe it is premature to speculate that we might exhaust our reserves in 2025-26 or indeed a future year, and I would therefore reject the suggestion that the Council is not a going concern.

7.4 Question from Cllr Catherine Rowett

According to the Council's 2022 glyphosate policy there are six options for how else to control or manage weeds on the highways and footways in preference to implementing glyphosate-based chemical treatments. Can the cabinet give an update for how many of these options are currently in use for county roads as routine ways of dealing with weeds, and how they are monitoring the effectiveness of their integrated weed management approach as a way of stopping the use of glyphosate, and how the results so far sit with the council's nature recovery and pollinator plans?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

The Council is committed to minimising the use of glyphosate to control the growth of weeds as detailed in the council's Glyphosate Policy. The policy also takes full account of the objectives and strategies set out in both the Council's Pollinator Strategy and Environment Policy.

In terms of highways, the use of glyphosate has been reduced by approximately 50%, as weed spraying has already reduced from 2 treatments to 1 treatment across the network.

The Council will review new methods of weed management as they become available to establish the viability of alternative weed control, although as the highway service require a fully mobile operation, other alternative methods such as thermal treatment or acidic chemical treatment have found to not be viable options.

It is also worth highlighting that the growth of weeds on highways verges is mainly controlled through the grass cutting programme across the network.

Supplementary question from Cllr Catherine Rowett

Bee-killing pesticides (neonicotinoids) have controversially been approved by the Conservative Government for use on sugar beet this year. The county council's Pollinator Action Plan, adopted this month, commits the council to work with others to do more to support pollinators. Does the Cabinet Member agree that the decision to allow neonicotinoids on sugar beet in Norfolk directly undermines the council's efforts under the Pollinator Action Plan?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Neonicotinoid insecticides are used in some pesticides to kill crop-harming insects. The use of most neonicotinoids was severely restricted in 2013 in the EU and UK due to their potential negative impact on bees and other pollinators. By 2020, all but one neonicotinoid was no longer approved for use. However, emergency authorisations are allowed to control pests on sugar beet. Whilst this pesticide is harmful to bees its use is restricted and only licenced by government.

7.5 Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn

Residents on Bull Close in Mancroft have been experiencing speeding and antisocial parking. One solution to this would be installation of chicanes to slow traffic, which could also provide valuable space for planting trees, as has been done on Alexandra Road in the Nelson division. Chicanes are a long-term solution that can improve quality of life for residents, but seem not to be being considered by the county council. Can the Cabinet Member tell me when the last time a chicane was installed in a residential street in Norwich?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Please discuss this in the first instance with your local Highway Engineer as this should be undertaken as part of the duties of a local Member.

Supplementary question from Cllr Jamie Osborn

From my experience as a ward councillor, there have been delays to obtaining feasibility studies for transport improvement projects. I was concerned to read Cllr Plant's response

	<p>to Cllr Price's question on 10 January stating that he does not know how many feasibility studies remain incomplete, with no overview of the delays. Will the Cabinet Member rationalise this process to ensure there is proper monitoring in place?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport As outlined in my response on 10 January, officers and councillors engage on a regular basis, both formally and informally, on a wide range of transport improvement proposals, some of which lead to further investigation and the production of feasibility studies. I believe this process to be effective without the requirement to increase workloads through the introduction of additional processes. The current processes enable hundreds of highway improvement measures to be installed across Norfolk every year.</p>
7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins Failures in HR systems have been at the forefront of the news cycle over the past fortnight due to the Horizon Scandal. Recently, this council has faced its own struggles with its HR system, MyOracle. Will the Cabinet Member commit to publishing a full report on the system's failings for means of openness and disclosure to staff members of this council?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance There was recent local media coverage that made reference to errors in pay for 78 members of staff and the story falsely equated this with the MyOracle system.</p> <p>The MyOracle system supports the delivery of finance, procurement, HR and payroll activities. Implementation of any software system on this scale creates transformational change which require changes to the way we work to achieve all the benefits a modern IT system brings with it. Our Corporate Select Committee was kept updated during implementation.</p> <p>Norfolk County Council is a complex organisation with a wide variety of roles and activities that require pay to be calculated in numerous ways. We have over 8000 employees and we also utilise myOracle to provide HR and payroll services to a number of other organisations. In total we pay over 18,000 workers and a total of £42 million each month. We recognise that as we embed the system and the necessary changes to how we work this can result in errors that in some instances have impacted on peoples pay. It is regrettable when anyone's pay is not correct, and we are sorry for the concern this caused any individual affected. We always look to correct any underpayments as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Norfolk County Council take all reasonable steps to ensure everyone's pay is correct first time, but it is not unusual for errors to occur in pay calculations for large organisations. Not least because they can arise because of multiple factors including human ones as was the case covered in the local media. Norfolk County Council had to manage such occurrences under our previous system too and the current error rate is lower than with that system. The implementation of myOracle has already brought us many benefits including manager and employee self-service in a number of areas that were not previously possible.</p> <p>We continue to work hard on improving the ease of use of the system for our managers and employees to help reduce errors further and provide additional benefits to colleagues and the organisation.</p>

7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Sharon Blundell</p> <p>One of this council's identified priorities when handling social care is to provide adequate support for people 'to live independently, avoid losing independence, and where possible gain it back.' With this in mind, what message does the Cabinet Member have for those who rely on the Adult Social Care service who will be affected by a reduction in the MIG and thus have their independence threatened?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>The Council's financial position – and the position of Adult Social Services – is set out clearly in the Cabinet papers today. On any one day in Norfolk, we are supporting in excess of 20,000 people and in order to continue to do the best we possibly can within the resources we have, we need to look at all aspects of our budget. This includes the contributions people make towards the cost of their care – and in doing this all councils consider government advice on the minimum income guarantee. We currently follow the legal minimum level for older people and we are above the legal minimum for people of working age. Through our engagement with some representatives, we do understand the impact of changes for people with disabilities. I have been in contact with the Charging Reference Group and hope to meet with them in the future.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Tim Adams</p> <p>Further budget proposals are due to go out to public consultation, including the controversial decision to reduce the Minimum Income Guarantee. What response from this consultation would it take for this administration to rethink its decision to reduce MIG and to ensure this consultation is not merely a formality?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question. Hearing from people as part of the consultation will be very important and the consultation options and approach are still under discussion, and we are engaging with others to help shape this to make sure that we can hear from as many people as possible. People's views will help shape the information that is provided to Cabinet, including the equality impact assessment. I would also refer you to my answers to the questions raised by Nick Taylor and Cllr Blundell.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp</p> <p>Council plans budget savings of £525,000 with "S2425CS005 Inclusion: More primary aged children with SEND travel independently with Travel Independence Travel Across Nation (TITAN) programme" and S2425CS006 Inclusion: Ongoing focus on Home to School Transport maximising travel independence".</p> <p>Council's plans to switch off 2% of streetlights are inconsistent with these aims. It is a safety risk to children of all abilities to wait at bus stops in the dark or walk to school in the dark in winter, a disincentive to reduce the £7.5 million the Council currently spends on Home-to-School Transport.</p> <p>Streetlights are where they are, for safety.</p> <p>Can Cabinet confirm NCC has abandoned plans to switch off streetlights?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p>

	<p>The council has some difficult challenges in balancing the budget for the coming financial year and the proposal for switching off a small proportion of the streetlighting asset is one way in which the council can both make a financial saving, a carbon saving, and reduce the amount of light pollution in the environment. In selecting the 2% of the asset, a number of factors will be taken into account including highway safety considerations, which includes pedestrian safety. A number of lights are also likely to be in locations where we would now no longer install street lighting on the network, as over time design standards and expectations change.</p> <p>Therefore, the budget proposal remains and subject to Cabinet approval, will be consulted on so a final decision can be made.</p>
7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Colleen Walker</p> <p>I asked the Leader at December's Council for the letter she wrote to the Secretary of State about coastal erosion after September's unanimous Council decision. She replied 'I don't have the letter in front of me but we'll see if we can actually find it....'. In fact she hadn't sent one and still hasn't. The December Council decision hasn't been actioned either. In a message to me subsequently she said the first letter wasn't sent because the Secretary of State had changed before it could be. Council was 26th September. Thérèse Coffey was responsible minister until 13th November. Why did the Leader mislead me, council and the people of Hemsby?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance</p> <p>I do not agree that I have misled anyone. When responding I was unsure of the status of the letter and was open about this to members and pledged to find out.</p> <p>I made personal contact with you to update you on this situation.</p> <p>This issue will be raised directly with Norfolk MPs as well as the Minister and Secretary of State on 31st January and I had preliminary discussions with Steve Barclay when he visited Norfolk on 22nd January.</p> <p>This administration continues to proactively engage on this issue.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton</p> <p>I've been told on three separate occasions that there is no demand for a carer parking permit scheme and that it will cost too much money. What surveys have been carried out to establish there is no demand, how will these findings be shared with councillors and how much has the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport calculated that such a scheme would cost?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>It is important to note that there are usually alternative arrangements to enable car parking near to client addresses. The majority of carers park legally in restricted areas using systems already in place to do this, including using visitors permits in residential parking areas.</p> <p>The existing parking agreements across the county already allow health / care workers to purchase daily permits to park in existing resident parking zones at a considerable discount. As such there are no current plans to develop a new scheme or costs available.</p>

7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones</p> <p>It is clear that any reduction in the value of the Minimum Income Guarantee will have a significantly detrimental impact on Norfolk's residents with disabilities and their families. Will the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care therefore scrap this proposal immediately and remove this recommendation from the budget papers?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question. I would refer you to my answers to the questions raised by Nick Taylor and Cllr Blundell in particular.</p> <p>As the budget paper sets out, the financial position facing the Council now and for the medium term and specifically facing Adult Social Services means that we need to look at all aspects of our spending and our income. As a Council we need to ensure that we can deliver our statutory responsibilities to all residents of Norfolk, including continuing to the support the 25,000 people that we reach and continue to commission care for them or provide direct payments.</p>

Cabinet

Item No: 8

Report Title: Director of Public Health Annual Report for Norfolk 2023: Smoking, tobacco control and vaping

Date of Meeting: 04 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Bill Borrett (Cabinet Member for Public Health & Wellbeing)

Responsible Director: Stuart Lines, Director of Public Health

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: Not applicable

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

The Director of Public Health is required to produce an independent annual report every year. Attached as Appendix 1 is the Director of Public Health's Annual Report for 2023 which focusses on smoking, tobacco control and vaping in Norfolk. The report explores the key figures and trends related to smoking and vaping in Norfolk, highlighting that smoking remains the single largest cause of preventable deaths and one of the leading contributors of health inequalities. Case studies highlight work that is already underway to protect Norfolk residents from the harms caused by tobacco and to make Norfolk smokefree.

The report shows how national policy on smoking and vaping has developed over the past 60 years and the local plans and strategies in place to reduce rates of smoking, to ensure effective tobacco control, and to control long term use and take up of vaping in Norfolk.

The wider impacts of smoking on Norfolk, including the cost of smoking to individuals, communities and services, are described in the report, and opportunities for improvement and the benefits that reduced smoking rates would generate for Norfolk are discussed.

The report draws attention to the plans and intentions from system partners in 2024 to intensify their efforts to tackle smoking and vaping and includes actions that can

be taken by Norfolk organisations and residents to enable Norfolk to become smokefree.

Recommendations:

1. Cabinet is recommended to receive the 2023 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health
2. Agree to publish the report.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Cabinet to receive the 2023 Annual report of the Director of Public Health for Norfolk.
- 1.2 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, one of the statutory requirements of the Director of Public Health is to produce an annual report about the health of the local population. This is an independent report which the local authority is required to publish. Previous reports can be accessed on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) website.
- 1.3 The Council has a statutory duty to protect the health of the local population. The Council's strategy *Better Together for Norfolk* and the corporate delivery plan 2023-24 commits to supporting people to make healthy choices such as providing stop smoking services. NCC's Public Health Strategic Plan, approved by Cabinet in November 2023, commits to delivering a new programme of tobacco control and stop smoking initiatives to help people to stop smoking and create smokefree environments. The Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2023 highlights the key issues for smoking, tobacco control and vaping as well as the actions already underway to address those issues for the people in Norfolk.
- 1.4 Norfolk's vision is for our residents and communities to no longer be affected by the harm caused by tobacco. This Annual Report for 2023 highlights why we must refocus our efforts towards reducing the number of people smoking in Norfolk and our ambition to achieve a smokefree county (defined nationally as less than 5% of the population smoking). The report also serves as a reminder on the use of e-cigarettes which can be a useful tool for quitting smoking but are not recommended for those who do not smoke already.
- 1.5 The report will also be taken to a future meeting of the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The key findings of the report are:

- Smoking, while decreasing over time, still causes too much harm and is a key cause of health inequalities in Norfolk. The good news is that there are steps we can all take to reduce the harm that smoking causes.
- Smoking is addictive and can be difficult to stop, but quitting smoking is one of the best things smokers can do to improve their health. Quitting is easier and more effective with support – free help to quit is available and increasing.
- Vaping is significantly less harmful than smoking and can be a useful tool to help smokers to quit. However, the advice is: if you don't smoke, don't vape.
- Organisations across Norfolk have prioritised smoking reduction and tobacco control and are working together to reduce smoking related harm to local residents. There are great opportunities for further action.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2023 seeks to remind the council, partners, local organisations and residents of the harms caused by tobacco in Norfolk and the actions that everyone can take to help Norfolk to become smokefree.
- 3.2 The Report seeks to refocus efforts across the county towards reducing the number of people smoking in Norfolk and our ambition to achieve a smokefree county (defined nationally as less than 5% of the population smoking).

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires Directors of Public Health to prepare an annual report on the health of their local population and for it to be published.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 There are no other options presented as it is a statutory duty of the Director of Public Health to prepare an Annual Public Health Report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 All Public Health Services are delivered within the budget of the Public Health Grant and other grant funding that the Council is allocated by the Government.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** There are no staffing implications.

7.2 Property: There are no property implications.

7.3 IT: There are no IT implications.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

There are no human rights implications.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):

The Annual Public Health Report provides evidence that population health needs are assessed and considered and utilises information produced in our local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None as no new data processed.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

There are no health and safety implications.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

There are no sustainability implications.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

None

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

There are no risk implications.

10. Select Committee Comments

None, report not taken to select committee.

11. Recommendations

1. Cabinet is recommended to receive the 2023 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health
2. Agree to publish the report.

12. Background Papers

12.1 Background documents are referenced throughout the Annual Public Health report, with direct web links.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:


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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

A photograph of a man and three children playing soccer on a grassy field. The man, in the center, is smiling and holding a soccer ball. He is wearing a blue jacket over a grey sweater. To his left, a young boy in a blue hoodie is reaching out. In front of him, a younger child in a light grey shirt is also reaching out. To his right, a girl in a red hoodie is smiling. The background shows a green field and trees. A large green circular graphic is on the right side of the page.

Director of Public Health annual report 2023

Smoking, tobacco control and vaping



Norfolk County Council
Public Health

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Foreword



Bill Borrett

Cabinet Member for
Public Health and Wellbeing

I am delighted to introduce the Director of Public Health's Annual Report. This year the report focuses on smoking and vaping in Norfolk.

Smoking remains one of the biggest contributors to preventable ill health and health inequalities. It kills an estimated 1,240 people in Norfolk every year and accounts for nearly 6,000 years of life lost annually.

Three in four smokers wish they had never started, and more than half would like to quit.¹ Quitting smoking is quite simply one of the best and simplest things anyone can do to improve their health. The benefits start almost immediately and last a lifetime. We know just how hard it can be to quit, which is why we offer as much support as possible.

E-cigarettes can be a useful tool for those trying to quit smoking – experts advise that vaping is less harmful than smoking.² However, it's important to stress that vaping is not recommended for people who don't already smoke and should not be promoted to children and young people.

This report highlights many positive examples of local initiatives, and I would like to thank everyone who is working hard to help reduce the harm caused by tobacco and nicotine in Norfolk.

¹ [Public Health England Better Health – Stoptober 2021: Opinion online survey summary](#)

² Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update summary – [GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Introduction



Stuart Lines

Director of Public Health

I am very pleased to present my first independent annual report as the Director of Public Health for Norfolk. This year's report is focussed on smoking, vaping and tobacco control. Smoking remains the single largest cause of preventable deaths and one of the largest contributors to health inequalities.

Smoking impacts on many facets of an individual's life. As well as dying earlier than non-smokers, smokers also suffer from poorer health. Many of the conditions caused by smoking are long term illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and respiratory disease. Breathing in second-hand smoke also has harmful impacts on health for babies, children and adults.

In Norfolk around 44,900 children live in households with adults who smoke. As well as affecting the child's health, this increases their chances of becoming smokers themselves – two thirds of adult smokers will have started smoking before they have reached the age of 18. The costs associated with smoking are substantial and estimated in Norfolk to be in the region of £872 million each year, including costs of health care, social care, lost productivity, and house fires.

It can take 30 or more attempts before a smoker successfully quits, although getting support can help significantly. This indicates the addictive nature of smoking and the grip that tobacco has on people.

For all these reasons, tobacco remains a key public health priority, and some excellent case studies from across Norfolk highlight some of the ways we're working together on this issue. These include not only helping people to quit smoking, but also what's called 'tobacco control' – protecting people from harm such as clamping down on underage or illegal sales to help prevent take up in the first place.

Over the past decades a great deal has already been done to reduce the rates and acceptability of smoking. In 1974, nearly half the country's population were smokers – this is down to less than 1 in 7 people today.

So why focus on smoking when so much has already been achieved?

Smoking rates are still too high in Norfolk if we are to achieve a smokefree generation by 2030. In addition, smoking rates vary within our local population. Some communities and groups which are already more deprived or marginalised have higher smoking levels. This increases inequalities in health and leads to poorer health for some.

This report therefore aims to refocus our efforts on reducing the number of people smoking in Norfolk and on our ambition for a smokefree county where our residents and communities are no longer affected by the harm caused by tobacco. It also serves as a reminder on the use of e-cigarettes: these can be a useful tool for quitting smoking but are not recommended for anyone who doesn't already smoke, including children. In this report, we look at the data on vaping and some of the key messages on the use of e-cigarettes.

Finally, if you'd like to delve further into the detail, you can find more information in our tobacco needs assessment – you'll find the link at the end of the report.

Some definitions

The NHS explains e-cigarettes and vaping as follows:³

An e-cigarette is a device that allows you to inhale nicotine in a vapour rather than smoke. E-cigarettes do not burn tobacco and do not produce tar or carbon monoxide, two of the most damaging elements in tobacco smoke.

They work by heating a liquid (called an e-liquid) that typically contains nicotine, propylene glycol, vegetable glycerine, and flavourings.

Using an e-cigarette is known as vaping.

E-cigarettes can also be referred to as vapes. Smoking refers to using tobacco cigarettes, pipes, cigars etc.

Prevalence means the proportion of a group or population that has a particular condition or engages in a specific behaviour – for example, the number of people who smoke or vape at a particular time.

Deprivation is where people don't have the conditions that are usually considered necessary for a pleasant life, for example sufficient income, employment, education, health, living environments, and low levels of crime and few barriers to housing and services.

The black line with a bar at each end in some of the charts in this report shows what's called a **95% confidence interval**. It often looks like a shorter or longer **I** or **H**. This is a statistical measure that shows how 'confident' we are that the figure used is accurate, for example when a survey of a certain number of people is used to estimate figures for the whole population. The confidence interval shows the range in which the real value is likely to lie.

³ Using e-cigarettes to stop smoking – [NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Section 1

Key figures and trends

Norfolk has higher life expectancy than the national average for both males and females, and Norfolk has lower death rates than the national average. However, there are some ways in which health and wellbeing in Norfolk could be improved, such as reducing smoking rates.

This section shows some of the key figures and trends related to smoking and vaping in Norfolk.

Key messages

- Smoking poses the single greatest risk for early deaths in Norfolk
- Smoking in pregnancy can have significant effects on the baby – and the rates of smoking in pregnancy in Norfolk are above average
- Tobacco is the third biggest risk factor for ill health
- Around 13% of adults in Norfolk smoke – around 99,300 people
- Stop smoking services and Ready to Change can help people to quit
- Some groups smoke more than others and there are strong links with socioeconomic status
- Quitting smoking can reduce negative health impacts – sometimes quite quickly
- Around 44,900 children in Norfolk live in smoking households
- Vaping is much less harmful than smoking and can help people quit
- E-cigarette use is increasing, especially in the 16-24 year olds. It is also increasing in children and young people.

How does smoking affect health?

Deaths

Smoking poses the single greatest risk for early deaths in Norfolk – more than other issues like high blood pressure, obesity, alcohol or air pollution. Tobacco contributes to early deaths from diseases like cancer, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease.

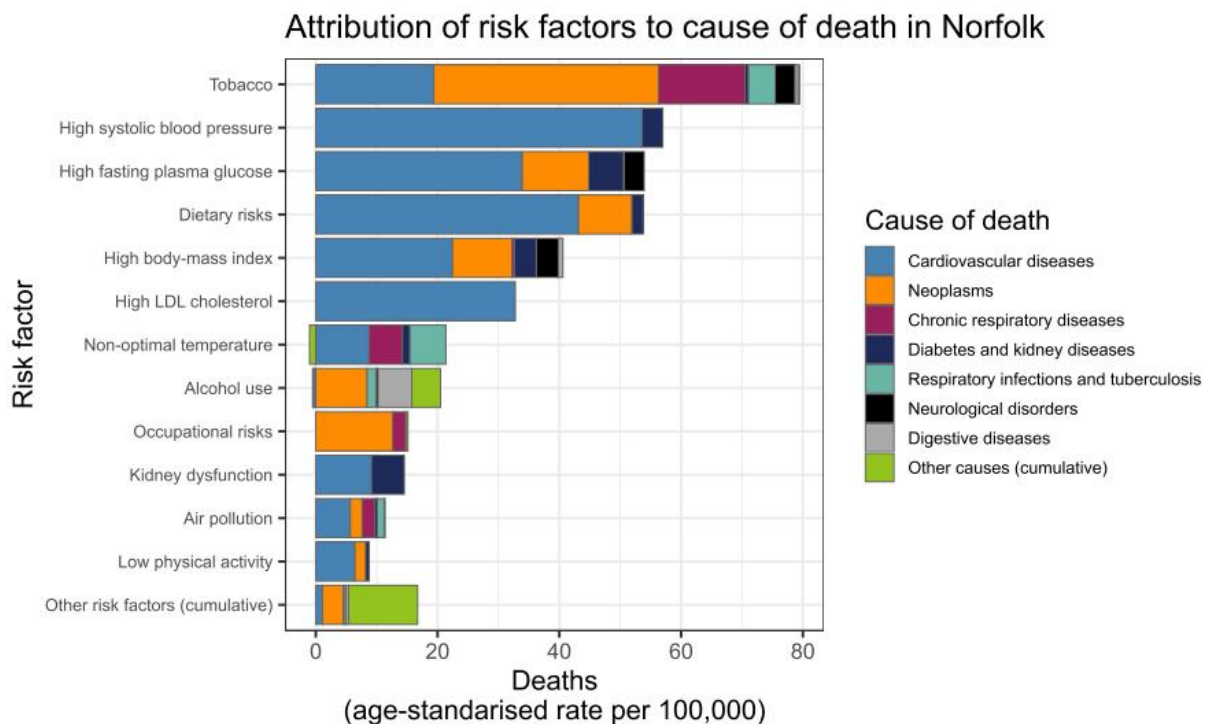


Figure 1: Attribution of risk factors to causes of death in Norfolk, 2019. Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Used with permission. All rights reserved. For more information visit: [Health Data](#)

Fortunately, deaths due to smoking in Norfolk have decreased over recent years and are below the England average.

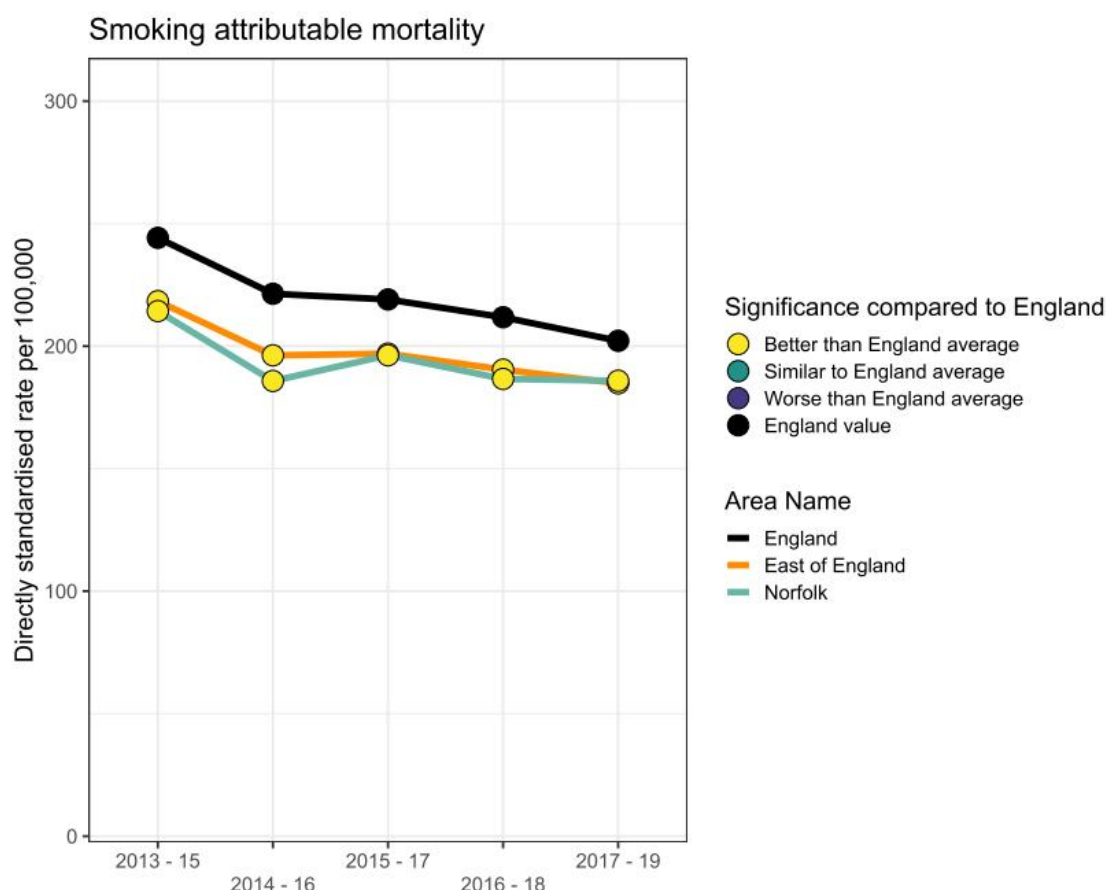


Figure 2: Smoking attributable mortality over time. Source: Office of Health Improvement and Disparities using mortality data from the Office of National Statistics mortality data; Office for National Statistics (ONS) – mid-year population estimates; Smoking prevalence data from Annual Population Survey; and relative risks from the Royal College of Physician's Report 'Hiding in Plain Sight'.

Lung cancer

Smoking is a leading cause or contributor of many cancers, including lung cancer. Lung cancer is one of the most common cancers and has a low survival rate compared to other types of cancer like colon, breast, and prostate cancers. The number of lung cancer cases in Norfolk has remained consistent and has been lower than the England average over the last decade.⁴

⁴ Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. Public Health Profiles: Lung cancer registrations 2017-19 directly standardised rate – per 100,000. [Accessed 05/02/2024] fingertips.phe.org.uk
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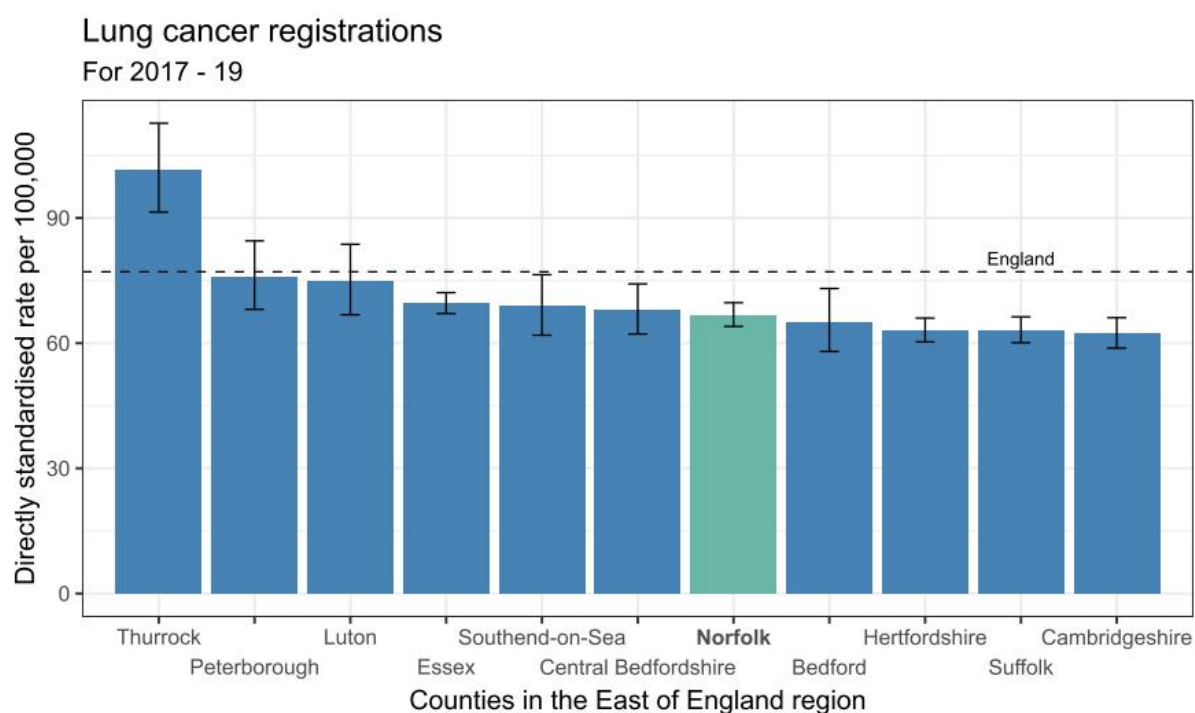


Figure 3: Lung cancer registrations for East of England counties, 2017 to 2019. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

Impact of smoking in pregnancy – on both the mother and the child

Smoking during pregnancy can have an impact on both mothers and their babies. It can increase the risk of problems in pregnancy, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight.⁵ In 2021, 492 babies in Norfolk were born at a low birth weight. It has been estimated that between 10% and 27% of cases of low birth weight are due to mothers smoking,⁶ suggesting that between 50 and 130 babies in Norfolk were born with low birth weight due to smoking.

Norfolk has consistently had higher rates of smoking during pregnancy than the England average. In 2022/23, there were around 850 mothers in Norfolk who were recorded as smoking at the time of delivery, around 1 in 9. Fortunately, that figure has been declining, following the overall national trend – but Norfolk's rates are still higher than both the England and regional averages.

⁵ Stop smoking in pregnancy – [NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

⁶ [Public Health Wales technical report, 2014: Low Birth Weight – technical paper v1.pdf](#) (wales.nhs.uk)

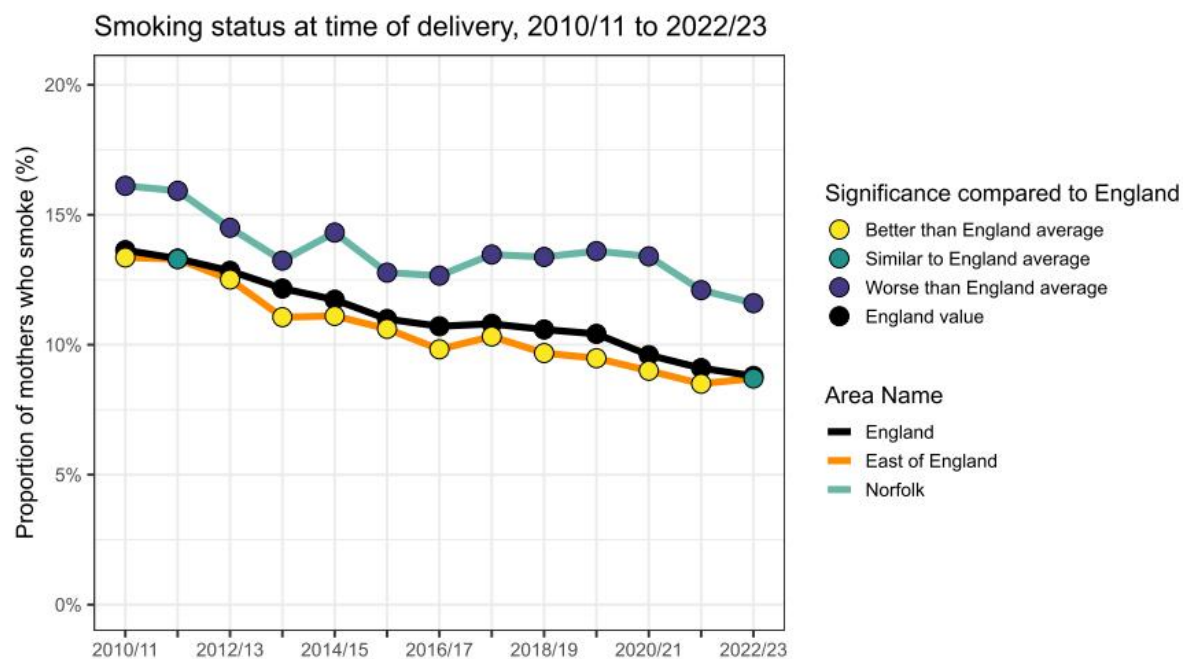


Figure 4: Smoking Status at Time of Delivery (SATOD) over time. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities using NHS digital data.

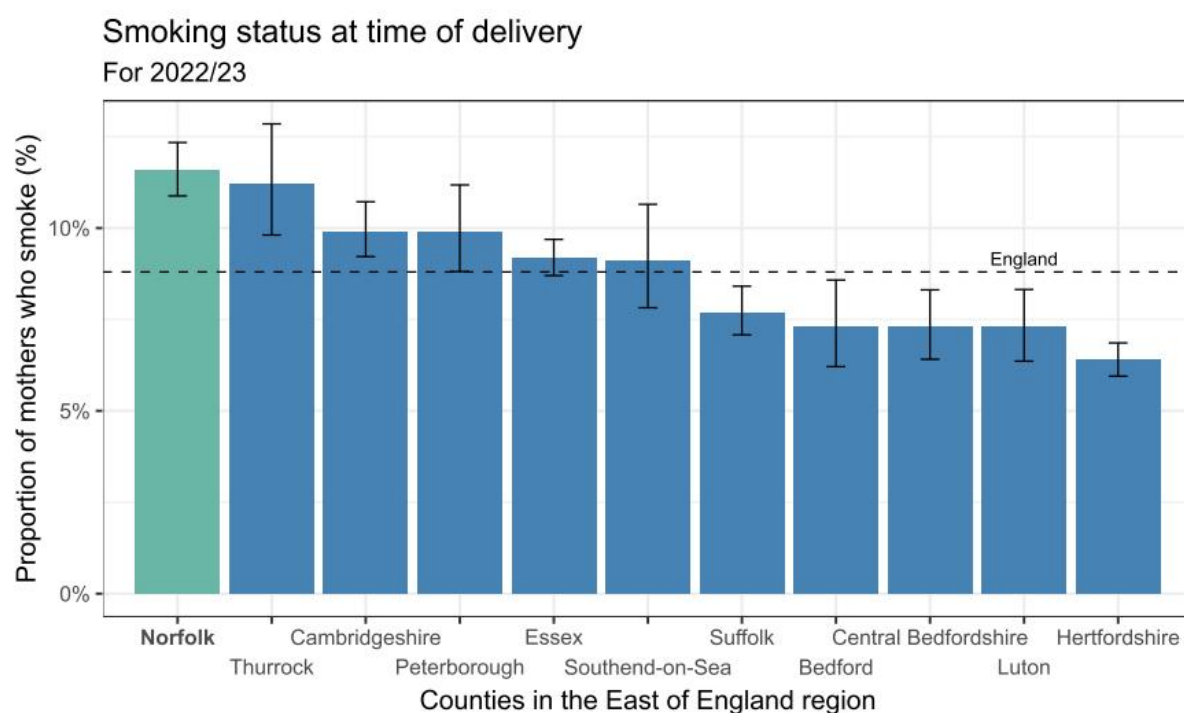


Figure 5: Smoking Status at Time of Delivery (SATOD) across the East of England counties, 2022/23. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities using NHS digital data.



Case Study

Incentives to stop smoking during pregnancy

In an effort to tackle the relatively high rates of smoking in pregnant women in Norfolk, a 12-month incentive programme was launched in May 2023. This involves collaboration between the Local Maternity and Neonatal System, the James Paget University Hospital and Smokefree Norfolk (the stop smoking service that Norfolk County Council funds).

As part of the programme, verified pregnant smokers who actively participate receive 'Love2Shop' vouchers worth a total of £250. The vouchers are given to the women when they set a quit date and at various points during their pregnancy, through to two weeks after they have given birth. Members of the programme can also nominate a support buddy who is given a £50 voucher for helping the pregnant woman to quit.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends supporting pregnant women to quit smoking by offering incentives at different stages of pregnancy. There is strong evidence to support this, as women who receive incentives are more than twice as likely to quit successfully. Early results from the programme have shown an increase in the number of quit dates set and a higher level of engagement with Smokefree Norfolk.

The insights gained from this initial scheme will inform the implementation of a countywide programme in summer 2024.

Long term conditions

Tobacco use is the third largest risk factor for illness.⁷ It can be a contributing cause of diabetes, kidney disease, chronic respiratory conditions, cardiovascular conditions such as heart disease and stroke, and musculoskeletal conditions. It is also a risk factor for dementia.

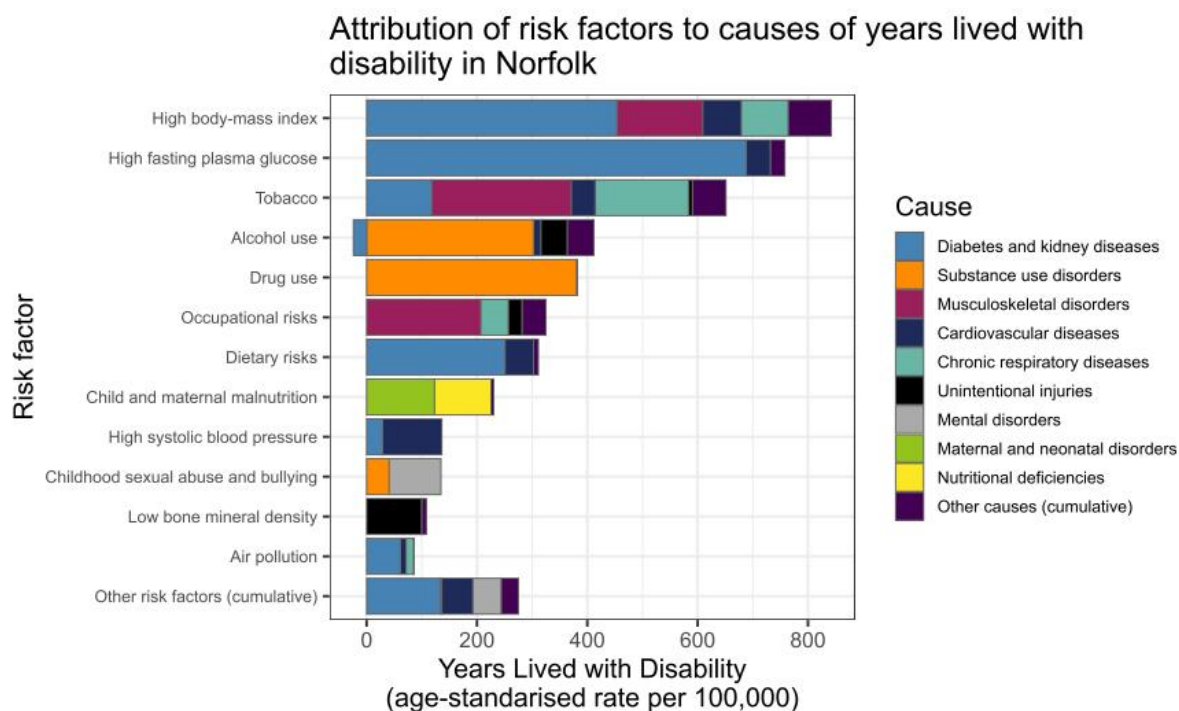


Figure 6: Attribution of risk factors to causes of years lived with disability in Norfolk, 2019.

Source: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

For more information visit: [Health Data](#)

Long term conditions are illnesses that can be controlled and managed but not cured. People who smoke are at greater risk of developing a long term condition and spending more years in later life in poorer health.

For example, smoking is the biggest preventable risk factor of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). In 2019/20, Norfolk had 2,240 emergency hospital admissions for COPD,⁸ many of which could have been avoided if smoking rates had been lower over recent decades. While Norfolk has had lower than average rates of emergency admissions for COPD, this has been increasing over the last decade in contrast to the national trend.

⁷ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. Used with permission. All rights reserved. For more information visit: [Health Data](#)

⁸ Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. Local Tobacco Control Profiles: Emergency hospital admissions for COPD (35+) 2019/20 directly standardised rate - per 100,000. [Accessed 05/02/2024] fingertips.phe.org.uk © Crown copyright 2024

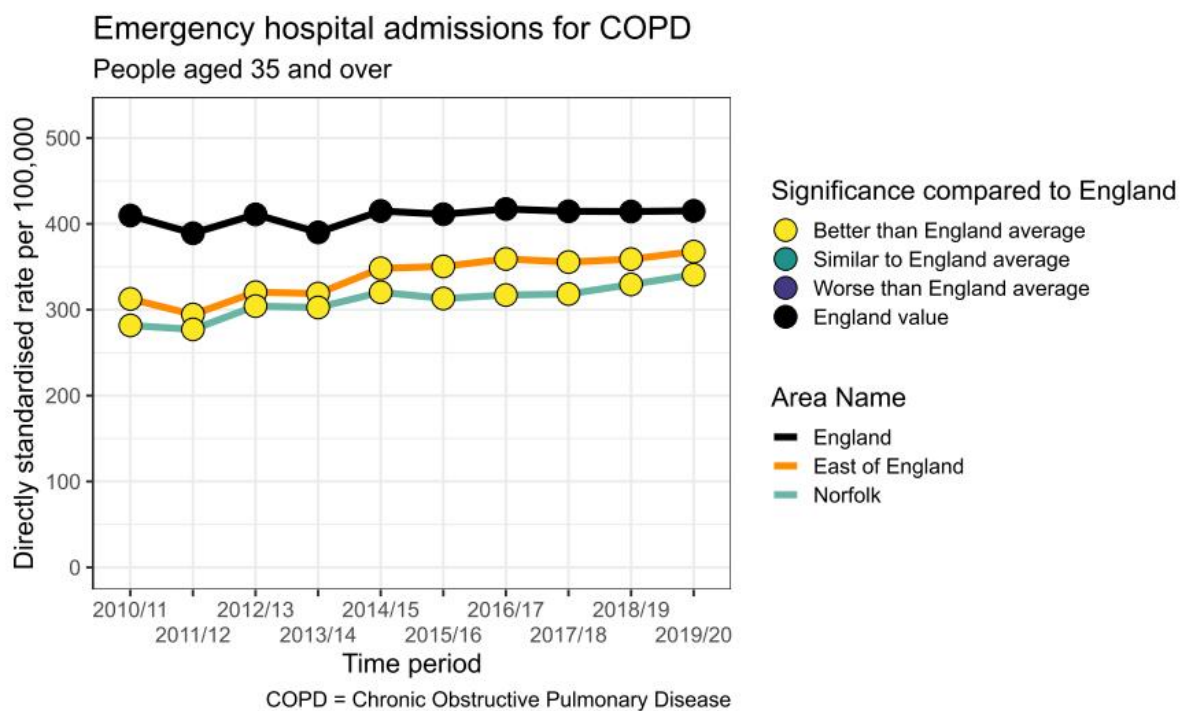


Figure 7: Emergency hospital admissions for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in people aged 35 and over. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, using Hospital Episode Statistics.





Case Study

Cessation of Smoking Trial in the Emergency Department (COSTED) UEA

Researchers from the University of East Anglia (UEA) conducted the Cessation of Smoking Trial in the Emergency Department (COSTED) at six UK hospitals, including the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. Participants were randomly assigned to receive either brief advice, an e-cigarette starter kit, and stop-smoking service referral, or no intervention (control group). Participants were generally from deprived neighbourhoods, with a higher than average number unemployed or unable to work due to sickness or disability.

Out of 972 participants, 1 in 4 in the intervention group reported quitting smoking at 6 months, compared to 1 in 8 in the control group. Carbon monoxide tests confirmed that those in the intervention group were twice as likely to quit. They were also more likely to reduce how many cigarettes they smoked and to make more attempts to quit than the control group.

The trial demonstrated the potential of emergency departments to reach smokers opportunistically, especially in disadvantaged communities. Economic evaluation suggested the intervention is cost-effective and implementing it across the three Accident and Emergency departments in Norfolk could lead to 1,636 additional quits annually at a lower cost than traditional methods.

Smoking patterns and inequalities

Norfolk position

Around 13% of adults in Norfolk smoke – around 99,300 people. This is similar to the national average. This is similar to the national average and is in line with other parts of the region.

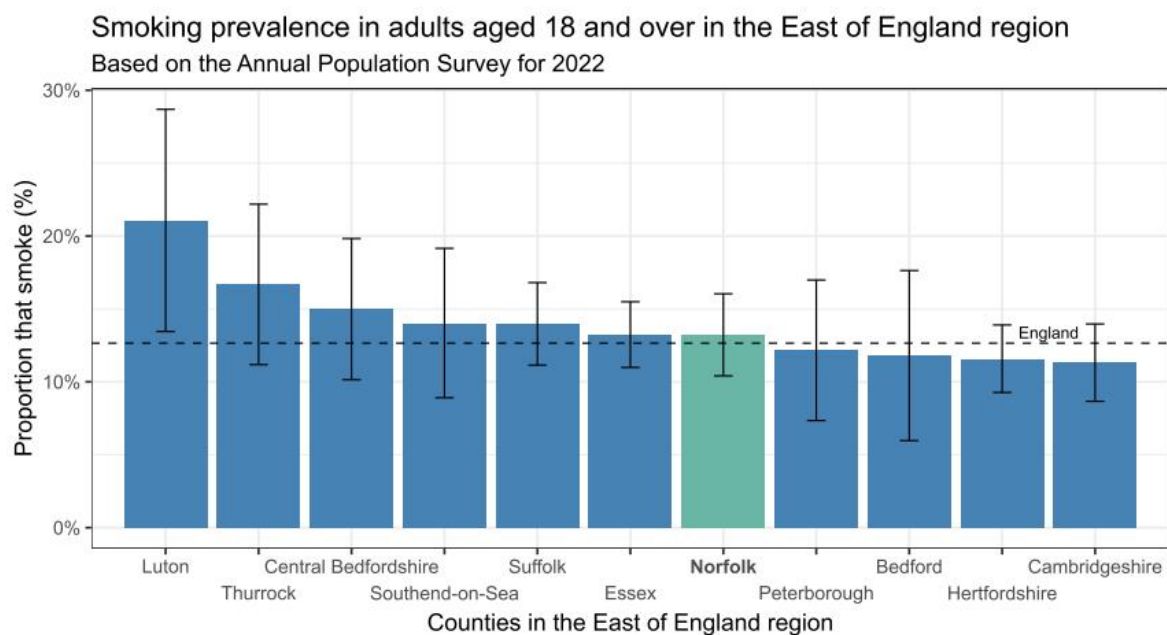


Figure 8: Smoking prevalence in adults by county in the East of England region, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities using Annual Population Survey data.

However, there is variation within Norfolk: Great Yarmouth has the highest adult smoking rate (around 18%), which equates to around 14,200 smokers and Broadland has the lowest rate (8%) or around 8,900 smokers.

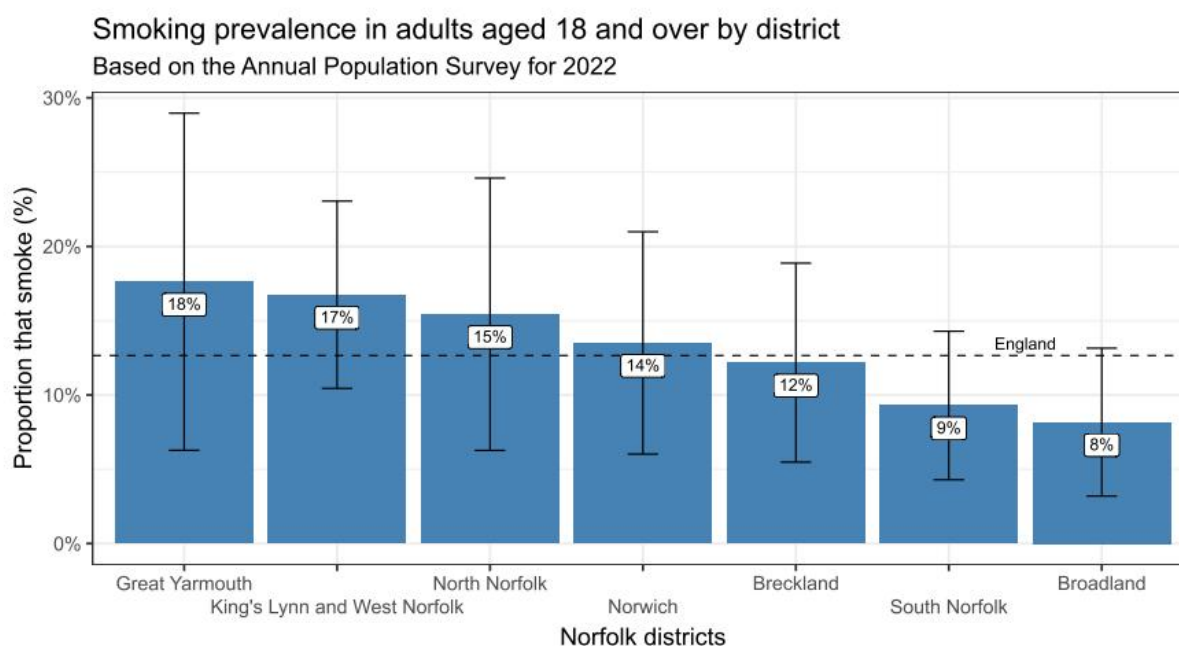


Figure 9: Smoking prevalence in adults by Norfolk districts, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities using Annual Population Survey data.

District	Smoking rate (%)	Estimated number of adult smokers	How many fewer needed to reach 5%
Breckland	12	14,200	8,400
Broadland	8	8,900	3,500
Great Yarmouth	18	14,200	10,200
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	17	21,300	14,900
North Norfolk	15	13,500	9,100
Norwich	14	16,100	10,100
South Norfolk	9	10,800	5,000
Norfolk	13	99,300	61,800

Table 1: Estimated adult smokers in Norfolk in 2022, based on Annual Population Survey prevalence rates and 2021 Census population estimates. Numbers rounded to nearest 100, district totals may not sum to make Norfolk total.

A national ambition aims for every area in England to be smokefree by the year 2030.⁹ 'Smokefree' is defined as having no more than 5% of adults smoking. For Norfolk to reach that ambition, we would need to have fewer than 37,500 smokers in the county – that is 61,800 fewer smokers than currently. Taking into account our growing population, we would need at least 6,500 people to quit smoking each year until 2030 to reach the national ambition – and more if people continue to take up smoking in the meantime. Some districts are closer to the 5% ambition than others, e.g. Broadland and South Norfolk.

People can and do attempt to quit smoking by themselves. Some people find it harder to quit than others, and Norfolk County Council funds services to help them. The stop smoking services reach around 8,600 smokers per year and offer support to help quit. Of those, 1,850 per year go on to successfully quit. This has significant impacts in helping improve the health of the people of Norfolk. However, not everyone takes advantage of stop smoking services. That's why the County Council developed its Ready to Change website, which helps people to quit smoking:

[Help to quit smoking – Norfolk County Council](#)

⁹ Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation – [GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)





Case Study

Ready to Change

Quitting smoking can be one of the best lifestyle changes anyone can make, even though this can be challenging due to tobacco's addictive nature. Ready to Change is a free online tool to help Norfolk residents in adopting healthier habits, including giving up cigarettes.

Developed by Norfolk County Council in collaboration with health psychologists and experts at the University of East Anglia, Ready to Change utilises behaviour change science to help individuals modify their habits for a healthier life. It includes quizzes, tips, and guidance for quitting smoking. A [video](#) explaining the behavioural science approach has been produced, along with campaign materials for print and social media.

Since its launch in 2022, over 8,000 people have used [Ready to Change](#) to help in their quitting journey – e.g. taking quizzes, reading about the benefits of stopping smoking or setting goals.



Smoking by gender

In Norfolk, more men smoke than women (14% compared to 12%) – this is a long running trend. Recently, Norfolk rates of female smokers has risen above the national average.

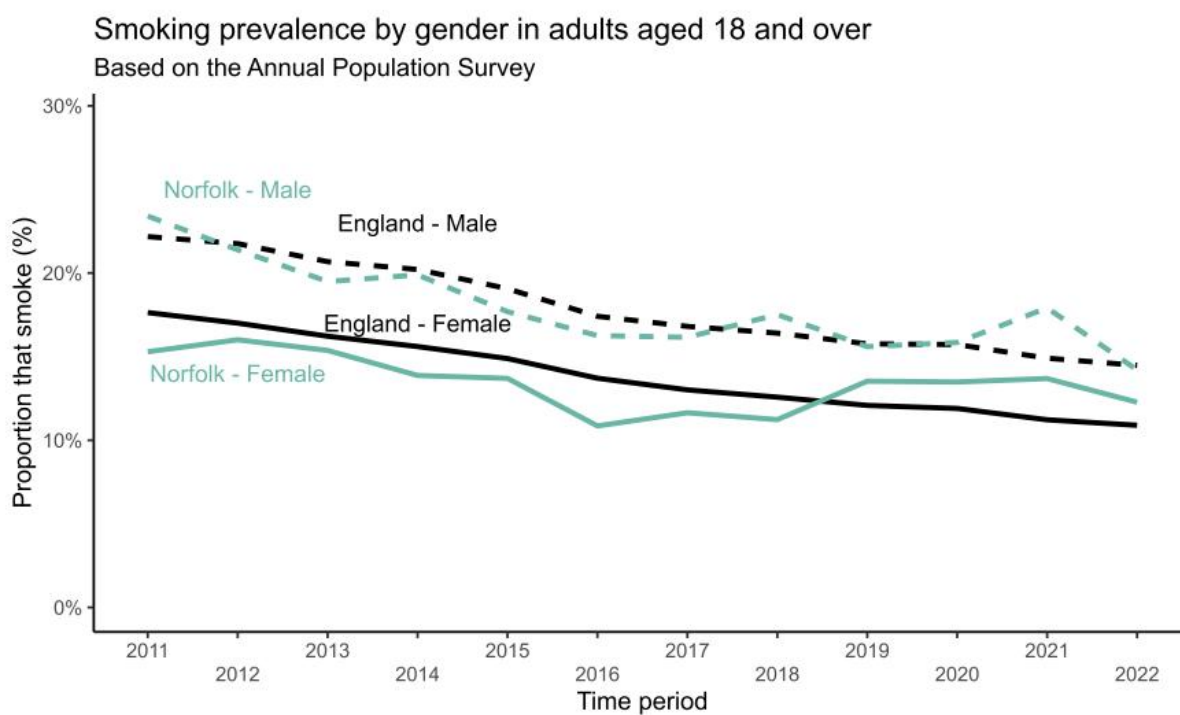


Figure 10: Smoking prevalence by gender over time. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking by age

Data on smoking rates for different age groups in Norfolk is not available. National data, however, shows the highest rates in those aged 25-29 (16%), with the numbers decreasing for older age groups. Nationally, those aged 65 and over smoke less than the England average.

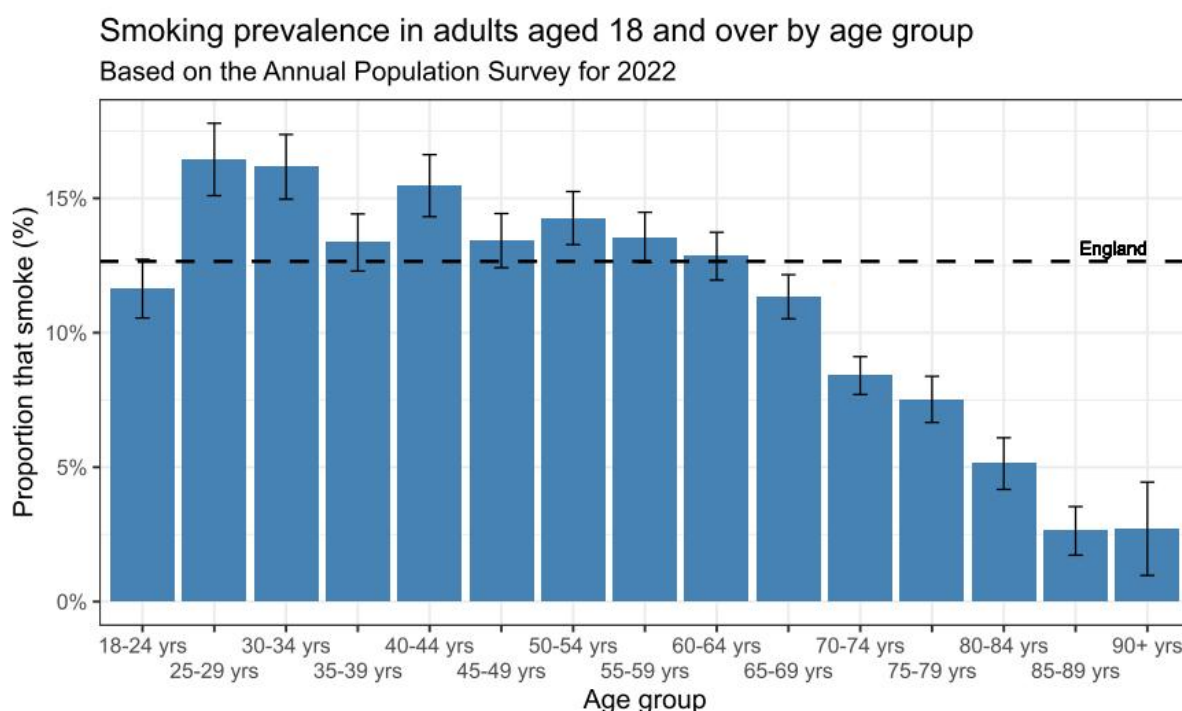


Figure 11: Smoking prevalence by age group in England, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Since 2011, smoking rates have declined most rapidly amongst the 18-24 year olds, however a recent study suggests this trend may have changed with rates in this age group increasing since 2020.¹⁰ The 25-29 year olds have consistently had the highest rates of smoking.

¹⁰ Have there been sustained impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on trends in smoking prevalence, uptake, quitting, use of treatment, and relapse? A monthly population study in England, 2017-2022 | BMC Medicine | Full Text [biomedcentral.com](https://www.biomedcentral.com)

Smoking prevalence in adults aged 18 and over in England by age group
Based on the Annual Population Survey

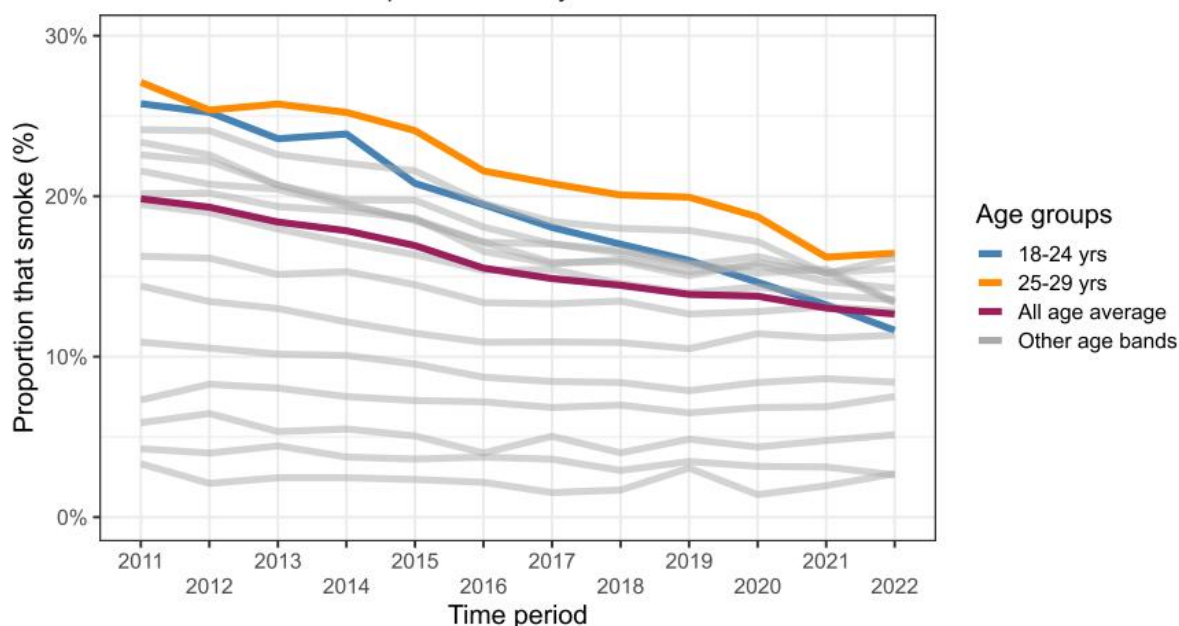


Figure 12: Smoking prevalence by age group over time showing the age group with the highest rates of smoking, the age group with the fastest rate of decrease in smoking, and the all age average smoking rate. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking prevalence by age group in England

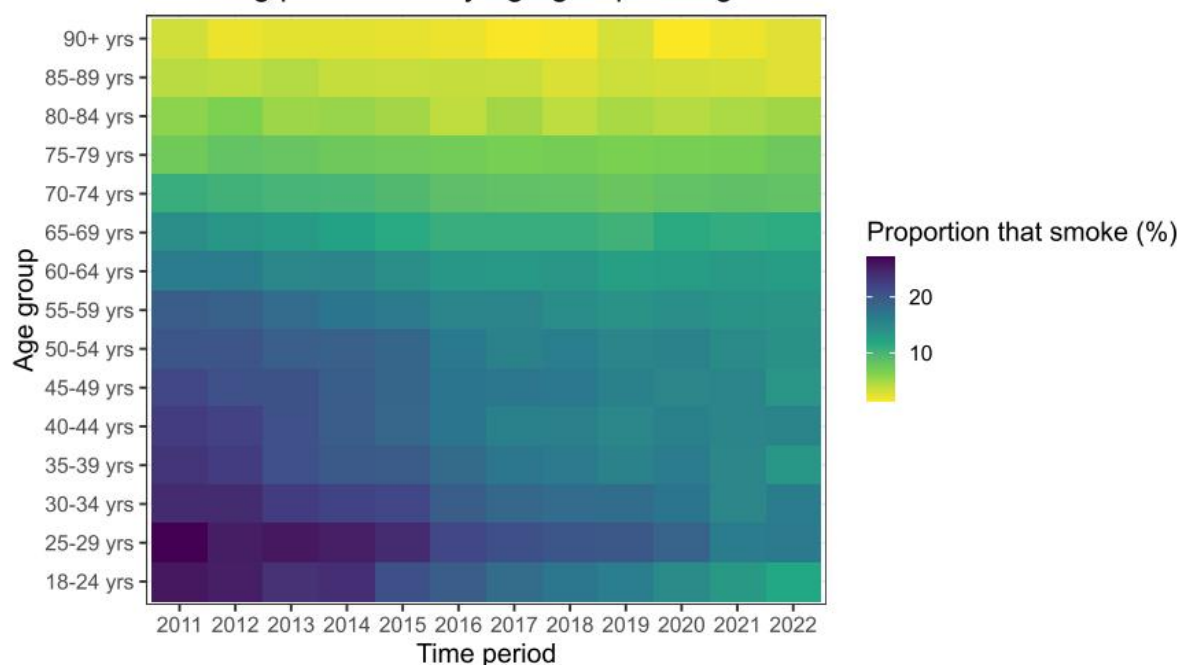


Figure 13: Heat map of smoking prevalence by age group over time. Darker colours show higher rates of smoking compared to other age groups and time periods. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking and deprivation

Smoking rates are higher in more deprived areas. Nationally, in the most deprived areas, around 16% of people smoke, compared to 10% in the least deprived areas. Around 1 in 3 of all smokers live in the fifth of the country that is most deprived.¹¹

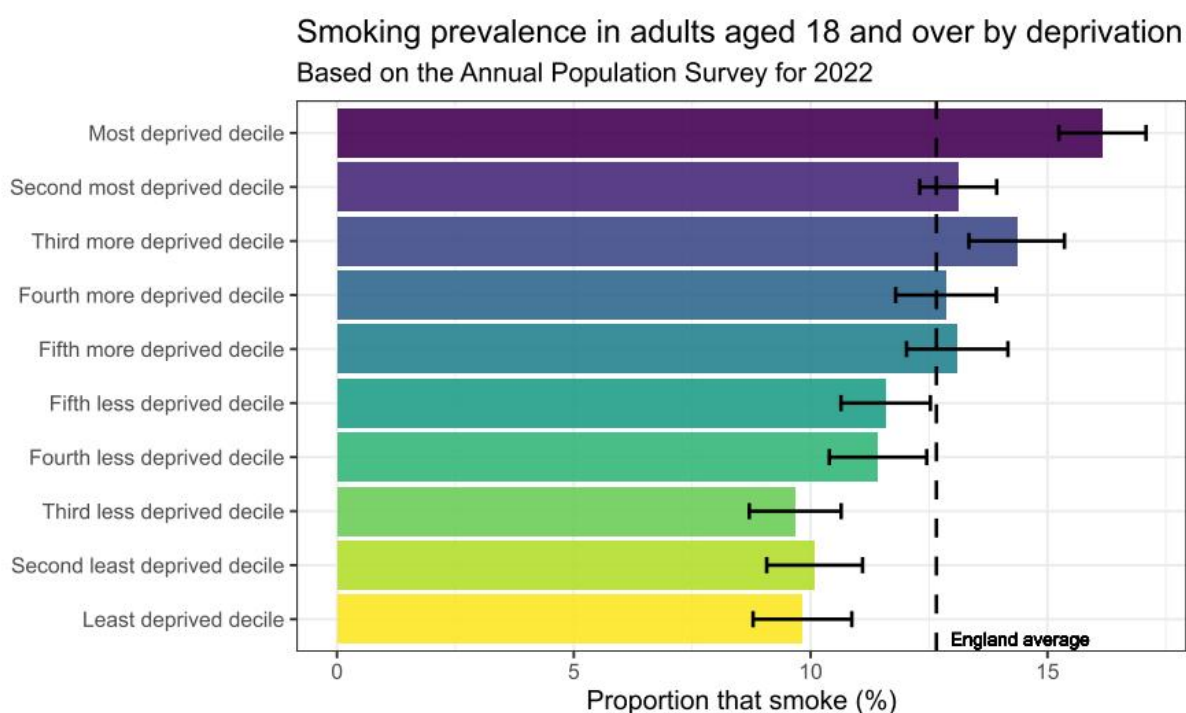


Figure 14: Smoking prevalence by deprivation group (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019) of residential areas in England, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

¹¹ Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. Public Health Profiles: Lung cancer registrations 2017-19 directly standardised rate - per 100,000. [Accessed 05/02/2024] fingertips.phe.org.uk © Crown copyright 2024.

In Norfolk, around 136,000 people live in areas that are some of the most deprived in the country – and health on average is poorer in deprived areas. Around 4 in 10 people in Great Yarmouth and Norwich live in these more deprived areas, compared to 1-2 in 10 people in Norfolk as a whole. None of the most deprived neighbourhoods are in Broadland and South Norfolk.¹²

Smoking and socioeconomic status

‘Socioeconomic status’ is a way of looking at the resources groups of people can draw upon. It often reflects education, income, work conditions, employment relations and job roles. The Office of National Statistics uses a set of groups linked to occupations to show socioeconomic status.

In Norfolk:

- around 1 in 4 people in routine and manual occupations smoke
- around 1 in 5 of those in ‘intermediate’ occupations (e.g. sales, administration, services and some technical jobs) smoke
- around 1 in 12 people in ‘management and professional occupations’ smoke.

This continues a long-running trend of smoking rates varying by socioeconomic status.

¹² Based on 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019

Smoking prevalence in working age adults based on the Annual Population Survey
Socioeconomic group (18-64 yrs) for 2022

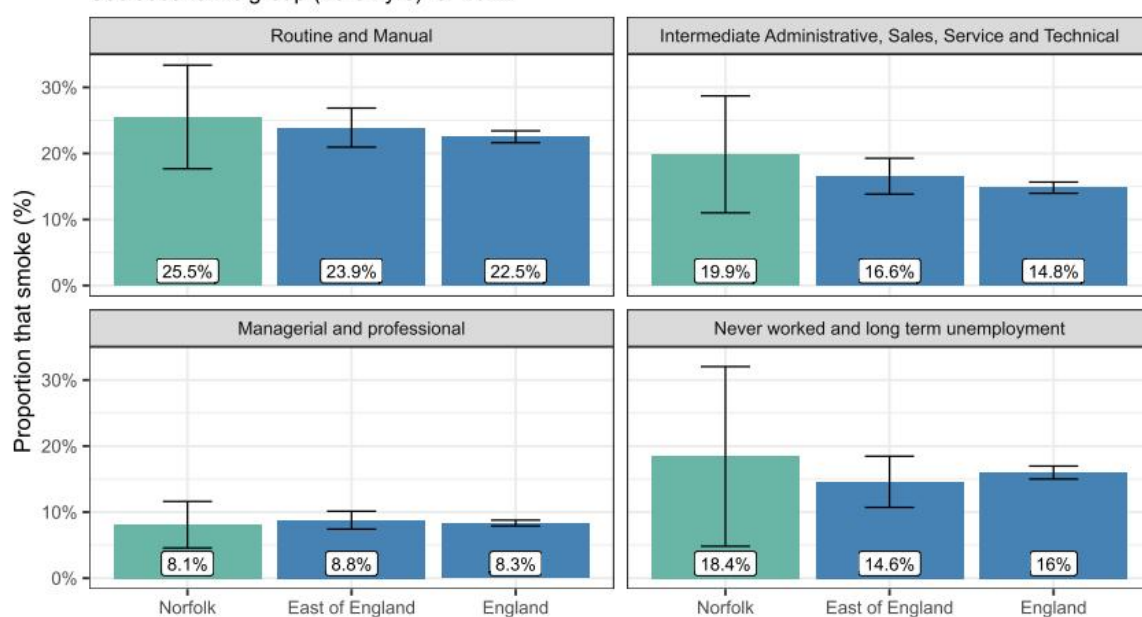


Figure 15: Smoking prevalence by socio-economic category in working age adults, 2022.
Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.





Case Study

Community Voices smoking conversations

In summer 2023, as part of the Integrated Care System's Community Voices Programme, Community Champions engaged in conversations with people in communities facing health inequality to discuss factors that either supported or hindered their efforts to quit smoking. The insights from these discussions were collected in an online 'insight bank,' which now contains over 200 recorded conversations.

These insights were organised according to factors that aid individuals in making positive health changes, namely capability, opportunity, and motivation. Some key themes emerged from these conversations:

- the role of social influences on smoking behaviour and the importance of having strong social support when attempting to quit smoking
- the short term versus long term economic costs of stopping smoking
- the need to maintain motivation and to have action plans and rewards
- the importance for stop smoking providers to tailor services to meet smokers' needs.

The insights tallied with research on this topic. Importantly, these real life Norfolk insights will inform the future design of local stop smoking services and the establishment of NHS pathways.

Smoking and housing tenure

Around 1 in 3 people living in social housing smoke. This is much higher than those who own their homes where around 1 in 11 smokes. Smoking rates for those who rent privately fall between the two.

What underlies these different smoking rates is complex. For example, people in social housing may face greater financial difficulties (see deprivation and socioeconomic status above). People who have paid off their mortgages may tend to be older – and smoking rates decrease with age, particularly for the over 65s.

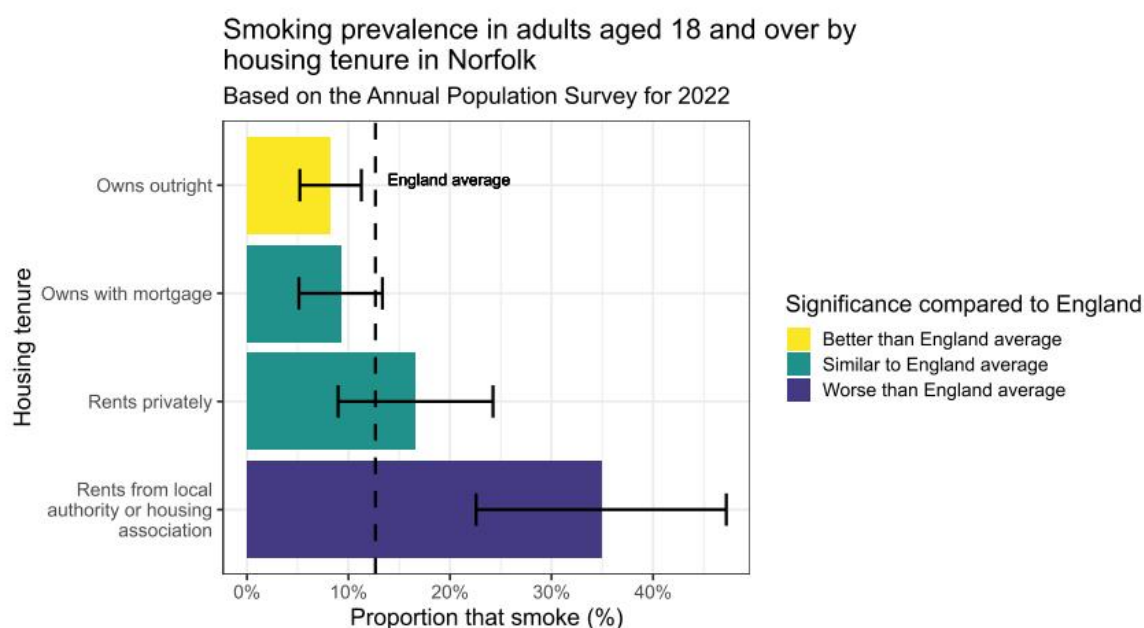


Figure 16: Smoking prevalence by housing type in Norfolk adults, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking and ethnicity

Nationally, smoking rates are highest among the white (13%) and mixed (17%) ethnic groups. Smoking rates are below the England average for the black (8%), Asian (7%) and Chinese (5%) ethnic groups. We do not have this breakdown for Norfolk, so rely on national figures.

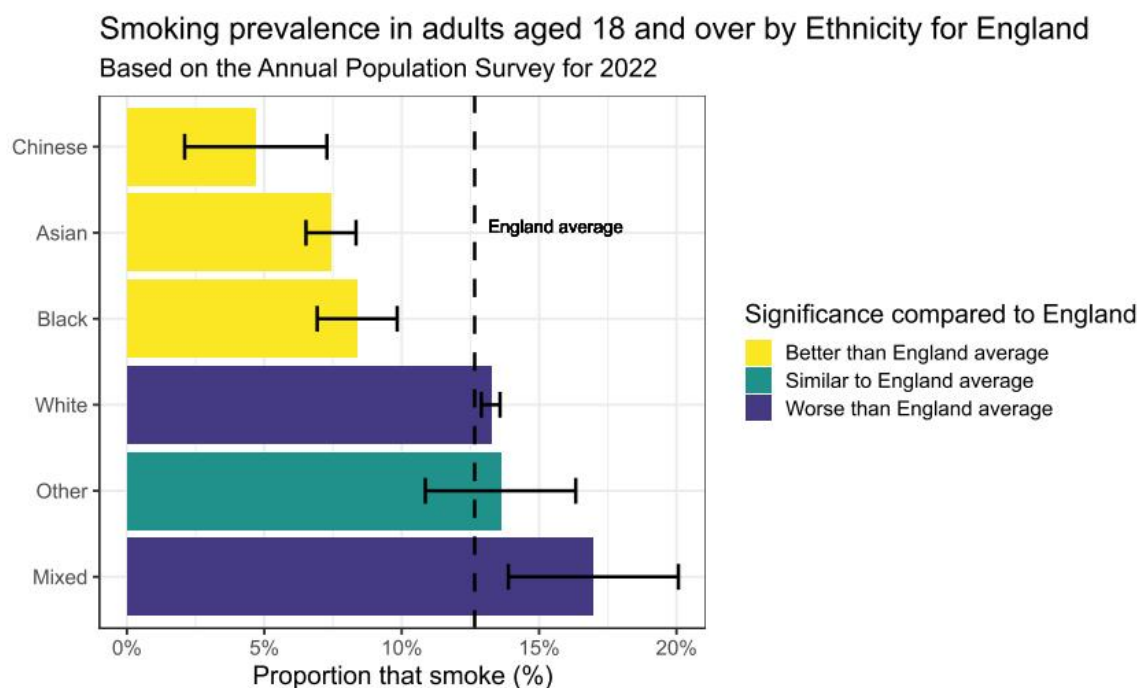


Figure 17: Smoking prevalence by Ethnicity, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking and country of birth

Smoking rates by country of birth have remained largely consistent over time. People living in the UK but born in India have had the lowest smoking rates since 2014 – around 5%. People born in Poland have consistently had the highest smoking rate, though this has decreased from 32% in 2014 to 21% in 2022.

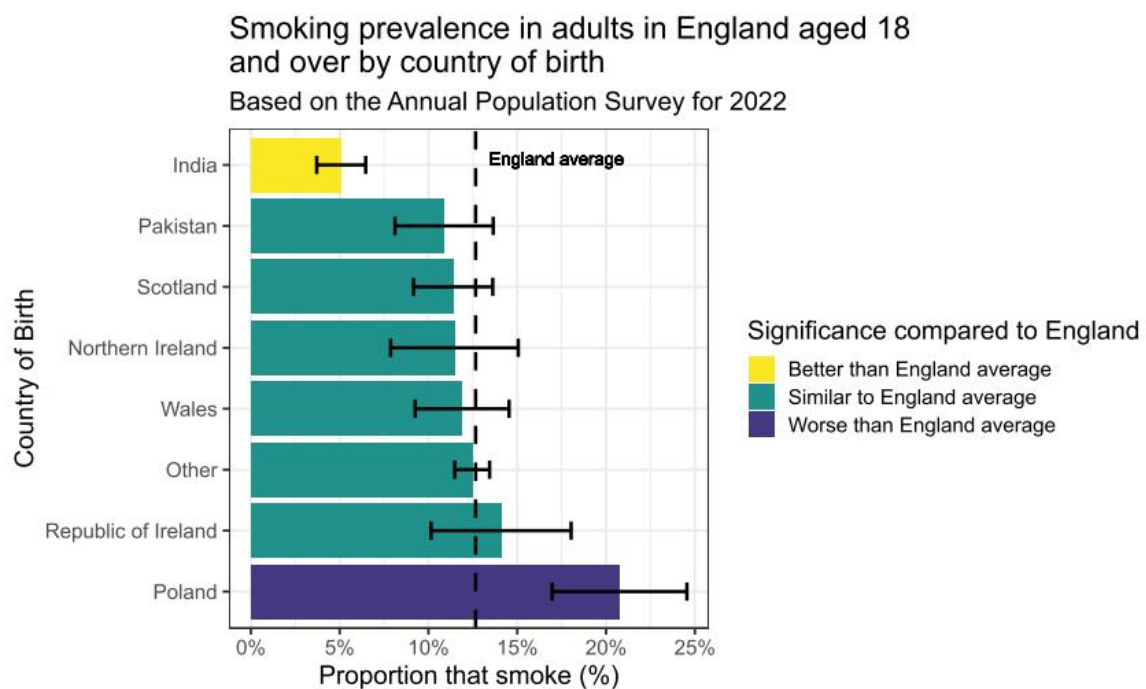


Figure 18: Smoking prevalence by country of birth, 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking and overall health

People who report the poorest health consistently have the highest smoking rates. One in four people who rate their health as 'very bad' are smokers. Those that report being in good health have the lowest smoking rates.

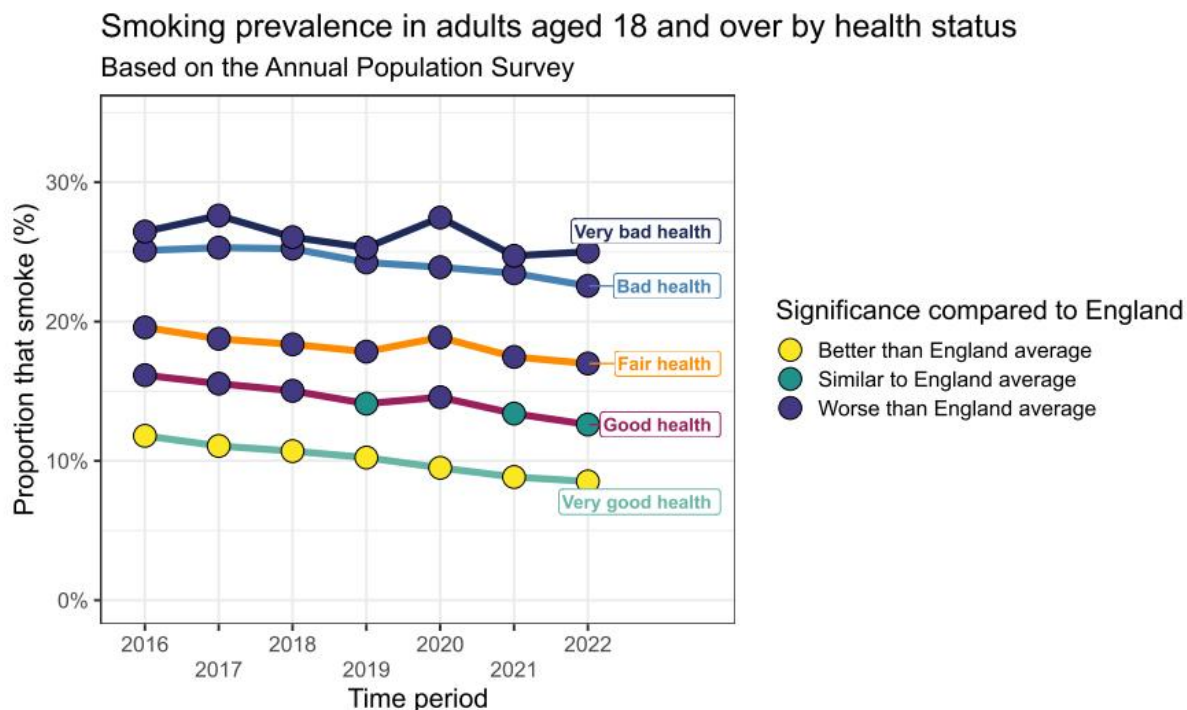


Figure 19: Smoking prevalence over time in England by health status. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

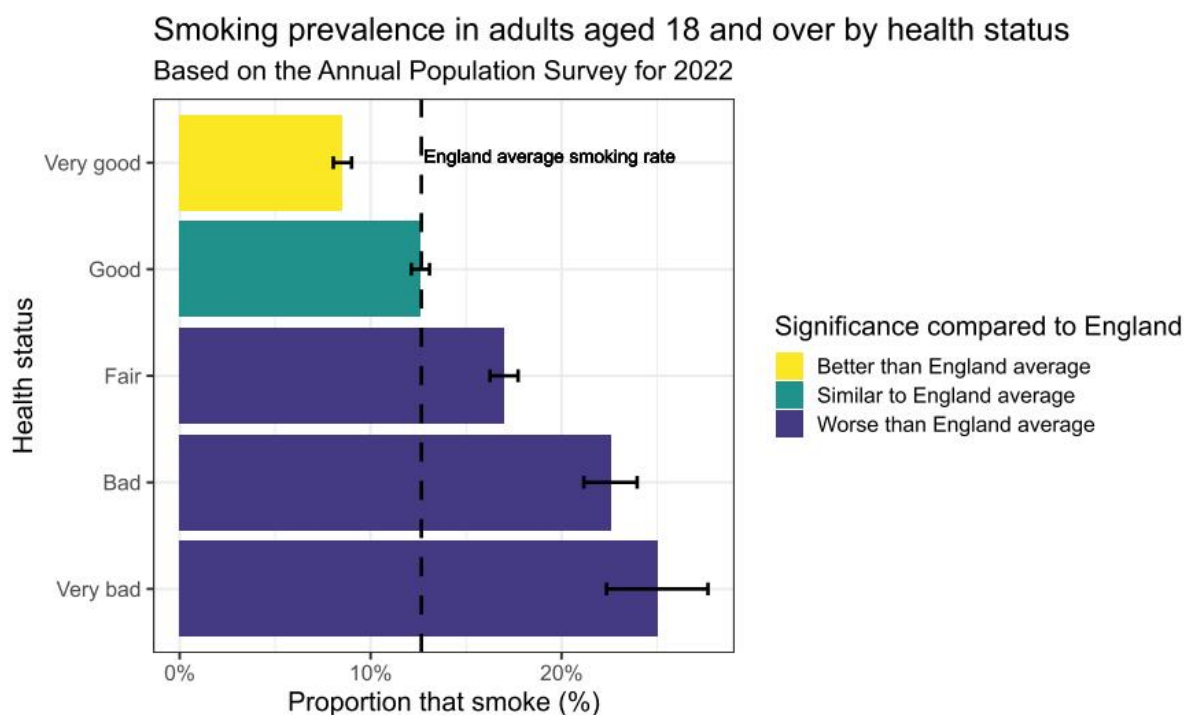


Figure 20: Smoking prevalence in England by health status in 2022. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on Annual Population Survey data.

Smoking and mental health

Smoking rates are higher in those who have mental health issues, representing a significant health inequality. A survey conducted among general practice patients found that in Norfolk, nearly one in four people with a long term mental health condition smoked. This is similar to the national average for those with long term mental health conditions, but much higher than for the general population.

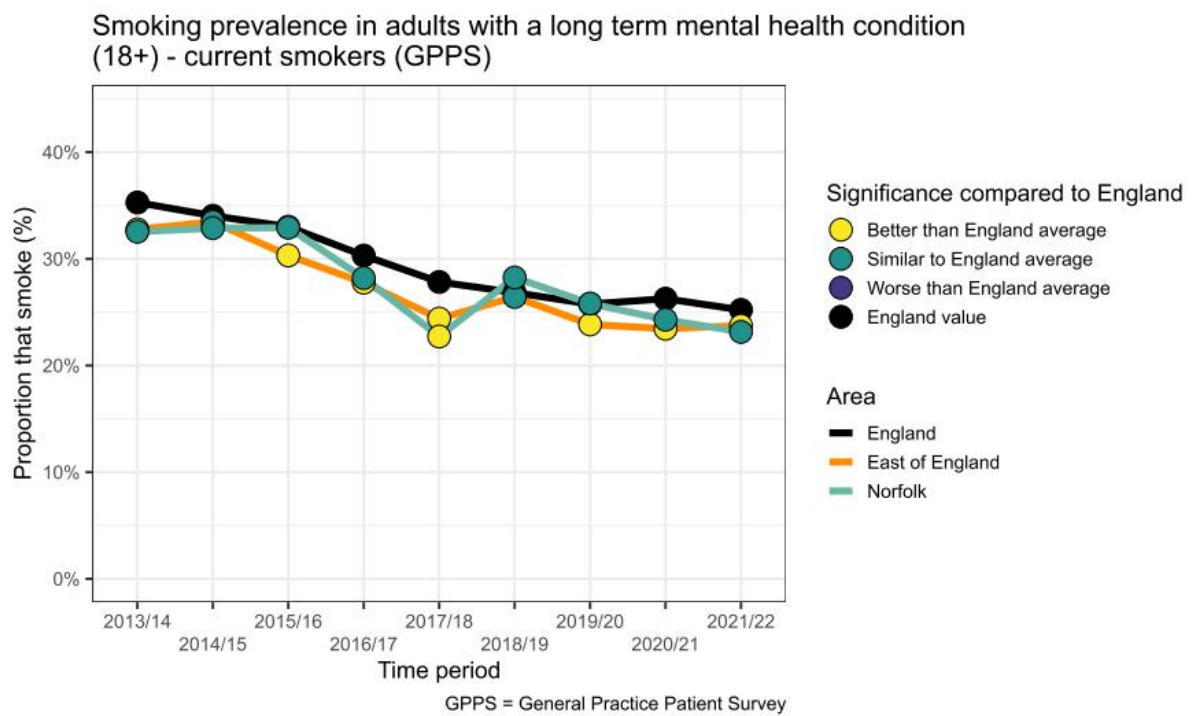


Figure 21: Smoking prevalence in those with a long term mental health condition. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on the General Practice Patient Survey.



Case Study

Community serious mental illness service

NHS England committed to offering a new universal smoking cessation programme within specialist mental health services for long term smokers by 2023/24. People with serious mental illness (SMI) face greater challenges quitting smoking due to higher dependency and heavier smoking.

NHS England is testing a pathway and service model before a national rollout, selecting four primary care network areas in Gorleston, Great Yarmouth and Norwich for the trial. These areas were chosen based on data indicating they serve over 30% of the SMI population in Norfolk and Waveney.

Smokefree Norfolk and Together for Mental Wellbeing are collaborating on the pilot service, with promising early results, including an 88% engagement rate, 81% setting a quit date, and 58% quitting within the first nine months. A research team from the UEA is evaluating the pilot, with findings informing the future service.

The benefits of quitting

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) report that:

- On average, stopping smoking at age 60 can add 3 extra years to life. Stopping at 30 can add 10 extra years¹³
- A study of over one million UK women showed that stopping smoking before the age of 40 avoids the vast majority (90%) of the increased risk of dying caused by continuing to smoke¹⁴
- For people who stop smoking before the age of 50 years, the risk of dying of smoking-related disease is cut in half.¹⁵

The sooner you quit, the sooner you'll notice changes to your body and health. Look at what happens when you quit for good.



After 20 minutes

Check your pulse rate, it will already be starting to return to normal.



After 8 hours

Your oxygen levels are recovering, and the harmful carbon monoxide level in your blood will have reduced by half.



After 48 hours

All carbon monoxide is flushed out. Your lungs are clearing out mucus and your senses of taste and smell are improving.



After 72 hours

If you notice that breathing feels easier, it's because your bronchial tubes have started to relax. Also your energy will be increasing.



After 2 to 12 weeks

Blood will be pumping through to your heart and muscles much better because your circulation will have improved.



After 3 to 9 months

Any coughs, wheezing or breathing problems will be improving as your lung function increases by up to 10%.



After 1 year

Great news! Your risk of heart attack will have halved compared with a smoker's.



After 10 years

More great news! Your risk of death from lung cancer will have halved compared with a smoker's.

Quitting smoking can also save individuals and their families money – on average around £3,100 per smoker per year.

¹³ [Doll, 2004](#) ¹⁴ [Pirie, 2013](#) ¹⁵ [PHE, 2015b](#)



Case Study

What quitting smoking felt like for Dan*

Dan started smoking as a teenager and had attempted to quit smoking multiple times, but without success. On his social media feed, he spotted adverts for Ready to Change, the Council website offering help to stop smoking. Intrigued by the promise of free assistance, Dan decided to click on the link and explore further.

Dan started with the Ready to Change quiz about his smoking habits. He then discovered the many benefits of quitting smoking. As someone facing financial difficulties, he realised that his cigarette expenses were a significant contributing factor. Furthermore, with his partner expecting their first child, Dan was motivated to eliminate the risk of second hand smoke for his family's wellbeing.

Dan recognised that swapping from smoking to vaping could serve as a good first step to quitting smoking because it would address the hand-to-mouth habit and provide a controlled level of nicotine. It would also be significantly less harmful than smoking. Determined to make a change, Dan contacted the local stop smoking service, which offered free vape kits for 12 weeks and the support of a specialist advisor.

Setting a quit date, Dan used the goal-setting and 'if-then' planning tools from Ready to Change to boost his motivation and maintain his progress. Six months later, Dan is still not smoking and only vapes a couple of times per day. He keeps a diary to track when he vapes so he can eventually quit vaping altogether.

*This is a fictional case study taking the reader through an example journey a quitter might follow when giving up smoking

Protect others from secondhand smoke

Second hand smoke (passive smoking) refers to the smoke that smokers exhale or that is given off from the end of a lit cigarette while it is burning – which people nearby can then inhale. Harmful chemicals such as tar, nicotine, and carbon monoxide are contained within second hand smoke making it harmful to those that inhale it.

In the short term, being exposed to second hand smoke can result in headaches, sore eyes, and coughing. In the longer term, people exposed to second hand smoke are at higher risk of heart disease, some types of cancer, and poor lung function. Children and young people are at particular risk due to their more delicate lungs.¹⁶

An estimated 44,900 children in Norfolk live in smoking households and are therefore likely to be exposed to second hand smoke. Children from smoking households are four times more likely to take up smoking themselves later in life.¹⁷

As smoking rates decrease, second hand smoke exposure can also decrease, reducing related harms.

¹⁶ [Secondhand Smoke – ASH](#)

¹⁷ ash.org.uk/resources/view/economic-and-health-inequalities-dashboard



Vaping (e-cigarettes)

Vaping is an effective tool to help people quit smoking. Tobacco cigarette smoke contains thousands of chemicals – many of them poisonous – and dozens of them can cause cancer.¹⁸ Cigarettes also contain nicotine, which is an addictive substance.¹⁹ Once addicted, it can be difficult to quit smoking.

The latest evidence review from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) shows that in the short and medium term, vaping poses only a small fraction of the risks of smoking.²⁰

E-cigarettes with nicotine are still addictive, however, and the long-term effects of vaping are not yet known. Vaping is not risk free, particularly for people who have never smoked.²¹ The Chief Medical Officer Professor Sir Chris Whitty wrote succinctly for The Times in May 2023:

‘The key points about vaping (e-cigarettes) can be easily summarised. If you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don’t smoke, don’t vape; marketing vapes to children is utterly unacceptable.’²²

Key messages on vaping

- Vaping is much less harmful than smoking
- Vapes are an effective tool to help smokers quit smoking
- Swapping from smoking to vaping is a positive health move
- If you don’t smoke, don’t vape
- Vapes should not be marketed to children

¹⁸ What chemicals are in a cigarette? | What does smoking do to your body? cancerresearchuk.org

¹⁹ ash.org.uk/resources/view/whats-in-a-cigarette

²⁰ Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update summary – GOV.UK www.gov.uk

²¹ Nicotine vaping in England: 2022 evidence update main findings – GOV.UK www.gov.uk

²² Chief Medical Officer for England on vaping – GOV.UK www.gov.uk

Vaping in adults (aged 16 and over)

Local data on vaping in Norfolk is not available, so we rely on national surveys. Nationally, around 5% of people aged 16 and over use e-cigarettes daily.²³ This would equate to around 40,000 adults in Norfolk. Around 3.5%, or 27,000 people, occasionally use e-cigarettes.

Evidence is mounting that while tobacco cigarette smoking is decreasing, e-cigarette use is increasing.

Current smokers (27%) and ex-smokers (17%) vape more than non-smokers.²⁴ While at lower levels, e-cigarette use is increasing among those who have never smoked before – currently a little under 2%. This would mean around 13,800 people in Norfolk who have never smoked cigarettes, use e-cigarettes.

Among adults aged 16 and over, occasional or daily vaping is increasing most quickly in the 16-24 year olds – from around 11% in 2021 to over 15% in 2022. At the same time, smoking tobacco cigarettes is decreasing most quickly in the 18-24 year olds.

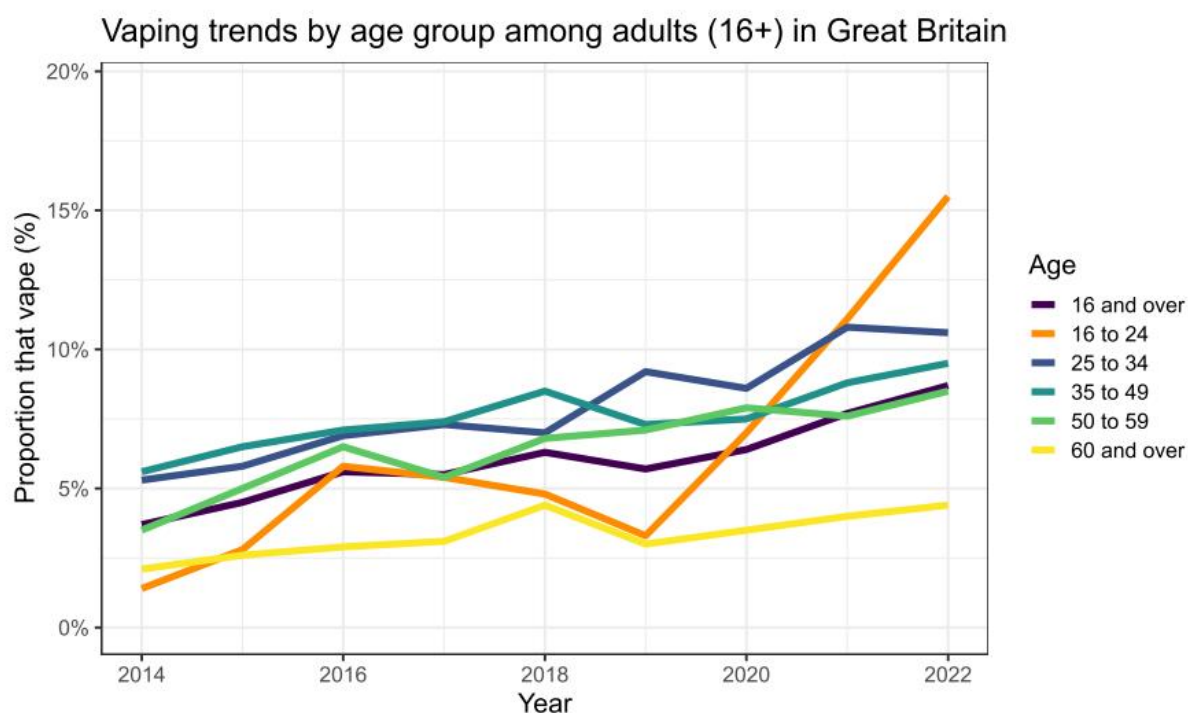


Figure 22: Vaping prevalence by age group in Great Britain. Source: Office for National Statistics based on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey data.

²³ [Adult smoking habits in the UK](#) – Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) Office for National Statistics report referencing Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

²⁴ [E-cigarette use in Great Britain](#) – Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)



Case Study

E-cigarette pilot and vouchers

In 2020 and early 2021, Norfolk County Council (NCC) Public Health, Smokefree Norfolk and the University of East Anglia conducted a pilot programme offering vouchers for vape starter kits or refills to specific groups in Great Yarmouth, where smoking rates are highest in Norfolk. These groups included individuals who had unsuccessfully tried to quit smoking, those with multiple health conditions, and people with mental health conditions.

During the trial, over 340 participants used their vouchers, and many provided positive feedback. Encouragingly, 42% of those who switched to vaping quit smoking at 4 weeks, with vapes proving effective where other methods had failed. The trial also helped dispel the myth that vaping is as harmful as, or more harmful, than smoking.

Given the success of the vape voucher trial, the service was expanded countywide in 2022, offering free 12-week vape vouchers to everyone in Norfolk as part of the stop smoking service. Recent figures show a 52% smoking quit rate at 4 weeks, surpassing the initial target.

Vaping in children and young people

Vaping is becoming more common among children and young people across England. Based on national data, around 13,600 children aged 11-17 in Norfolk are estimated to have tried vaping. An estimated 5,000 children aged 11-17 (8%) are current users. Nationally, use increased slightly in 2023, after having doubled from 2021 to 2022.

Only one in three children believe that e-cigarettes are less harmful than cigarettes. More than half believe they are as harmful as, or more harmful than, smoking.²⁵

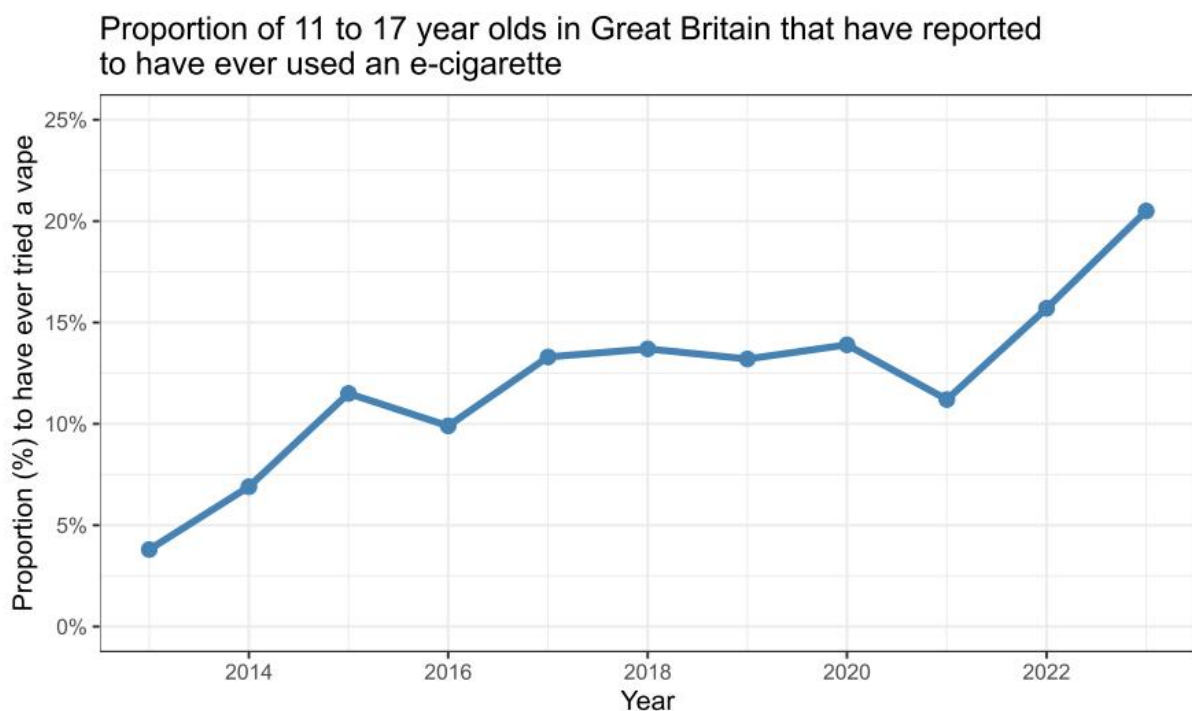


Figure 23: Vaping prevalence by age group in Great Britain. Source: Action on Smoking and Health.

The use of single-use e-cigarettes among children has increased substantially from fewer than one in ten young vapers preferring disposable vapes in 2021 to seven in ten in 2023.²⁶

²⁵ ASH – [Use of e-cigarettes among young people in Great Britain](https://ash.org.uk/resources/view/use-of-e-cigarettes-among-young-people-in-great-britain)

²⁶ ash.org.uk/resources/view/use-of-e-cigarettes-among-young-people-in-great-britain



Case Study

Schools vaping toolkit

In October 2023, Norfolk County Council's Children's Services developed a vaping toolkit for schools. The goal is to assist schools in tackling increased vaping by offering high quality guidance and resources for a comprehensive approach. The toolkit features an audit tool for schools to assess their current approaches and areas for improvement, along with an action plan to support further development. It emphasises preventative measures and strategies to address vaping concerns:

- Supporting staff to feel confident in their knowledge of vaping and how it compares to smoking
- Creating an inclusive ethos and values around health, wellbeing and sustainability
- Teaching about vaping as part of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and within the wider curriculum
- Ensuring all staff, children, young people and families are aware of how to get support.

The toolkit provides a detailed step by step checklist for what to do if a student is found vaping, with a focus on supporting them to stay in school.

Section 2

National and local policy on smoking and vaping

Key messages

- Smoking rates have decreased over the past 60 years
- Knowledge, policies and attitudes towards smoking have also changed over time
- Reducing rates of smoking, effective tobacco control and controlling long term vaping use and take up are priorities for many organisations across Norfolk.

The changing national picture

Knowledge, policies and attitudes towards smoking have changed greatly over the past 60 years and smoking rates have declined as it has become more socially unacceptable.



Smoking prevalence timeline for Great Britain, ages 16 and over by gender for 1974 to 2022

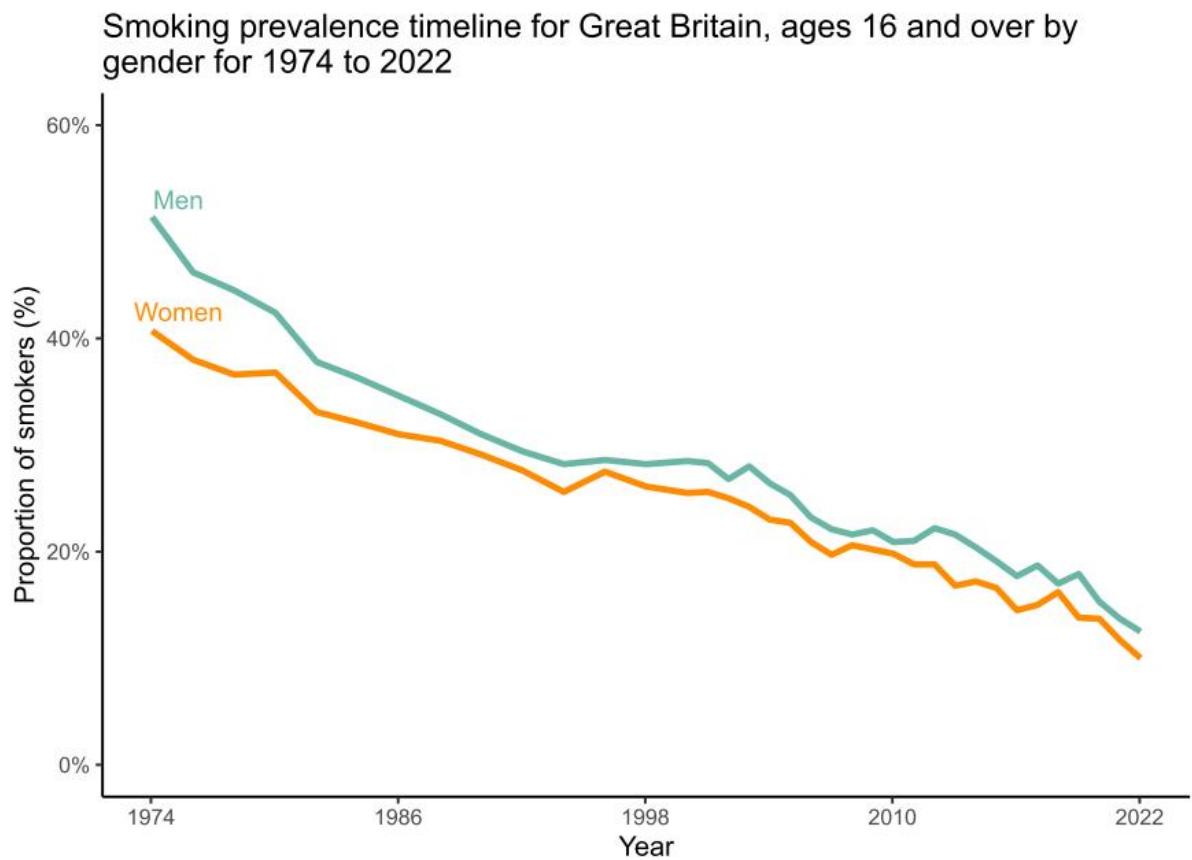
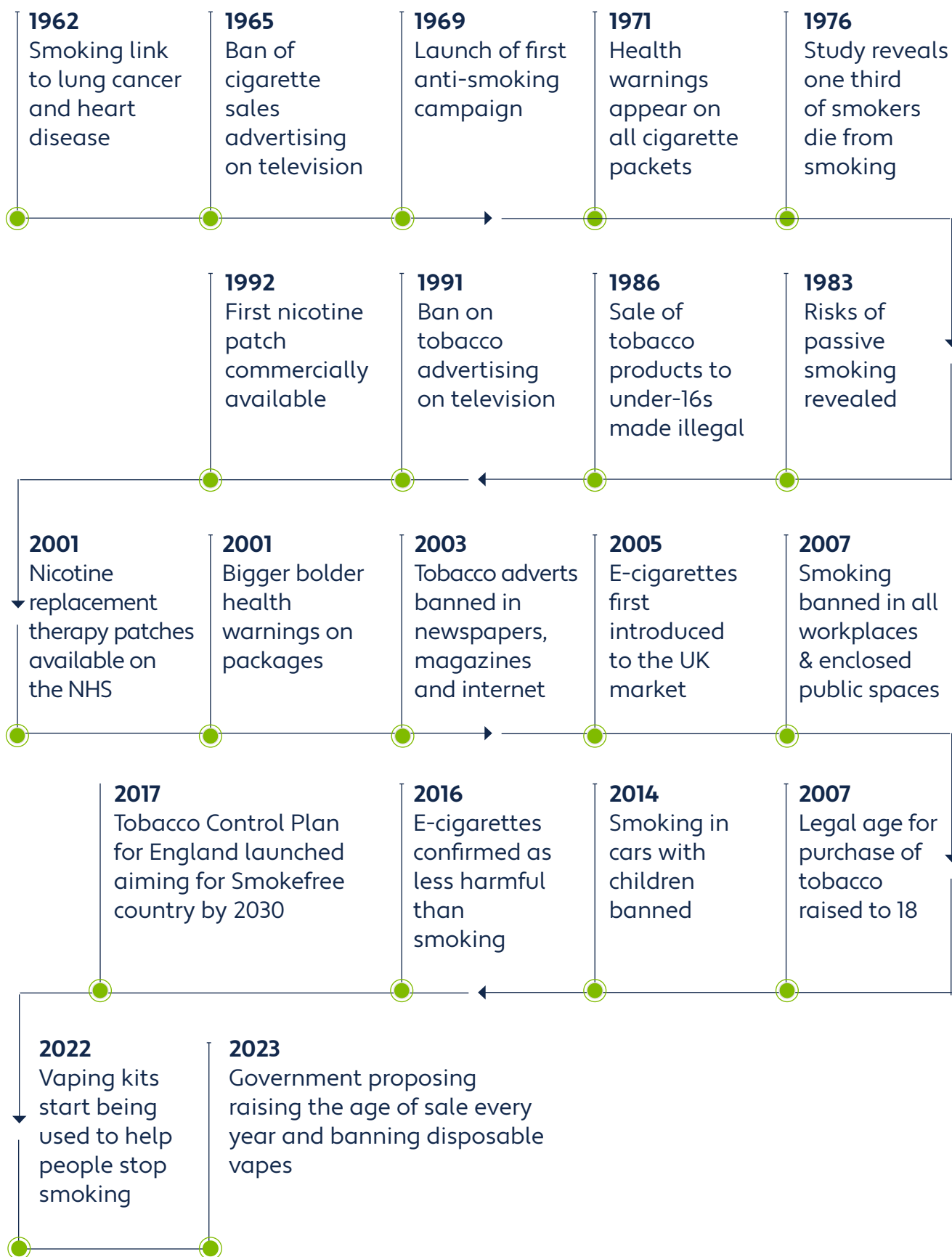


Figure 24: Timeline of the proportion of current smokers, for all persons aged 16 years and over, Great Britain, 1974 to 2022. Source: Office for National Statistics based on Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.



Local plans and strategies

Ambitions around reducing rates of smoking, effective tobacco control and controlling long term vaping use and take-up are not just the priorities for the County Council's public health team – many organisations across Norfolk highlight their work on these aims:

- The Integrated Care System (ICS) [**Integrated Care Strategy and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy**](#) commits to addressing inequalities and prioritising prevention, to reduce years spent in poor health and differences in life expectancy due to deaths from circulatory, cancer and respiratory diseases, for which smoking is a chief contributor
- The ICS [**Clinical Strategy**](#) commits to acting early to improve health by predicting, detecting and acting early to prevent poor health by helping people make healthy choices, which includes stopping smoking
- The ICS [**Joint Forward Plan**](#) commits to developing and providing a maternity led stop smoking service for pregnant women and partners
- The ICS Health Improvement Transformation Group has agreed smoking as one of two priority areas for action across the Integrated Care System
- Norfolk County Council's Strategy [**Better together for Norfolk**](#) commits to supporting people to make healthy choices such as providing free stop smoking services
- Norfolk County Council's [**Public Health Strategic Plan**](#) commits to delivering a new programme of tobacco control and stop smoking initiatives to help people to stop smoking and create smokefree environments
- The Norfolk Tobacco and Vaping Control Alliance agreed a system-wide programme of work to help Norfolk to become smokefree by 2030 (defined as smoking rates of 5% or less), and developed a vaping delivery plan.

Section 3

The wider impacts of smoking on Norfolk residents and opportunities for improvement

Smoking has any number of negative impacts – some of these are described below.

Key messages

- Around 1,240 people in Norfolk die as a result of smoking every year
- On average, smokers spend around £3,100 each year on smoking
- Smoking costs Norfolk as a whole around £872 million per year
- Benefits from reducing or eliminating smoking could include:
 - Saving around 1,200 lives each year
 - Having around 1,130 fewer hospital admissions per year
 - Preventing 1,100 cases of cancer each year
 - Having around 480 more smokefree pregnancies
 - 16,500 less well-off households could be better off financially which could help them move out of poverty.

Cost of smoking to individuals, communities and services

Around 1,240 people in Norfolk die each year as a result of smoking. While the Norfolk rate overall is lower than the national average, deaths from smoking are largely preventable and rates will vary by place.

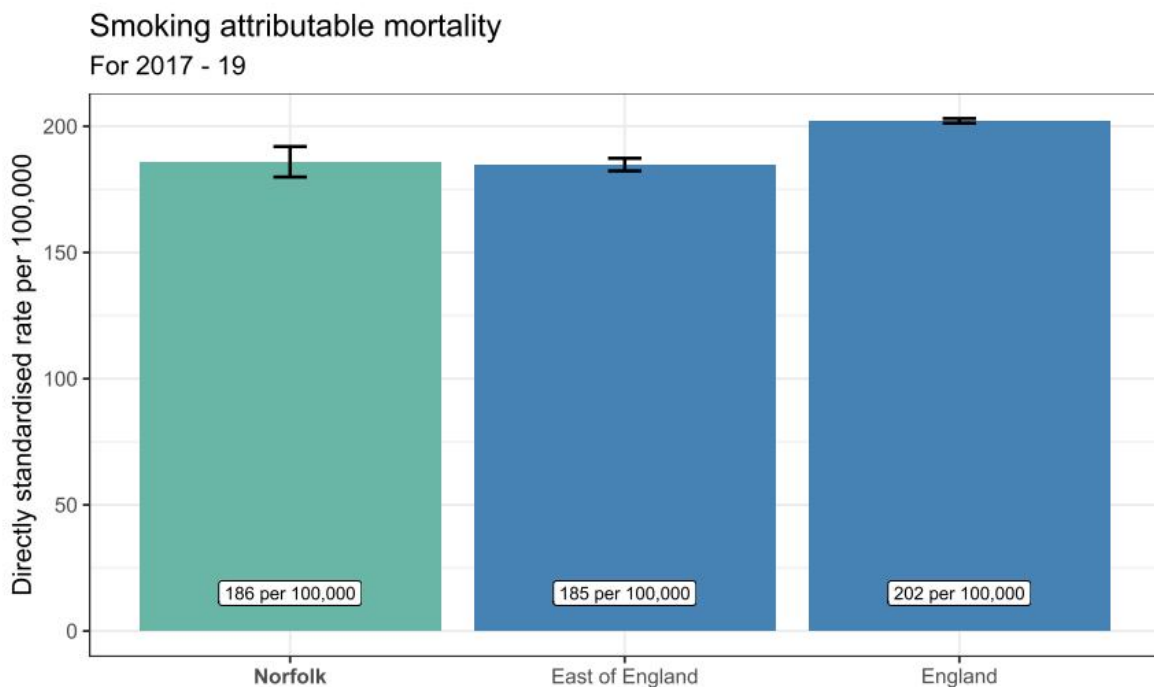


Figure 25: Smoking attributable mortality, 2017 to 2019. Source: Office of Health Improvement and Disparities using mortality data from the Office of National Statistics mortality data; Office for National Statistics (ONS) – mid-year population estimates; Smoking prevalence data from Annual Population Survey; and relative risks from the Royal College of Physician's Report 'Hiding in Plain Sight'.

Smoking has a financial cost²⁷ – to individuals and their families, to the economy, and to local services – as well as the personal impact of illness and death on individuals and loved ones.

Norfolk residents spend around £308 million on tobacco products each year, which is based on the average spend of about £3,100 per smoker each year. This generates around £198 million in tax revenue – however, it is estimated that smoking costs Norfolk far more, at around £872 million per year:

- £7 million as a result of house fires
- £239 million for social care due to smoking related conditions
- £30 million on hospital admissions and primary care services
- £596 million per year in productivity loss from the economy²⁸ including:
 - £136 million in lost earnings
 - £189 million due to smoking-related unemployment
 - £239 million loss to the local economy if people had switched their spending from tobacco to other products²⁹
 - £31 million due to smoking related early deaths.

In Norfolk we have higher rates of hospital admissions related to smoking than England, indicating a potentially greater impact on health services in Norfolk when compared to the England average.

²⁷ ash.org.uk/resources/view/ash-ready-reckoner

²⁸ Figures don't add up to £596 million due to rounding

²⁹ [Gross Value Added \(GVA\) ASH Ready Reckoner](#) – ASH

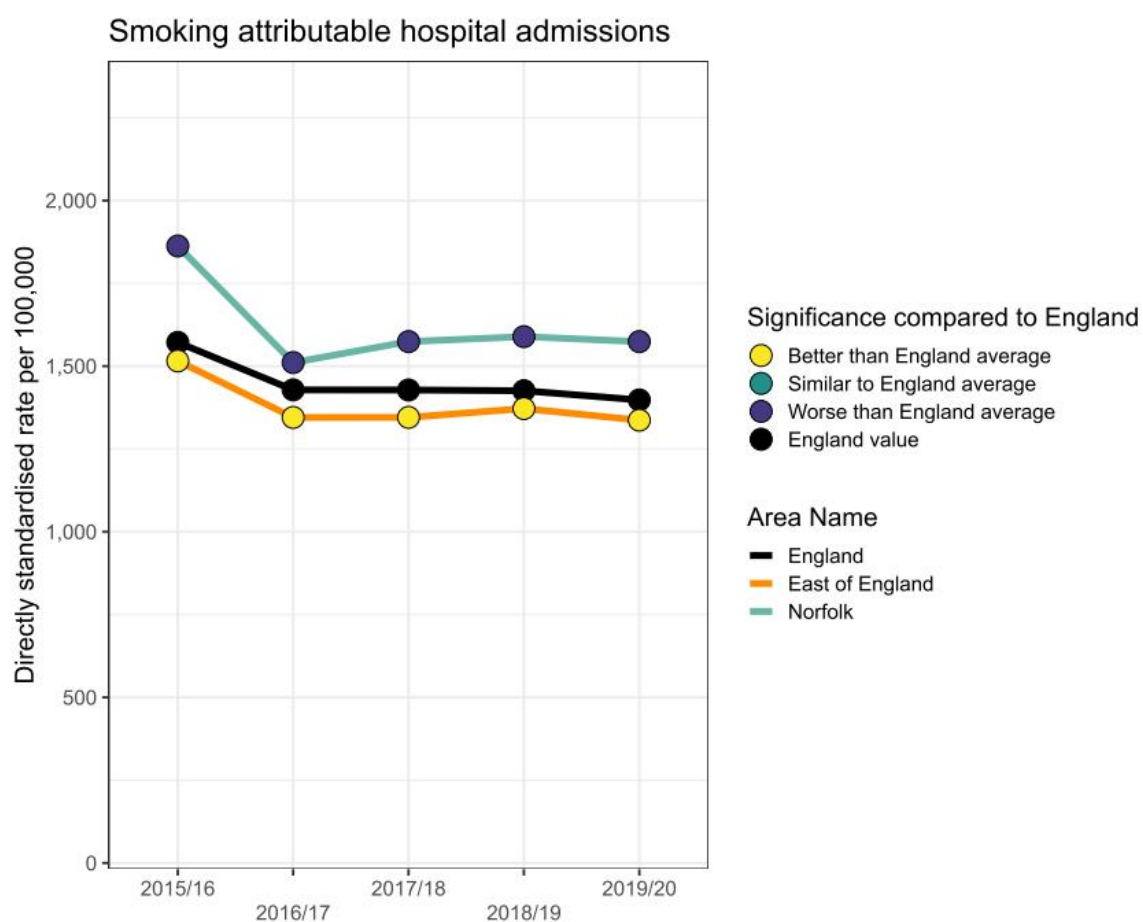


Figure 26: Smoking attributable hospital admissions over time. Source: Office of Health Improvement and Disparities using admissions data from Hospital Episode Statistics (HES); Office for National Statistics (ONS) – mid-year population estimates; Smoking prevalence data from Annual Population Survey; and relative risks from the Royal College of Physician's Report 'Hiding in Plain Sight'.



Case Study

Help for inpatients to stop smoking at the James Paget University Hospital

NHS England has committed that by 2023/24 all people admitted to hospital will be offered free tobacco treatment services. In Norfolk and Waveney, this started in May 2022, with stop smoking support being offered directly in hospitals for inpatients. The James Paget University Hospital in Great Yarmouth was chosen early because many people in the area smoke, and there are greater health inequalities in that area than in other parts of Norfolk.

When hospital patients are identified as smokers, they are referred to a specialist team to help them quit. The team provides nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and other support to increase the patients' chances of quitting. When leaving hospital, patients receive extra NRT and are referred to Smokefree Norfolk for further support at home.

Since the project started, 87% of smokers have been referred to the team, with 79% receiving support and 24% successfully quitting smoking. These results are encouraging, especially as people may not have been planning to quit before they went into hospital.

Opportunities and benefits of reducing smoking in Norfolk

Over the longer term, rates of smoking have been decreasing, but there is still more we can all do to achieve a smokefree county. Below are examples of some of the opportunities and benefits that could be realised if we continue our joint working and focus:

If smoking were eliminated, we could eventually save future Norfolk generations around 1,240 lives per year.³⁰

Smoking costs the average smoker around £3,100 a year.³¹ If smoking were eliminated then around 16,500 less well-off households would be better off financially which could help them move out of poverty.³²

Smoking results in over 10,000 hospital admissions each year in Norfolk.³³ If Norfolk had the same rate of admissions as the national average, that would result in around 1,130 fewer hospital admissions per year.

³⁰ Office for Health Improvement & Disparities: Local Tobacco Control Profiles: Smoking attributable mortality (new method) 2017-19 directly standardised rate – per 100,000. [Accessed 05/02/2024] fingertips.phe.org.uk © Crown copyright 2023.

³¹ ash.org.uk/resources/view/ash-ready-reckoner

³² ash.org.uk/resources/view/economic-and-health-inequalities-dashboard

³³ Office for Health Improvement & Disparities: Local Tobacco Control Profiles: Smoking attributable hospital admissions (new method) 2019/20 directly standardised rate – per 100,000 [Accessed 05/02/2024] fingertips.phe.org.uk © Crown copyright 2023.

Eliminating smoking entirely would reduce cancer cases by around 15%.³⁴ This would mean that Norfolk and Waveney would see a reduction of over 1,100 cancer diagnoses per year.³⁵ Achieving the 2030 smokefree ambition of having fewer than 5% of the population smoke would prevent around 680 cancers per year across the system.

Norfolk has a higher than average rate of mothers who smoke during pregnancy. If Norfolk had the same rate of mothers who smoke during pregnancy as the national average, then 205 more babies would have been born smokefree in 2022/23. If Norfolk rates reduced to 5%, then around 480 more deliveries would have been smokefree, significantly improving the health of babies and children in Norfolk, as well as the health of their mothers.

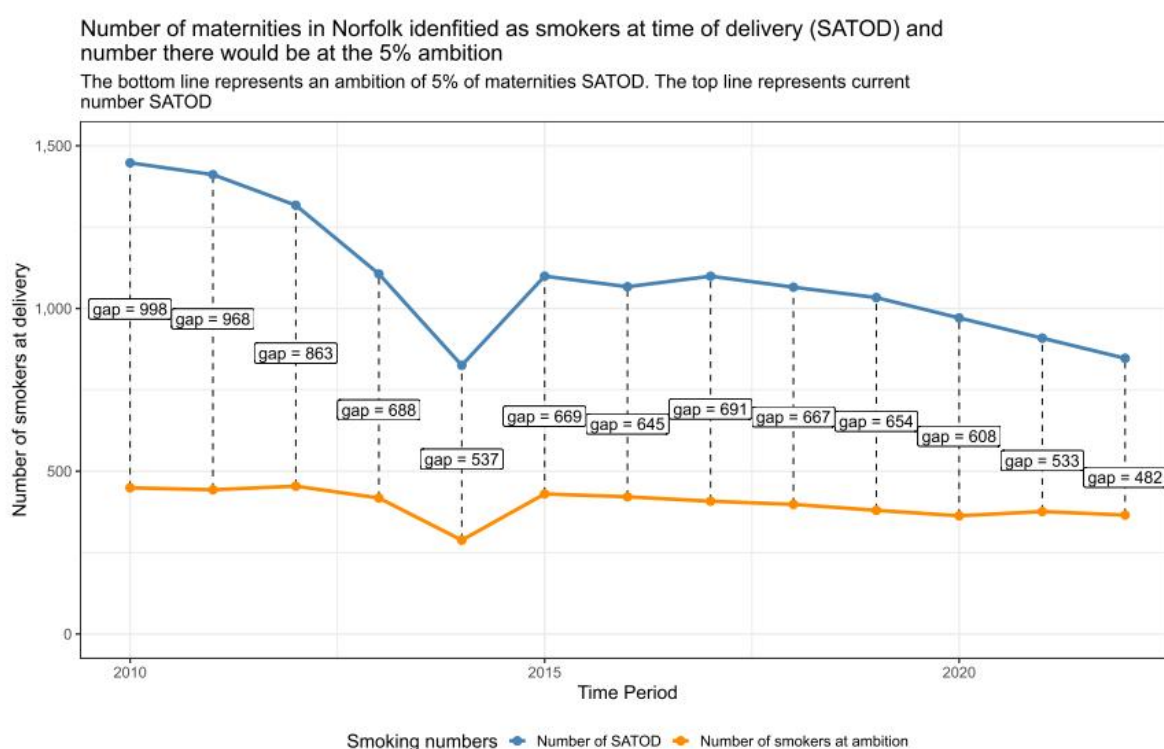


Figure 27: Number of deliveries that are recorded as smoking at time of delivery, and the number that there would be if only 5% of mothers were recorded as smokers, with the gap between the current and ambition over time. Source: Office for Health Improvement and Disparities based on the NHS digital Smoking at Time of Delivery data return.

³⁴ www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/risk#heading-Two

³⁵ Cancer Services – Data – OHID phe.org.uk

Section 4

What next?

In 2024, organisations in Norfolk will intensify their efforts to tackle smoking and vaping – both dependency and take-up.

NCC Public Health plans to enhance free local stop smoking services by investing additional government funding in line with the goal of creating a smokefree generation. This will include supporting local organisations to train frontline staff to have effective conversations with people about their health and equipping them with techniques to help people to stop smoking.

The Norfolk Tobacco Control and Vaping Alliance will work together to implement the Norfolk Tobacco Control Strategy and vaping delivery plan.

NCC Public Health will promote swapping from smoking to vaping to help quit as a positive health move through prominent media campaigns and will continue to fund the provision of e-cigarettes in the main stop smoking service.

In hospitals, the **NHS** aims to expand smoking cessation options for patients, offering NHS funded tobacco treatment services to those admitted as acute, maternity or mental health inpatients.

NCC Public Health will continue to work with **Children's Services**, head teachers and other representative organisations to promote responsible messages on smoking and vaping and to work with young people to counter the rising trend of vaping among those who have never smoked.

NCC Trading Standards and Public Health will highlight the risks of illegal vapes, continue enforcement efforts and work with reputable retailers through information dissemination and exploring a trusted trader scheme.



Case Study

Trading Standards action on illegal tobacco and vapes

Norfolk County Council's Trading Standards team collaborates with Norfolk Police and district councils to enforce tobacco control laws. They conduct frequent operations, such as test purchases and inspections, prompted by intelligence indicating concerns about the sale of illegal products. Inspections during 2023 led to the removal of over 16,500 illegal disposable vapes from the market.

Tobacco search dogs are often employed to find hidden illegal cigarettes and hand-rolling tobacco. In a November 2023 operation, two premises in the county had 847 illegal vapes, 760 illegal cigarettes, and 950g of illegal hand-rolling tobacco seized. Both traders used concealment spaces to hide the products, which is a common practice.

Working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk and Norfolk Constabulary, one of the businesses had a closure order issued against them through the Courts.

What we can all do

Helping achieve a smokefree generation and continuing to help eliminate smoking from society is something we can all contribute to.

Whether you...

- Are a smoker
- Are a professional who encounters people who smoke
- Are an employer
- Are a Norfolk resident
- Know someone who smokes

...there are things you can do to help Norfolk to become smokefree:

- Remember it's never too late to take action on smoking
- Remember that most people don't smoke
- Promote [Ready to Change](#) to family and friends, and share the [explainer video](#) with people you know who are looking to quit smoking
- Remember that free specialist stop-smoking support is available from [Smokefree Norfolk](#), as well as some GP practices and pharmacies, for people who have found quitting by themselves difficult
- Remember that quitting smoking during and after pregnancy can help mothers and babies – and help is available from [Smokefree Norfolk](#)
- Remember that if you smoke, vaping is much less harmful, and swapping from smoking to vaping is a positive health move
- If you don't smoke, don't vape
- If you work with or know young people who might be smoking or vaping, have a look at the information from [Just One Norfolk](#)
- If you are part of an organisation working to improve the lives of your clients or patients, consider the free [Make Every Contact Count and Behaviour Change Training](#) for your staff offered by Public Health
- If you are an employer, consider smokefree workplace policies and signpost staff to [Ready to Change](#) and [Smokefree Norfolk](#)
- Be aware that the illicit trade of tobacco and vapes causes harm to individuals and society. If you are aware of traders selling illicit products, or selling tobacco or vapes to under 18s, please report them to Trading Standards via the [Citizens Advice Online Portal](#)
- Take action to reduce children and young people's exposure to smoking – whether at home, in cars, at school gates or anywhere else where children and young people congregate.

Section 5

Summary

Smoking, while decreasing over time, still causes too much harm and is a key cause of health inequalities in Norfolk. The good news is that there are steps we can all take to reduce the harm that smoking causes.

Smoking is addictive and it can be difficult to stop, but quitting smoking is one of the best things smokers can do to improve their health. Quitting is easier and more effective with support – free help to quit is available and increasing.

Vaping is much less harmful than smoking and can be a useful tool to help smokers to quit. However, the advice is: if you don't smoke, don't vape. There is a particular focus on children and young people to prevent them taking up vaping.

Organisations across Norfolk have prioritised smoking reduction and tobacco control and are working together to reduce smoking related harm to local residents. There are great opportunities for further action and achievement.

We all have a role to play in helping to achieve a smokefree county.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the contributors to this Annual Report, especially Diane Steiner, Michael Woodward, Ciceley Scarborough, Josh Robotham, David Thirkettle, Katherine Attwell, Rosie Christmas, Andreas Sutter, Teresa Gibbon, Lou Banning, Sophie Harrison and Nina Brown amongst others.

Thanks are also due to all those in Norfolk who help to reduce smoking locally – including those who have successfully quit smoking, and those who are on the way.

Credits

Design: Tom Watson and Nina Brown

Images: Getty Images



More information

If you would like further facts and figures, you can find them here:

www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource-norfolk-tobacco-health-needs-assessment

and

[www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/
resource-norfolk-tobacco-health-needs-assessment-summary-infographic](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource-norfolk-tobacco-health-needs-assessment-summary-infographic)

Weblink for this report is [DPH Report 2023](#)

For help quitting smoking, visit Ready to Change www.readytochange.co.uk



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Cabinet

Item No: 9

Report Title: Adult Learning Annual Plan

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Margaret Dewsbury (Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director, Community & Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: Not applicable

Introduction from Cabinet Member

The Adult Learning service is externally funded by the Department for Education and tuition fee income. The service's total income is £5.3 million per academic year, and it earns this income by delivering qualifications, apprenticeships, non-accredited learning programmes and self-financed personal development courses to adult residents in Norfolk.

In the 2022-23 academic year the service was highly successful in meeting the needs of residents, increasing the recruitment of individual learners by 50% from 4,181 in 2021-22 to 6,000. The service also exceeded its funding target, earning 106.8% of target and thus bringing an additional £258,926 of funding into Norfolk.

The service was inspected by Ofsted in November 2023, and inspectors recognised the service's robust approach to delivery in Norfolk: *"Leaders are ambitious for adults and apprentices in the region. They have formed highly effective partnerships with local stakeholders to design the curriculum. Leaders consider pathways to ensure that courses provide routes into employment and design inclusive courses with flexible delivery models that meet the needs of the local community."*

Adult Learning's community-based vision, delivering learning both in 130 venues across Norfolk and online, plays a central role in the service's success in meeting

resident needs. Around 63% of the service's courses are classroom-based and the remainder are delivered online. Ofsted confirmed that *"Learners appreciate the vast number of community venues that the service uses because they can access learning locally, including online, and this widens participation in Norfolk."*

This Annual Plan sets out the service's vision '**Changing lives through inspirational learning with exceptional support**' and clearly links service delivery to Norfolk's strategic objectives, as detailed in the Better Together, for Norfolk Strategy 2021-25. Adult Learning's proposed key priorities are the same as Norfolk's key priorities:

In the 2024-25 academic year, Adult Learning will:

- **Enable** a vibrant and sustainable economy.
- **Support** better opportunities for children and young people.
- **Empower** individuals to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives.
- **Strengthen** communities.
- **Enable** the development of a greener, more resilient future.

This paper sets out how the service's proposed strategic and operational activities contribute to Norfolk's priorities.

Recommendations:

1. To commend the Adult Learning service for its exceptional performance and contribution to Norfolk priorities.
2. To approve the Adult Learning Annual Plan for 2024/25.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The Adult Learning service is an Ofsted-rated 'Good' (November 2023) Further Education Adult and Community Education service, that is externally funded through grant funding from the Department for Education and tuition fee income.
- 1.2 With a total income of **£5,306,569** in the 2022-23 academic year (August 1st 2022-July 31st 2023), the service is one of the largest adult education services in the country, the largest adult education provider in Norfolk, and is cost neutral to the Council.

The service earns its external funding and tuition fee income through the delivery of careers information, advice, and guidance; teaching, learning and assessment; as well as learner and learning support activities, with **6,000** individual adult (19+) learners and **12,579** adult (19+) learner registrations, delivering courses in over **130** community venues and online across Norfolk.

Appendix A provides detailed information on Adult Learning's Income and Financial Management.

- 1.3 The 2022-23 academic year was a highly successful year for the service, with the service's community-based vision really beginning to show success in terms of the service's reach to Norfolk residents and the delivery of a high-quality service.

In the 2022-23 academic year, Adult Learning successfully secured a significant increase in the number of individual learners it worked with, from 4,181 in 2021-22 to 6,000 in 2022-23 – **a 50% increase in one year**.

In addition, Adult Learning increased the number of learner registrations from 9,956 in 2021-22 to 12,579 in 2022-23 – **a 25% increase in one year**. This demonstrates the highly effective way in which the service is encouraging its learners to take up more than one course with the service.

The service earns its income by recruiting and securing positive outcomes for learners.

- ❖ In 2021-22 the service achieved **102.86%** of its Adult Education Budget funding contract target, bringing in an additional **£111,290** of funding to the county.
- ❖ The service's very strong performance in the 2022-23 academic year saw a further increase in Adult Education Budget funding drawdown, as the service achieved **106.8%** of its contract value, with an additional **£258,926** of funding earned for Norfolk. This provides evidence that the service is pushing the boundaries and using its funding fully to maximise delivery to Norfolk residents.

Currently around **63% of courses are classroom-based, with 37% delivered online**, and this continues to meet the needs of learners who live in rural communities and/or who have challenges in getting to classroom venues, perhaps due to caring responsibilities, work shift patterns or because they have a disability. In addition, many learners can access synchronous delivery options, with classes where some of our learners are in a physical venue, while other class members attend online. The service is trailblazing in this area of its work.

The service proactively targets and provides opportunities for residents who are the furthest from education and training. In the 2022-23 academic year, **39%** of learners attending qualification programmes – over **47%** of learners in English, maths and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) - were from the 30% most deprived areas of Norfolk. In non-qualification programmes the proportion was **36%**. Overall, **2,250** learners were from the 30% most deprived wards.

Data that analyses learners' next steps provides evidence of the positive impact Adult Learning has on Norfolk residents. In a survey conducted by an external research organisation two months after the end of the 2022-23 academic year, **42% of learners were in employment and 45% were continuing in education** (39% continuing with Adult Learning and the rest with other Further Education or Higher Education institutions). 53% of the learners who joined the service in 2022-23 at the lowest qualification level – entry level – have progressed onto further learning with Adult Learning this year.

- 1.4 The Adult Learning service was inspected by **Ofsted** in November 2023 and was judged to be **Good** across all inspection themes.

The following direct quotes from the report provide a flavour of the feedback from the Ofsted inspection team:

- ❖ *“Leaders are ambitious for adults and apprentices in the region. They have formed highly effective partnerships with local stakeholders to design the curriculum.”*
- ❖ *“Leaders consider pathways to ensure that courses provide routes into employment and design inclusive courses with flexible delivery models that meet the needs of the local community.”*
- ❖ *“Adult learners and apprentices are enthusiastic, highly motivated and committed to their studies. They have clear plans for their future careers. Almost all plan to use their learning to improve their economic prospects or quality of life.”*
- ❖ *“Adult Learning aims to ensure that learning is accessible to residents in the region, including those who are furthest from education.”*
- ❖ *“Learners who struggle with mobility, social isolation and financial hardship can access programmes that meet their needs.”*
- ❖ *“Tutors ensure that learning takes place in a calm, encouraging and supportive environment and use their experience and expertise to enhance the learning and skills development for learners and apprentices.”*
- ❖ *“Learners and apprentices develop a secure understanding of British values and appreciate their importance. Adult learners benefit from course-related safeguarding and develop an understanding of radicalisation and can make early identification should it occur.”*

Appendix B is a copy of the Norfolk County Council Adult Learning Ofsted Report following the inspection from 14 to 17 November 2023.

1.5 The service continues to play an important role nationally as a leader in the Adult Community Education sector and this has a significant impact on the quality of delivery to Norfolk residents. In the last 12 months the service has:

- ❖ Participated in a Further Education Commissioner 'Active Support' programme, which focused on Governance, Quality and Curriculum Efficiency and Sustainability.
- ❖ Worked with the Department for Education to develop the future funding methodology for community/tailored learning provision.
- ❖ Taken the lead role in the East of England Local Authority Heads of Service group.

1.6 The service regularly collects feedback and produces case studies that demonstrate the impact of its services on Norfolk residents.

In the 2022-23 academic year, the service received 2,415 feedback survey responses from learners. **92%** of the learners who responded to the survey (**2,222**) said that they enjoyed their course.

Appendix C entitled 'The Impact of Adult Learning' provides direct feedback from our learners, taken from the Learner Survey 2022-23 academic year.

Appendix D provides examples of Learner Impact Stories related to the 2022-23 academic year.

Each year, the service holds an awards ceremony that celebrates the achievements of our learners.



The service's 2022-23 **learner of the year**, Ruby Dagless, started a Marketing Apprenticeship at the age of 17. Her employer, Nurtured in Norfolk (an edible flowers company in Dereham), were so impressed by her progress and the

quality of her work that at the age of 18, she was given responsibility for her employer's marketing campaigns.

This is a link to the Adult Learning Learner Awards event 2023:

[Adult Learning Learner Awards 2023 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

2. Proposal

2.1 Intent – the Adult Learning Vision 2024-25

Feedback from learners tells us that the central thing that Adult Learning achieves is to change their lives. We, therefore, propose this vision for the service. We feel that it is extremely powerful and enables both staff and residents to immediately see the aspirations that this service aims to achieve.



2.2 Intent – the Adult Learning Annual Plan

The Adult Learning Annual Plan has been reviewed and adjusted based on the latest evidence and insight and outlines how Adult Learning will use its funding and income in the 2024-25 academic year to continue to respond well to the ambition and aspirations of the county, as well as the existing and emerging learning needs of adults in Norfolk, and funding priorities.

In developing this plan, the service has considered external factors, such as changes to national Further Education funding policy from the Department for Education. From the 2024-25 academic year, Adult Education Budget and Free Courses for Jobs funding will be replaced by a new Adult Skills Fund, with non-qualification learning refocused as tailored learning within the wider Adult Skills Fund.

The service's performance and plans place the service in a strong position in relation to the devolution to Norfolk County Council of the Adult Skills Fund (formerly Adult Education Budget) from the 2025-26 academic year, as well as in terms of a robust response to the economic and social needs of the county.

A key focus in the 2024-25 academic year will be to target adult residents who are seeking employment or who are economically inactive and to enable individuals to return to the workplace by providing support and access to new skills, vocational and apprenticeship pathways. The service will also continue to provide support for the health and wellbeing of a wide range of adult residents, as well as a programme of Independent Living Skills for residents who have a physical disability and/or learning disability or difficulty.

In addition, the curriculum planning process considers national, regional, and local priorities in the Further Education sector, as well as how the service will contribute to Norfolk County Council's strategic objectives, as detailed in Better Together for Norfolk.

In revisiting the Annual Plan, the service has used evidence-based research and extensive partnership working to identify the key drivers for the future delivery of its courses, in particular the county's ambition and aspiration to be high performing, to enjoy economic growth and to protect the environment; as well as to have safe, empowered and connected communities.

2.3 Intent – Adult Learning's Key Priorities and Contribution to Norfolk's priorities for learning and skills in the academic year 2024-25.

This section outlines Adult Learning's key priorities and how they will contribute to the Better Together, for Norfolk Strategy 2021-25.

In the 2024-25 academic year, Adult Learning will:

- **Enable** a vibrant and sustainable economy.
- **Support** better opportunities for children and young people.
- **Empower** individuals to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives.
- **Strengthen** communities.
- **Enable** the development of a greener, more resilient future.

Appendix E outlines Adult Learning's Key Planning Priorities and Contributions, including how Adult Learning's strategic and operational activities will contribute to Norfolk County Council's strategic priorities as detailed in the Better Together, for Norfolk Strategy 2021-25.

Appendix F is the Adult Learning Plan on a Page for the academic year 2024-25. This document brings together Adult Learning's objectives and priorities for

the year, key deliverables, key activities, key risks, vital signs and targets, and key budget headings.

2.4 The service's external income will enable it to deliver a wide-ranging curriculum, including:

- Qualifications from entry level to Level 5 (foundation degree level)
- Apprenticeships
- Non-accredited tailored learning that:
 - Provides opportunities for residents to return to education and progress on to further learning, qualifications and/or employment.
 - Enables access to learning, work, and independent lives for residents with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.
 - Provides opportunities for parents, guardians, and carers to support children and young people.
 - Supports, through learning, the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- A wide range of learning interventions that improve numeracy skills, funded through the county's Multiply grant
- Self-financed creative and personal development courses.

Appendix G outlines the proposed Adult Learning curriculum 2024-25.

2.5 Our community-based vision

Adult Learning is a service focused on accessible, community-based delivery to the residents who most need it. Our Unique Selling Point, across the 130 community venues that we use, as well as online, is that the Adult Learning service:

- ❖ Delivers learning in the heart of Norfolk's communities, both in classrooms and online – we take teaching and learning to Norfolk residents, we don't expect them to come to us.
- ❖ We focus our delivery on the areas that have the highest levels of educational deprivation – across the whole of Norfolk.
- ❖ We provide first step, tailored learning, qualifications, and apprenticeships that provide progression pathways for adult learners who need to build their confidence and motivation, and who need flexible, local delivery – we specialise in responding to the needs of adults and we don't expect adult learners to compromise in how we meet their specific needs.

Ofsted recognised the benefits of our community-based approach. At the final inspection feedback meeting (November 2023), the Lead Inspector said:
“Learners appreciate the vast number of community venues that the service uses because they can access learning locally, including online, and this widens participation in Norfolk.”

The service has already demonstrated its ability to use its external funding and income highly effectively to plan both flexible and responsive learning programmes that are delivered in the community and leads the way in our sector with the use of technology in education and the implementation of synchronous delivery.

Appendix H outlines the service’s proposed approach to the delivery of its community-based vision.

3. A County Deal for Norfolk

- 3.1 A County Deal for Norfolk would provide significant opportunities for the service. At present, funding is provided by Government to deliver against nationally set outcomes and priorities. In a County Deal, the funding would be devolved to the County Council (from August 2025 onwards) and there would be flexibility to create a local approach, to meet local needs. The Adult Learning Service would be involved in shaping these priorities, which means better tailoring of activity so that the service can deliver what Norfolk needs.

4. Impact of the Proposal

- 4.1 The Adult Learning Annual Plan will enable the Council to use its external funding and tuition fee income to deliver the learning outcomes outlined in this proposal.

The Adult Learning service will use the success measures identified in its Key Priorities and Contribution to Norfolk’s Priorities document (**see Appendix E**), its Plan on a Page (**see Appendix F**) and its self-assessment process to measure the impact of the proposed Adult Learning Annual Plan.

5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 5.1 This paper demonstrates that the performance of the Adult Learning service, which has gained national recognition for Norfolk County Council, is exceptional in meeting the needs of Norfolk residents and communities.
- 5.2 The Adult Learning Annual Plan is based on the identified needs and priorities for adults in Norfolk. The service’s external funding and income enables Norfolk County Council to provide wide-ranging opportunities to Norfolk residents and communities to learn, gain new skills and qualifications and to progress.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The proposed Adult Learning Annual Plan enables Norfolk County Council to best use its external Further Education funding and tuition fee income to deliver a comprehensive, bespoke service for adult residents across Norfolk through its Adult Learning service, the largest provider of adult education in Norfolk. This results in the delivery of strong outcomes and exceptional support, that respond directly to the Council's priorities for Norfolk and have a significant impact on residents, proactively targeting those who are the furthest from education and training.

Cabinet could decide not to deliver adult education in-house in Norfolk and the outcome of this decision would result in the loss of this high-quality, place-based, community-focused service that responds so well to the diverse needs of Norfolk residents, communities, and employers.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 Adult Learning is externally funded through the Department for Education, student loans and tuition fee income and is financially self-sustainable.

The growth of the service's programmes, together with successful applications for additional funding, will allow for investment into future learning opportunities that respond to Norfolk's priorities.

8. Resource Implications

8.1 Staff:

Adult Learning currently has 290 staff, of which 206 are teaching staff. The service manages its staffing requirements in line with the funding and income it secures and the curriculum that it delivers.

The service continues to provide specialist training for teaching staff to enable them to deliver their programmes effectively.

8.2 Property:

The service's move to hybrid working, together with the online and synchronous delivery of a proportion of its courses, has reduced the service's venue-associated costs. In addition, the service has actively increased its use of training facilities in libraries and a wide range of other local, community venues.

With 37% of course delivery online and for the remaining 63% a focus on local, community-based delivery, the service can deliver a more environmentally sustainable programme.

This combination of online and community-based training facilities has enabled the service to increase its countywide presence, and better meet the needs of residents.

The service's two construction training centres in Norwich (opened November 2022) and King's Lynn (opened in September 2023), also provide training facilities for other subject areas. The on-going costs of these new facilities will be managed through the service's existing budgets.

Adult Learning is also actively involved in the development of the two new Multi-User Community Hubs in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. The Place in Great Yarmouth will open in Autumn 2024 and Adult Learning will deliver a full programme of courses from dedicated training rooms at this new location.

8.3 IT:

The significant growth in online delivery has required the service to increase its expenditure on equipment, software, and training for staff, as well as to increase the level of support for learners to access and effectively use digital platforms. The service's Department for Education learner support funding enables the service to provide digital equipment to learners who have an annual income of less than £33,955.

9. Other Implications

9.1 Legal Implications:

Adult Learning operates within the requirements around funding and performance established by the Department for Education and Ofsted.

9.2 Human Rights Implications:

None.

9.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):

The Adult Learning Annual Plan actively seeks to target diverse and vulnerable individuals and supports community cohesion, and it is not envisaged that there will be any adverse impacts based on this proposal. Ofsted said (November 2023): *"Adult Learning aims to ensure that learning is accessible to residents in the region, including those who are furthest from education."*

Adult Learning has an immensely positive impact on adult residents, for example:

- ❖ **39%** of learners who attended qualification programmes and **36%** of learners who attended non-accredited courses or **2,250 learners** in total in the 2022-23 academic year were from the **30%** most deprived wards in Norfolk.

- ❖ The service responds well to the needs of Norfolk's ethnic minority communities, with **38% (1,074)** of learners on qualification programmes and **19% (868)** of community learning learners from a non-White British ethnic background in the 2022-23 academic year. Ofsted said (November 2023): *"Leaders have responded effectively to the growing demand in the region for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses... Learners studying ESOL make good use of their new skills in their personal lives... As a result, learners feel more confident and able to live independent lives."*
- ❖ The **Independent Living Skills** programme, with around **200** learner registrations each year, supports residents with a learning difficulty and/or disability to gain the skills they need to live an independent life. Ofsted said (November 2023): *"Leaders and managers are ambitious for learners and apprentices, including learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD)."*
- ❖ The **Lipreading** programme provides around **200** learners each year, who have a hearing impairment, with the skills they need to participate fully in everyday life and work. This programme is offered free of charge to facilitate access. Ofsted said (November 2023): *"Staff encourage adult lipreading learners to take walks, do gardening, and enjoy meeting their friends. This enables them to better manage their mental and physical health needs."*
- ❖ The service actively enables **female** learners to gain the skills and qualifications they need to gain employment and progress and reduce the pay gap, for example, **30%** of our construction learners are female.
- ❖ **Learner support funding** provides access to learning for residents who need financial support to enable them to participate in a course and is available to learners attending funded courses.
Our funded courses are free of charge to a resident with an income of less than £20,319, and a resident who has an income of between £20,319 and £33,955 will pay a reduced fee.
In addition, we can pay a resident's childcare and travel costs, and for course materials, such as a laptop, books, pens, folders, for anyone with an income of less than £33,955.
- ❖ Our **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)** assesses learners' specific needs, including dyslexia assessments, and arranges the support an individual needs to succeed in their learning and to access examinations and qualifications.
- ❖ **Additional learning support** enables a learner who needs one-to-one support with their learning to access the support they need, and this is available to all funded learners.
- ❖ The service's **community-based vision**, with classroom-based delivery in local venues, combined with an online offer, provides access to learning for residents who previously had barriers, such as residents with a disability or who live in a rural area. Ofsted said (November 2023): *"Learners who struggle with mobility, social isolation and financial hardship can access programmes that meet their needs."*

9.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

Adult Learning is fully compliant with data protection requirements and there are no changes in this proposal that have implications in relation to data protection.

9.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

The delivery of the Adult Learning Annual Plan will be taken forward in line with Government regulations and in consultation with Health and Safety colleagues in the Council. An Assistant Head of Service is responsible for this process and for ensuring that learners and staff are and remain safe.

9.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

This proposal will have a positive impact on the environment, as it is planned that around 37-40% of the service's future learning provision will be available online. In addition, the service's community-based vision reduces the need for staff and learners to travel, as the service uses local venues to deliver its courses. The service's construction and environmental sustainability curriculum, including the introduction of new Retrofit qualifications, will actively support Norfolk's net zero aspirations.

9.7 Any Other Implications:

None.

10. Risk Implications / Assessment

- 10.1 The risks associated with the Adult Learning service's operations are managed through the Community, Information and Learning departmental risk register. There are no additional risks resulting from this proposal.

11. Select Committee Comments

- 11.1 Adult Learning will provide an update to Cabinet following the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee that is due to be held on Friday 23rd February 2023.

12. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Commend the Adult Learning service for its exceptional performance and contribution to Norfolk priorities.**
- 2. Approve the Adult Learning Annual Plan for 2024-25.**

13. Background Papers

- 13.1 None.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Adult Learning Income and Financial Management

Adult Learning is externally funded through grant funding from the Department for Education and student loan and tuition fee income. The service's income, in the 2022-23 academic year totalled £5,306,569, and was broken down as follows:

- Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£4,039,207)
- National Skills Fund (£155,731)
- Student loans (£104,386)
- Tuition fees (£241,432) (financial year)
- Apprenticeships (£765,813).

The service's external funding is earned through the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment across Norfolk.

In 2022-23, following a strong year of qualifications and community learning delivery, against a national backdrop of under-delivery, the service overdelivered on its AEB allocation by 6.8%, bringing in an additional £259K of funding into Norfolk (an in-year change in the rules meant we were allowed to claim up to 110% of our contract value, up from 103% previously).

£137K from the service's £766K Apprenticeship income is paid to the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service for the delivery of their Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship programme.

Following a similar trend to the last few years, more of the service's Department for Education-funded learners were entitled to fully funded courses, leading to a reduction in the service's tuition fee income.

This reduction in tuition fee income is a direct result of the service's success in engaging with harder to reach learners and learners who are eligible for fully funded courses. Over the last five years, the service's income from tuition fees has reduced from more than £500K per year to around £241K in total. This figure does mask the full extent of the reduction, as it includes fees from self-financed provision of £219K.

Set against another tough year nationally in the sector, Adult Learning over-delivered by £5K on its allocation for Free Level 3 Courses. However, the service's Student Loans income for its Level 3 provision was down at £104K, because more learners were eligible for free courses.

By increasing the service's delivery, including the introduction of new qualifications in the construction and sustainability curriculum, the service expects to use all its funding in the 2023-24 academic year, and is targeting an additional 10% made available by the Department for Education.

In addition to the income detailed above, Adult Learning is delivering a significant proportion of Norfolk's Multiply contract, with a target of £350K funding in the 2024-25 financial year. This funding will be used to deliver a range of Multiply numeracy interventions across the county.

Inspection of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning

Inspection dates:

14 to 17 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Apprenticeships	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Information about this provider

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning (NCCAL) provides adult learning and apprenticeship programmes across the Norfolk region. NCCAL aims to ensure that learning is accessible to residents in the region, including those who are furthest from education. It provides community-based learning and online learning programmes. Currently, NCCAL operates in over 100 community venues across Norfolk.

At the time of the inspection, there were approximately 6,000 adult learners and 179 apprentices. Most adult learners are on level 1 and level 2 learning programmes. These programmes include English and mathematics, health and social care, preparation for work, and digital learning. More recently, NCCAL has started to offer construction courses for adult learners. Level 3 programmes include access to higher education (access to HE), accounting and finance, and supporting teaching and learning.

Most apprentices are over the age of 19 years and training on level 3 programmes, including teaching assistant, business administration and operational firefighter. NCCAL recently introduced the level 4 early intervention practitioner apprenticeship programme. There are approximately 20 apprenticeship standards with fewer than 10 apprentices in training.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Adult Learners and apprentices are enthusiastic, highly motivated and committed to their studies. They have clear plans for their future careers. Almost all plan to use their learning to improve their economic prospects or quality of life.

Adult learners benefit from a flexible approach to learning. Learners who struggle with mobility, social isolation and financial hardship can access programmes that meet their needs. Learners who are resident in retired living homes have increased their confidence, self-care and resilience after completing courses in basic cookery. Learners feel less isolated by completing the courses together and are excited to prepare and eat their own meals. As a result, these learners develop friendships, confidence and a sense of belonging in the communities in which they live.

Tutors ensure that learning takes place in a calm, encouraging and supportive environment. Learners and apprentices support their peers and are confident to ask questions and clarify misconceptions. Learners and apprentices share their own experiences to provide additional insights during discussions.

Most learners attend classes regularly and arrive punctually. In the few cases of learner absence, managers explore options to provide additional support to overcome the barriers that learners may be facing.

Most learners and apprentices study how to maintain their health and well-being. Staff encourage adult lip-reading learners to take walks, do gardening, and enjoy meeting new friends. This enables them to better manage their mental and physical health needs.

Apprentices feel safe in their work settings. They have a good understanding of safeguarding and how to report a concern. Learners and apprentices develop a secure understanding of British values and appreciate their importance. Adult learners benefit from course-related safeguarding. Accounting assistants understand about online fraud and the importance of cybersecurity. Most learners develop an understanding of radicalisation and can make early identification should it occur.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for adults and apprentices in the region. They have formed highly effective partnerships with local stakeholders to design the curriculum. They have responded effectively to the growing demand in the region for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. Leaders work with libraries to identify and provide courses, such as digital literacy courses, in rural communities. Leaders work with job centres to promote their programmes in areas of skills shortage, such as construction trades. Leaders consider pathways to ensure that courses provide

routes into employment for learners. Leaders design inclusive courses with flexible delivery models that meet the needs of the local community.

Leaders have worked with local employers effectively to design apprenticeship courses. Leaders worked with employers to introduce the early intervention practitioner apprenticeship. Leaders responded to employers needing qualified staff in children's and adult services.

Leaders work with employers to ensure that apprentices establish and remember new skills in an incremental and secure way. Operational firefighter apprentices learn health and safety routines. They demonstrate the professional standards of behaviour expected of them in the fire service. Apprentices learn about nutrition, hydration and managing sleep patterns while working on shift. Staff highlight the effects of sleep patterns on hormone cycles and how to manage these to avoid conflict in the workplace. As a result, the apprenticeship is well matched to the needs of the fire service and leads logically towards their final examinations.

Tutors and assessors are well qualified in their subjects and have good workplace experience. This includes specialist courses, such as lip-reading. Tutors use their experience and expertise to enhance the learning and skills development for learners and apprentices.

Apprentices value the support they receive from their assessors and workplace mentors. Assessors plan frequent tripartite meetings to review the progress of apprentices. Assessors work with the workplace mentors to agree an individualised plan for on- and off-the-job training. Apprentices in danger of falling behind with their work receive additional support sessions to enable them to meet their targets.

Tutors do not consistently identify learners' and apprentices' existing skills and knowledge at the start of their course. Tutors do not use the information that they do collect on prior learning to tailor training for adults and apprentices. Tutors do not consistently agree and set effective targets for adult learners at the beginning of their programmes. In most cases, targets for adult learners are too vague and do not identify the skills that learners need to make the progress of which they are capable.

Most tutors present information skilfully, particularly in face-to-face sessions. They provide clear explanations, using their industry experience to explain key concepts. In access to HE, tutors provide clear explanations of key theories, such as person-centred therapy. Tutors include practical examples of class members' experience of using positive affirmation techniques. Tutors use stimulating learning materials, such as video clips, to reinforce the theories. Learners move on to compare and contrast with previously learned alternative therapy approaches. As a result, learners are developing substantial new knowledge and skills of psychodynamic approaches.

Most teachers use assessment effectively. Teachers use assessment to ensure that learners understand and remember key concepts. Tutors use effective questioning techniques to identify knowledge gaps, deepen understanding and quickly address

any misconceptions. In construction, tutors use questioning techniques with learners to reflect on the progress they have made. Tutors challenge learners to reflect on what they would do differently and what the impact would be.

Most learners and apprentices further develop their English and mathematics skills throughout their course. In ESOL, learners quickly develop their written English skills in the initial stages of their programme. Learners improve their written English in the use of tense and positive and negative verbs. Tutors ensure that learners understand and correct common mistakes. Learners studying ESOL make good use of their new skills in their personal lives. Learners take part in social activities, such as sports, where they feel welcomed and able to communicate with others. As a result, learners feel more confident and able to live independent lives.

However, leaders do not ensure that level 3 teaching assistant apprentices make good progress with English and mathematics. Leaders do not ensure that English and mathematics are successfully embedded or taught early enough in the programme. As a result, apprentices do not complete their apprenticeship in a timely manner.

Leaders and managers are ambitious for learners and apprentices, including learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). Tutors are aware of the broad additional needs of their learners and ensure that support is available to improve learners' access to learning. However, planning between teachers and learning support staff is not consistently effective. Leaders acknowledge that learners with LDD are not always supported effectively. Leaders are taking appropriate steps to resolve this issue, but it is too early to evidence the impact of these actions.

Tutors prepare apprentices very effectively for their final examinations. Apprentices have a good understanding of how their work contributes to their final assessment. Apprentices are keen to collect their best pieces of work for their final submission portfolio.

Most learners are well prepared for their next steps. Learners are aware of the wider careers support available to them should they wish to change their vocational route. Learners studying accounting know the career routes within their chosen sector. Tutors provide information about next steps and examples of the pathways taken by alumni. Learners studying access to HE programmes benefit from teaching that is jointly delivered with local university staff. They complete assignments that enable them to research careers in their chosen sector. The few learners who do not wish to progress to university receive support to plan their next steps. However, too few apprentices receive independent careers advice. Too few apprentices understand the wide range of job opportunities available to them in the future.

Most adult learners and apprentices achieve well and complete their programmes. Leaders have put in place appropriate actions to address the decline in achievement, where appropriate. Leaders have removed the embedded digital skills qualification from the functional skills programmes. Leaders have introduced more robust English diagnostic assessment for those learners studying functional skills level 2

mathematics. However, at the time of the inspection, it was too early to see the full impact of these actions.

Governors have a good understanding and oversight of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. They provide effective support and challenge for leaders to continue to drive improvements. Governors challenged managers to improve their performance reporting to the board. As a result, governors have been instrumental in improving the monitoring and improvement of safeguarding compliance, such as timely safeguarding checks and refresher training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Tutors must establish learners' and apprentices' starting points to ensure that they are on an appropriate programme. Tutors must use these starting points to develop individual learning plans and targets for learners and apprentices.
- Leaders must ensure that apprentices benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance to plan their future careers and progression pathways.
- Tutors and learning support assistants must communicate effectively to ensure that learners with LDD receive the support they need to access learning and make good progress.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53545
Address	County Hall Martineau Lane Norwich NR1 2DH
Contact number	01603 306605
Website	www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Denise Saadvandi
Provider type	Community Learning and Skills – Local Authority
Date of previous inspection	18 to 21 April 2016
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the Head of Service, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Penny Fawcus, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michael Worgs	His Majesty's Inspector
Claire Griffin	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Bealey	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Manning	His Majesty's Inspector
Judith Mobbs	Ofsted Inspector
Lyn Bourne	Ofsted Inspector

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Appendix C – The Impact of Adult Learning

"I have gained a better understanding of how to deal with my own and others disabilities. I have found this course challenging but feel it has given me the confidence to make my hearing difficulties known and strategies to communicate and understand others better."

[Lipreading]

"It has allowed more options of employment to be available to me in a mechanical industry as I will be able to achieve high qualifications in my industry."

[Maths]

"Really enjoyable, I wouldn't have been able to do the course if it hadn't been offered online..."

[GCSE English]

"OUR DEAF DAUGHTER RECOGNISES THE BASIC SIGNS WE ARE DOING, AND THE LOOK OF JOY AND EXCITEMENT ON THEIR FACE WHEN SHE SIGNS BACK TO US AND WE KNOW WHAT SHE NEEDS."

[British Sign Language]

"It has been a life changing course, because of this course I am able to progress to university, the amount of support and quality of teaching has been excellent. This course will forever be etched in my memory as one of the best experiences ever."

[Psychosocial Studies]

"I have been accepted into uni. At the age of 43!!."

[Access to Nursing and Midwifery]

"I have felt less depressed and more accepting of myself."

[Boosting Your Emotional Intelligence]

"It was a highlight of my week: building creative skills and using that as a platform for improving my mental health, building my confidence and co-ordination, my eye for detail and design, and improving my social skills..."

[Step into Art: Painting]

"I look at things in a different way now. I also have enquired learning more at City college and hopefully onto University to gain a degree."

[Peer Support]

"I feel much more at ease with myself and I like myself more after doing this course. It is a great course for folks with trauma or low self-esteem."

[Self-Acceptance and Self-Validation]

"It has given structure to my week...Improved my confidence and positivity..."

[Relax, Create and Learn: Crafting]

"This... has cemented my interest in doing further study in counselling to become qualified and help people in this way."

[Introduction to Counselling]

"Learn some thing new and meet friends , share problems. The only time in the week when I don't have to apologise for being deaf."

[Lipreading]

"It has had a tremendous impact on my life in many ways...we come away having laughed, struggled and improved our knowledge of varied subjects...We are a 'family'!"

[Lipreading]

"This course has give [sic] me the confidence to push myself and better myself and my children's life"

[NVQ L2 Teaching Assistant]

"Doing yoga has increased my self awareness of my health overall, I have also lost weight and reduced my blood pressure."

[Yoga Flow]

"I now feel confident to seek employment in the finance industry which starts at a higher pay than previous retail jobs I have been in."

[AAT]

"I will now be able to move onto the next course I'd like to do."

I enjoy the purpose it's gave to my evenings."

[L3 Teaching Assistant]

*"I HAVE NOW MADE
FOOD FROM FRESH."*

[Think Food –
Cooking on a Budget]

*"I've got more confidence to try something new. I have
definitely gained skills from the course, and I think if I wanted, I
could take these skills further. I definitely think it would be a
good starting point if I wanted to change my career."*

[Basic Bricklaying]

*"This has help [sic] me believe i can do
anything if i put my mind to it.it will help
me get into my next job role."*

[English Fast Track Online]

*"its hard to get out when you have
nowhere in mind to go to, this has given
me the push to leave my house and start
looking at the world again."*

[Step Up Your Computer Skills]

*"It has made me feel more confident in myself. I have
set places I go at certain times. I avoid social contact
with new people, crowds, etc. The course has shown
me I am stronger than I allow myself to feel."*

[Beginners Carpentry and Joinery]

*"...No worry, no anxiety, no having to be
out in the dark, no traveling, just safe. I
attended every lesson and I miss it so
much now it has finished."*

[Sketching and Journalling Improvers]

"Done [sic] the course in my spare time so didn't interfere [sic] with anything, hoping to apply for dream job

[FS English]

"I am 77 years old, I have no friends in the UK and don't speak English.

This course is a bit difficult, but nevertheless massively helped my well-being in that I'm meeting other people, learning some new words, slowly gaining confidence in speaking English more."

[Everyday Conversations]

"The Lipreading course gives many tips for coping in everyday situations. This makes what appear simple things like going shopping more achievable."

[Lipreading]

"I have recently retired and this course has given me a sense of purpose."

[Introduction to BSL]

"It gave me a boost to actually find I could understand some of maths. Its always been a blank area in the...Its good to actually understand.."

[Maths L2]

"Has a very positive effect, stimulated my thinking and perception of other things, slowly allows me to look into a different kind of world."

[British Sign Language]

"A regular pattern to my week, enjoying learning and meeting new people."

[Art]

"This course has given me confidence in making food for a reasonable price. It has also given me a purpose to get out and meet other people as I do sometimes isolate at home."

[Slow Cooking]

"give [sic] me a reason to get up."

[English]

"It is good to have plans in my diary to look forward to."

[Wellbeing through Art]

"I have come out of my shell more and I have got a bit more courage..."

[Maths Functional Skills]

"Doing the wheel of life and using that helped me to assess what is important to me and make some goals. I now feel my life is more balanced and I spend more time doing things that are important to me..."

[Introduction to Life Coaching]

A powerful reminder of the impact Adult Learning has



Ayse came to England from Turkey, where she worked as a psychologist. Ayse's main area of work was with children, and she would like to continue her career in England but needs to have a very good level of English, to carry on that journey.

When first arriving in England, Ayse applied for a job at her daughter's school, but was unfortunately not accepted due to her English not being at the required level. The school Principal suggested volunteering in the school to help improve her English and gain experience working with children in a different country. As a result, Ayse started helping at the school, volunteering in the classrooms and helping both the staff and children. This later developed into a Midday Supervisor Assistant (MSA) role and Ayse would continue to volunteer in the classroom after her paid shift was

over to help develop her English and increase her experience.

Whilst volunteering in the school, Ayse also decided to start improving her English through enrolling on an ESOL Level 2 course at Great Yarmouth Library with Marie-Lea Demolliens as her teacher. Ayse has nothing but praise for her tutor *"I can say that Marie-Lea Demolliens is a great teacher. She loves her job and supports her students in every way"*. It was in fact Marie-Lea who encouraged Ayse to take the initiative and apply for a paid Teaching Assistant role at the school. Ayse was delighted to be offered the position and is now working as an SEN Teaching Assistant and as a result has also enrolled on the Adult Learning Level 2 Teaching Assistant course.

The courses that Ayse has joined not only develop her skills and knowledge but have also had a very strong impact on her personal life and wellbeing. *"Even though I had lots of friends and relatives in Turkey, of course I don't have anybody in here. If you are a foreigner in a country, it is not easy to build up friendships. Thankfully I joined the Norfolk Adult Learning family, that way I had a great opportunity to know people from different cultures. Before I joined, there were times I felt so alone, but thanks to Norfolk Adult Learning, I am not feeling so alone anymore."*

Ayse has continued to thrive during her time with Adult Learning and is starting an online English Functional Skills Level 2 course in the summer, with the plan to become a psychologist once again, as she was in Turkey.

Asked about her experiences so far, Ayse commented: *"If you have chosen to develop yourself and learn new things with Norfolk Adult Learning, you are in the right place. An organization full of people who do their job properly and with love. I am happy to continue my learning adventure with such a professional team."*

An update from our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

Many of our learners have barriers and experiences that mean they have not achieved what they want in their education or career. Adult Learning gives people of any age or background an invaluable opportunity to realise achievements and reach their goals. This is why I am passionate about my role as part of our team. In the last 6 months alone, we have helped:

- ❖ A learner with extreme anxiety, leave the house for the first time in years, because we allowed them to access their course with their anxiety pets.
- ❖ A learner with anxiety, visual and medical conditions, to be on track to complete a Maths GCSE they have been trying to achieve for nearly 50 years.
- ❖ A learner whose glaucoma recently became total blindness, to update their digital skills and be able to play an active role in promoting accessibility across the region.

These, along with many others we have supported to feel safe, included, and welcome in our service. I feel proud to be part of an organisation that doesn't judge and does everything it can to be inclusive, giving all an equal chance of success.



Help with dyslexia

I first met Grace in October 2022 and prior to meeting Grace, I met with the workshop tutor Jim Kelly who explained that Grace was dyslexic and had some concerns about her apprenticeship. Grace was concerned about undertaking her course because she had been told at the workshop that she would need to complete written assignments. She was concerned about doing this due to her dyslexia. At our meetings we would check her work including the spelling, punctuation, and grammar. I would also break the questions down so

that she could understand them better.

Grace has thrived since my first meeting, including producing written assignments. She has demonstrated excellent skills throughout and has shown, when I have observed her practice, that she is more than competent at undertaking her job role. Feedback from her employers is that she is an asset to the team and works well on her own, and also provides support to new staff within the department. She is a good role model for them.

Grace's evidence has been audited and she is now in End Point Assessment. I believe Grace will do very well in this, although she is very nervous.

Mark Yorkston, Curriculum Manager, Public Services, Leisure and Tourism said: *"Another fantastic example of how our professional and passionate tutors go that extra mile to support their learners, not only to progress in learning, but to provide long term coping mechanisms for work and everyday life".*

Taking the first step towards a dream career

Sarah started her English GCSE course last year with Adult Learning but found a month into the course that she was pregnant. She spoke to the tutor about whether to continue as the baby was due just after the last exam, and after lots of discussion and deliberation decided to carry on and complete the course. She really wants to be a midwife but is starting the journey from the bottom and needs to get her GCSEs to realise this dream. She passed her GCSE English and is now going on to do the GCSE maths before she starts the Access to Higher Education Nursing and Midwifery course and so that she can finally gain a place at university and study towards becoming a midwife.

She said *"The tutors were excellent and if you are thinking about doing a course with Adult Learning, don't even think twice, definitely go for it."*

Let me introduce you to Lisa....

Lisa recently gained her Access to Higher Education Nursing and Midwifery qualification with Adult Learning and is now looking towards a new and exciting future career.

Sounds simple - but it wasn't. Lisa had a difficult start to life, she didn't do very well at school, has two failed marriages behind her and cares for her disabled children. This had allowed her very little time to explore her own aspirations, but she decided that now was the time to start pursuing her career goals.

Lisa has always worked in the care sector to provide for her family, and many of the nurses she worked with remarked on her natural caring ability and recommended nursing as a career path. So, Lisa decided that was something she wanted to do and joined the Access to Higher Education Nursing and Midwifery course, as well as the Maths Functional Skills Fast Track course, to gain the qualifications needed to pursue her career choice.

Full of praise for the course and her tutors, Lisa said: *"I loved studying on the course and was really glad it was face-to-face. The support received was phenomenal and any concerns and stresses were dealt with straight away by my tutor, Christine. She really is a credit to the Access course"*.

Lisa is one step closer to her dream job as she has now started a Nursing Degree at the UEA in Norwich.

Exams case study



Following a busy Summer of GCSE results, I wanted to reflect on one of our learner's journeys, and I really appreciated one of our GCSE maths learners, Charlene, taking the time out of her day to chat with me about her learning journey.

Charlene had friends who had previously studied with Adult Learning, so she contacted us and enrolled, knowing that she wanted to go into midwifery or paediatric nursing in the future and maths and English were a requirement for her to study at university. Charlene spoke about her school experiences when she was younger and how she didn't like school, but when she decided to return to learning as an adult, she found it enjoyable. She attended a classroom-based course and had a tutor who was very supportive and structured his lessons in a positive way, which made it easy for her to understand, and Charlene stated

that she "thoroughly enjoyed" her classes.

Charlene's life is busy having four children, aged 13, 12, 10, and 7. Her eldest is currently starting his GCSEs, and she is happy to be able to support him with his maths after achieving a grade 5.

Charlene has done a fantastic job finding time to study, in addition to the day-to-day duties that come with being a mum, and she is now continuing her learning journey for her English GCSE qualification. I'm looking forward to seeing Charlene next summer when she sits her exams and moves a step closer to her goals.

This is why we do what we do!

Student X is 35 and attends the English Functional Skills class at her local library on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings. She joined the course last September and this has been her first experience of formal education – growing up in the traveller community, she was ‘not allowed’ to go to school.

Her background is a truly inspiring story of how, with grit and determination, she has been able to start turning her life around for the better. Because as she admits, she has known some dark times....

Still in her teens, she got married and had six children in quick succession. Her husband was in the army, which meant she had to cope on her own for a lot of the time. Life slowly began to spiral out of control as her mental health deteriorated, and with no acknowledgement from her community that mental health issues exist, and therefore with little or no support available, in desperation, she turned to drugs. Her children were taken into care, and following a full breakdown, she eventually found herself homeless and living on the streets.

A homeless project organisation helped her to see a way forward and she started to think about how to improve her reading and writing. She was directed to, and participated in, the Pathways to Reading programme at the local library, who then recommended Adult Learning courses. She achieved her first English qualification with Adult Learning – Entry Level 1 - in November 2022. In March 2023, she gained her Entry Level 2 English and will soon complete Entry Level 3 English. Peter Howard, her tutor, put her forward for an Adult Learning Learner Award and she won the award for Personal Accomplishment.

But she isn't stopping there.... not only is she completing her English qualifications, but she has also joined the maths class at her local Library too! Ultimately, she aspires to help others who find themselves in similar situations to hers. We think this is just the first chapter in her story to success....



Gaining the ‘Confidence to speak up’

Here's a picture of some of our learners, who joined us for the ‘Confidence to Speak Up’ course.

This community arts course was delivered by Adult Learning in partnership with MensCraft.

Colin Howey, MensCraft coordinator said:

“The ‘Confidence to Speak Up’ course has provided MensCraft’s Pit Stop members with an opportunity to come together in a supportive environment to ‘find’ and develop their unique voices. Cat, our tutor, a professional poet, was able to share her experience and insights as a performer, allowing the group to develop practical techniques to perform effectively in front of an audience.

Many of the group had never spoken publicly before and gained considerable confidence and self-esteem – especially through their final performances in front of the group. Progressing on from this, we will be starting a poetry writing group and it is our hope that these classes will act as a catalyst for a new MensCraft Pit Stop group, focused on poetry writing and performance.”

Functional Skills Maths case study

David, who joined a blended Functional Skills Maths course, is a brilliant example of how well a motivated learner can progress. David was rusty with his maths and, by his own admission, not the most confident, and slightly worried when he began.

He joined as an Entry 3 learner in September but, very impressively, put in a lot of extra work himself and in his own time. This meant that by Christmas, he had not only passed his Level 1 (with a score of 100%), but also had a Learner Award given to him. David was very open that the Learner Award meant more to him than the qualification, and it was touching and well worth remembering the genuine pride and satisfaction the learner got as a result.

David carried on to Level 2 and continued in much the same vein. He took great strides and got his Level 2 certificate at the very first time of asking.

David really sums up the fantastic work that goes on in Adult Learning; he went from Entry 3 to gaining his Level 2 within six months, and claims that the work he has done has transformed his life; he is now seriously considering applying for GCSE Maths.

Unaccompanied child asylum seeker without schooling wins educational award



An unaccompanied child asylum seeker who arrived in Norwich never having been to school has become the recipient of a prestigious Adult Learning Learner Award.

Hamza Mahmoud, 20, originally from Eritrea, lost his family due to civil unrest within the country and arrived on his own in Norwich. When he was aged 19, he joined an Adult Learning English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course, which also incorporates Maths. Hamza had never been to school in his own country, but despite that he attended every single lesson and made stunning progress, moving from entry level through to Level 2 within one academic year, which really is exceptional. On top of this, Hamza has proved himself to be a model learner, often helping and inspiring others within the class as well as translating from English to Eritrean where necessary.

Hamza's tutor nominated him for the Learner Awards after seeing his amazing progress and how well he had adapted to education.

Hamza said: *"Adult Learning has made such a difference to my life. My English and Maths have improved and it has been the most important step for my future. I initially wanted to complete Entry Level 1 and 2 but doing that gave me the motivation to continue to pass Level 2. It has shown me that with hard work I could reach anything I want."*

Hamza is now studying GCSEs and his aim is to get into university and one day become a doctor.



Young apprentice with a bright future wins Adult Learning Award

A young apprentice who started her Apprenticeship journey at just 17 years of age has become the youngest recipient of a prestigious Learner of the Year Award.

Ruby Dagless, 18, from Dereham, was considering her post-16 options, when she saw a marketing apprenticeship vacancy with Nurtured in Norfolk, an edible flowers company, based in Dereham. The training was provided by Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning. She had been thinking about A-Levels, but was unsure which route to take, but on seeing this opportunity she was in no doubt about what career path she wanted to follow. Ruby successfully secured her apprenticeship, and started with the company in April 2022, when she was 17. Ruby proved herself to be an invaluable member of the team very quickly, and was given increasing responsibility, including writing and updating social media content, attending trade fairs and even showing high profile chefs around the site.

When Ruby's Line Manager resigned in November 2022, the Managing Director was so impressed by the quality of work being undertaken and completed by Ruby that he decided not to replace his Marketing Manager, and this resulted in her taking on even more responsibility for the company's marketing campaigns. Ruby has flourished in her role and went on to complete the Level 2 Apprenticeship 6 months ahead of schedule.

Ruby's tutor assessor nominated her for the Learner Awards after seeing how well she took on the role and the amazing progress made during the apprenticeship.

Ruby said: *"An apprenticeship is 100% something that I would recommend. I've learnt so much throughout my course, whilst having support from my tutor and the whole of Adult Learning too. I really enjoyed my time at school but I'm very glad that I chose an apprenticeship over A-levels. It has allowed me to gain hands-on experience in the workplace, whilst learning valuable skills too. I also feel that since I left school and started my apprenticeship, I have gained a lot of confidence which has benefitted me in the workplace and outside of it too."*

Ruby is now looking forward to putting the skills that she has learnt into practice in her role and may progress to a higher-level apprenticeship in the future.

Using life experiences to help others

Lucas achieved his Access to Higher Education certificate last year. He is a recovering addict and his qualification has allowed him to start a Social Psychology degree course at the UEA, with the aim of getting into a career in Counselling and Therapy so he can help other addicts that were in the same situation as him. He took a bit longer to get through the Access course as he found it a bit of a struggle with his anxiety issues but said *"The tutors were so supportive and there was always someone available to talk to. It is never too late to get back into learning and the benefits are lifelong."*

Amazing achievements!

Learner Attendance

Congratulations to Amy Lane and the Early Years team for attendance on early years/childcare qualifications of 98.4% this year, and to Kay Burnett-Kiernan and the Supporting Teaching and Learning team for attendance on teaching assistant qualification programmes of 94.3% and on counselling qualifications of 95.5%. Congratulations also to Marie Valdes, Curriculum Manager for these programmes. These are phenomenal attendance rates, especially as these are lengthy qualification programmes, so well done to everyone in these teams.

Early Years External Quality Assurance visit

Our Early Years colleagues are celebrating a recent External Quality Assurance visit from City & Guilds, the Awarding Organisation for their Level 2 and 3 Early Years qualifications. The feedback and report received, recognised the team's 'outstanding practice demonstrated across all areas', with a 'very effective, individualised approach to meet individual needs, preferences, and the circumstances of learners'. The External Quality Assurer referred to the team's exceptional standards, which equip learners completing their courses, to become experts in early years practice.



The importance of maths

Hannah is very aware of the importance of Level 2 Maths and how achieving the course can positively impact her career choice of going into nursing in the future.

After completing a degree in Health Studies, Hannah tried to get her maths qualifications. Hannah worked in a hotel reception job while studying her maths, with an aim to eventually study to become a nurse. She felt that school did not really help with her maths, and she was self-taught until she joined Adult Learning.

Hannah had been working through her Level 2 Maths course but struggled with exam anxiety and remembering key facts and processes, causing her to fail her exam, which was devastating for her. After the second attempt, Hannah joined Sarah, one of our tutors, to work on her technique and confidence on a one-to-one basis. Things that she had gone over and over without it sticking before are now firmly cemented in her long-term memory. For example, Hannah has never forgotten the night she first cracked simplifying fractions, remembers it like yesterday, and feels it was such an achievement. Even when Sarah was unwell for a couple of weeks, we made sure someone stepped in and supported Hannah so there was not a break in her studies. Things have moved on for Hannah and she is now working in the health sector. We all feel very positive about Hannah's next exam and wish her every success.

Support for Ukrainians



In February 2022, war broke out in Ukraine and lots of people were forced to flee their country. In addition to delivering a wide range of flexible English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses – both non-accredited and qualification programmes delivered in classrooms and online - Adult Learning has worked and supported Norfolk Library and Information Service and The People from Abroad Team by offering an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) meeting with every Ukrainian guest who wanted support.

Supporting individuals that have been forced to abandon their homes and move to a new country poses many barriers. Many Ukrainian learners came to this country without any English. We used creative ways to overcome these barriers, from using technology such as google translate, to Intran interpreters to write flyers in Ukrainian. We also hosted coffee mornings to bring the learners together and share information. During these coffee mornings, we answered questions about Adult Learning courses and promoted cultural understanding.

Through the Adult Learning service, we:

- ❖ Continue to support Ukrainian learners at every stage of their journey.
- ❖ Have enabled learners who were unable to speak any English to be able to start communicating with people in their community and to progress in their learning.
- ❖ Have supported learners who could already have a conversation to start looking towards finding employment.
- ❖ Have advised learners who are already fluent in English on how to use their qualifications in the UK.

Each conversation that we have with a learner is unique. We present them with all the information they need to make an informed decision about their learning or career, just as we do with all our learners.

Here's some feedback that we've received:

A third party sent this to us - *"I just wanted to pass this on - they are all raving about you. They've all been saying - they are so good!"*

"We really liked the lesson. Thank you very much."

"Yevheniia came along to a coffee morning set up for Ukrainian guests. This was her second coffee morning. She told me that she was grateful for the opportunity to meet in person and to have someone available that she could talk to about courses and general questions about life in the UK. Yevheniia also enjoyed the opportunity to practise her English. She was pleased that she could bring her son along and she felt that he was safe as he was being supervised. This gave her a much-needed break."

"Thanks for taking care of me. I really like the classes and like our teacher Liz. And I attend classes with great pleasure and interest."

Overcoming barriers

I thought it would be good to share a case study highlighting the challenges one of our learners has faced attending their course and how the Adult Learning team has tried to support them to continue to attend their course and allow them to continue to enjoy their learning experience with us.

The learner suffers with seizures, but the triggers are unclear and can be triggered by a variety of environmental factors. The Adult Learning team has worked closely with the learner to understand any triggers that are within our learning environment and attempt to reduce or remove these to make the environment much more suitable.

In addition to this, we have provided a personal radar key and purchased a comfortable mat to provide improved comfort and support while recovering from a seizure. In addition, we are arranging accessible rooms for assessments and door-to-door transport for attending classes.

We have received great feedback from some of the professionals supporting this learner:

“The support that my client has received from Adult Learning is beyond anything she could have dreamed for her. The difference in my client’s confidence and willingness to leave the house and take steps to be independent from September to now is enormous.”

Originally, family and support networks were very hesitant in her attending due to all the factors detailed above, but since she started attending, all her support network (including the specialist consultant) has been so pleased with the positive impact and improvement in the learner’s social network. How they have developed has far outweighed expectations and previous concerns.

Multiply good news story

I met Zoe on a visit to Swaffham library back in April. She was there as part of the Reading Pathway, and we chatted about learning in general and about the local community centre. Zoe has learning difficulties, some health issues and is hard of hearing. She said she would love the opportunity to do some basic numeracy and I recommended that she attend a drop-in course, run by Adult Learning on a Thursday afternoon.

Zoe did attend the sessions and has continued to chat with me when I visit the library. She really enjoyed playing ‘shut the box’ and dice counting.



Zoe is keen to enrol on any courses that Multiply can offer in her area.

I presented her with a certificate for being part of the Multiply programme and she was delighted with this. She became tearful and said “I have never been given a certificate before. Can I put it up on my wall at home and show it to everyone?”. I said absolutely!

Adult Learning Service Intent 2024-25

Key Planning Priorities and Contributions

Priority 1: We will enable a vibrant and sustainable economy by:

- Enabling individuals to increase their English (including English for Speakers of Other Languages – ESOL), numeracy, and digital skills.
- Delivering a wide range of cross-cutting fusion (soft) skills that are required across the whole spectrum of the local economy.
- Providing access to vocational skills and qualifications, including apprenticeships, that are responsive to the changing needs of the local economy, as well as national, regional, and local priorities.
- Enabling residents who are seeking employment or economically inactive to return to the workplace by providing access to new skills and vocational pathways.

Contribution

- ✓ 1,000 adult enrolments on numeracy, English, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and digital skills qualifications.
- ✓ 1,700 adult enrolments on vocational skills qualifications.
- ✓ 300 new apprentices recruited.

Priority 2: We will support better opportunities for children and young people by:

- Delivering skills, qualifications and apprenticeships that support the early years and school sectors.
- Providing opportunities for parents, guardians, and carers to improve the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of children and young people.

Contribution

- ✓ 650 adult enrolments on qualifications and apprenticeships in areas such as childcare, teaching assistants and higher-level teaching assistants, enhancing the quality of education given to children and young people. This will include qualifications that enhance the level of specialist skills available to those working with children and young people, including understanding autism, mental health, and anxiety.
- ✓ We will secure 600 adult enrolments that enable parents, guardians, and carers to improve the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of children and young people.
- ✓ 1,000 adult enrolments on numeracy, English, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and digital skills qualifications.
- ✓ 1,700 adult enrolments on vocational skills qualifications.
- ✓ 300 new apprentices recruited.

Priority 3: We will empower individuals to live healthy, fulfilling, and independent lives by:

- Providing appropriate and effective careers support that prepares learners well for their next steps.
- Delivering a personal development curriculum that supports the personal growth of adult learners, enabling them to positively engage with themselves, peers, staff, and the wider world.
- Delivering an independent living skills programme that enables people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties to access learning and work and to live independent lives.
- Maximising the use of learner and learning support funding to enable adults to access learning.
- Delivering a comprehensive programme of online learning that overcomes the barriers to accessing learning in Norfolk.
- Supporting, through learning, the wellbeing of our residents, including through social prescribing.

Contribution

- ✓ Provide bespoke and impartial information, advice, and guidance to at least 700 residents, including from the outset to all apprentices who are on programme.
- ✓ Deliver a bespoke independent living skills programme, including lipreading, that focuses on the skills residents need to live independent lives, with at least 300 adult learners who have a disability and/or learning difficulty.
- ✓ Ensure that financial and personal barriers to learning and achievement are removed by ensuring that all eligible learners have equal access to both learner and learning support funding.
- ✓ Deliver a Personal Development Curriculum in line with the service's Personal Development Curriculum Strategy (see attachment).
- ✓ Deliver 1,000 enrolments on health and wellbeing programmes that support residents with their mental and physical wellbeing.

Priority 4: We will strengthen communities by:

- Making our courses accessible to residents by locating courses in the heart of Norfolk's communities, both in community venues and online.
- Improving digital inclusion in Norfolk by increasing the digital skills and confidence of adult residents.
- Supporting the integration of ethnic minority communities through the delivery of a comprehensive and targeted programme of English as a second language, employability, and life skills, including family learning.

- Championing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, the Fundamental British Values, as well as Safeguarding and Prevent.

Contribution

- ✓ Provide local access to adult education opportunities to Norfolk adult residents through community-based and online delivery.
- ✓ Increase the digital skills and confidence of 2,000 adult residents.
- ✓ Deliver a comprehensive and targeted programme of skills with at least 700 adult enrolments from ethnic minority communities.
- ✓ Deliver a Personal Development Curriculum in line with the service's Personal Development Curriculum Strategy (see attachment).

Priority 5: We will enable the development of a greener, more resilient future by:

- Developing 'Green' skills curriculum pathways and qualifications that support the sustainability agenda, including light/mid/dark 'Green' qualifications.
- Providing a programme of environmental awareness courses for individuals and families, focusing on how to reduce environmental impact /increase environmental sustainability.
- Embedding environmental awareness within the service's Personal Development Curriculum.
- Delivering our services with environmental sustainability in mind.

Contribution

- ✓ 100 learners will complete retrofit courses as part of the service's new 'Green' skills curriculum pathways and qualifications.
- ✓ 500 learners will complete environmental awareness training as part of their course.
- ✓ Deliver environmental awareness as part of the Personal Development Curriculum in line with the service's Personal Development Curriculum Strategy (see attachment).
- ✓ Reduce the service's impact on the environment by delivering 30% of our courses online, with public transport the preferred option when providing Learner Support funding to learners who need to travel to their course.

Service Area: Adult Learning

Objectives and priorities for the year:

“Changing lives through inspirational learning with exceptional support”

We will:

- Enable a vibrant and sustainable economy
- Support better opportunities for children and young people
- Empower individuals to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives
- Strengthen communities
- Enable the development of a greener, more resilient future.

Key deliverables:

We will demonstrate the impact of our service delivery through:

- The achievement of the service’s planned contributions to Council priorities (2024-25 Annual Plan, Appendix E)
- The achievement of the service’s funding and income targets, evidencing effective recruitment and delivery to learners and apprentices
- The delivery of strong outcomes for learners and apprentices, that are at or above national rates
- The successful progression of learners and apprentices into further learning, into sustainable employment or within employment

Key activities, including:

- English (including English for Speakers of Other Languages), numeracy, and digital skills. Cross-cutting fusion (soft) skills that are required across the whole spectrum of the local economy. Vocational skills and qualifications, including apprenticeships. Enabling residents who are seeking employment or economically inactive to return to the workplace by providing access to new skills and vocational pathways.
- Skills, qualifications and apprenticeships that support the early years and school sectors. Opportunities for parents, guardians, and carers to improve the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of children and young people.
- Careers support that prepares learners well for their next steps. An effective personal development curriculum. An independent living skills programme that enables people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties to access learning and work and to live independent lives. Use of learner and learning support funding to enable adults to access learning. A comprehensive programme of online learning that overcomes the barriers to accessing learning in Norfolk. Supporting, through learning, the wellbeing of our residents, including through social prescribing.
- Making courses accessible to residents by locating them in the heart of Norfolk’s communities, including online. Increasing the digital skills and confidence of adult residents. Supporting the integration of ethnic minority communities through the delivery of English for Speakers of Other Languages, employability, and life skills, including family learning. Championing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, the Fundamental British Values, as well as Safeguarding and Prevent.
- ‘Green’ skills curriculum pathways and qualifications that support the sustainability agenda. A programme of environmental awareness courses. Delivering our services with environmental sustainability in mind.
- Continuing to gain external assurance of our approach and outcomes through our engagement with external organisations and the successful implementation of quality improvement initiatives that progress the service we provide to residents towards outstanding.

Key risks on Risk Register:

- Teaching staff terms and conditions review destabilises the service
- Changes to national funding policy, including devolution of the Adult Skills Fund (Adult Education Budget) in 2025-26, or failure to achieve funding target place service income at risk
- Ofsted inspection leads to reduced grade (November 2023 Good)

Vital signs and targets (please indicate if this is an existing or new metric):

- Number of registrations on qualification programmes. 2024-25 academic year target: 2,200. This metric was introduced in the 2023-24 academic year.

Key budget headings:

Adult Learning does not yet have its 2024-25 funding allocations, so these numbers will be adjusted once available.

Academic year 2024-25 (August 1st 2024-July 31st 2025) as at January 2024:

- ❖ Adult Skills Fund (ASF)(replaces Adult Education Budget/AEB) and National Skills Fund(NSF): £4,194,938
- ❖ Student Loans: £104,386
- ❖ Tuition fees: £241,432
- ❖ Apprenticeships: £765,813

(subject to external allocation and income variations and performance-related increases/decreases in-year)

Financial year 2024-25:

- ❖ Adult Learning Multiply delivery: £350,000 **140**

Adult Learning Curriculum 2024-25

Qualifications:

- Functional (basic English, including English as a Second Language (ESOL), maths and digital skills) and vocational qualifications from entry level (basic knowledge and understanding) to level 5 (foundation degree equivalent)
- Knowledge; skills; attainment; and employability skills
- Targeting residents who either do not have the basic skills and professional qualifications they need to progress, or who are seeking to reskill and retrain and/or progress into further learning and employment, or who are economically inactive and, with encouragement and support, could return to the workplace
- Fully funded for eligible learners, subject to Government criteria, with an element of tuition fees and student loans for other learners
- Each qualification attracts a funding tariff and 20% of the funding for each learner is earned on achievement of the qualification.

Apprenticeships

- A fast-growing, high-quality programme across a variety of employment sectors that meets the needs of Norfolk employers and residents
- This programme provides entry to sustainable employment for apprentices and opportunities to develop new and higher-level skills for those who are already in employment
- The service's apprenticeships programme addresses local priorities by contributing to the creation of a skilled workforce and supporting employers to plan and deliver their business strategies.

Tailored Learning

- Tailored Learning provides opportunities for residents who are the furthest from education and/or employment or who need support through learning, to reengage with learning, grow and progress with confidence, including into employment.
- These non-regulated or non-accredited courses aim to break the cycle of low achievement and renew and rebuild confidence and capacity to achieve and progress.
- This programme:
 - Enables an individual to gain confidence, motivation, knowledge and skills and supports progression into further learning, qualification programmes and/or employment.
 - Empowers people to live well independently.
 - Enables families to support their children and break intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes.

- Strengthens communities.
- Supports, through learning, the wellbeing of our residents, for example, through mental and physical wellbeing and healthy lifestyle programmes, as well as creative courses.

Multiply

- A wide range of numeracy interventions, including both outreach activities and substantive courses, that target adults who are not qualified in maths or who have below Level 2 (GCSE-equivalent) skills.
- These courses are designed to:
 - Increase confidence with numbers
 - Help people use numeracy to manage their money
 - Support employers to improve the numeracy skills of their workforce
 - Support people who cannot apply for certain jobs because they lack the required numeracy skills
 - Give parents the numeracy skills they need to both help their children and progress themselves
 - Improve the numeracy skills of prisoners, those recently released from prison or on temporary licence
 - Support care leavers
 - Engage the hardest to reach learners in the community
 - Provide additional relevant maths modules embedded into other vocational courses.

Self-Financed and Commercial Courses

- Courses that are self-financed by the learner or employer – completely outside the Government-funded system.
- No Government funding support, so tuition fee income must cover all costs.
- These courses target residents who are looking for personal development opportunities without the constraints of the Government-funded system and employers who are seeking high quality training for themselves or their staff.

Appendix H - Delivery of the Adult Learning Community-Based Vision

Adult Learning delivers its community-based vision through a combination of around 130 physical venues (63% of courses) and online learning (37% of courses).

Synchronous delivery enables learners to choose to join a course either as a classroom-based or an online learner, so the service has a range of courses where some of the learners attend a physical venue and other learners attend online. Adult Learning's synchronous delivery methodology is at the cutting edge of Further Education delivery nationally, and this widens participation in learning in Norfolk. It facilitates access to courses for residents in rural areas, who have a disability, who have caring responsibilities or who work shift patterns that prevent them from attending a standard course format.

Learners have welcomed these new opportunities, and in terms of service viability, larger class sizes (by combining classroom-based with online delivery) enable the service to continue to offer a broad curriculum.

The service has established dedicated training rooms in the following locations:

- Baseline Future Projects, Norwich
- Great Yarmouth Library (2 rooms)
- Hellesdon Construction Training Centre. Norwich
- Kings Lynn Construction Training Centre
- King's Lynn Library
- Millennium Library, Norwich
- NWES Rouen House, Norwich (2 rooms)
- Norman Centre, Norwich
- Swaffham Community Centre
- The Feed, Norwich

The service is also currently finalising arrangements for a dedicated Silversmithing and Jewellery training facility in Norwich.

In addition, the service is working with other community venues on an ad hoc basis and libraries across the county.

This map shows where Adult Learning currently delivers face to face courses in community venues across the county:



In addition, Adult Learning is able to deliver bespoke courses in all 47 libraries across the county:



List of Norfolk Libraries where Adult Learning is able to deliver:

Acle Library	Great Yarmouth Library	Poringland Library
Attleborough Library	Harleston Library	Reepham Library
Aylsham Library	Hellesdon Library	Sheringham Library
Blofield Library	Hethersett Library	Sprowston Library
Brundall Library	Hingham Library	St Williams Way Library
Caister Library	Holt Library	Stalham Library
Costessey Library	Hunstanton Library	Swaffham Library
Cromer Library	King's Lynn Library	Taverham Library
Dereham Library	Loddon Library	Thetford Library
Dersingham Library	Long Stratton Library	Tuckswood Library
Diss Library	Martham Library	Watton Library
Downham Market Library	Mile Cross Library	Wells Library
Earlham Library	Mundesley Library	West Earlham Library
Fakenham Library	Norfolk and Norwich	Wroxham Library
Gaywood Library	Millennium Library	Wymondham Library
Gorleston Library	North Walsham Library	
	Plumstead Road Library	

Here are the key libraries Adult Learning currently delivers courses at:

Attleborough, Cromer, Derham, Dersingham, Diss, Downham Market, Earlham, Gaywood, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Hellesdon, Hingham, Kings Lynn, Long Stratton, Mile Cross, North Walsham, Plumstead Road, Poringland, Swaffham, Taverham, Thetford, Tuckswood, Forum, Watton, Wroxham, Wymondham Library.

The following are Adult Learning community-based venues where the service has a dedicated training room or rooms:

Baseline Future Projects	Monday to Friday	NR5 8YD – Norwich Knowland Grove / Larkman / Bowthorpe
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**Hellesdon Construction
Training Centre**

Monday to Friday

**NR6 5DP – Norwich
Hellesdon / Mile Cross /
Drayton / Taverham**



**King's Lynn
Construction Training
Centre**

Monday to Friday

PE30 2HZ – King's Lynn



NWES – Rouen House

Monday to Friday

**NR1 1RB – Norwich
Central**



Norman Centre	Monday to Friday	NR3 2QZ Norwich – Mile Cross
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Swaffham Community Centre	Monday to Friday	PE37 7RB
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The Feed	Monday and Wednesday	NR3 3HX – Norwich Catton Grove / Mile Cross / Sewell
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Future dedicated Adult Learning community-based venues:

We are proud to be working with key Norfolk County Council projects in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, developing new Multi-User Community Hubs, where Adult Learning will have dedicated training facilities in the heart of the community.

The Place Yarmouth	Monday to Saturday – opening autumn 2024	NR30 1LU – Great Yarmouth
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Kings Lynn Hub	Monday to Saturday – opening 2025	PE30 1DL – Kings Lynn
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Adult Learning also uses a wide range of ad hoc community-based venues:

Acle Recreation Centre	Ad Hoc	NR13 3RA - Acle
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Aylsham Youth Centre	Ad Hoc	NR11 6BX - Aylsham
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Breckland District Council main offices	Ad Hoc	NR19 1EE - Dereham
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Charles Burrell Thetford	Ad Hoc	IP24 3LH - Thetford
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Charing Cross	Ad Hoc	NR2 1DN Norwich - Mancroft
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Cromer Community Centre	Ad Hoc	NR27 9HL - Cromer
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Cromer Merchant's Place	Ad Hoc	NR27 9ES - Cromer
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Diss Hope Church	Ad Hoc	IP22 4HG - Diss
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Diss Youth Community Centre	Ad Hoc	IP22 4EH - Diss
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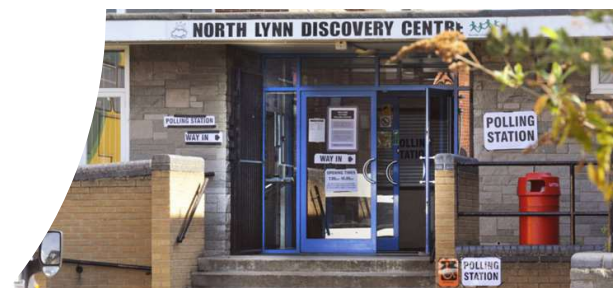
Harleston Info Centre	Ad Hoc	IP20 9AB - Harleston
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Loddon Jubilee Hall	Ad Hoc	NR14 6NB - Loddon
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North Lynn Discovery Centre	Ad Hoc	PE30 2LA – King's Lynn
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Phoenix Centre	Ad Hoc	NR3 2LD - Norwich Catton Grove / Mile Cross / Sewell
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Sewell Park Academy	Monday to Friday (evenings) Saturdays	NR3 4BX - Norwich Catton Grove / Mile Cross / Sewell
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Sheringham Community Centre	Ad Hoc	NR26 8NP - Sheringham
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South Lynn Community Centre	Ad Hoc	PE30 5HE – King's Lynn
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Sprowston Diamond Centre	Ad Hoc	NR7 8TR Norwich – Sprowston / Old Catton / Heartsease
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Swaffham Assembly Rooms	Ad Hoc	PE37 - Swaffham
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Wells Community Hospital	Ad Hoc	NR23 1RF - Wells
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Cabinet

Item No: 10

Report Title: Climate Policy for Norfolk County Council

Date of Meeting: 4th March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 22 January 2024

Executive Summary

In June 2023, Norfolk County Council launched its Climate Strategy. The strategy sets out how the council can address its own carbon footprint as well as its role in supporting Norfolk's low carbon development and green growth. The strategy received widespread support for its detailed coverage of how the council can help shape Norfolk's response to climate change in line with the local context and priorities. Moreover, the council's approach to climate was independently ranked second among the UK's county councils in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards.

This paper introduces a Climate Policy that reflects the main elements of the Climate Strategy in a more concise policy format. It also uses the Climate Policy as an opportunity to restate the council's countywide commitment, seeking better alignment with the UK's 2050 net zero target and the ambitious trajectory set out in the national carbon budgets. Finally, it proposes a timeline for the Climate Policy to progress to Full Council for consideration in March 2024.

Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. Review and comment on the proposed Climate Policy, including the new statement of the council's county-wide net zero commitment.**
- 2. Endorse the Climate Policy's progression for Full Council's consideration via Scrutiny Committee in accordance with part 11b of Council's Constitution.**
- 3. Agree that a related amendment to the Environment Policy also be put to Full Council to align its wording on our overarching climate commitments with the Climate Policy.**
- 4. Endorse bringing an annual report to Select Committee and Cabinet on progress of the Climate Policy.**

1 Background and purpose

- 1.1 Norfolk County Council's policy relating to climate change has to date been stated within its Environmental Policy. Published in 2019, this policy articulated the council's ambition to reach net zero for its estate by 2030 and to work with partners towards carbon neutrality county-wide.
- 1.2 Given the scale and complexity of this issue, the council launched a detailed Climate Strategy in June 2023. The strategy sets out seven focus areas that guide how the council could best apply its powers and influence towards addressing climate change:
 - Reducing our estate emissions
 - Reducing our indirect emissions
 - Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions
 - Promoting a green economy for Norfolk
 - Climate adaptation
 - Ensure nature has space to recover and grow
 - Engage and collaborate.
- 1.3 The council's ambition and comprehensive approach to climate change has been recognised in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards, where Norfolk County Council was independently ranked second among the UK's county councils for its climate action approach and initiatives.
- 1.4 Having this clear strategic vision alongside our reputation as a reliable delivery partner helps to set apart Norfolk County Council as a good investment when government makes funding decisions for low carbon initiatives. This is demonstrated through the council's recent success in securing funding to bring seventy zero emissions buses to Norwich in 2024 and nearly £6.5m earmarked for expanding electric vehicle chargepoint infrastructure through 2024 and 2025.
- 1.5 When Cabinet endorsed the strategy, it approved a further recommendation to develop a policy that would reflect the strategy within the council's policy framework. A Climate Policy for Norfolk County Council is now presented in this paper, which seeks to meet this commitment.

2 Proposal

Policy structure

- 2.1 The full Climate Policy being proposed is attached to this paper for review at appendix A. An overview of the policy's structure is as follows:

1. A brief introduction setting out the background to the policy and its overarching ambitions relating to our estate and the county.
 2. A subsequent section for each of the seven focus areas set out in the Climate Strategy, with a brief introduction followed by their respective strategic priorities.
 3. References to where the climate policy aligns with a primary policy for that theme (for example the Local Transport Plan).
- 2.2 By following this structure, the policy seeks to offer a concise summary of the key aspects of the Climate Strategy so that close alignment is maintained between them.

County wide commitment

- 2.3 The council's approach to addressing climate change looks beyond simply its own estate to also encompass how it can support low carbon development across Norfolk.
- 2.4 In its Environment Policy, the council commits to working towards carbon neutrality for Norfolk by 2030. This statement set a clear tone of ambition when it was drafted in 2019 to anchor focus on the need for action across the county.
- 2.5 With more clarity on area-wide emissions trajectories now available, it is apparent that working towards 2030 climate neutrality is not a practical ambition (for Norfolk or any other part of the country). Furthermore, the term 'carbon neutrality' that was used does not match with the UK's legal commitment to net zero, which can be a source of confusion.
- 2.6 This paper proposes that the Climate Policy includes an update to this county wide statement, using the following wording:
- “Norfolk County Council commits to using its powers, influence and partnerships towards supporting the county's low carbon development in line with the UK-wide target to reach net zero by 2050. We will look to keep Norfolk in step with the ambitious trajectory set out in the national carbon budgets of a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 relative to 1990 levels, whilst recognising the vital role of Norfolk's agricultural sector in UK food security and the implications for its land use emissions in the national context.”
- 2.7 This updated statement aligns to both the target and the language of the UK as a whole. Moreover, it recognises the need for an ambitious but practical trajectory towards net zero that maintains a focus on acting now - which is what the carbon budgets set by the government represent by setting a path towards a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 relative to 1990 levels.

- 2.8 The wording also gives reference to Norfolk as key food-producing part of the country to properly recognise how its contribution to land use emissions is also a reflection of its important role in UK food security.
- 2.9 If this restatement is agreed, a related amendment of the council's existing Environmental Policy wording will be required – with agreement from Full Council – so that it aligns with the new wording for the county-wide climate ambition set out in the Climate Policy.

Proposed timeline

- 2.10 As set out in recommendation 2, the Climate Policy is to be included as part of the NCC Policy Framework. Adoption of the strategy will therefore require both Full Council approval, and a pre-scrutiny process held in accordance with the procedures and guidance set out in part 11b of the NCC constitution. Cabinet are therefore asked to approve the following governance route for the Climate Change Strategy:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting</i>
<i>Monday 4th March</i>	Cabinet – endorsement of proposed Climate Policy, and referral to Full Council via the Scrutiny Committee
<i>Wednesday 20th March</i>	Scrutiny Committee – scrutiny of proposed Climate Policy.
<i>Tuesday 26th March</i>	Full Council – the Climate Policy to be put to Full Council for debate and approval. Full Council will also receive a report from the Scrutiny Committee detailing discussions and associated recommendations.

- 2.11 The related amendment to the Environmental Policy wording can be brought to the same meeting so it can be agreed alongside the Climate Policy to ensure they align.

Progress reporting

- 2.12 Corporate Select Committee reviewed the Climate Policy at its January 2024 meeting, and in endorsing the policy carried a motion for an annual report on the policy's progress. Cabinet is therefore asked to endorse this approach of annual progress reporting, which can be linked with the annual review cycle that has been agreed for the council's Climate Action Plans.

3 Impact of the proposals

- 3.1 The proposed policy ensures that the council's approach to climate change, as comprehensively set out in its Climate Strategy, is formally reflected in the policy framework.

4 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 The Climate Policy fulfils a commitment made in May 2023 by Cabinet to reflect the Climate Strategy in the council's policy framework. This ensures it is effectively integrated as a policy governing how the council is run.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The council could choose not to pursue a Climate Policy. This would leave a gap in the council's governance around this issue and mean not fulfilling the public commitment made by Cabinet in May 2023 to reflect the Climate Strategy in the policy framework.
- 5.2 In relation to its county-wide commitment, the council could choose to stick with its current wording in the Environment Policy. This would maintain the strong tone of ambition in working towards 2030 carbon neutrality for Norfolk, but it will not reflect a practical emissions reduction pathway for the county.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The proposed Climate Policy does not introduce new financial implications for the council as it substantively reflects the existing Climate Strategy as a policy document. The financial viability of specific initiatives that are introduced towards meeting the policy goals will have to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure they can be budgeted for and are financially sustainable. Key to successful delivery of initiatives related to the policy will be ongoing success in securing government grants. However, it will also require exploring wider channels of funding including leveraging in private sector investment and enabling community investments in local priorities.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff** – no new implications beyond what has been recognised through the Climate Strategy. Delivery of the initiatives that relate to the Climate Policy will be through existing staff resource or additional resource secured from partnerships or external funding sources. Furthermore, staff engagement is currently underway to build awareness of the council's Climate Strategy and seek direct input on ways the council can become more sustainable.
- 7.2 **Property** – no new implications. An initial £22.5 million capital budget has been agreed by Cabinet for investing in a 'future ready' programme of building improvement works on the council's freehold building estate.
- 7.3 **IT** – no new implications
- 7.4 **Implementation capacity** – no new implications

8 Other implications

- 8.1 **Legal implications** – introducing a Climate Policy into the policy framework will mean it that it is integrated one of the policies that governs how the council should be run.
- 8.2 **Human rights implications** – no new implications resulting from the Climate Policy
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)** – no new implications beyond the existing Climate Strategy. For example, residents and visitors who are older, disabled, pregnant or have young children are likely to be especially affected by the impacts of climate change – particularly extreme heat, flooding and increased occurrence of disruptive events. There may also be opportunities to reduce inequalities through climate action, for example with more accessible and modern public transport and better designed infrastructure to encourage active travel including for those with mobility aids such as wheelchairs. The effect will need to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis.
- 8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA):** no impact identified.
- 8.5 **Health and Safety implications:** No new implications of the policy. Climate change increases risks from flooding, heat-related health impacts and other causes. Playing our part in mitigating it reduces these risks. More directly, investing in buildings which are better-adapted to the changing climate – through being better insulated, having properly maintained fabric, and where appropriate other adaptations – and adapting services to changed conditions mitigates health and safety risks.
- 8.5.1 **Sustainability implications** – the Climate Policy directly contributes to strengthening the governance around the council's climate action.
- 8.6 **Any other implications** – no new implications

9 Risk Implications/Assessment

10 Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 The Climate Policy was reviewed by Corporate Select Committee on 15 January 2024.
- 10.2 Cllr Price proposed that there was an annual report to a Select Committee that would note the progress of the Climate Policy. The proposal was seconded by Cllr White and following a vote, the recommendation was carried.
- 10.3 The Select Committee endorsed the Climate Policy's progression for Cabinet's consideration

11 Recommendations

11.1 The Cabinet is asked to:

1. Review and comment on the proposed Climate Policy, including the new statement of the council's county-wide net zero commitment.
2. Endorse the Climate Policy's progression for Full Council's consideration via Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the process set out in part 11b of Council's Constitution.
3. Agree that a related amendment to the Environment Policy also be put to Full Council to align its wording on our overarching climate commitments with the Climate Policy.
4. Endorse bringing an annual report to Select Committee and Cabinet on progress of the Climate Policy.

12 Background papers

12.1 [Cabinet Report \(10 May 2023\) 'Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy'](#)

12.2 [Climate strategy - Norfolk County Council](#)

12.3 [Environmental policy - Norfolk County Council](#)

Officer contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

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Email address: jonathan.franklin@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Norfolk County Council's Climate Policy 2024

Introduction

It is beyond any reasonable doubt that climate change is taking place and its effects are beginning to be felt. This includes here in Norfolk, where our unique geography makes the county a special place to live but also one of the most vulnerable parts of the UK to a changing climate. What we do today can make a huge difference to protect our communities and natural places from the impacts of climate change, but also enable us to seize the real opportunities arising from the green economy.

As the upper-tier local authority, Norfolk County Council has a key role in shaping the local response to climate change in a way that reflects the specific characteristics and priorities of the county. The Council made a commitment to help address climate change in its Environmental Policy in 2019, and in June 2023 launched a comprehensive Climate Strategy. The strategy outlines how the Council will use its powers and influence to address climate change across seven focus areas. This Climate Policy:

- makes two overarching commitments; and
- brings out the key strategic priorities set out in the Climate Strategy for each focus area.

Overarching commitments

- 1) Norfolk County Council will lead by example through making its own estate net zero by 2030. Estate emissions include those generated from the council's buildings, streetlights and vehicle fleet.
- 2) In 2019, the UK became the first major economy to enshrine a commitment to reaching net zero by 2050 into law. Norfolk County Council commits to using its powers, influence and partnerships towards supporting the county's low carbon development in line with the UK-wide target to reach net zero by 2050. We will look to keep Norfolk in step with the ambitious trajectory set out in the national carbon budgets of a 78% reduction in emissions by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, whilst recognising Norfolk's agriculture sector's vital role in food security and the implications for its land use emissions in the national context.

Focus area 1: Reduce our estate emissions

The council's focus here is on reducing its carbon footprint rather than relying heavily on offsetting to achieve net zero. To this end, the council has set interim targets for its (gross)

estate emissions relative to its emissions in the 2016/17 baseline year as stepping stones towards reaching this target:

- 66% reduction by 2024/25
- 85% reduction by 2028/29
- 90% reduction by 2030/31 with suitable certified offsets for remaining 10%.

Achieving net zero by 2030 on the council's estate will be pursued through the following strategic priorities:

- Decarbonise and improve the energy efficiency of our council-owned buildings through a comprehensive retrofitting programme.
- Transition towards a low-carbon vehicle fleet and more sustainable modes of transport including e-cargo bikes.
- Upgrade the remainder of our streetlight stock to more energy efficient LEDs to reduce electricity consumption.

Focus area 2: Reduce our indirect emissions

Our indirect emissions (also known as 'scope 3' emissions) represent the council's wider carbon footprint that we have influence over but which is outside of our direct control. This includes the carbon resulting from our supply chain, the companies we own, and the buildings we lease, among other aspects. We will reduce our indirect emissions through pursuing the following strategic priorities:

- Work with our wholly owned companies to reduce their emissions.
- Improve data quality of supply chain carbon emissions.
- Create carbon reduction strategies for key procurement categories.
- Integrate emission metrics in our procurement activity.
- Use internal carbon pricing where appropriate to inform carbon reduction options appraisal.
- Work with other large public sector organisations to develop procurement standards where appropriate.

Focus area 3: Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions

This focus area steps back to address the bigger picture of how the council can support emissions reductions county-wide through its place-shaping activities and wider leadership role. The scale of potential influence here is much greater than with our estate and indirect emissions, but the degree of control we have over these wider emissions is also more limited.

The council seeks to take a pragmatic approach to supporting carbon reduction county-wide by prioritising the areas where we have the greatest opportunity to make positive change. This will be achieved across the sectoral themes set out below.

Transport

Our Local Transport Plan represents its overarching strategy in relation to transport infrastructure until 2036. This Climate Policy aligns with its goals but more specifically focuses on decarbonisation of transport through the following priorities:

- Working with transport providers, to continue to positively influence behaviour change and increase the range and number of sustainable travel options available to residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk. This includes bus operators and building on the Enhanced Partnership relationship we already have in place with bus operators and implementing Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- To prioritise transport investment into more sustainable modes, such as public transport and active travel including micromobility options, to help support the journey to net zero. This is especially important in areas where there is poor air quality, and these will be prioritised.
- To prioritise investment into net zero initiatives, including implementation of our Electric Vehicle Strategy, as part of proactive transport network management, to help residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk become more sustainable.
- To improve connectivity between rural areas and services in urban centres, with a focus on active travel and public transport.
- To focus on identifying the key risks from climate change and directing efforts to tackling these where they are likely to be most disruptive to journeys, especially on the most critical parts of the network.

The built environment

- Promote green skill development to support the domestic building retrofit agenda.
- Use our position to secure more resources, seek funding opportunities to support our partners in the retrofit agenda.
- With partners, help residents to understand and engage in retrofitting their homes by information provision and active promotion.
- Promote residential development that is sustainably located.

The commercial and industrial sector

- Support the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Clean Growth Taskforce (and equivalent activity under successor arrangements) to facilitate behaviour change in the industrial and commercial sectors and encourage the sharing of best practice.
- Support the decarbonisation of the local commercial sector through continued funding schemes such as Carbon Charter.
- Work with local networks such as the LEP to support SMEs (small and medium enterprises) on their journey to net zero.

Energy

- Work with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to evolve our energy approach for Norfolk.

- Develop an energy strategy for Norfolk County Council aligned with our net zero agenda.
- Support national decarbonisation of the Grid by expanding appropriate renewable energy generation across the county.
- Support an Offshore Transmission Network to minimise the need for any onshore infrastructure associated with offshore wind farms.
- Support the upgrading of onshore transmission infrastructure where this provides appropriate benefits to Norfolk's residents and businesses and helps in delivering clean energy for housing and employment growth in Norfolk.

Digital solutions and connectivity

- Ensure high speed digital connectivity is made available to every property across Norfolk.
- Work to improve mobile phone coverage across Norfolk.
- Develop and allow free, universal access to IoT network connectivity.

Waste and circular economy

- REDUCE: use targeted messages and work with the Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP) to drive behaviour change to help reduce the amount of waste produced with a strong focus on reducing food waste.
- REUSE: provide reuse facilities and promote and support opportunities for reuse and repair.
- RECYCLE: use targeted messages to increase recycling rates and drive down levels of contamination by working with the NWP. Provide easy to use and convenient recycling centre services, keep home composting as a priority and support the District, City and Borough Councils in their recycling services.
- RECOVER: focus on treatment and disposal options for residual waste that are sustainable and consider emissions and recovery, and that are flexible enough to allow for waste reduction and composition change.
- POLICY: influence the development of national policy to support the move to the circular economy and a shift from weight based to carbon-based performance metrics.
- COSTS: promote a total system approach to reducing costs with the Norfolk Waste Partnership and assessing the implications of future funding changes on waste services and the possibility of an emissions trading scheme and the changes they will lead to.

Focus area 4: Promoting a green economy for Norfolk

Technology improvements and government policy will drive demand for low carbon goods and services over the coming years. A workforce will be needed to match this, so it is vital that Norfolk gets equipped with the skills to harness the opportunities of the green economy for jobs and business growth. Furthermore, promoting Norfolk as a sustainable tourism

destination can help bring year-round value to the local economy. The strategic priorities for this theme include:

- Promote green skill development to support the development and installation of clean technologies to support decarbonisation county-wide.
- Grow the sustainable tourism sector to support year-round, well-paid, skilled careers.
- Support Norfolk's tourism and hospitality businesses to achieve Green Tourism accreditation.
- Provide access to green finance and investments through the Norfolk Investment Framework.

Focus area 5: Climate adaptation

The impacts of climate change and the risks to Norfolk's communities and natural places are set to intensify over the coming decades. As a council, we must ensure that the vital local services that we provide are resilient in the face of climate hazards, and that we support the resilience of Norfolk's communities to the risks brought by coastal and inland flooding and extreme heat among others. Our strategic priorities to this end include:

- Work with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia to understand better the risks of climate change impacts on Norfolk and potential adaptation responses.
- Ensure new infrastructure is designed against appropriate assumptions on the future impacts of climate change.
- Learn lessons from the extreme heat experienced in summer 2022 and the implications for public services.
- Be the voice of Norfolk residents to government bodies like the Environment Agency on securing appropriate investment on adaptation across the county.

Focus area 6: Ensure nature has space to recover and grow

Norfolk is a county of diverse and unique landscapes, some of which are recognised as internationally important wildlife havens. The natural environment also provides invaluable services for people, including water and air purification, flood protection, recreation opportunities, and carbon storage in soil and vegetation. These 'ecosystem services' are a vital component of climate change mitigation and adaptation in the county. The Council's Environmental Policy represents the principal policy expression on this theme, but complementary strategic priorities relating to climate include the following:

- Produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk that prioritises areas for action focusing on species, habitats, landscapes and land use of importance to Norfolk with potential for carbon capture.
- Embrace nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and mitigation.
- Ensure that our actions on land use and nature recovery reflect the interests of the farming community and public at large.

- In September 2024, we will put in place a new robust and resilient monitoring scheme for biodiversity.

Focus area 7: Engage and collaborate

Cutting across all the other focus areas is the need for engagement and collaboration. A key role for the council as the upper-tier authority in Norfolk is to use our position to bring together the businesses, academic, public and community and voluntary sectors towards delivering the right changes for the county. Our strategic priorities on this theme include the following:

- Work closely with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and the Integrated Care System to take forward mitigation and adaptation activities where collaboration can add maximum value.
- Create a carbon conscious culture at NCC by ensuring we engage with staff on the climate agenda.
- Develop and deliver a communications strategy to ensure that stakeholders are aware of the Climate Strategy, understand their role and know how to get involved.
- Facilitate a series of targeted engagement workshops with key stakeholders to refine specific aspects of the strategy and developing evidence-based action plans.

Cabinet

Item No: 11

Report Title: Climate Action Plans - Tranche 2

Date of Meeting: 4th March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: n/a

Executive Summary

In June 2023, Norfolk County Council launched its Climate Strategy. The strategy sets out how the council can address its own carbon footprint as well as its role in supporting Norfolk's low carbon development and green growth. The strategy received widespread support for its detailed coverage of how the council can help shape Norfolk's response to climate change in line with the local context and priorities. Moreover, the council's approach to climate was independently ranked second among the UK's county councils in the 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards.

With this strategic statement in place, action plans are needed to help translate the vision and priorities of the strategy into practical implementation. They represent a key governance tool to support member and public oversight of the strategy's delivery by outlining the initiatives taking place across the council's services that align with the strategy's seven focus areas.

The action plans are being developed in three tranches to help maintain momentum in building this governance framework. Following the endorsement of the first tranche of climate actions by Cabinet in October 2023, this paper proposes the second tranche of actions for Cabinet's review. These cover our initiatives relating to energy, the green economy, and waste and the circular economy. The third and final tranche will be brought for Select Committee and Cabinet review later in spring.

All three action plans will be brought together and updated in the autumn as a single list. This will start an annual reporting cycle to members to ensure oversight and accountability over the Climate Strategy's delivery.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

1. **Approve the second tranche of actions as set out in this report.**

1 Background and purpose

- 1.1 Launched in June 2023, Norfolk County Council's Climate Strategy set out a comprehensive framework for how the council can best direct its powers, resources and influence in support of Norfolk's journey towards a clean and resilient future in the face of climate change.
- 1.2 The council's ambition and comprehensive approach to climate change has been recognised in the national 2023 Council Climate Action Scorecards, where Norfolk County Council was independently ranked second among the UK's county councils for its climate action related initiatives.
- 1.3 Looking beyond carbon reduction, the climate strategy considers in tandem the close relationship between climate action and nature recovery, the jobs and growth opportunities from the expanding green economy, and how adaptation is needed to protect our local services and communities. This is reflected in the seven 'focus areas' that make up the structure of the strategy:
 - Reducing our estate emissions
 - Reducing our indirect emissions
 - Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions
 - Promoting a green economy for Norfolk
 - Climate adaptation
 - Ensure nature has space to recover and grow
 - Engage and collaborate.
- 1.4 With the strategy in place, we set out the governance procedures to oversee its delivery and provide public accountability. Action plans are an appropriate governance tool that translate strategic vision into practical implementation — enabling member and public monitoring of the strategy's delivery.

1.5 In October 2023, Cabinet approved the approach for bringing Climate Action Plans through the select committees in three tranches to help maintain momentum in developing the governance framework across such a wide portfolio of work areas:

- Tranche 1 – Established programmes, often where the council has greater control, and plans can be put together quickly;
- Tranche 2 – Programme areas with some level of maturity in plan development but requiring refinement;
- Tranche 3 – Programme areas with less mature plans and/or requiring external engagement as the council's role is less direct, and where there may be significant interdependencies (for example, national guidance for transport carbon quantification of local transport policies).

Alongside approving the tranching approach, the first tranche of actions was approved by Cabinet at the meeting in October 2023, covering actions relating to the council's estate, procurement, county-wide digital connectivity, and nature recovery.

1.6 This paper introduces the second tranche of actions which relate to energy, the green economy and waste and the circular economy.

1.7 An overview of the anticipated content and timings of the three tranches is set out in the table below.

Tranche	Tranche content (with reference to focus area in the Climate Strategy)	Committees
1	Our estate (focus area 1) Procurement (focus area 2) Digital connectivity (focus area 3) Nature recovery (focus area 6)	Endorsed by Cabinet in October 2023
2	Energy (focus area 3) Waste & circular economy (focus area 3) Green skills (focus area 4) Sustainable tourism (focus area 4)	Cabinet: March 2024

Tranche	Tranche content (with reference to focus area in the Climate Strategy)	Committees
3	Business mileage (focus area 2) Our companies (focus area 2) Building and planning (focus area 3) Transport (focus area 3) Commercial and industrial (focus area 3) Climate adaptation (focus area 3) Engagement and collaboration (focus area 3)	I&D Select Committee: spring 2024 (provisional) Cabinet: spring/summer 2024 (provisional)

2 Proposal

Tranche 2 actions

2.1 This report brings the second tranche of actions for review by Cabinet. The list of actions is provided in full below.

County-Wide

Energy

Action	Date	Owner
Work with Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to produce a Norfolk wide energy plan identifying the optimal pathway to decarbonising power, heat and transport for residents, businesses, and properties. This will build on focused stakeholder meetings in Autumn 2023 and with a brief for a procurement exercise in 2024 - timeline contingent on County Deal.	2024	Growth & Investment (G&I)
Support UK Power Networks to identify opportunities which can help overcome power constrained areas.	2024	G&I
Engage with the National Grid East Anglia cluster model to explore how Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects can demonstrate socio-economic benefits.	2024	G&I

Action	Date	Owner
Provide National Grid and UK Power Networks with local housing, jobs and technology data to feed into their future scenario modelling and investment strategy. This will help ensure sufficient electricity infrastructure is planned to allow the uptake of electrified heating and transport.	2024	G&I
Support renewable energy generation across the county by facilitating discussions between District Council and the Energy Systems Catapult to identify innovative onsite energy solutions where new infrastructure is not currently available.	2024	G&I
Feed into the National Grid study into options for electricity network infrastructure in East Anglia, ensuring Norfolk's objectives for minimal onshore infrastructure and upgrades that benefit local residents and businesses are considered.	2024	G&I

Green Economy

Green Skills

Action	Date	Owner
Develop the retrofit provider network through engaging with installers and housing providers in retrofit objectives. This will work to the recommendations arising from the NCC-commissioned analysis of retrofit skills demand and builds on existing availability of Skills Bootcamp retrofit training provision.	2024	G&I
Establish the Green Skills for Net Zero group, by working with industry stakeholders (offshore, electric vehicle, solar, housing, hydrogen) on methods to address skills demand. This will take forward recommendations from the NCC-commissioned skills analysis of net zero industries.	2024	G&I

Action	Date	Owner
Partner with the Norfolk Chambers of Commerce to ensure our work aligns with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) they are leading on.	2024	G&I
Establish the feasibility of a Norfolk-based Retrofit Skills Academy through Norfolk Investment Framework pilot funding.	2024	G&I

Green Apprenticeships

Action	Date	Owner
Fulfil strategic aim 1 of the council's Apprenticeships Strategy in relation to the promotion of green apprenticeships. This includes marketing campaigns, website development and social media promotion, and a specific award for 'Contribution to Green Apprenticeships' within the Apprenticeships Norfolk Awards.	2025	G&I
Fulfil strategic aim 2 of the Apprenticeships Strategy in relation to the promotion of green apprenticeships through conducting research to understand the awareness, demand and barriers for Green Apprenticeships from Norfolk businesses.	2025	G&I
Fulfil strategic aim 3 of the Apprenticeships Strategy to support increase in the number of green apprenticeship starts in Norfolk. This includes working with local providers to develop effective pre-apprenticeship provision to prepare prospective apprentices for the work environment, and working with District Councils to develop funding proposals that support increased provision.	2025	G&I

Action	Date	Owner
Fulfil strategic aim 5 of the Apprenticeships Strategy by developing the Apprenticeships Norfolk employer and provider networks. This includes facilitating peer support scheme for employers to share good practice and through funding the IEMA Foundation Certificate in Environmental Management to develop green apprenticeship delivery capacity across the county.	2025	G&I

Sustainable Tourism

Action	Date	Owner
Support the partnership application to become a Visit England Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) underpinned by the ambition to become the UK's most sustainable tourist destination.	2024	Environment
Maintain, develop and implement solutions to take Norfolk towards the ambition to become UK's most sustainable tourist destination (e.g. maintaining boardwalks, sustainable travel between key tourist destinations)	2024	Environment
Maintain, develop and implement solutions to increase community and tourist engagement in local environmental action (e.g. Gressenhall Environment hub) and seek similar models at key locations in the county associated with landscape scale nature recovery projects	2024	Environment

County-Wide

Waste – reduction & circular economy

Action	Date	Owner
Reducing food waste: Work with colleagues in Suffolk to deliver a communications campaign under the banner of 'Food Savvy', supporting householders to make the most of their food and throw away less. Moreover, deliver training to Food Waste Ambassadors within the community to raise awareness of resources available and enable individuals with skills and tips to manage food.	2025	Waste
Home composting: Provide subsidised home compost bins and support their use through the master composter volunteer programme, including training members of the community in home composting in partnership with Garden Organic research charity.	2025	Waste
Expand recycling credits for districts and community groups to support parish councils, charities, and other not for profit organisations in collecting household waste for recycling.	Ongoing	Waste
Reduce Single Use initiative: Maintain a communications campaign to reduce the number of single use items thrown away, with a current focus on Refill campaign to target single use food and drinks items.	2024	Waste
Work through the Norfolk Waste Partnership on initiatives and campaigns focused on reducing recycling contamination and increasing the capture rate of recyclable materials.	Ongoing	Waste
Improved recycling centres: Review feasibility for improvement of the network of recycling centres across the county to improve services, performance and accessibility.	Ongoing	Waste
Support the East of England Plastic Coalition in their aims to reduce the amount of plastic waste in the marine debris around our coast and reduce the amounts of plastics found in our wastewater systems from households.	Ongoing	Waste

Action	Date	Owner
Support the placement of community fridges across the county to prevent food from retailers close to expiry from going to waste. Fridges are located in community hubs and accept donations from individuals with all donations offered free to those who need it.	2025	Waste
Review opportunities to develop infrastructure to support reuse and raise awareness of opportunities to reuse items that may have otherwise gone to waste. This includes potential expansion of reuse shops at recycling centres, developing partnerships with the third sector and increasing breadth of operations to include more materials, such as furniture and electricals.	Ongoing	Waste

Waste – Closed landfill management

Action	Date	Owner
Maximise capture of landfill methane through efficient gas monitoring and collection systems for its use as an energy source.	Ongoing	Waste
Bioremediation: Use planting schemes to maximise the efficiency of methane breakdown in the landfill.	Ongoing	Waste
Leachate treatment: Aim to implement on-site leachate treatment systems that reduce transport and energy use.	Ongoing	Waste

3 Impact of the proposals

- 3.1 The action plans will bring together initiatives taking place across the council that help it to address climate change. They will form the basis of reporting to members and the public for oversight of the council's delivery of its Climate Strategy.

4 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 Action plans help to translate the strategic vision into practical implementation and provides accountability to members and the public. Cabinet approved a recommendation to publish action plans, therefore this proposal is fulfilling that recommendation.

- 4.2 Given the Climate Strategy's breadth of scope, Cabinet agreed in October 2023 to bring forward action plans in tranches. This is to maintain momentum in developing the governance framework for the strategy's delivery. A tranching approach also gives members more opportunity to review actions across different thematic areas than if they were to be released in one single list.
- 4.3 Publishing action plans follows good practice adopted by other local authorities and enhances the council's reputation in relation to climate governance.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The council could decide to publish all actions related to the Climate Strategy in one rather than to release the action plans in tranches. This would lead to the same end result for creating a reporting framework for delivery of the strategy. However, this approach would slow down the publication of actions for areas which are ready or soon to be ready for release. They would have to be held back by development of actions around more complex areas, which could impact on the momentum for building up the reporting framework.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The action plans do not have direct financial implications but their content relates to initiatives which do. Where these initiatives are not already in progress and represent key decisions, they will be brought forward for consideration in their own right.
- 6.2 In May 2023, Cabinet approved the recommendation to develop a Funding Blueprint for the Climate Strategy. This will set out funding options for delivering the strategy. The blueprint is under development by officers and will be brought for Select Committee review this year.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 Staff – the coordination of the actions will be undertaken within existing staff resource.
- 7.2 Property – reference to the capital investment towards a 'Future Ready' estate was part of the tranche 1 actions approved by Cabinet in October 2023.
- 7.3 IT – no direct implications.

8 Other implications

- 8.1 Legal implications – no direct legal implications
- 8.2 Human rights implications – no direct human rights implications

- 8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included) – the publication of the action plan in itself does not have equality impacts. The individual actions may have equality implications which have either been assessed [in the case of decisions already made] or will be assessed at the time of detailed implementation.
- 8.4 Sustainability implications – climate action plans represent a governance tool to help ensure the council contributes to a sustainable Norfolk.
- 8.5 Any other implications – no further material implications identified.

9 Risk Implications/Assessment

- 9.1 Individual actions may have risk implications which have either been assessed [in the case of decisions already made] or will be assessed at the time of detailed implementation.
- 9.2 Action plans represent a governance tool that reduce the risk of not delivering against the Climate Strategy through providing a framework for member and public oversight of progress.

10 Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 [Infrastructure & Development Select committee](#) reviewed the actions at their meeting on 17 January 2024, and endorsed their progression for consideration by Cabinet.

11 Recommendations

- 11.1 The Cabinet is asked to:
 - 1. Approve the second tranche of actions as set out in this report.**

12 Background papers

- 12.1 [Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy](#)
- 12.2 [Cabinet Report, October 2023: Climate Action Plans Tranche 1](#) (p85 – p98)

13 Officer contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with

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Cabinet

Item No: 12

Report Title: Highways Capital Programme 2024/25/26/27 and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Plant (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 3 August 2023

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

Highway and Transport infrastructure is important for our growing economy as we seek to manage, maintain & develop Norfolk's highway network, facilitate major development and deliver effective transport services to support sustainable growth and quality of life to residents and businesses.

It supports the Council's strategy 'Better Together for Norfolk' 2021-25. The Highways Capital Programme contributes directly to the strategic priorities of:

- A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy;
- Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities; and
- A Greener, More Resilient Future.

Key outcomes for the Highway Capital Programme are; -:

- A well-managed highway network that enables everyone to travel the county freely and easily; and
- A strong infrastructure for our growing economy.

The programme also helps implement the Council's Strategic Delivery Infrastructure Plan.

This report summarises the three-year settlement following the Government's 2023 autumn statement and the proposed allocations for 2024/25/26/27. It also includes the successful progression of the 3rd River Crossing (Herring Bridge) in Great Yarmouth, the Transforming Cities Fund in the Greater Norwich Area, and Long Stratton Bypass. In recent years, competitive bids have already secured significant funding from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP), as well as the Department for Transport's (DfT) "Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)" and "Bus Service Improvement Funds (BSIP)" for improvements, and the DfT "Challenge" and "Incentive" funds for maintenance, and Active Travel for Walking and Cycling. These funds are progressively replacing "needs based" allocations.

The recommended allocations for 2024/25, based on the expected government settlement, are set out in paragraphs 1.3.3, 1.3.4 and Appendix A of this report. At the time of writing, the actual allocations from the DfT for the 2025/26 financial year and beyond are unknown.

Recommendations:

- 1. Approve the Highways Capital Programme including the proposed draft allocations and programme for 2024/25 and indicative allocations for 2025/26/27 (as set out in Appendices A, B and C).**
- 2. Approve the proposals for the £10m Highway Maintenance Fund (as set out in Appendix D).**
- 3. Approve the proposals for the £4.51m Road Resurfacing Fund 2024/25 (as set out in Appendix E).**
- 4. Approve the proposals for the Road Safety Community Fund (as set out in Appendices F and G).**
- 5. Delegate approval of the minor updates to the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) for 2024/25 to 2028/29 to the Interim Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The Highways Capital Programme helps to deliver corporate objectives from Norfolk's Local Transport Plan.

1.2 Local Transport Plan

- 1.2.1 The county council adopted its new Local Transport Plan (LTP), covering the period 2021-2036, at the Full County Council meeting of 19 July 2022. This replaced the previous version adopted in 2011. The transport plan describes the council's strategy and policy framework for transport and is used as a guide for investment priorities as well as being considered by other agencies when determining their planning or delivery decisions.

- 1.2.2** The plan has a clear focus on reducing carbon, a switch to active travel, public transport, and cleaner fuels, and improving people's connections to services and facilities. It enables the authority to deliver against its current agreed objectives and maximises the ability to secure new investment into much-needed transport infrastructure and services to benefit Norfolk's residents and businesses.
- 1.2.3** The plan has the following aims:
1. Embracing the Future
 2. Delivering a Sustainable Norfolk
 3. Enhancing Connectivity
 4. Enhancing Norfolk's Quality of Life
 5. Increasing Accessibility
 6. Improving Transport Safety
 7. A Well Managed and Maintained Transport Network
- 1.2.4** In December 2022, the County Council and government agreed, in principle, a new County Deal, to transfer funding and powers. In December 2023, Full Council voted to accept the Deal subject to a vote in July 2024 to enable the election for a Directly Elected Leader to take place in May 2025. In respect of the LTP, the draft County Deal included text referring to an update its LTP by March 2024 for a new Elected Leader. However, at the time of writing the guidance is yet to be published by government and there is a revised date for the elected leader.
- 1.2.5** The council has continued to work with Transport East, the Sub-national Transport Body for the area. Transport East has adopted a transport strategy for the region, endorsed by the council's Cabinet on 7 November 2022, which we are now working in partnership to help deliver.
- 1.2.6** Alongside the strategy is an Investment and Delivery Programme that sets out the regional investment programme. This reflects Norfolk County Council's current strategic priorities in the DfT Major Road Network and Large Local Major funding programmes (West Winch Housing Access Road, Long Stratton Bypass, and Norwich Western Link), as well as our other priorities.
- 1.2.7** The current position of schemes in the DfT Major Road Network and Large Local Major funding programmes, with the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing construction opened early February 2024, is as follows:
1. Long Stratton Bypass: Outline Business Case (OBC) approved.
 2. Norwich Western Link OBC approved.
 3. West Winch Strategic OBC submitted and awaiting approval.
 4. A47/A17 Pullover junction, Strategic Case being developed.
- 1.2.8** This is set out in more detail below, Section 2.4.8.4 onwards.

1.3 Funding

- 1.3.1 National funding levels from the Department for Transport (DfT) for both Structural Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block grants was announced in the three-spending review in October 2021. This was a 'flat 3-year settlement with no allowance for inflation.
- 1.3.2 However additional grants have been recently announced by Government including within the Budget, autumn statement, and the recent 'Network North' road maintenance allocations.
- 1.3.3 In March 2023, government announced an additional £6.38m for Norfolk for the 2023/24 year and as part of the Network North announcement in November 2023, an additional £4.51m for each of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years.
- 1.3.4 As part of the Network North announcements a new Road Resurfacing Fund for local highways maintenance was announced. This was for the resurfacing of carriageways, cycleways, and footways to prevent potholes and other road defects from occurring, as well as tackling other asset management priorities, such as keeping local bridges and other highway structures open and safe. The fund has been established up to 2033/34. The Government has indicated a total minimum funding for Norfolk of £141m over this period, and we await the profile in financial years of the remaining £132m.
- 1.3.5 We will report to members when this guidance is received, and we will be required to publish a long-term plan for the use of the full 11-year funding and the transformation it will deliver.
- 1.3.6 The Integrated Transport budget is funded from DfT allocations, but more significantly we look to other sources of funding, such as Transforming Cities, Bus Service Improvement Plan and district funded Town Deals as well as funding from developers.
- 1.3.7 In planning the 2024/25/26/27 programme, we have made assumptions around the availability and success in achieving future competitive based funding opportunities. Where the funding source has not been confirmed, these are detailed with the comments against the schemes in Appendix C.
- 1.3.8 Members should note that in addition to DfT Integrated Transport funding, schemes of this type are also delivered from various funding sources including developer funding (Section 106, CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy); one-off bidding rounds such as Transforming Cities Fund, Bus Service Improvement Fund, Town Deals and Local Levelling Up Fund. The

total value of this programme is estimated at some £114.578m, which considerably exceeds the proposed LTP Integrated Transport allocation of £1.771m.

- 1.3.9 The team continue to explore potential funding opportunities and facilitate the preparation and submission of bids that support County Council priorities and objectives. This maximises the opportunity to seek and secure additional funding for the County.
- 1.3.10 The highways capital programme is actively managed throughout the year to aim for full delivery within the allocated budget. Schemes are planned at the start of the year but may be delayed for a variety of reasons e.g., planning consent or responding to public consultation. When it is identified that a scheme may be delayed, then other schemes will be planned and progressed to ensure delivery of the overall programme and the original schemes will be included later.

2. Proposal

2.1 Structural Maintenance and Bridge Strengthening

- 2.1.1 It is recognised that the existing level of funding makes the maintenance of current condition challenging, but our planned interventions and effective asset management approach have had a generally positive outcome over the years. However, due to current funding levels and inflation, the maintenance backlog has increased in recent years.
- 2.1.2 The overall highway asset backlog in April 2023 was calculated as £68.4m. This is an increase compared with £57.4m in 2021/22 and £47.9m in 2020/21 and reflects the current funding levels from government combined with inflationary effects.
- 2.1.3 The Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy, together with targets, has been reviewed, revised, and was considered by the July 2022 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee. It will continue to be monitored by the Committee as part of the annual Highway and Transport Network Performance Report.
- 2.1.4 We will report to members when further guidance is received regarding the Government's new Road Resurfacing Fund, and the DfT are expected to require the council to publish a long-term plan for the use of the full 11-year funding and the transformation it will deliver. Will we review our Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy alongside the new funding allocations.

- 2.1.5 Construction industry inflation indices are heavily based on energy and oil derived products such as asphalt, bitumen, and concrete. These inflation indices are likely to be in the region of 5-8% in the coming year, which diminishes the Council's purchasing power compared to its former value.
- 2.1.6 To help reduce the above effects, as in previous years, it is recommended that structural maintenance continues to be supported by the reallocation of funds from the LTP Integrated Transport block. For 2024/25 this will be £2.402m. Reduced from £2.873m in 2023/24.
- 2.1.7 To help with the challenge of managing the asset we will continue to look for opportunities for additional funds as they become available over and above the DfT allocations.
- 2.1.8 In the summer of 2021, the County Council announced an additional £10m investment into highway maintenance over the next four years, starting in 2021-22. This has so far enabled an additional £3.5m to be spent resurfacing Norfolk's roads, including sites at B1136 Hales, B1535 Great Witchingham, B1145 Great Massingham, A1082 Sheringham, A1064 Fleggburgh, B1077 Attleborough. We have spent an additional £3.2m surface dressing, delivering 80 miles of treated roads as part of our preventive maintenance strategy, and £0.5m on footway resurfacing in Taverham, Thorpe St Andrew and Norwich.
- 2.1.9 Details of the proposed total allocation of the total structural maintenance and bridges budget for 2024-25 can be found in Appendix B, the distribution of the additional Council investment in Appendix D and the Governments Road Resurfacing Fund in Appendix E.
- 2.1.10 Carrow Bridge, Norwich
- 2.1.10.1 Discussions have continued to examine the navigational issues in partnership as part of the work in and around East Norwich, a significant, major regeneration site. The programme of ongoing maintenance works to Carrow Bridge continues on a regular basis.
- 2.1.11 Norfolk Flood Reserve
- 2.1.11.1 As part of our commitment to the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA), the County Council has made additional funding of £1.5m available in 2024/25. Of this there has been capital allocation of £500,000 in 2024/25. This is shown in the structural maintenance allocation Appendix B.
- 2.1.11.2 In context our total spend on drainage for 2024/5 is expected to be capital £ 3.3m and revenue in the region of £2.7m. The revenue fund

deals with day-to-day cleansing and reactive response over thousands of sites, whilst the capital delivers scheme maintenance improvements works around the county.

- 2.1.11.3 In 2023/24 the Council delivered drainage improvement works at Pulham, and worked on feasibility studies at Acle, Great Plumstead, and Strumpshaw as well providing contributions to partnering organisations.
- 2.1.11.4 In 2024/25 will continue to work with the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance to deliver a variety of drainage improvement and maintenance schemes across the county, including works at Strumpshaw, completing further feasibility studies, delivering works at Acle and support NSFA partners with joint-scheme delivery.

2.2 Integrated Transport

- 2.2.1 Integrated Transport funding covers all expenditure on new infrastructure such as improvements at bus interchanges and rail stations, local safety schemes, pedestrian crossings, footways, traffic management, route and junction improvements and cycle paths. It used to be largely funded by the DfT Integrated Transport block grant. It is now heavily supplemented by other funding sources such as specific funding for Majors, Community Investment Levy, and Housing Infrastructure Fund. It also links developer funded schemes.
- 2.2.2 Norfolk County Council directly funds the Local Member Fund (see paragraph 2.2.12), and any approved additional investment. Approved investment in capital projects has often been part of a necessary local contribution to attract significant capital investment for example our local Majors, Long Stratton bypass and the Transforming Cities Programme. This has led to the Government making additional investment over hundreds of millions of pounds in Norfolk's infrastructure.
- 2.2.3 Budget summaries for the proposed programme is detailed in Appendix A. Individual schemes are detailed in Appendix C.
- 2.2.4 The proposed allocation from the LTP grant is £1.771m. This is allocated for mainly low-cost improvement schemes including the parish partnership programme, local safety, and contributions to developing major schemes.
- 2.2.5 **Active Travel**
 - 2.2.5.1 In summer 2020, the DfT published 'Gear Change'. This new strategy from government has made clear the ambition of achieving a step change in walking and cycling in the coming years, calling for bold

action and a 'once in a generation chance to accelerate active travel.' This includes the vision that cycling, and walking will be the natural first choice and account for half of all journeys in our towns and cities by 2030.

- 2.2.5.2 Publication of the DfT Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, gave guidance on the creation of Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans. Norfolk County Councils has been working to create these plans for Norfolk. A published Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Greater Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn have been approved through committee and published online.
- 2.2.5.3 A Countywide LCWIP is being developed that builds on the existing LCWIP plans and identifies active travel network improvements which will create better connectivity within 20 market towns in Norfolk. The Countywide LCWIP also includes proposals to increase connectivity between towns and surrounding rural communities. Consultation has been completed and we have a target adoption date of Spring 2024. This work is being funded by the DfT through the Capability Fund.
- 2.2.5.4 The £300,000 revenue element of the Tranche 2 funding has enabled the council to build vital capacity to implement the Active Travel programme, including increased community engagement, consultation, and behaviour change initiatives. The insight led approach created through the revenue funding has enabled us to evidence the plans we intend to resource in future iterations of the Active Travel Fund. It has also allowed us to expand our employee engagement through Mobilityways and pilot School Streets work with Sustrans. It has also funded a new website centred around sustainable transport which was launched in Spring 2023. Just under £1m of revenue funding has been secured to cover the period 2023 and 2024 and this is being used to fund a range of activities including engagement with schools, holiday activities, community bike grants, staff training and data collection.
- 2.2.5.5 The Council has also been successful in a £285,000 project to promote e-cycles across Norfolk. This programme continues with an e-bike loan offer available to residents in North Norfolk and recent successful extensions to the Beryl Hire e-bike scheme to Wymondham, Hethersett and Drayton.
- 2.2.5.6 In 2022, Norfolk received a £0.955m grant from the Active Travel Fund Tranche. Three schemes were approved in principle: Jellicoe Road in Great Yarmouth; Middleton Avenue in Gorleston; and Mile Cross Road in Norwich. These are currently going through design reviews with Active Travel England, with a further £739,000 successfully awarded to assist in delivery of these in the coming year.

- 2.2.5.7 In January 2023, we were invited by the DfT to bid for further capital funding for cycling and walking infrastructure schemes as part of Active Travel 4. and we were successful in being awarded £2.24m in March 2023 to deliver eight active travel schemes across Norfolk with the emphasis on crossings near schools in Dereham, Fleggburgh, Brundall, Thorpe St Andrew, Kings Lynn, Hunstanton & Sandringham. At the same time, we were awarded a Including a further £100,000 to support revenue funded work.
- 2.2.5.8 We have engaged with Active Travel in seeking funding to deliver our top two schemes that failed to be funded as part of Active Travel 4 in Gorleston and Bradwell to the value of £1.045m We are awaiting the outcome of these discussions.
- 2.2.5.9 We are delivering some £3m worth of LCWIP schemes for KLWNBC as part of their Active and Clean Connectivity (A&CC) programme which is part of their £25m Town Deal funding. The schemes are moving through design with several smaller schemes delivered and the remaining to be completed by March 2026.

2.2.6 Local Safety Schemes (LSS)

- 2.2.6.1 The 1988 Road Traffic Act places a statutory duty on local authorities to study road collisions and introduce measures to reduce and prevent them. Improving road safety is also one of seven strategic aims within the LTP.
- 2.2.6.2 LSS proposals enter the capital programme following an evaluation of accident statistics and their potential for casualty reduction. Accident cluster locations are included where the first-year rate of return of the proposed remedial measures exceeds 200%. LSS are treated as a priority due to their positive impact on road safety and casualty reduction.
- 2.2.6.3 A sample of LSS implemented over recent years has been reviewed, to check whether expected benefits have been delivered. LSS are generally performing as expected and delivering cost benefits in terms of accident reduction savings, based on low-cost measures.

2.2.7 Parish Partnership programme

- 2.2.7.1 The Parish Partnership programme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for small highway improvements. The County Council offered to support up to 50% of the cost of schemes. The intention being to ensure that limited

funds could be used to meet local community needs, helping promote the developing localism agenda.

- 2.2.7.2 To give Parish/Town Councils time to develop bids, letters inviting bids were sent out in June 2023. Bids are assessed against their contribution towards the aims that support the vision in the LTP, and viable schemes identified.
- 2.2.7.3 For 2024-25 it is proposed to support a programme of 118 schemes (97 local works and 21 SAM2) totalling £1,040,586 to be delivered. A County Council contribution £467,884 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution (subject to a future bid) of £43,760 along with funding from Town and Parish Councils.
- 2.2.7.4 To further assist Town/Councils, the County Council website provides key supporting information.

2.2.8 Local Road schemes / Junction Improvements

- 2.2.8.1.1 In 2022-23, we carried out a feasibility into an improvement to the A148/A1082 junction in Upper Sheringham. We are continuing to develop an outline design in expectation of a future external funding opportunity.
- 2.2.8.1.2 Similarly in 2024-25, we will develop an outline design for signalisation of the Crostwick lane / B1150 junction in Spixworth, following a feasibility undertaken in 2023-24. This will enable a future bid to any future potential external funding opportunity.

2.2.9 Market Town Network Improvement Strategies

- 2.2.9.1 The county council completed ten market town strategies (Dereham, Swaffham, North Walsham, Thetford, Diss, Downham Market, Fakenham, Wroxham/Hoveton, Wymondham, Aylsham), which were adopted by the Council in 2020 (Dereham 2019).
- 2.2.9.2 The resultant Network Improvement Strategies help inform future development and opportunities, as demonstrated by the Heritage Funded works undertaken during 2022/23 in North Walsham Marketplace led by North Norfolk District Council but supported by the County Council.
- 2.2.9.3 Subject to funding being available, the strategies for some towns will be updated from 2024/25 where there is a benefit from, and need for,

doing so. Consideration is also being given to looking at further towns, again based on the likely benefits and need.

2.2.10 Pedestrian Crossings and Footways

- 2.2.10.1 Unless there is a local safety concern from accident data, assessments are undertaken using the Local Member Fund and Parish Partnership Scheme. These are used to inform the priorities and cost for inclusion in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for future funding and to development opportunities. An example being the Pedestrian Crossing facility at the new Country Park in Horsford on Holt Road planned for the summer of 2023/34 delivered using CIL funds and the four new crossing facilities funded by Active Travel 4 at Brundall, Dereham, Fleggburgh and Hethersett.

2.2.11 Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- 2.2.11.1 Funding from the LTP Integrated Transport remains at £15,000 for 2024/25. This enables repairs to assets on the Public Rights of Way such as wayfinding, encouraging their use.

2.2.12 Local Member Fund budget

- 2.2.12.1 In June 2017, a new fund was created to provide each Member with an annual budget of £6,000 to be used on highway work within each financial year.
- 2.2.12.2 From 2021/22 it was agreed as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process to increase this fund per member to £10,000 per annum, with the scope of the fund was widened to include environmental aspects such as tree planting and the installation of Electrical Vehicle charging points.
- 2.2.12.3 From 2023/24 this was increased to £11,000 per member. This investment is being maintained by our Council, enabling Members flexibility to help facilitate to progress small highway projects based upon local need.
- 2.2.12.4 The local Highways Area team can provide the necessary help and advice on what the engineering solutions to any given problem may be. The Environment team can provide advice on biodiversity, tree planting and other greenspace enhancements. These options will be location specific and will usually involve a site visit to fully understand the issues and identify the optimum solution.

- 2.2.12.5 The local Highways Area team records all requests for each individual member, so they and the programme team can advise on spend against budget.
- 2.2.13 Additional Highways Investment
 - 2.2.13.1 At the Policy & Resources Committee on 27 November 2017, Members noted that one of the priorities for the administration was a commitment to invest an extra £20m in Norfolk's roads.
 - 2.2.13.2 This funding was allocated to the delivery of major projects, junction improvements, market town schemes, footways and crossing improvements and a contribution to Parish Partnership, Local Member fund and public rights of way. Much of this funding has been spent and many highway improvement and maintenance schemes have been delivered such as the Station Road Bus Link, Diss in 2023-24
 - 2.2.13.3 . The remaining scheme for delivery is the B1146 Hempton Roundabout. This received planning permission in January 2023, and we expect to construct in 2024-25.

2.3 Major Projects

2.3.1 Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing (Herring Bridge)

- 2.3.1.1 The Secretary of State granted development consent in September 2020 and the Full Business Case was and approved by the Department of Transport in November 2020.
- 2.3.1.2 Construction work commenced on 4 January 2021. The bridge became operational for all marine vessels at the end of November 2023.
- 2.3.1.3 Final works to the bridge deck and full commissioning of the bridge operation systems took place on 1 February 2024.
- 2.3.1.4 The project team has also delivered significant improvements to the adjacent Harfreys Roundabout which were fully funded by National Highways. This minimised disruption to local residents and businesses as the works were carried out simultaneously with the Herring Bridge project.

2.3.2 Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan

2.3.2.1 Other significant projects are being scoped using available funding sources. These are part of the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan refreshed for 2022, that was agreed by Cabinet on 3 April 2023.

2.3.2.2 Those which would form part of the County Council's adopted road network are:

1. Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road
2. Attleborough Link Road
3. A10 West Winch Housing Access Road
4. A140 Long Stratton Bypass
5. Fakenham A148 Roundabout Enhancement
6. Norwich Western Link
7. A17/A47 Pullover Junction (part local road, part strategic (trunk) road)
8. Kings Lynn Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme
9. North Walsham Link Road

2.3.2.3 The Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road, Attleborough Link Road, North Walsham Link Road, and Fakenham A148 Roundabout enhancement sites are development led projects which are not part of our Highway Capital Programme. The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan also details a range of other infrastructure projects including projects being promoted on the trunk road and rail networks. The remaining schemes are as follows:

2.3.2.4 West Winch Housing Access Road

2.3.2.4.1 The Outline Business Case for the project, which is essential to support significant planned housing growth, was submitted to the DfT in September 2023, and is currently progressing through DfT's review. In December 2023, a Planning application was submitted to Norfolk County Council Local Planning Authority and in January 2024 a public information event was held at the West Winch school to allow members of the public to discuss the project with representatives of the county council project team and borough council officers. The delivery of the project requires the diversion of two high pressure gas mains, the agreements required between both parties (county council and National Gas) are progressing well. The council project team has commenced work to procure a supplier for detailed design and construction.

2.3.2.5 A140 Long Stratton Bypass

2.3.2.5.1 In July 2021, the Outline Business Case (OBC) was approved by DfT. This confirmed that, based on the importance and benefits of the proposed scheme, DfT were providing the necessary funding

contribution of £26.21m (70% of total) to enable the scheme to continue with the development of the statutory approval processes and through the tendering process to identify a preferred contractor.

2.3.2.5.2 The scheme has completed both preliminary design and detailed design preparation. Following delays to the planning process associated with new nutrient neutrality guidance issued by Natural England, NCC have supported the Developer to allow updating of the previously submitted information in January 2023, which allowed the Local Planning Authority to approve the application in March 2023. Full planning permission was granted following agreement of planning conditions and the Section 106 Agreement in September 2023.

2.3.2.5.3 Highway Orders for the scheme have been through advertisement and consultation, allowing submission to the DfT for consideration. Further to their consideration, the DfT Confirmed the Side Roads Order in December 2023. Following identification of Target Cost and appetite to risk from the procurement exercise, the Full Business Case (FBC) was completed and submitted to the DfT for approval in January 2024. The council is now awaiting approval of the FBC from the DfT.

2.3.2.5.4 The procurement process commenced in November 2022 and culminated in four bidders submitting compliant tenders in November 2023. A winning Contractor was identified following an evaluation and moderation process leading to an Award of Contract in January 2024.

2.3.2.5.5 Advanced enabling works will commence in February 2024 allowing the main start of works to be programmed for early April 2024 (subject to DfT approving the FBC). The scheme is programmed for opening in 2025.

2.3.2.6 Norwich Western Link

2.3.2.6.1 In May 2020, the Norwich Western Link was given conditional entry into the Department for Transport (DfT) Large Local Majors funding programme via acceptance of the Strategic Outline Business Case.

2.3.2.6.2 A Design and Build Contractor was appointed in July 2021 to develop the design and a pre planning application consultation was carried out in 2022.

2.3.2.6.3 The Outline Business Case (OBC) was approved by DfT in October 2023 and a planning application is currently being finalised ahead of a planning application submission planned for early 2024. Details and an update on the project delivery were provided to Cabinet at its 4 December 2023 meeting.

2.3.2.7 Pullover A17/A47

- 2.3.2.7.1 Work on the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the A17/A47 Pullover Roundabout Improvement was completed in June 2023.
- 2.3.2.7.2 Our preferred option is the A17 to A47 east single-carriageway flyover which is supported by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and National Highways. This option is regarded as a permanent solution compared to a cheaper signalisation scheme which is not supported by stakeholders.
- 2.3.2.7.3 Using the new TEMPro8 forecasts in the traffic modelling, the value for money (VfM) has now dropped into the 'low' category, as defined by DfT, with a benefit to cost ratio at 1.3. At this ratio, it is considered to be unlikely to attract funding from DfT under the Major Road Network programme and may cause reputational damage if we were to submit the Strategic Outline Case (SOC). In view of this, the SOC has not been submitted and the project is currently under review.
- 2.3.2.7.4 There have been a number of developments since last summer, including the cancellation of HS2 and the Network North announcement indicating that all Major Road Network schemes would be up to 100% funded. It is also known that TEMPro8 has had an adverse impact on all major scheme business case VfM across the country.
- 2.3.2.7.5 The feasibility work carried out to date to develop ideas for an improvement scheme and the SOC work was funded from the Business Rates Pool with contributions National Highways. Any further small-scale development work that might be carried out in 2024/25 will be met from existing resources and will look to see if the VfM can be improved.

2.3.2.8 Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme, Kings Lynn

- 2.3.2.8.1 Work has continued in 2023/24 on the £26.8m King's Lynn Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme (STARS) Levelling Up Fund (LUF) project working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and engaging WSP to undertake the technical aspects. This has comprised detailed scheme development, including transport modelling and the preparation of an Outline Business Case.

- 2.3.2.8.2 This is a visionary Bus and Active Travel project which will transform a key gateway into the town and reconfigure the gyratory road system between the rail and bus stations. Working in partnership with the Borough Council, the scheme will facilitate a bold transformational masterplan to regenerate the area around the historic 15 century Southgate. The route under the gate will be used for Active Travel modes rather than for general traffic.
- 2.3.2.8.3 The scheme reduces the dominance of traffic by reconfiguring the 'Southgates' roundabout into a smaller junction that has bus priority and better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 2.3.2.8.4 The scheme also includes improvements to the gyratory system, including transforming the public realm on Railway Road, by introducing measures that will assist buses, pedestrians and cyclists which will give rise to benefits in road safety and air quality.
- 2.3.2.8.5 Delays to the topographical, utility apparatus and drainage surveys have meant that the submission of the OBC has slipped to May 2024, but at present the opening dates of July 2026 and June 2027 for the gyratory and Southgates aspects are not affected.
- 2.3.2.8.6 With regard to the timing of the LUF funding, which is available until March 2026, we are working with DfT so that we can continue to deliver the projects to the timescales set out in the original bid, which were accepted by DfT.

2.4 Transforming Cities

- 2.4.1 Transforming Cities is a £2.5bn transport fund to support connectivity in some of England's largest cities, with funding running from 2018-19 to 2022-23.
- 2.4.2 We received £6.1m through Tranche 1 and this was used to successfully deliver six schemes across Norwich, which included improvements to Norwich Bus Station and the introduction of the Beryl bike share scheme.
- 2.4.3 In September 2020, the DfT awarded Norwich £32m capital funding from Tranche 2. The bid was based on a range of projects aimed at improving clean and shared transport to create a healthy environment, increasing social mobility, and boosting productivity through enhanced access to employment and learning. The TCF allocation is based upon the following funding breakdown, DfT £32.2m, LA £7.9m and third-Party £18.8m.
- 2.4.4 As a result of this funding award, the TCF programme is a significant addition to the Highway Capital Programme.

- 2.4.5 Delivery of the TCF fund is going well, but in line with other cities there are challenges in delivering the programme to the timescales set by the DfT and discussions are ongoing about extending the funding for a small number of projects into 24/25. To date, 14 schemes have been delivered by the council with another 4 in construction, all of which contribute to improvements for sustainable transport.

2.5 Zero Emission Transport City Funding

Norfolk County Council was shortlisted as one of three authorities to work with the Department for Transport on the Zero Emission Transport City programme and was awarded £500,000 of funding to develop a business case for Norwich to transition to a low/zero emission city. The programme was a good fit with the adoption of the latest Local Transport Plan and Implementation Plan, as well as the Transport for Norwich strategy. Whilst the programme was discontinued by the Department for Transport in early 2023, with no further funding allocated (so no allocation for the financial year 24/25) discussions are continuing with the Department for Transport and the Connected Places Catapult regarding other possible funding sources and funding models which could assist with transport decarbonisation across the city and county.

2.6 Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas

Norfolk County Council was successful in securing £3.3m from the Department for Transport through the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme. This bid was matched by £3.6m of local investment from First Bus and will see the introduction of 15 battery electric buses to the bus fleet in Norwich by March 2024 and supports infrastructure and electrical grid upgrade works. A further supplementary bid for an additional 55 electric double decker buses was also submitted to the DfT in partnership with First Buses, and was also successful, with the DfT providing an additional £11.4 million funding towards the project. This takes the total number of battery electric buses to 70, all of which should be operational by March 2024, whilst the Roundtree Way First Bus depot will have all diesel infrastructure removed, making it a fully electric depot.

2.7 DEFRA Air Quality funding

- 2.7.1 Norfolk County Council was successful in securing an Air Quality grant of £171,545 in 2023-24 from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This is being used to provide an e-cargo bike loan scheme which can be used by businesses operating within Norwich (where there is an Air Quality Management Area designated). Benefits anticipated from the scheme include air quality benefits due to van/car

trips being replaced, business benefits, with businesses saving both money and time, and health benefits.

- 2.7.2 We have also applied for £545,000 of funding for Air Quality related work (including monitoring, communications), which is mainly revenue funding, but could include £71,000 capital investment.

2.8 Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

- 2.8.1 Funding has been allocated to Norfolk through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) programme, which is aimed at delivering a step-change in the deployment of local, on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- 2.8.2 We have an indicative capital allocation of £6.458m from Tranche 1 for 2024 and are working with government on confirming the delivery programme for this. We are also working on delivering several other EV infrastructure programmes following successful funding bids to the LEVI Capital Pilot Fund (£1.6m) and the Norfolk Infrastructure Framework (£1.175m).
- 2.8.3 Separately, we have been provided with capability funding from the Department for Transport to assist in resourcing and planning for the delivery of EV infrastructure.

2.9 Bus Service Improvement Plan

- 2.9.1 Norfolk County Council has received £49.6m funding from the Department for Transport in November 2022 to deliver Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which outlines commitments that the County Council and Norfolk's bus operators have made to improve public transport in the county. This is divided between a capital funding allocation of £30.9m for the provision of bus priority measures and improvements to transport interchanges, with the remaining £18.7m being revenue funding to support enhancements to bus services.
- 2.9.2 Of the capital funding, £16.8m is earmarked for bus priority measures and junction improvements. There are six schemes planned for Norwich (Queen's Road, Yarmouth Road, A140 from Harford, Ipswich Road, Dereham Rd/Grapes Hill, and Angel Rd/Waterloo Rd), two for Great Yarmouth (Southtown Rd and the gyratory) and six for King's Lynn and West Norfolk (A148, A149, Hardwick Rd, and junctions at the QEH, Lavender corner and Portland St). Norwich schemes are the most progressed with Queen's Road starting January 2024, 2 having already been consulted on and the other 3 due for consultation in early 2024. All delivery is expected to have started by the end of 2024/25.

- 2.9.3 £3.8m of the capital fund is being used to upgrade or create new travel hubs, to make connecting journeys easier, not only bus-bus but also bus-train-bike-walk. These travel hubs are in North Walsham, Cromer, Sheringham, Diss, Hunstanton and Great Yarmouth (Acle New Rd and North Quay near the rail station). North Walsham is already delivered, Acle New Rd will be constructed early 2024 and the others are in design and will be delivered during 2024/25.
- 2.9.4 Improved bus stop infrastructure is also being provided using £7.9m. This includes 20 gold stops (bus stops with better shelters, seating, real-time passenger information, improved information, and cycle facilities), real-time information screens at 50 bus stops, up to 200 bus stops upgraded to be DDA compliant, and QR boards at all bus stops that give scheduled and real-time information.
- 2.9.5 We are also using £800,000 to equip every bus in Norfolk with Tap-Off readers. This will mean that they can introduce daily and weekly capped fares on their services, like you get in London.
- 2.9.6 The remainder of the capital money will go towards programme management and other small-scale improvements.

2.10 Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.10.1 Funding of £1.6m has been secured through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the extension of the Yellow Pedalway from Norwich Airport to the Broadland Northway, providing a safe route for accessing sports facilities at The Nest Community Sports Hub. We expect to construct in 2024-25.
- 2.10.2 The CIL bid for the Hethersett to Colney link has been approved by the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) and will go forward for approval by all the Councils. We expect to construct in 2024-25.
- 2.10.3 The council is working with partners to bring forward an improvement to the transport infrastructure at the access to Hethel Technology Park. This project will act as a catalyst to accelerate economic development and substantial investment into the area. A preliminary design has been completed for the scheme and a planning application submitted, including both the transport infrastructure and an outline application for the factory expansion. A funding package is currently being put together for the next stages of design on the project and its construction. GNGB has approved £5m CIL towards access improvements and a bid has been submitted for government funding. On determination of this, a report will be brought

back to Members seeking approval for the next stages of the project including its funding package.

2.11 Traffic Management

2.11.1 Minor traffic management issues (parking, waiting, speed, and weight limit restrictions) are generally funded via the Local Member Fund budget. Anything more significant will need to identify appropriate funding.

2.11.2 Speed limits are governed by the Council's Norfolk Speed Management Strategy which was reviewed and approved by Cabinet on 30 January 2023.

2.11.3 It is key to highlight that most new speed limits are now only introduced where there is, or has been, significant changes in the environment (e.g., a village boundary has expanded) or there are compelling highway safety reasons.

2.11.4 Road Safety Community Fund

2.11.4.1 The highest priority road safety schemes, which have targeted casualty reduction, have been delivered via the local safety scheme part of the highway capital programme.

2.11.4.2 Many of the smaller scale, locally identified concerns regarding road safety issues have not been advanced as the Council's resources has focused on directing the limited available funding to those locations where the greatest benefits on casualty reduction could be achieved. It was therefore recognised we had a growing need to work with County Councillors and local communities to provide small scale road safety schemes that could address more specific local issues.

2.11.4.3 The £1m Road Safety Community Fund (RSCF) was approved by Cabinet on 6 September 2021. The aim of this fund is to give communities across Norfolk an opportunity to promote small scale, locally driven road safety improvements. The objective of the Fund is to deliver 100 new county-wide road safety schemes over the four-year period 2022/23 to 2025/26. We are particularly keen to encourage schemes which are likely to focus on casualty reduction, therefore these types of proposals will be given greater consideration when prioritising.

2.11.4.4 These schemes are restricted to maximum threshold of £10,000 each from this fund, for local highway safety improvements, which will help address local issues and concerns. However, where the scheme meets our criteria, but costs are estimated to be slightly above this figure,

‘topping up’ will be permitted if the community or Local Member are willing and able to fund the difference. Any such external funding needs to be clearly shown on the bid form. Larger schemes above £10,000 will still need to be considered as part of the wider Highways Capital Programme.

2.11.4.5 To maximise resources and deliver schemes efficiently, it has previously been agreed that the RSCF will deliver 20 to 30 schemes per year focusing on geographical areas as detailed below:

1. Year 1: 2022/23; King’s Lynn & West Norfolk;
2. Year 2: 2023/24; North Norfolk, Broadland & Gt Yarmouth;
3. Year 3: 2024/25; South Norfolk & Breckland;
4. Year 4: 2025/26; Norwich & other subsequent requests.

2.11.4.6 Good progress is being made with delivery. In King’s Lynn and West Norfolk 21 schemes have been completed. The remaining schemes and those in North Norfolk, Broadland and Great Yarmouth are planned to be completed in 2024.

2.11.4.7 Those schemes contained in Year 3 (2024/25) for approval in South Norfolk & Breckland are shown in Appendix F and the proposed timescales for the delivery for years 3 & 4 are shown on the programme in Appendix G.

2.11.4.8 In late spring/early summer 2024 we will be contacting the County Councillors in the City to invite them to submit their bids for consideration for Year 4. All bids received before the submission deadline (late November 2024) will be considered for suitability, prioritised, and shortlisted in line with the funding profile.

3. Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) 2024-25

- 3.1 The TAMP is updated annually, significant changes are reported to Select Committee and it is approved by Cabinet. It is available on our website and further details can be supplied upon request.
- 3.2 An annual “Highway & Transport Network Performance report” was presented to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee in July 2023. This report enables the Committee to understand the network performance so that they can take this into account in considering policies and strategies.
- 3.3 Norfolk continues to review its maintenance and inspection policies for the network to ensure they deliver best practice, are value for money, and that

actions align with Member's decisions on funding priorities. The TAMP will reflect the decisions made by members for specific reports that come forward as separate items for review such as Winter Service Policy and Herbicide Policy which will have their own approval process.

- 3.4 The TAMP has been reviewed and no significant changes are proposed other than to update dates and financial information based on this report.
- 3.5 The TAMP 2025/26 will reflect the impact of the government funding profile of its Road Resurfacing Fund when it is announced and the resultant review of Highway Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Performance Framework targets to be agreed with members.

4. Impact of the Proposal

- 4.1 The Highways Capital Programme represents a sustained and significant investment in the Norfolk economy.
- 4.2 It helps protect the investment already made in establishing the £19bn highway asset in Norfolk.
- 4.3 It supports the Council's business plan, Together, For Norfolk, and its strategy 'Better Together for Norfolk' 2021-25. The latter contains a strategic priority of a "Vibrant and Sustainable Economy".
- 4.4 The council's two key outcomes for the Highway Capital Programme are; -
 - A well-managed highway network that enables everyone to travel the county freely and easily.
 - A strong infrastructure for our growing economy.
- 4.5 It helps implement the council's Norfolk Strategic Delivery Infrastructure Plan.

5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 5.1 The Highway Capital Programme matches the Council's aspirations in the Council business plan to manage, maintain & develop Norfolk's highway network, facilitate major development and deliver effective services to support sustainable growth and quality of life to residents.

5.2 National Highways & Transport Network (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey 2023

- 5.2.1 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey takes place annually during the summer. The survey sample size was 3,300 and boasted a response rate of 26.8%, a good response rate for surveys of this type.

- 5.2.2 The NHT Survey is referenced in the DfT's Incentive Fund self-assessment process and allows the Council to compare ourselves to our peers, monitor performance and help make efficiencies. It also forms part of our performance framework for our asset management strategy.
- 5.2.3 Norfolk County Council achieved an overall score of 47 and achieved a ranking of 1st out of 30 County Councils that participated in this year's NHT survey. The average overall score amongst our peers this year was 40.
- 5.2.4 Norfolk also ranked first place overall when compared to the Eastern Region County Councils (Cambridge, Essex, Hertfordshire & Suffolk).
- 5.2.5 We report both the score and position in the annual Transport Asset Network Performance Report of several maintenance indicators, including:
- KBI 11 - Pavements & Footpaths (overall); 5th (score of 51).
 - KBI 13 - Cycle routes and facilities (overall); 1st (52).
 - KBI 15 - Rights of way (overall); 1st (56).
 - KBI 23 - Condition of highways; 2nd (32).
 - KBI 24 - Highway maintenance; 7th (44).
 - KBI 25 - Street lighting; 16th (60).
- 5.2.6 The customer satisfaction results across a range of indicators, coupled with the asset performance framework gives the Council confidence that outcomes are being achieved.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 Differing proposals could be put forward to utilise planned invest differently across the highway assets or provide additional investment from our Council. However, given the performance as detailed in section 5, this is not recommended.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The funding for highways schemes is included in the Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2024-25, presented to Cabinet 29 January 2024 and Full Council on 20 February 2024. This included the overall County Council Capital Programme, and overall budgets contained within this report.

8. Resource Implications

8.1 Staff:

If the County Council is successful in its external funding bid applications, the resource strategy will need to be reviewed to ensure delivery of the projects, although the current arrangements with the professional services provider, WSP, will be utilised in the first instance.

8.2 Property:

There are no implications.

8.3 IT:

There are no implications.

9. Other Implications

9.1 Legal Implications:

The legal implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

9.2 Human Rights Implications:

The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

9.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

An Equality Impact Assessment for the Highway Asset Management Strategy and Policy has been completed. There are no adverse impacts.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for our Transforming Cities programme. Assessments will also be carried out as part of the development of individual schemes which form the Highways Capital Programme.

9.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None arising from this report. However, a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be carried out for individual projects where a new type of processing is introduced with the potential of a high-risk impact on individuals as a result of processing their data.

9.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

9.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

The programme has been developed in accordance with the current LTP aims, which include delivering sustainable growth. Highway improvement schemes, including walking, cycling, public transport and active travel schemes which

form part of this programme, will have a positive effect on sustainability and achieving net zero. This is considered further for each scheme during the detailed design phase.

9.7 Any Other Implications: N/A

10. Risk Implications / Assessment

- 10.1 Funding may be changed by Government (for example budget announcements or bidding opportunities) or the Council.
- 10.2 Although an allowance for inflation is budgeted for, if inflation exceeds what is expected the programme may be adversely affected.
- 10.3 Damage to assets can be caused by adverse weather, winter, drought, wind, and flood. The County's Fen roads are particularly susceptible to drought damage due to the underlying geological conditions.
- 10.4 There is a risk with the larger, non-LTP funded schemes that if they overspend, any shortfall may need to be funded from the Highways Capital Programme. To accommodate this, programmed schemes may need to be deferred to prevent overspend on the overall Highways Capital Programme. The risk is mitigated by effective project and programme management.
- 10.5 The Council has underwritten local contributions on major schemes as part of the requirements of the funding opportunities, such as the 3rd River Crossing.
- 10.6 Any scheme specific risks and implications will be assessed and mitigated during the development of each scheme.

11. Select Committee Comments

- 11.1 The Infrastructure & Development Select Committee noted progress against the Asset Management Strategy Performance as part of the annual Highway and Transport Network Performance Report on 12 July 2023.

12. Recommendations

- 1. **Approve the Highways Capital Programme including the proposed draft allocations and programme for 2024/25 and indicative allocations for 2025/26/27 (as set out in Appendices A, B and C).**
- 2. **Approve the proposals for the £10m Highway Maintenance Investment (as set out in Appendix D).**

3. Approve the proposals for the £4.51m Road Resurfacing Fund 2024/25 (as set out in Appendix E).
4. Approve the proposals for the Road Safety Community Fund (as set out in Appendices F and G).
5. Delegate approval of the minor updates to the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) for 2024/25 to 2028/29 to the Interim Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services.

13. Background Papers

12.1 [Local Transport Plan](#)

- 12.2 At the Cabinet meeting on 6 March 2023 Members approved the Highway capital programme and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) [Report](#) and [link to minutes](#)
- 12.3 At the Cabinet meeting on 6 March 2021 Members approved the establishment of the Road Safety Community Fund, its funding and delivery approach [Report](#) and [link to minutes](#)
- 12.4 The Highway and Transport Network Performance report was presented to the Infrastructure and Development Committee on 12 July 2023. [Report](#) and [link to minutes](#)

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

APPENDIX A: Norfolk County Council- Highways Capital Programme Summary

Scheme Type	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding
Major schemes	0	54,606	0	97,449	0	92,465
Bus infrastructure	20	12,636	20	0	20	0
Bus priority schemes	0	12,750	0	0	0	0
Public Transport Interchanges	185	3,554	145	0	145	0
Cycling schemes	70	6,176	0	0	0	0
Walking schemes	515	1,767	515	1,905	515	500
Road crossings	0	2,164	0	0	0	0
Local road schemes	661	12,223	771	1,475	771	0
Traffic Management & Traffic Calming	0	1,175	0	0	0	0
Local Safety Schemes	320	4,603	320	0	320	0
Other Schemes, Future Fees & Carry Over Costs	0	1,153	0	1,130	0	924
Integrated transport	1,771	112,807	1,771	101,959	1,771	93,889
Structural/Routine/Bridge Maintenance	48,159	3,611	45,886	0	45,886	0
Totals:	49,930	116,418	47,657	101,959	47,657	93,889

Notes:

1. Above figures in £000's
2. DfT (Local Transport Plan) funding detailed under main year headings
3. Other Funding includes Section 106, Section 278, LGF, CIL, County Council & Major Scheme funding

Structural Maintenance Budget Proposed Allocations 2024/25/26/27 Draft	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	After Government Autumn Statement 2023	Pending (1)Future Govt Road resurfacing Fund (2)Future NCC funding for potholes and Drainage	Pending (1)Future Govt Road resurfacing Fund (2)Future NCC funding for potholes and Drainage
Funding			
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (needs)	15,892,000	15892000	15892000
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (permananet pothole fund)	15,892,000	15892000	15892000
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (incentive)	3,973,000	3973000	3973000
County Council funding to cover £1.065m capitalisation from 2018-19	1,065,000	1065000	1065000
County Council funding to cover £1.599m capitalisation from 2019-20	1,559,000	1559000	1559000
County Council funding to cover £722,708 capitalisation from 20-21	500,000	500000	500000
County Council funding to cover £93,000 capitalisation from 21-22	93,000	93000	93000
Capital Integrated Transport Contribution	2,402,000	2402000	2402000
NCC borrowing for Drainage £300k / £500k from 23/24	500,000		
Various Creditors	500,000		
NCC Pothole Fund	3,111,000		
DfT Network North/Road Resurfacing Fund 24/25	4,510,000	4510000	4510000
DfT Network North/Road Resurfacing Fund 23/24 carry over	1,773,000		
	51770000	41376000	41376000

Structural Maintenance Budget Proposed Allocations 2024/25/26/27 Draft	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	After Government Autumn Statement 2023	Pending (1)Future Govt Road resurfacing Fund (2)Future NCC funding for potholes and Drainage	Pending (1)Future Govt Road resurfacing Fund (2)Future NCC funding for potholes and Drainage
Spending			
Countywide specialist			
Bridges	2,007,364		
Bridges (small works)	720,000		
Bridges Inspections / feasibility studies	1,011,001		
Traffic Signal Replacement	575,000		
Traffic Signals (small works)	700,000		
Public Transport Disruption	5,000		
Park & Ride	40,000		
Asset Condition Surveys	160,000		
sub total	5,218,365		
Roads			
Principal Roads (Surfacing)	2,881,150		
Principal Roads (Surface Treatment)	2,242,597		
Principal Roads (SCRIM)	150,000		
Principal Roads (Reclamite)	550,000		
sub total	5,823,747		
B roads (surfacing)	913,162		
B roads (surface treatment)	1,163,851		
sub total	2,077,013		
C roads (surfacing and haunch) fen roads recycling	500,000		
C roads (surfacing and haunch)	711,375		
C roads (surface dressing)	4,519,713		
sub total	5,731,088		
U roads (surfacing and haunch)	223,000		
U roads (surface dressing)	4,519,713		
sub total	4,742,713		
Layered Patching	4,785,709		
Chip Patching	1,969,000		
Permanent Pothole repair	900,000		
Road Markings	800,000		
Road Studs	111,060		
sub total	8,565,769		
Machine Patching	454,400		
Patching	55,600		
sub total	510,000		
Bleeding Roads	30,000		
sub total	30,000		
	27,480,330		
Contract costs etc.	8,295,027		
Fencing Repairs	55,000		
Vehicle Restraint Systems			
Condition inspections & retensioning	44,000		
Risk Assessment,	53,000		
Design & works	100,000		
VRS Repairs	75,000		
	272,000		
Footways & Drainage & signs			
Signs & post	650,000		
Signs - PROW finger Posts	40,000		
Area Managers Schemes	140,000		
Footways - Category 1 & 2	999,169		
Footways Category 3 & 4	2,567,967		
Footways Category 3 & 4 Micro-Asphalt	820,750		
Footways & Kerbs repairs	800,000		
Footway layered patching	1,100,000		
Drainage Schemes	1,978,393		
Drainage (as-built SWD capture)	5,000		
(Drainage Flood & Water Risk Match Pot)	40,000		
Drainage Capitalisation Area Delivery	876,000		
sub total	10,017,279		
Drainage NSFA to be allocated	432,000		
Summary			
Total Structural Maintenance & Bridges Spending	51,770,000		
Probable final budget	51,770,000		

Appendix C: Proposed Highways Capital Improvements Programme 2024-25-26-27

Proposed Highways Capital Improvements Programme 2024-25-26-27										
Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Major Schemes										
DFT	Great Yarmouth	DFT	Great Yarmouth - Third River Crossing Scheme	£0	£4,022,000	£0	£3,000	£0	£0	The bridge became operational for all marine vessels at the end of November 2023 and fully operational February 2024.
DfT	South Norfolk	DfT	Long Stratton Bypass (NCC Design)	£0	£24,150,000	£0	£12,279,000	£0	£0	Guidance is still awaited from DfT and the final balance of the funding contributions are still to be confirmed.
DfT	Broadland	DfT	A47-A1067 (Wensum Valley) Western Link Road	£0	£14,577,000	£0	£30,061,000	£0	£65,456,000	It has been indicated that funding of up to 100% (based on the OBC submission of £251.1m) is possible from DfT. This is subject to further guidance and agreement with DfT, which is yet to be provided.

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Major Schemes cont.										
DfT	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	DfT	West Winch Housing Access Road	£0	£10,570,000	£0	£32,650,000	£0	£25,240,000	The Outline Business Case was submitted to the DfT in September 2023, and is currently progressing through DfT's review.
DfT	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	DfT	A17/A47 Pullover	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Work on the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) was completed in June 2023. Any further small-scale work that might be carried out in 2024/25 will be met from existing resources.
LUF	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	LUF	Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme, Kings Lynn	£0	£1,287,000	£0	£22,456,000	£0	£1,769,000	Part of Levelling Up Fund application
CIL	South Norfolk	CIL	Hethel Technology Park	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	GNGB has approved £5m CIL towards access improvements and a bid has been submitted for government funding.
Bus Infrastructure										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	County- DDA Bus stop upgrades	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Thickthorn Park and Ride Phase 1	£0	£2,100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Bus Infrastructure cont.										
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road / Breckland Road with Costessey Bowthorpe Mobility Hub	£0	£1,490,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Norwich - Bus Infrastructure Improvements (DDA)	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	
DfT	Countywide	DfT	Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas	£0	£737,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	A supplementary bid for an additional 55 electric buses was submitted to the DfT in partnership with First Buses, and was also successful, with the DfT providing an additional £11.4 million funding towards the project. Most of which was spent in 2023/24.
BSIP	Great Yarmouth	BSIP	Great Yarmouth Acle New Road - North Quay and Vauxhall	£0	£130,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Majority of construction in 2023/24
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Bus Stop Clearway Programme	£0	£1,900,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Bus Infrastructure cont.										
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County -Bus Stop Relocations	£0	£1,180,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Bus Stop DDA Upgrades	£0	£1,500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Gold Standard Bus Stop Upgrades	£0	£1,031,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	RTPI Displays King's Lynn-Hunstanton, Sheringham-Cromer and 25 further locations	£0	£933,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Tap-on/Tap-off Readers for Norfolk Bus Fleet	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Travel Norfolk Roll-Out	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Countywide	BSIP	County - Programme Resources	£0	£450,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Broadland	BSIP	Acle The Street Gold Bus Stop	£0	£60,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	To be delivered with maintenance resurfacing scheme
BSIP	South Norfolk	BSIP	Wymondham Market Place Gold Bus Stop	£0	£55,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Bus Infrastructure cont.										
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	Downham Market Gold Bus Stop	£0	£70,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Bus Priority										
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road/Longwater Lane Bus Lane (Longwater Lane - Wendene)	£0	£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Sprowston Road (Denmark Road - Outer Ring Road)	£0	£735,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Dereham Road/Larkman Lane and Larkman Mobility Hub	£0	£641,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	To be delivered with maintenance resurfacing scheme
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Heartsease Fiveways Junction	£0	£628,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Sprowston Road (Magdalen Road - Denmark Road)	£0	£582,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Great Yarmouth	BSIP	Great Yarmouth Southtown Road	£0	£750,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	South Norfolk	BSIP	Keswick A140 Ipswich Road Bus Lane from Harford P&R to Tesco's	£0	£400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Bus Priority cont.										
BSIP	Norwich	BSIP	Dereham Road / Grapes Hill Bus Lane	£0	£525,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Norwich	BSIP	A140 Ipswich Road (Hall Road to Outer Ring Road) inbound bus lane	£0	£1,065,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Broadland	BSIP	Thorpe St Andrew A1242 Yarmouth Road/Thorpe Road outbound bus lane	£0	£1,525,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	A149 Queen Elizabeth Way - Castle Rising to Knights Hill and Queen Elizabeth Hospital	£0	£1,324,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	A148/A149 Grimston Road junction Queen Elizabeth Way - Knights Hill junction reconfiguration	£0	£880,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	A149 Hardwick Road - Hardwick Roundabout to Southgates	£0	£905,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Bus Priority cont.										
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	A1076 Gayton Road, Queen Elizabeth Hospital exit	£0	£600,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	Heacham A149 / Lynn Road junction	£0	£320,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	Great Yarmouth	BSIP	Bus Station & Gyrotory Remodel	£0	£1,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	Portland Street/ Wellesley Street Bus Station Exit	£0	£620,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Public Transport Interchanges										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Countywide Public Transport Interchanges	£145,000	£0	£145,000	£0	£145,000	£0	small measures across all interchanges
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Rail Station mobility hub	£0	£107,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital mobility hub	£0	£1,170,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Wymondham Rail Station Platform Access	£0	£533,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Bus Station Mobility Hub	£0	£163,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Public Transport Interchanges cont.										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Support for Greater Anglia's bid for Access For All - Diss, North Walsham, Thetford, Wymondham	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Provisional contribution to Greater Anglia station improvements dependant on outcome of bid to DfT by GA
BSIP	South Norfolk	BSIP	Diss Travel Hub Upgrade	£0	£281,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	North Norfolk	BSIP	Cromer Travel Hub Upgrade	£0	£400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	North Norfolk	BSIP	Sheringham Travel Hub Upgrade	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
BSIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	BSIP	Hunstanton Travel Hub Upgrade	£0	£800,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Cycling										
CIL	Norwich	CIL	Yellow Pedalway Extension to Horsham St Faith	£50,000	£1,739,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50k from LTP in 2024/25
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Marriott's Way Link - Gunton Lane parking area	£0	£89,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road/Richmond Road	£0	£278,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Cycling cont.										
CIL	South Norfolk	CIL	Colney Lane B1172 to B1108 Walking and Cycling Link Partially S106 funded	£0	£450,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Supplemented by Section 106 funds
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Vauxhall Rail bridge to North Quay	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
ATF3	Norwich	ATF	A1024 Mile Cross Road	£0	£1,225,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Currently working through design review and change management for budget with Active Travel England, outcome to be confirmed.
ATF3	Great Yarmouth	ATF	Gorleston B1370 Middleton Road	£0	£479,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Currently working through design review and change management for budget with Active Travel England, outcome to be confirmed.
ATF3	Great Yarmouth	ATF	Great Yarmouth C628 Jellicoe Road	£0	£358,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Currently working through design review and change management for budget with Active Travel England, outcome to be confirmed.
ATF4	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	ATF	Old Hunstanton A149 Shared Use Cycleway / Footway	£0	£290,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Cycling cont.										
ATF4	Broadland	ATF	Thorpe St Andrew A1042 Ring Road Segregated Cycleway	£0	£255,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Fairstead - Cycleway Resurfacing	£0	£52,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Oldmedow Road - Upgrade to shared use path	£0	£380,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Hulton Road - Cycle Barrier Review	£0	£2,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Queen Mary Road - crossing improvement	£0	£2,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Bishops Road - surface improvement	£0	£101,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Sandringham Railway Path - Path widening	£0	£6,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	Tennyson Avenue - Railway crossing improvement	£0	£442,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Cycling cont.										
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	A1078 Edward Benefer Way - New Cycle Link to St Edmondsbury Road	£0	£28,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Walking Schemes										
LTP	Countywide	LTP/ Parish	Delivering local highway improvements in partnership with Town and Parish Councils	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	Parish Partnership "other funding" is 50% match funding from Town/Parish Councils
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Public Rights of Way in Towns & Villages - Urban Path Improvements	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	City Centre eastbound through-traffic reduction - including Duke Street and St Crispins	£0	£1,159,000	£0	£1,405,000	£0	£0	
Norwich CC	Norwich	Norwich CC	Hay Hill Public Realm	£0	£6,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Funded by Norwich City Council via Town Deal funding bid.

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Walking Schemes cont.										
S106	South Norfolk	S106	Costessey - Trod between A1074 Dereham Road & Lodge Farm Development	£0	£102,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	S106 funded - Lodge Farm Phase 2
Road Crossings										
ATF4	South Norfolk	ATF4	Hethersett - Back Lane Zebra Crossing	£0	£210,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
ATF4	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	ATF4	King's Lynn - A1078 Edward Benefer Way - Signalised Staggered Segregated Crossing	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
ATF4	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	ATF4	Sandringham - A149 Queen Elizabeth Way - Central Refuge	£0	£290,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	A1076 Gayton Road - Toucan Crossing near Hospital	£0	£300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Road Crossings cont.										
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	A1078/ A148 Low Road/Wooton Road/Grimston Road junction - Toucan Crossing	£0	£484,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LCWIP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	KLWN Town Deal	U20250/ A1078 Bergen Way junction Edward Benefer Way junction – Refuge	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Parish Council - CIL	Broadland	Parish Council	Horsford - B1149/Mill Lane Crossing Upgrade	£0	£280,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Dependant upon feasibility outcome
Local Road Schemes										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Unallocated Funding	£0	£0	£290,000	£0	£475,000	£0	
LTP	Broadland	LTP	Post NDR Environmental monitoring	£91,000	£0	£91,000	£0	£91,000	£0	Monitoring until 2033/34
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Great Yarmouth Gorleston - White lion Steps	£100,000	£0	£160,000	£0	£0	£0	To be delivered with maintenance contribution

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Local Road Schemes cont.										
LTP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	LTP	Downham Market - A1122 railway crossing (continued maintenance costs) recurring annual spend to be covered by capital programme	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	recurring annual spend to be covered by capital programme
NCC	North Norfolk	NCC Extra £20m	Hempton B1146/C550 junction improvement	£0	£335,000	£0	£1,475,000	£0	£0	
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	North Walsham Station Access Ramp	£25,000	£0	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	contribution
NNDC	North Norfolk	NNDC	Fakenham, A148 / Water Moor Lane Roundabout Scheme	£0	£1,300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	NNDC funding to be confirmed, bid submitted dependant on successful outcome
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Airport Access – Industrial Estate Link	£0	£960,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2 Programme Fees	£0	£80,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	VIVACITY Data analytics	£40,000	£0	£40,000	£0	£40,000	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Local Road Schemes cont.										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	INRIX Roadway Analytics	£45,000	£0	£45,000	£0	£45,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	VIDA Data analytics funding	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	NCC Contribution for 25 Years - A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon	£40,000	£0	£40,000	£0	£40,000	£0	Recurring annual spend for 25 Years from 2022/23
BSIP	Norwich	BSIP	Angel Road/Waterloo Road junction revision	£0	£633,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	Upper Sheringham - A148 A1082 Junction	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Further design development, construction dependent upon successful bid
NCC	Norwich	NCC	Bracondale / King Street Junction	£0	£140,000	£0	£425,000	£0	£425,000	Feasibility
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	North Walsham Grammer School Road Mini Roundabout	£140,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	To be delivered alongside Traffic signal update and maintenance

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Local Road Schemes cont.										
LEVI	Countywide	LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Pilot	£0	£1,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Funding has been allocated to Norfolk through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) programme, which is aimed at delivering a step-change in the deployment of local, on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
LTP	Broadland	LTP	Spixworth B1150 / Crostwick Lane Junction	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Preliminary design work to inform future bid
Developer S278	South Norfolk	Developer S278	Cringleford Roundhouse Way (S278 Barratt David Wilson)	£0	£1,900,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Timing yet to be confirmed subject to Section 278 agreement.
Developer S278	South Norfolk	Developer S278	Longwater Junction Improvement (S278 Persimmon)	£0	£2,400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Timing yet to be confirmed.
BDC	Broadland	BDC	Plumstead Road Junction Improvement	£0	£775,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Timing yet to be confirmed with Broadland District Council and developer
Developer S278	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk	Developer S278	Knights Hill (S278 Barratt David Wilson)	£0	£2,700,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Traffic Management & Traffic Calming										
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Thorpe Hamlet - Area wide 20mph speed limit and traffic calming	£0	£145,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
DfT	South Norfolk	DfT	Barnham Broom - NWL Traffic Mitigation - Speed Reduction Measures	£0	£130,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
DfT	South Norfolk	DfT	Kimberley/Wymondham - NWL Traffic Mitigation - Speed Reduction Measures	£0	£80,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
DfT	Broadland	DfT	Felthorpe/Horsford - NWL Traffic Mitigation - Speed Reduction Measures	£0	£560,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
DfT	Broadland	DfT	Weston Longville - NWL Traffic Mitigation - Speed Reduction Measures	£0	£260,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Local Safety Schemes										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Local safety schemes Feasibility / Preliminary Design	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Safety Partnership Schemes / contribution to maintenance schemes	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Unallocated local road scheme funding	£26,000	£0	£295,000	£0	£295,000	£0	To be allocated to individual schemes once identified and assessed.
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Newmarket Road / Unthank Road	£0	£12,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	South Norfolk	LTP	A140 Norwich to Scole iRAP Study	£114,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Breckland	LTP	Weeting-with-Broomhill C873 AIP Study	£37,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	A149 Thorpe Market to Antingham Route Study	£35,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Norwich A1074 Dereham Road / Waterworks Road	£23,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2024/ 25	Other Funding	2025/ 26	Other Funding	2026/ 27	Other Funding	Comments
Local Safety Schemes cont.										
LTP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	LTP	A10 South Runcton	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	A143 Fritton to Belton Speed Limit Review	£15,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Great Yarmouth Southtown Road Pedestrian Refuge	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
NCC	Countywide	NCC	ANoC11 - Countywide LED replacement	£0	£4,591,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Other Schemes, Future Fees & Carry Over Costs										
NCC	Countywide	NCC	Members Fund	£0	£924,000	£0	£924,000	£0	£924,000	£11,000 per member per annum
NCC	Countywide	NCC	Road Safety Community Fund	£0	£229,000	£0	£206,000	£0	£0	See Appendix F & G
Totals:				£1,771,000	£112,807,000	£1,771,000	£101,959,000	£1,771,000	£93,889,000	

**£10m NCC ADDITIONAL CAPITAL MAINTENANCE FUNDING 2024/25
SUMMARY**

Work Type	2021-22	2022-23	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Forecast	Total
Resurfacing	£ 474,716	£ 306,144	£ 2,511,348	£ 682,150	£ 3,974,358
Resurfacing & drainage repairs			£ 21,505		£ 21,505
Surface Dressing	£ 1,100,000	£ 1,100,000	£ 543,918	£ 1,814,000	£ 4,557,918
Machine / Layered patching			£ 12,310	£ 55,600	£ 67,910
Bridge Maintenance		£ 295,351	£ -		£ 295,351
Footways	£ 6,774	£ 292,448	£ 224,486	£ 559,250	£ 1,082,958
	<u>£ 1,581,490</u>	<u>£1,993,943</u>	<u>£3,513,597</u>	<u>£ 3,111,000</u>	<u>£ 10,000,000</u>

Additional Highway Maintenance Funding 2024-25 Network North / Road Resurfacing Fund							
Delivery 2024-25							
Asset	Treatment	Road Class	Road Number	Parish	Location	£ cost	Length (miles)
Roads	Reclamite	A	A147	Norwich	Grapes Hill	}	0.21
	Reclamite	A	A1042	Norwich	Mousehold Lane		0.28
	Reclamite	A	A146	Norwich	Lakenham Road		0.38
	Reclamite	A	A1402	Norwich	Aylsham Road		0.25
	Reclamite	A	A1074	Norwich	Dereham Road		0.22
	Reclamite	A	A147	Norwich	Chapel Field Road		0.16
	Reclamite	A	A1042	Postwick with Witton	Yarmouth Road		0.22
	Reclamite	A	A1194	Postwick with Witton	Broadland Way		0.41
	Reclamite	A	A1194	Postwick with Witton	Poppy Way		0.40
	Reclamite	A	A1270	Postwick with Witton	Broadland Northway		0.62
	Reclamite	A	A140	Hellesdon	Cromer Road		0.98
	Reclamite	B	B1108	Watton	High Street		0.35
	Reclamite	C	C860	Norwich	Rose Lane		0.71
	Reclamite	C	C850	Norwich	St Stephens Street		0.22
	Reclamite	C	C813	Norwich	Tombland		0.17
						554,653	5.55
	Surfacing	A	A1042	Norwich	Chartwell Road Roundabout	102,000	0.15
	Surfacing	A	A1042	Thorpe St Andrew	Yarmouth Road	107,000	0.14
	Surfacing	A	A149	Cromer	Norwich Road	62,000	0.08
	Surfacing	A	A1062	Ludham	Norwich Road	131,000	0.18
	Surfacing	A	A148	King's Lynn	Lynn Road	288,000	0.23
	Surfacing	B	B1140	Norwich	Plumstead Road	70,762	0.07
	Surfacing	B	B1355	Barsham	Creake Road	61,000	0.03
	Surfacing	B	B1354	Briston	Norwich Road	53,000	0.01

	Surfacing	B	B1354	Corpusty	Briston Road	119,000	0.35
	Surfacing	B	B1355	Sculthorpe	Burnham Market Road	49,000	0.04
	Surfacing	B	B1144	King's Lynn	Vancouver Avenue	177,000	0.31
	Surfacing	B	B1161	Hunstanton	Southend Road	51,000	0.02
	Surfacing	B	B1161	Hunstanton	Le Strange Terrace	74,000	0.06
	Surfacing	C	C875	Acle	The Street	200,000	0.58
	Surfacing	C	C286	Aylsham	Norwich Road	67,000	0.07
	Surfacing	C	C485	Postwick with Witton	Yarmouth Road	101,567	0.09
	Surfacing	C	C66	Harpley	Nethergate Street	179,000	0.61
	Surfacing	C	C201	Norwich	Stoke Road	126,000	0.17
	Surfacing	U	78301	Wymondham	Back Lane	223,000	0.40
						2,241,329	3.58
Footways	Reconstruction			Thorpe St Andrew	Hillcrest Road	129,396	0.33
	Reconstruction			Trimingham	Staden Park	42,220	0.38
	Reconstruction			Sea Palling	Beach Road	87,974	0.46
	Reconstruction			Sprowston	Tills Road	179,932	1.14
	Reconstruction			Sprowston	Carleton Rd and Close	82,000	0.33
	Reconstruction			Great Yarmouth	University Crescent	90,000	0.06
	Reconstruction			Hempnall	Mill Road	60,000	0.19
	Reconstruction			Wymondham	Folly Road	114,000	0.18
	Reconstruction			Thetford	Mundford Road	77,000	0.25
	Reconstruction			Ditchingham	Ditchingham Dam	111,000	0.11
	Reconstruction			Swanton Morley	Thomson Close	72,000	0.24
	Reconstruction			Ashill	Dunnets Close	37,000	0.27
	Reconstruction			Swaffham	Haspalls Road	72,000	0.18
	Reconstruction			Heacham	Lamsey Lane	42,866	0.11
	Reconstruction			Heacham	Jubilee Road	71,000	0.07
	Reconstruction			Burnham Overy	New Road	72,000	0.15

	Reconstruction			Southery	Churchgate Street	34,329	0.24
	Reconstruction			Norwich	Quebec Road	99,450	0.27
	Reconstruction			Norwich	Lyhart Road	99,450	0.34
	Reconstruction			Norwich	Woodhill Rise	140,400	0.75
						1,714,018	6.06
					Grand Total	4,510,000	15.19

Road Safety Community Fund Scheme Proposals 2024-25

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works
Tasburgh	Cllr Thomas	Speed Limit	£10,000
Diss	Cllr Kiddie	VAS	£6,000
Aldeby	Cllr Stone	Speed Limit	£10,000
Langley	Cllr Mason Billig	Signs & Road Markings	£3,000
Harleston/Brockdish/Scole	Cllr Wilby	Waiting Restrictions	£9,000
Trowse	Cllr Thompson	Speed Limit	£9,000
Wymondham	Cllr Savage	Speed Limit	£9,000
Bawburgh	Cllr Bills	Speed Cushions	£2,500
Hethersett	Cllr Bills	20mph Wig Wags	£7,000
Bressingham and Fersfield	Cllr Rowett	Signs & Road Markings	£4,000
Bunwell	Cllr Rowett	Signs & Road Markings	£3,000
Gt Melton	Cllr Dewsbury	Signs & Road Markings	£4,000
Costessey	Cllr Blundell	Speed Limit	£10,000
Costessey	Cllr Blundell	Speed Limit	£9,000
Harling	Cllr Askew	Speed Limit	£10,000
Snetterton / Shropham	Cllr Eagle	VAS	£6,000
Thetford	Cllr Jermy	Speed Limit	£10,000
Thetford	Cllr Jermy	Signs & Road Markings	£3,000
Thetford	Cllr James	Waiting Restrictions	£9,000
Thetford	Cllr James	Speed Limit	£9,000
Bawdeswell	Cllr James	Speed Limit	£9,000
Mattishall	Cllr Borrett	Speed Cushions	£2,500

Appendix F			
Road Safety Community Fund Scheme Proposals 2024-25			
Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works
Watton	Cllr Bowes	Speed Limit	£9,000
Brisley	Cllr Kiddle-Morris	Speed Limit	£9,000
Carbrooke	Cllr Bowes	Speed Limit	£9,000
Great Ellingham	Cllr Connolly	Speed Limit	£9,000
Great Ellingham	Cllr Connolly	Speed Limit	£9,000
		Total NCC budget	£229,000

Appendix G																																														
Road Safety Community Fund Timescales - Third & Fourth Years																																														
Activity	2023-24												2024-25												2025-26																					
	MONTH																																													
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M										
Send out letters to Members explaining the RSCF and bidding process																																														
Members contact their parishes and discuss ideas with their local Highway Engineer. Then submit bids to HE/RSCF Team (ideally prioritise all bids).																																														
RSCF Team collates all bids & evaluates against funding criteria;once deadline for submissions has passed, produce summaries of all bids received; shortlist, prioritise and produce Design Briefs for the proposed successful bids.																																														
RSCF Team submit proposed schemes to Asset & Capital Programme Team for inclusion within the Capital ProgrammeReport for the March budget setting Committee meeting.																																														
Letters sent to all Members notifying outcome of bids.																																														
Scheme briefs handed over to Highways Design Team for resourcing and detailed design.																																														
Programme Meetings held (including Design & contractors) to discuss proposed schemes, delivery plan, design progress, start dates, scheme progress, completion & final accounts etc																																														

Key

YEAR 3 (SOUTH NORFOLK & BRECKLAND)
YEAR 4 (CITY)

Cabinet

Item No: 13

Report Title: Highway Parish Partnership Schemes 2024-25

Date of Meeting: 04 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Plant (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director Community and Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 03 January 2024

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

We established the Parish Partnership scheme to give local communities the opportunity to directly influence our programme of small highway improvements. The scheme continues to be extremely popular, and officers have assessed 118 individual bids from Town and Parish Councils across Norfolk this year.

The 2024/25 programme will see 118 small local schemes, delivering what communities tell us they need. This includes trods, village gateways, bus shelters and vehicle activated signs.

The way that the programme is funded, with Town and Parish Councils making a contribution of £485,184, means that we can more than double the impact of the funding we make available. This year, our contribution of £467,884 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £43,760 to this local investment programme will support the delivery of schemes totalling £1,040,586.

We also accept bids from unparished County Council divisions. Such divisions can always opt to become a formal Parish Council, but otherwise we are offering support on the basis that the division raises the required 50% funding. Kings Lynn Borough Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norwich City Council have previously indicated their willingness to consider proposed schemes and potential funding for them. We will also continue to make significant investment in these important areas. This includes the investment we are making in Norwich as part of the Transforming Cities Fund and in Great Yarmouth with the 3rd River Crossing.

Recommendations:

- 1. To approve the 97 local schemes listed in Appendix B for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2024/25.**
- 2. To approve the 21 vehicle activated sign schemes listed in Appendix C for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2024/25, subject to securing funding from the Safety Camera Partnership.**

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 The Parish Partnership scheme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for local highway improvements, with the County Council funding up to 50% of bid costs. The key benefits of the scheme are that it:

- Delivers local priorities identified by local people.
- Draws in additional funding for small scale highway improvements, enabling us to collectively deliver more schemes.
- Gives local communities an opportunity to directly influence the improvements in their local area.

1.2 The programme continues to be well received by Parish/Town Councils, Local Members, and communities. Information about the number of bids received through the scheme over the past twelve years demonstrates there is a good spread across Norfolk.

1.3 Invitation letters for 2024/25 bids were sent out in June 2023 with a closing date of 8 December 2023 (Appendix A), giving bidders good time to develop their proposals.

1.4 118 bids were submitted from Town & Parish Councils for 2024/25.

1.5 All bids have been assessed against the following factors:

- Contribution to Local Transport Plan objectives.
- Outcome for the local community.
- Value for money.
- Compliance with regulations.

2. Proposal

2.1 Small highway improvements

2.1.1 97 bids for small highway improvements have been assessed and are considered to be viable and deliverable. It is proposed that all 97 of these bids are allocated funding and added to the Parish Partnership

Programme for 2024/25. The total funding contribution from the County Council needed to deliver these schemes is £467,884.

2.1.2 A full list of the 97 bids is included at Appendix B. The most popular bids are for:

- Village Gateways (26)
- Trods (14) - a simplified, lower cost alternative to footways (often constructed using recycled road surface material)
- Bus Shelters (10)
- Signs (8)
- Footway (7)
- Posts (7)
- 20mph Wig-Wags (reactive flashing signs) (5)
- Kerbing (5)

2.2 Vehicle activated signs (SAM2)

2.2.1 21 bids were received for SAM2. These are mobile VAS units which flash vehicle speed as a reminder to the driver. The SAM2 would be purchased under the scheme, and subsequently owned/maintained by the relevant Town or Parish Council. Full cost of the 21 bids is £87,519.

2.2.2 For these 21 bids, officers have submitted a bid for funding of £43,760 (50%) from the Safety Camera Partnership to enable them to be delivered without any direct County Council funding. On that basis, it is proposed to add all of these schemes onto the Parish Partnership Programme for 2024/25. A full list of these bids is included at Appendix C.

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 A County Council contribution £467,884 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £43,760 along with funding from Town and Parish Councils, will enable a programme of local works totalling £1,040,586 to be delivered.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 This Parish Partnership scheme enables delivery of schemes which have been identified as important by local communities.

4.2 The contribution from Town and Parish Councils and the Safety Camera Partnership means that we can deliver more schemes on the ground. In addition, where local communities support lower cost solutions, there is a positive impact on the wider highway's improvement programme. For example, over the last five years, the implementation of trods has enabled 36 much more expensive footway schemes to be removed from the forward programme.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Cabinet could decide to reduce the County Council's contribution to the Parish Partnership Programme or could decide to not utilise highways funding to allow all the assessed bids to progress. In which case, a set of additional criteria would need to be developed to enable the current list of proposed schemes for 2024/25 to be re-assessed.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The County Council contribution to the Parish Partnership schemes is £467,884, allocated from the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport grant.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** There are no staffing implications, and the programme can be delivered within existing staff resource.
- 7.2 **Property:** None of the proposed schemes involve land acquisition.
- 7.3 **IT:** None.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** The legal implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process. None of the proposed schemes will require legal orders to deliver.
- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** The Human Rights implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** An equality impact assessment has been undertaken on this proposal, to examine how the proposal is likely to impact on people with protected characteristics.

The assessment has identified that the proposal should promote equality for people with protected characteristics, particularly older and disabled people, and parents/younger people. This is because the scheme enables Parish councils to bid for money for improvements to the highways in their local area,

which includes improvements that promote accessibility and inclusion, such as bus shelters, vehicle activated speed warning signs and road markings near schools.

Careful planning takes place to ensure that new schemes are implemented correctly and take account of issues within the local area. The bidding process is accessible and inclusive, and it is a criterion of the process that any successful bid must be accessible for disabled people. This enables the scheme to play its part in making Norfolk an accessible county – a priority identified in Better Together, for Norfolk, the Council's business plan.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None arising from this report. However, a Data Protection Impact Assessment will be carried out for individual projects where a new type of processing is introduced with the potential of a high-risk impact on individuals as a result of processing their data.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): Many of the schemes will have a positive contribution to sustainability, by encouraging walking and cycling.

8.7 Any Other Implications: None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 In previous years, the Safety Camera Partnership (SCP) has agreed to contribute funding towards the SAM2 bids. However, funding for 2024/25 is not guaranteed, and decisions are taken in the context of all bids submitted to the SCP.

10. Select Committee Comments

10.1 Not applicable: this report has not been taken to a Select Committee.

11. Recommendations

- 1. To approve the 97 local schemes listed in Appendix B for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2024/25.**

2. To approve the 21 vehicle activated sign schemes listed in Appendix C for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2024/25, subject to securing funding from the Safety Camera Partnership.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 Highway Parish Partnership Schemes 2023-24 [Report](#) to Cabinet committee 6 March 2023 and [minutes](#)
- 12.2 Highway Capital Programme 2023/24/25/26 and Transport Asset Management Plan [Report](#) to Cabinet 6 March 2023 and [minutes](#)

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

Officer name: Kevin Townly
Telephone no.: 01602 222627
Email: kevin.townly@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

cc Local Members

Your Ref:

Date: June 2023

My Ref:

HI/12/GEN/DH/KT

Tel No.:

0344 800 8020

Email:

ppschemes@norfolk.gov.uk

From the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport

Dear Sir/Madam

Delivering local highway improvements in partnership with Town and Parish Councils

I am delighted to inform you that due to the success of working in partnership with Parish/Town Councils for the last ten years the Parish Partnership Scheme Initiative will again be repeated in the financial year 2024/25. Further supporting information, including possible funding sources for your share of the bid, is available on our website (click on [this link](#)).

The County Council has provisionally allocated £300,000 on a 50/50 basis (There is an upper limit on Norfolk County Council funding support of £25,000 per bid) to fund schemes put forward by Town and Parish Councils to deliver projects that are priorities for local communities. We are particularly keen to encourage and support first-time bids.

This letter provides more information on the process, invites you to submit bids, and explains how the County Council can support you in developing your ideas. The closing date will be the 8th December 2023. Please contact your local Highway Engineer based at the local Area Office for agreement and any advice in developing your ideas, especially around the practicalities and cost estimates.

Once all bids have been received, we will assess them and inform you of our decision in March 2024 following approval by the Norfolk County Council Cabinet.

To encourage bids from Town and Parish Councils with annual incomes (precepts plus any another income) below £2,000, we are offering the following support;

- 75% County Council contribution
- £5,000 maximum bid value
- Offer available only once to any bidder

Continued .../

We will also accept bids from unparished County Council Wards. Such Wards can always opt to become a formal Parish Council, but otherwise we are offering support on the basis that the Ward raises the required 50% funding. Kings Lynn Borough Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norwich City Council have kindly indicated their willingness to consider proposed schemes and potential funding for them. Further details are in the relevant committee report on our website (click on [this link](#)).

What sort of schemes would be acceptable?

- Small lengths of formal footway
- Trods (a simplified and low-cost footway),
- Improved crossing facilities
- Improvements to Public Rights of Way.
- Flashing signs to tackle speeding. We would encourage you to consider Speed Awareness Mobile Signs (SAM2) - which flash up the driver's actual speed rather than fixed signs (VAS) - which flash up the speed limit. The number of VAS in Norfolk has grown, and checks show that speed reduction benefits can be minimal. Whilst we will still consider bids for fixed VAS, we will only consider these if there is a known and recorded personal Injury accident record. We consider that SAM2 mobile signs, which are moved around on an agreed rota, are better at reducing speed; **SAM2 can be jointly purchased with neighbouring Parishes and would be owned and maintained by the Parish/Town Council.** Please note this type of scheme may be dependent upon NCC securing additional funding from the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership
- Part-time 20mph signs with flashing warning lights, outside schools. The County Council generally supports these as they do show a moderate reduction in average speeds during peak times.
- "Keep Clear" carriageway markings outside schools. Applications will be considered for new school keep clear carriageway markings (which must be supported by the local school) however, these will not be enforceable without a Traffic Regulation Order which is outside the scope of the Parish Partnership Scheme. If you wish to enforce the Order, it would have to be wholly funded by the Parish or the Local Member.
- New Bus Shelter or Shelter Lighting. A copy of Norfolk County Councils guidance for new bus shelters is available on our web site (click on [this link](#)). **Any new shelter would be owned and maintained by the Parish/Town Council.**
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points. In the first instance we would expect Parish/Town Councils to investigate available grants, for more information please email evehicles@norfolk.gov.uk – A website containing useful information is currently being developed and will be updated with new information regularly. We will be contacting Parish/Town Councils when this available.

Continued .../

Schemes can be within or immediately adjacent to the highway. If they are off highway the future responsibility for the maintenance will fall to the Parish or Town Council.

Schemes should be self-contained and not require other schemes or works to make them effective.

Schemes that support the Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives will have a higher priority for funding. The LTP can be found on our website (click on [this link](#)).

With the County Council's agreement Parishes can employ private contractors to deliver schemes. However, any works on the highway would be subject to an agreed programme, inspection on completion, and the contractor having £10m public liability insurance.

Schemes which will not be considered

- Bids for minor traffic management changes which require a Traffic Regulation Order for example;-
 - Speed Limits
 - Waiting restrictions
 - Weight restrictions
- Bids for installation of low-energy LED lighting in streetlights to help cut energy bills and maintenance.
- Mirrors in the highway
- Protection of private land from travellers
- Quiet Lane zones

Information you must include in your bid

- The objective of the scheme
- Details of the scheme, its cost and your contribution.
- A plan/map of the extents of the scheme
- Who, and how many people will benefit.
- Local support, particularly from your local Member, frontagers and landowners.
- For 'off highway' schemes, your proposals for future maintenance.

Please find a simple bid application form attached to this letter. When assessing your bid, we will consider the points above, but also:

- The potential for casualty reduction.
- Any ongoing maintenance costs for the County Council.

Your bids should be emailed to ppschemas@norfolk.gov.uk (or posted for the attention of the County Programme Engineer, Linda McDermott, at the above address). If you need further information on the bid process please contact Linda, by email or by phoning 01603 228905. For advice on the scheme practicalities and/or likely costs, please contact your local Highway Engineer.

Yours sincerely



Graham Plant
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport

Parish Partnership bid application form 2024/25

Fund applied for:	Parish Partnership Fund		
Applicant details:			
Submitted by/contact:			
Phone Number:			
Email:			
Sum applied for:			
Total project cost:			
Project title:			
Project detail: (please include a plan/map of the extents of the scheme):			
plan/map attached:	Yes / No		
Any other funding:			
Parish Income:	Precept	Other Income	Total Yearly Income
Reason for works:			
Any relevant supporting documents (e.g. supportive correspondence) :			
Discussed with:			

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Alburgh	Barry Stone	Village gateways	5,760.00
Aldborough	Saul Penfold	Posts	2,536.85
Antingham	Edward Maxfield	Signs	4,065.00
Ashmanhaugh	Nigel Dixon	Village gateways	1,934.00
Attleborough	Rhodri Oliver	Village gateways	7,209.56
Aylsham	Steve Riley	Kerbing	6,000.00
Beetley	Mark Kiddle-Morris	Road markings	270.00
Blofield	Andrew Proctor	Kerbing	5,000.00
Blofield	Andrew Proctor	PROW	10,000.00
Booton	Greg Peck	Village gateways 75% contribution	5,400.00
Bramerton	Vic Thomson	Village gateways	2,970.00
Bressingham	Barry Duffin	20mph Wig Wags	15,775.00
Brundall	Andrew Proctor	Village gateways	5,240.00
Brundall	Andrew Proctor	Signs	1,735.00
Burnham Market	Andrew Jamieson	Surfacing £5k Contribution only	30,000.00
Burston and Shimpling	Barry Duffin	Village gateways	14,612.00

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Buxton with Lamas	Steve Riley	Bus shelter	4,989.00
Cantley	Andrew Proctor	Trod	5,500.00
Carbrooke	Claire Bowes	Village gateways	10,000.00
Catfield	Richard Price	Bus shelter	6,861.00
Cringleford	David Bills	VAS	5,649.00
Dereham	William Richmond/Philip Duigan	Bus shelter	7,938.00
Dereham	William Richmond/Philip Duigan	Trod	50,000.00
Earsham	Barry Stone	Posts	2,000.00
East Ruston	Richard Price	Village gateways	3,300.78
East Winch	Jim Moriarty	Trod	36,675.00
Felmingham	Saul Penfold	Kerbing	7,974.33
Field Dalling	Michael Dalby	Village gateways	1,368.62
Filby	Andy Grant	Village gateways	8,151.24
Fleggburgh	Andy Grant	Village gateways	3,800.00
Garvestone	Ed Connolly	Bus shelter	6,470.00
Gillingham	Barry Stone	Footway	22,180.00

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Gimingham	Edward Maxfield	Bus shelter	4,017.00
Great Massingham	Stuart Dark	Village gateways	5,000.00
Gressenhall	Mark Kiddle-Morris	Surfacing	15,700.00
Griston	Claire Bowes	Trod	26,159.91
Haddiscoe	Barry Stone	Signs	2,428.00
Harling	Steve Askew	VAS	19,120.00
Harling	Steve Askew	Village gateways	4,720.00
Hellesdon	Shelagh Gurney	Bus shelter	12,286.00
Hempnall	Alison Thomas	PROW	1,550.00
Hempton	Tom Fitzpatrick	VAS	7,492.00
Holme Hale	Fabian Eagle	Posts	2,000.00
Holme next the Sea	Andrew Jamieson	Street Furniture	800.00
Itteringham	Steffan Aquarone	Signs	5,000.00
Langham	Michael Dalby	Footway	11,200.00
Lenwade/Weston Longville	Greg Peck	Bus shelter	6,364.00
Loddon	Kay Mason Billig	Trod	2,200.00
Narborough	William Nunn	Bus shelter	10,054.00

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Necton	Mark Kiddle-Morris	Village gateways	6,859.50
New Buckenham	Steve Askew	Village gateways	2,500.00
Newton Flotman	Daniel Elmer	Village gateways	4,158.64
Nordelph	Chris Dawson	Posts £14k max	28,000.00
North Lopham	Steve Askew	Village gateways	6,500.00
Outwell	Chris Dawson	Posts £25k max	50,000.00
Potter Heigham	Richard Price	Feasibility	10,000.00
Pulham St Mary	Martin Wilby	Kerbing	5,000.00
Redenhall with Harleston	Martin Wilby	Posts	14,000.00
Roughton	Tim Adams	Village gateways	1,476.19
Roughton	Tim Adams	Surfacing	4,800.00
Salhouse	Fran Whymark	Bus shelter	7,399.00
Salhouse	Fran Whymark	Village gateways	8,550.16
Saxlingham Nethergate	Alison Thomas	Footway	15,633.00
Scarning	William Richmond	Signs	1,459.31
Scarning	William Richmond	Signs	1,392.63

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Scole	Martin Wilby	Signs	3,500.00
Scoulton	Ed Connolly	Signs	950.00
Sheringham	Judy Oliver	Bench £2k contribution	4,000.00
Sheringham	Judy Oliver	Footway	9,300.00
Sheringham	Judy Oliver	Village gateways	5,560.00
Shipdham	Ed Connolly	Village gateways	4,093.44
Southery	Martin Storey	Bench	1,000.00
Sporle with Palgrave	William Nunn	Surfacing	5,980.00
Sprowston	John Ward	Trod	13,965.00
Stoke Ferry	Martin Storey	20mph Wig Wags	3,800.00
Stoke Ferry	Martin Storey	Trod	30,000.00
Stoke Ferry	Martin Storey	Footway	4,000.00
Strumpshaw	Andrew Proctor	Footway	24,000.00
Swanton Morley	Bill Borrett	VAS	9,681.50
Swardeston	Daniel Elmer	Village gateways	9,111.30
Syderstone	Michael Chenery	Posts	300.00

Parish	Member	Scheme Type		Value of Works (£)
Syderstone	Michael Chenery	Village gateways		2,935.62
Tattersett	Tom Fitzpatrick	20mph Wig Wags		7,000.00
Terrington St John	Brian Long	Trods		30,000.00
Thetford	Terry Jermy	Trods		50,000.00
Tilney St Lawrence	Brian Long	Bus shelter		9,249.00
Tunstead	Nigel Dixon	20mph Wig Wags		8,256.50
Upwell	Chris Dawson	Trods		10,000.00
Watton	Claire Bowes	Kerbing		40,000.00
Watton	Claire Bowes	20mph Wig Wags		7,514.00
Watton	Claire Bowes	Trods		7,416.00
Weasenham	Mark Kiddle-Morris	Village gateways		7,520.08
Weeting	Fabian Eagle	Trods		24,000.00
Wereham	Martin Storey	Footway		1,300.00
West Rudham	Michael Chenery	Village gateways		2,572.85
Worstead	Saul Penfold	Trods		10,878.00
Full cost		Total	£953,067.01	
NCC Contribution			£467,883.51	

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works (£)
Barsham	Michael Dalby	SAM2	3,996.00
Brockdish	Martin Wilby	SAM2	4,570.00
Drayton	A Adams	SAM2	3,864.00
Fakenham	Tom Fitzpatrick	SAM2	3,175.00
High Kelling	Eric Vardy	SAM2	4,451.00
Hockham	Fabian Eagle	SAM2	3,554.00
Ingoldisthorpe	Stuart Dark	SAM2	3,563.00
Little Snoring	Steffan Aquarone	SAM2 component	898.00
Pentney	Jim Moriarty	SAM2	3,204.00
Poringland	Vic Thomson	SAM2	3,554.00
Repps with Bastwick	Andy Grant	SAM2	5,972.40
Rollesby	Andy Grant	SAM2	3,554.00
Saham Toney	Ed Connolly	SAM2	3,175.00
Scarning	William Richmond	SAM2	3,554.00
Sheringham	Judy Oliver	SAM2	3,824.00
Stibbard	Steffan Aquarone	SAM2	9,600.00
Tittleshall	Mark Kiddle-Morris	SAM2	4,000.00
Tivetshall	Barry Duffin	SAM2	4,757.00
Walpole Highway	Julian Kirk	SAM2	3,555.00
Woodton	Kay Mason Billig	SAM2	7,380.00
Wroxham	Fran Whymark	SAM2	3,319.00
Full cost			£87519.40
50/50			£43759.70

Cabinet

Item No: 14

Report Title: Progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan and Objectives 2023-2026

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Margaret Dewsbury (Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave (Interim Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

[“Better Together, for Norfolk”, the Council’s strategic plan for 2021 to 2025](#), sets out how the Council is transforming services to ensure financial stability and sustainability and overseeing economic growth. A priority in “Better Together, for Norfolk” is “No community left behind”.

The Council publishes a range of documents linked to “Better Together, for Norfolk”, which explain how we are delivering this priority for everyone. Our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023 to 2026](#) is one of these documents.

This report summarises progress to deliver Year 1 of the Plan.

Progress on most actions is rated green, but there have been delays in progressing the Accessible Information Standard and responding to the findings of Adults Peer Review, for reasons set out in the report.

It is important to note that the Council continues to receive feedback from employees about their experiences of persistent racism at work. This is a priority to address. In light of this feedback, we are undertaking a review, to understand the specific circumstances in which racism is occurring and to identify how best to protect our employees.

We will ensure that anyone who experiences racism at work will be listened to without judgement, supported, and protected. Racism will never be tolerated or allowed to persist – any racist incident reported to us will be taken seriously, investigated, and acted upon by managers in accordance with our published policies.

Appendix 1 sets out a progress report on all objectives. This includes work to eliminate racism and work to promote equality for disabled people and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning people (LGBTQ+).

Recommendations:

- 1. Agree the direction of travel for Years 2 and 3 of the Action Plan (2024 to 2026) set out in Appendix 1.**
- 2. Acknowledge the feedback from employees that they are affected by racism at work and the actions being delivered to address this, as set out in section 2 of this report.**
- 3. Note the progress to date set out in Appendix 1.**

1. Background and purpose

- 1.1 The Cabinet approved the new EDI Objectives 2023 to 2026 on 6 March 2023. The Plan covers services, communities, and workforce.
- 1.2 As a County Council, our capacity and budgets are limited, so we think carefully about what will deliver results. We prioritise actions based on:
 - Our legal responsibilities – gaps in compliance.
 - Independent reviews – for example, OFSTED, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, the Care Quality Commission, and safeguarding reviews.
 - Data about how people use our services and any inequalities they experience – and what will achieve the greatest impact.
 - Views of different people and communities.
- 1.3 Our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023 to 2026](#) sets out the following objectives:
 - a) Promote race equality and eliminate racism across our workforce, services and communities.
 - b) Provide services, information and environments that can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all disabled people.
 - c) Promote equality for our LGBTQ+ service users and colleagues.

- d) Deliver our EDI transformation plans in response to external inspections, peer and safeguarding reviews.

2. Progress on the EDI Objectives

Objective 1 – Promote race equality and eliminate racism across our workforce, services and communities.

- 2.1** The focus of this objective is to ensure that employees have clear information, training and resources to understand how to manage racism at work – this includes:
- Developing the ‘Managing abusive and violent behaviour compliance code’ and Bullying and harassment guidance to clearly set out the steps that managers and employees should take to manage racism at work and respond to complex issues – based on feedback from ethnic minority employees and managers.
 - Designing new training with race equality experts to ensure that managers and employees understand which policies to apply, and actions they should take to tackle racism at work.
 - Creating a new dedicated webpage on race equality at work, to make it easier for managers and employees to find what they need.
 - Ensuring that employees are aware of how to access wellbeing support if they are affected by racism (this includes internal well-being services and external charities providing support).
 - Addressing persistent existing, known, racial inequalities in services, identified by the independent whole-council review (for example, relating to the overrepresentation of black young people in looked after and youth offending cohorts and under representation in early help).
 - Undertaking consultation with people working in the care sector in Norfolk, to understand their experiences.
 - Supporting the establishment of a new black women’s network for Norfolk, led by volunteers – the first of its kind.
- 2.2** As mentioned in the introduction, employees working with children, adults and families continue to feedback informally to the Council’s employee engagement networks that they are affected by racism at work.
- 2.3** It is difficult to quantify the numbers of employees affected, due to the low number of formal reports submitted by employees citing racism as a factor, and a lack of centrally held data. However, the Council’s employee survey 2022 indicates that ethnic minority colleagues may be over twice as likely to experience harassment, bullying or abuse from a colleague or manager (8% of white colleagues and between 14-20% of ethnic minority colleagues reported that they had experienced harassment, bullying or abuse in the previous 12 months from a colleague or a manager).

- 2.4 There is a range of information available, nationally and locally, that indicates victims of racism are often fearful that if they report racism, they could lose their jobs (and their associated residency, if they are an international worker). There is also a belief that reporting racism will not make a difference.
- 2.5 The Council has agreed a whole-Council motion to promote race equality and tackle racism. Racism will never be tolerated, which is why, in addition to the actions above, a review is being undertaken to understand the circumstances in which racism is occurring and to identify additional opportunities to address this and to protect employees.
- 2.6 **Appendix 1** sets out a progress report on all objectives. This includes work to eliminate racism and work to promote equality for disabled people and LGBTQ+ people.

3. Impact of the proposal

- 3.1 Delivery of the objectives set out in Appendix 1 will enable the Council to address the operational challenges reported to Cabinet on 6 March 2023.

4. Evidence and reasons for decision

- 4.1 The evidence for the proposals is set out in the [report to Cabinet on 6 March 2023 published on the Council's website](#).

5. Alternative options

- 5.1 The Cabinet could consider amendments to the proposed objectives or priorities. Alternatively, it could consider not progressing some priorities. This should be considered against the legal implications summarised below and the operational challenges reported to Cabinet on 6 March 2023.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The objectives detailed in this report can be met within existing budgets.

7. Resource implications

- 7.1 **Staff:**
The objectives detailed in this report can be met within existing budgets.

7.2 Property:

The objectives detailed in this report can be met within existing budgets.

7.3 IT:

The objectives detailed in this report can be met within existing budgets.

8. Other implications

8.1 Legal implications:

The Equality Act 2010 requires authorities to publish equality objectives every four years and to report annually on progress each year. Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to pay 'due regard' to the following when exercising public functions:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct.
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good community relations.

8.2 Human rights implications:

No human rights issues identified.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

This report sets out how the Council has given due regard to equality to comply with the Equality Act 2010 including the public sector equality duty. The aim of this is to ensure that the Council continues to take full account of equality, diversity and inclusion when planning and commissioning services and, where necessary, puts actions in place to promote equality and address barriers faced by people with protected characteristics as set out in this report.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None required.

8.5 Health and safety implications (where appropriate):

None identified.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

None identified.

8.7 Any other implications:

None identified.

9. Risk implications / assessment

- 9.1 The Council has monitored potential risks for failure to comply with statutory equality duties. This risk is regularly reviewed by departmental managers.

10. Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 At the meeting on 15 January 2024, the Corporate Select Committee reviewed and commented on progress so far to deliver Year 1 of the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2023 to 2026](#).
- 10.2 The Committee confirmed support for the [Action Plan](#) and reaffirmed their support to Cabinet to continue to champion race equality in Norfolk.

11. Recommendations

- 1. Agree the direction of travel for Years 2 and 3 of the Action Plan (2024 to 2026) set out in Appendix 1.**
- 2. Acknowledge the feedback from employees that they are affected by racism at work and the actions being delivered to address this, as set out in section 2 of this report.**
- 3. Note the progress to date set out in Appendix 1.**

12. Background papers

- 12.1 See Appendix 1.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Telephone no.: 01603 223816

Email: equalities@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Appendix 1: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Objectives 2023-2026

Objective 1: Promote race equality and eliminate racism across our workforce, services and communities.

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
1. Publish revised guidance explaining all the steps managers and employees should take to eliminate racism affecting service users and colleagues.	<p>The Council's Managing Abusive and Violent Behaviour Code and Bullying and Harassment guidance have been revised, to explain to employees how to report and record racist incidents so that they can be investigated, addressed and monitored.</p> <p>This includes new information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do if you're an employee affected by racism • What to do if someone you manage is affected by racism • What to do if you witness racism at work • What to do if the racism is caused by a service user – if so the importance of following Guidance on sanctions G630e which sets out the steps to take including sanctions that can be applied such as the need to contact the service user to explain that racism towards workers is unacceptable and will not be tolerated and the use of formal letters to service users regarding their behaviour. • What to do if the racism is caused by someone who lacks capacity to understand the impact of their behaviour • How to report racism, record the incident • How to support the employee and the risk assessments to put in place to keep the employee 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of People and Head of EDI

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	<p>safe and to ensure other employees are not unknowingly exposed to racism in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How employees can access wellbeing support if they are affected by racism (internal well-being services and external charities providing support) • If you're a manager, making sure your team knows you will support them if racism occurs. • The importance of establishing positive cultures in teams - for example –championing race equality and respect and dignity for all, diverse perspectives and ideas, listening without judgement. • Recognising that it can be difficult to talk about racism. If employees feel unable to report a racist incident to their manager they can ask a colleague or a trade union representative to support them, or they can contact HR for advice. <p>This guidance has now been published.</p> <p>A new web page is under development, to bring together all relevant policies and resources for employees on tackling racism, to make this easier for employees to find.</p> <p>This new web page will also include links to new training on eliminating racism at work – both e-learning (to explain how to deal with racism and which policies to apply) and face-to-face learning.</p> <p>See Objective 4 for progress on developing race equality training.</p>			

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
2. Pilot restorative work with people who exhibit racist behaviour towards our employees.	Due to start 1 April 2024.	Not started	31 March 2026	Tbc
3. Undertake analysis to check whether the decisions we make about young people who are Black or from a Gypsy, Roma or Traveller background are equitable.	Due to start 1 April 2024.	Not started	31 March 2026	Tbc
4. Review the support available for Black and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people who are Looked After or Care Leavers, to check whether we take every opportunity to meet their needs.	Due to start 1 April 2024.	Not started	31 March 2026	Tbc
5. Work with independent Black equality experts to examine why Black young people are overrepresented in youth offending.	<p>Norfolk Youth Justice Service (NYJS) is leading this priority. The latest position is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between January and December 2022, 277 children received an intervention from NYJS. Black children in Norfolk continue to be overrepresented on youth justice interventions (in 2022, 5.4% of young people receiving an intervention were black, which is considerably higher than the 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of Family Help and High Needs

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	<p>1.3% proportion of black children in the school age population)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black children were also the most likely group of children to be stop and searched and arrested. • White children were more likely to be offered diversion prior to receiving a referral order. • To address this disparity, the following actions have been implemented by NYJS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi-agency group established (courts, probation, housing, NYJS, mental & physical health, Children's Services) to enable public agencies to work together to solve this disparity. ○ Racism, discrimination and bias training has been included as part of assessment skills training for Norfolk Youth Justice Services managers and employees. ○ Workforce development strategy includes mandatory training and induction (i.e. cultural competence training) ○ Volunteer training includes focus on discrimination and bias. ○ Stop & Search session delivered to NYJS practitioners and an intervention tool created. ○ Data sharing with Education teams in place to establish a more up to data comparator. ○ Case management guidance updated to include relevant ethnicity recording. ○ Guided conversations started in routine work reviews. 			

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity audit carried out. <p>Working with interpreters guide developed.</p>			
6. Provide clear guidance to managers on how to promote race equality through policies and procedures and continue to undertake robust checks to ensure that our policies consistently meet agreed standards.	<p>Each of the Council's departmental management teams is being briefed on the policies and resources available to promote race equality and manage racism at work.</p> <p>Managers are being asked to rate their services' current level of awareness of the guidance available.</p> <p>This has highlighted a low level of awareness regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to support employees affected by racism What policies to use to ensure a consistent approach Where to record incidents. <p>In view of this, an internal communications campaign was implemented on 5 February 2024, to ensure that employees understand how to promote race equality and eliminate racism; the relevant policies to apply to ensure a consistent approach and the training available.</p> <p>Careful monitoring will take place to see if there is an increase in the number of employees feeling supported by the organisation if they are affected by racism.</p> <p>This action is rated amber, to highlight the importance of ensuring that managers understand the information and resources available.</p>	Amber	31 March 2026	Director of People and Head of EDI

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
7. Increase the representation of ethnic minority people in our public participation forums	<p>A review commissioned by the Cabinet identified that there were low levels of ethnic minority people on the Council's public participation forums.</p> <p>Work has taken place to identify which forums are in scope. Not all of these groups formally collect monitoring data, so work will take place with the chairs to set a baseline so that the Council can track progress over time, to ensure that public participation forums reflect the diversity of the local population.</p> <p>In Childrens Services, an audit of participation undertaken in 2023 showed that overall, ethnic minority children and young people were well represented across participation groups and activities. It is noted that the data is not sufficiently detailed to identify whether some specific ethnic minority groups continue to be under-represented and further work is required to ensure that learning is being used to inform service design and delivery.</p> <p>This action has been rated amber, to reflect that not all participations forums reflect Norfolk's diversity.</p>	Amber	31 March 2026	Executive Directors
8. Increase the visibility of ethnic minority people in marketing materials, so that we are representing all the people we serve	<p>The website has been reviewed. There is proportionate representation of ethnic minority people in images used but further work is required to ensure this approach is consistently reflected in specific marketing materials and on social media.</p>	Green	31 March 2026	Head of Communications

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	<p>The Council commissioned research with 45 black women in Norfolk in 2022. Participants in the research commended 'the excellent services' during the pandemic: and said the care shown by Norfolk County Council was exemplary and 'the information and advice availability online and on the phone could not be faulted'.</p> <p>They also said that black women are often portrayed as 'big' and not 'pretty, slim or attractive' in the media.</p>			
9. Monitor whether the ethnic diversity of apprentices reflects the ethnic diversity of the Norfolk population	<p>In 2021, no apprentices were from a black, Asian, Arab or Gypsy, Roma or Traveller background.</p> <p>The ethnic diversity of apprentices has since increased to 3.1%. Overall, there were 203 apprentices 22/23.</p> <p>On 22 November 2023, Trading Standards service received a Highly Commended Award in the Diversity and Inclusion category of the Chartered Trading Standards Institute Awards for work to embed race equality into induction and support materials.</p> <p>Work will continue to monitor whether the level of ethnic minority apprentices is broadly in line with the Norfolk population.</p>	Green	31 March 2024	Head of EDI
10. Engage with black workers in social care in Norfolk, to understand whether their experiences reflect the national research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National research indicates that social care employees from ethnic minorities are twice as likely as white colleagues to experience harassment, bullying or abuse from service users or the public. 	Green	31 March 2024	Head of EDI

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council commissioned Dr Atuki Turner to complete qualitative research with 45 black women in Norfolk, primarily employed in the social care sector, to better understand their experiences. The majority of women interviewed reported experiencing racism in the last year from service users. The research report has been finalised and system leaders are being briefed. The report will be shared with all relevant agencies, and adult social care has agreed to lead discussions with care providers to examine how sector leaders can work together to ensure that ethnic minority workers are protected at work, and are supported by their manager or organisation if they are experiencing racism. 			
11. Support black women in Norfolk to establish a new volunteer-led black women's network for Norfolk residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to requests from residents, the Council has sponsored a range of events to give black women in Norfolk the opportunity to consider whether they wish to lead and participate in a new black women's network. Volunteers have been nominated and a series of events have been well attended. The new volunteer-led network will be called the 'Norfolk Black Women's Chapter'. 	Green	31 March 2024	Head of EDI

Objective 2: Provide services, information and environments that can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all disabled people.

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
1. Improve Digital Accessibility through delivering our new road map which sets out the actions we are taking to comply with the Web Accessibility Guidelines AA Standard - and then beyond that to make our digital platforms as usable for as many people as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The roadmap sets out actions to improve the accessibility of the Council's digital offer. It comprises 6 objectives each with a plan of action. Currently, www.norfolk.gov.uk is rated 98.6% compliant with the Website Content Accessibility Guidelines Regulations 2.1AA (Silktide score) - an improvement of 8.1% over 15 months - and the Norfolk Community Directory is 97.8% compliant. It is important to note that although this high compliance score has been achieved, users with physical, cognitive, learning or visual disabilities may find it hard to use online forms. For example, small fields may be hard to select; error messages do not sufficiently help users to correct errors or are only available visually. In terms of the Council's other digital platforms, a lack of testing and accurate records makes access testing hard to assess. Available information indicates that most platforms have relatively poor accessibility. Plans are in hand to migrate the Council's website to a new content management system that will 	Green	31 March 2026	Head of Digital Customer Experience

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
	<p>significantly improve the accessibility of online forms and other website content for a wide range of users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and guidance is being developed to support staff to create and commission accessible content. 			
2. Publish revised guidance explaining the steps managers and employees should take (and the resources available to support them) to promote access for disabled people.	<p>Work is underway to create a series of 30-minute learning briefings, to be offered as monthly 'lunchtime seminars' over the next 18 months, filmed so that they are also available 24/7 as a webinar, accompanied by a briefing note uploaded to Oracle Learn/Mynet on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to effectively communicate with and address barriers for D/deaf and hard of hearing people. • How to effectively communicate with and address barriers for blind and partially sighted people. • How to effectively communicate with and address barriers for neurodivergent people. • How to chair or coordinate inclusive physical meetings – using the accessibility software and resources available in council premises and committee rooms. • How to chair or participate in inclusive Teams meetings – using the virtual access resources available (eg captions). 	Green	31 March 2026	Head of EDI and Director of People

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to enable good physical access for disabled staff/employees. How to effectively induct/onboard a disabled member of staff. <p>The first briefings will begin by 31 March 2024.</p> <p>A review of access to work guidance and arrangements is underway which will result in revised guidance being launched in 2024.</p> <p>It should be noted that Adult Learning recently won a Norfolk Education Award. The judges stated that they were 'extremely impressed with the breadth of education offered by Norfolk County Council, recognising that those who teach on its wide range of programmes are supporting adults with often complex needs.'.</p>			
3. Continue to implement the Accessible Information Standard - to achieve compliance and explore ways to overcome supply issues with formats such as Easy Read.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of compliance with the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) has been completed. The review has recommended some improvements. The AIS is a legal requirement set out in section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 for publicly funded adult social care services to make sure that disabled people are given information they can understand. The Standard requires adult social care services to develop a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing, and meeting 	Amber	31 March 2026	Director of Community Social Work in consultation with Head of Communications

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
	<p>the information and communication support needs of service users, carers and parents with a disability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care has published a procedure on the standards of accessible information that must be used and how staff should make reasonable adjustments to enable people to communicate effectively. The review recommends an update to this procedure to include specific guidance on the provision of particular information formats or types of communication support. It is also recommends training be made available. • One particular challenge identified by the review is that some service users may request information in an 'Easy Read' format or British Sign Language interpretation. However, it is challenging to obtain Easy Read in Norfolk (and other areas of the UK), and the cost is often prohibitively high (e.g., £700 per document). There is also a low level of British Sign Language Interpreters – particularly those for in-person bookings. • This reduced availability can impact the timeframes within which Adult Social Care accessible information and communication support can be sourced and provided to service users. This is of particular importance for time-limited or time-critical processes, as highlighted by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. 			

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address the supply issues with Easy Read, Adult Social Care is working with Communications, to explore solutions. This is likely to take time to address. This action is currently rated amber/red, to reflect the problems described above in sourcing Easy Read. 			
4. Explore whether we can produce accessible templates of our commonly used business documents (eg policies, action plans, contracts, reports, presentations, plans on a page, job descriptions) so that people with sight loss, people who are neurodivergent and/or who have dexterity issues can access this information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aim of this action is to ensure that the documents staff routinely use are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA. Templates are being developed and a central storage location for these has been identified. Engagement with services is taking place to identify further key documents requiring accessible versions. Further work will need to be undertaken to address access needs of people who require alternative formats (e.g., Easy Read). 	Green	31 March 2025	Head of EDI
5. Deliver our customer experience strategy, to ensure all our customers can communicate with us, particularly people who are Blind, D/deaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive work has been undertaken by the Council to provide different customer contact options to make it easy for disabled residents (and non-disabled residents) to contact the organisation. Details are published on the Council's website. Consultation has recently taken place with 100+ blind and D/deaf residents, and residents with learning 	Green	31 March 2026	Head of Communities and Customer Service

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
or who have learning disabilities.	<p>disabilities, to discuss the current level of accessibility and to identify areas for improvement. This has highlighted issues which are being reviewed to identify potential solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following consideration of the consultation feedback, the rating of this action will be reviewed. 			
6. Continue to deliver our rolling programme of capital improvement, transport, infrastructure and technology – working with disabled people to identify, prioritise and address barriers to access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council is implementing several major capital projects (e.g., King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth Learning Hubs, and the Hunstanton travel hub). Access considerations are being routinely incorporated into all projects. Roll out of Changing Places provision across Norfolk continues. There are now 40 changing places toilets installed across Norfolk or being planned/built – funded by the Council or private providers. A rolling programme of access audits for all Council premises has commenced, to help identify where access improvements can be made. Ongoing support for managers is being provided to identify reasonable adjustments where required and environmental adaptations to meet the needs of disabled users. 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of Property

Objective 3: Promote equality for our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ)+ service users and colleagues.

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
1. Publish revised guidance for managers and employees explaining the steps they should take if an LGBTQ+ service user or colleague is affected by discrimination.	<p>The Council's Managing Abusive and Violent Behaviour Code and Bullying and Harassment guidance are being updated, to explain to employees how to report and record discrimination in relation to sexual orientation, sex and gender identity, so that this can be investigated, addressed and monitored.</p> <p>This includes new information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do if you're an employee • What to do if someone you manage is affected • What to do if you witness prejudice at work • What to do if the prejudice is caused by a service user – if so the importance of following Guidance on sanctions G630e which sets out the steps to take including sanctions that can be applied such as the need to contact the service user to explain that prejudice towards workers is unacceptable and the use of formal letters to service users regarding their behaviour. • What to do if the prejudice is caused by someone who lacks capacity to understand the impact of their behaviour • How to report prejudice and record the incident • How to support the employee and the risk assessments to put in place to keep the employee safe and to ensure other employees are not unknowingly exposed to prejudice in the future. • How employees can access wellbeing support if they are affected by prejudice. 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of People and Head of EDI

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're a manager, making sure your team knows you will support them if prejudice occurs. Don't wait for incidents to be reported. • The importance of establishing positive cultures in teams - promoting respect and dignity for all; embracing diverse perspectives and ideas; and listening without judgement. • Recognising that it can be difficult to talk about prejudice. If employees feel unable to report an incident to their manager they can ask a colleague or a trade union representative to support them, or they can contact HR for advice. <p>A new web page is under development, to bring together all relevant policies and resources for employees on promoting equality for LGBTQ+ people, to make this easier for employees to find.</p> <p>This new web page will also include links to new training.</p>			
2. Ensure that our business systems can accurately record someone's sex and gender identity – and where there are barriers, work with LGBTQ+ people to identify ways to remedy this.	<p>The Council aims to record users' sex and gender identity accurately in accordance with the law and users' identity.</p> <p>Departments have gathered information on the systems they own which require users to provide information on sex or gender identity.</p> <p>The Council's modern systems tend to give flexibility in recording sex and gender, however older systems may not allow this. If the Council cannot accurately record identity information, there is a risk of causing harm or distress to the user and not complying with case law. Work is taking place to identify and address issues identified.</p>	Green	31 March 2026	Executive Directors

Priority	Progress	RAG rating	Target Date	Lead
3. Carefully consider public-facing services (such as the books and resources we provide in libraries), to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our increasing LGBTQ+ community in the city.	This action is due to start 1 April 2025.	Not started	31 March 2026	Tbc
4. Increase the representation of LGBTQ+ people in our public participation forums.	<p>A recent review commissioned by the Cabinet identified that there were low levels of LGBTQ+ people on the Council's public participation forums.</p> <p>Work has taken place to identify which forums are in scope. Not all of these groups formally collect monitoring data, so work will begin so that a baseline can be set and the Council can track progress over time, to ensure that public participation forums reflect the diversity of the local population.</p>	Green	31 March 2026	Executive Directors
5. Increase the visibility of LGBTQ+ people in our marketing materials, so that we are representing all the people we serve.	This action is due to start 1 April 2025.	Not started	31 March 2026	Head of Comms

Objective 4: Deliver our EDI transformation plans in response to external inspections, peer and safeguarding reviews.

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
1. Deliver our EDI plan for Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new Plan for 2023-2026 has been developed and is now published on the Council's website. Currently, actions in the plan are rated green. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has recently inspected Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, and a significant part of the inspection focused on equality and diversity. The final report from HMICFRS is due to be published and will set out recommendations on EDI. 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service
2. Deliver our EDI improvement actions in response to Adults Peer Review 2022.	<p>The Peer Review highlighted a range of recommendations on EDI. Primarily, these related to the need to ensure that adult social care employees understand the department's priorities on EDI – specifically, what the key barriers are for service users and employees with protected characteristics; how these are being addressed and how employees can contribute to positive workforce culture.</p> <p>A programme of events to equip staff with this knowledge has been designed and was due to commence in October 2023. However, this was delayed slightly due to capacity issues within adult social care so a new start date is being identified and should commence shortly.</p> <p>This action is rated Amber, to reflect the importance of completing this work to satisfy Care Quality Commission inspection requirements.</p>	Amber	31 March 2025	Interim Executive Director Adult Social Care
3. Deliver our EDI improvement actions	Recommendation M stated that "Although Cawston Park Hospital was not explicitly tolerant of racism, it did not address the fact that [a	Green	31 March 2026	Interim Executive

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
in response to Recommendation M (tackling racism) Safeguarding Adults Review – Joanna, Jon and Ben	<p>resident] targeted ethnic minority employees. Hospital staff were not protected from their injurious encounters with him.”</p> <p>In response, the Council agreed a range of actions:</p> <p>(a) Publish clear policy setting out how managers and workers should respond to racism at work. This is covered under objective 1 of this plan.</p> <p>(b) Ensure that social care workers have a system for recording, investigating and addressing racist incidents against employees. The Council’s Incident reporting system (OSHENS) has been adapted to enable employees to record when an incident is racially motivated. This system requires managers to investigate and address the racist incident and record what actions they have taken. By the end of the year, racist incident reports will begin to be reported to departmental management teams.</p> <p>(c) Develop learning and development for employees to support them to eliminate racism at work. This training was launched as part of race equality week on 5 February 2024.</p> <p>(d) The Council’s mandatory e-learning is being fundamentally reviewed to reflect feedback from international social workers.</p> <p>(e) Engage with black workers in social care in Norfolk, to understand whether their experiences reflect the national research. Reported under Objective 1.</p> <p>(f) Promoting race equality in safeguarding. Norfolk Safeguarding Adult’s Board is leading work to review data to</p>			Director Adult Social Care

Priority	Progress	Rating	Target Date	Lead
	check whether safeguarding referrals are equitable. This has identified a low level of referrals made for ethnic minority people. The Board will work with stakeholders to understand this disparity and to make sure that the right procedures are in place to keep ethnic minority residents safe.			
4. Review our EDI learning and development offer – to help us to deliver the priorities in this plan and equip people with the knowledge they need to eliminate discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An update has been provided above on work to progress training on race equality and mandatory learning on EDI. A range of other e-learning modules are in production, relating to allyship and disability equality. 	Green	31 March 2026	Director of People and Head of EDI

Report Title: Finance Monitoring Report 2023-24 P10: January 2024

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Harvey Bullen (Director of Strategic Finance)

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 02/03/2023

Introduction from Cabinet Member

This report gives a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2023-24 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2024, together with related financial information.

Executive Summary

Financial monitoring position

Subject to mitigating actions, on a net budget of £493.707m, the forecast revenue outturn for 2023-24 at the end of period 10 (January) is **a balanced budget**.

General Balances are forecast to be **£25.410m** at 31 March 2024 following transfers of £1m planned contribution from the revenue budget at the end of 2023-24. Service reserves and provisions are forecast to total **£139.589m**.

All significant cost pressures are taken into account in the forecasts in this report. Details of these pressures and progress on achieving savings are addressed in detail in this report.

Recommendations:

- 1. To note the increase of £8.3m to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements previously approved by full Council as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 1.4 and 4.1 as follows:**
 - **£8.3m increase in NCC Borrowing to fund the Norse Project One Loan**
- 2. To note the revised current and future 2023-28 capital programme as set out in Appendix 3 including the significant reprofiling undertaken to date.**
- 3. To delegate to the Director of Procurement and the Director of Property to undertake the necessary procurement and tender processes to deliver this revised capital programme in accordance with the delegated authority awarded on 6 March 2023 in the Authority to enact Capital Programme paper - [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com/Document.ashx).**

4. To agree the period 10 general fund revenue forecast of a balanced budget, noting also that Executive Directors will take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
5. To agree the period 10 forecast of 97% savings delivery in 2023-24, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
6. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2024 of £25.410m.
7. To approve the write-off eight debts over £10,000 totalling £122,025.21 due to the exhaustion of estate and legal options where there is no further possibility of recovery, as set out in Appendix 2 paragraph 3.11;
8. To approve the appointment of directors to Norfolk County Council owned companies and joint ventures as set out in section 2.3, as required by the Council's Financial Regulations

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. This report and associated annexes summarise the forecast financial outturn position for 2023-24, to assist members to maintain an overview of the overall financial position of the Council.

2. Proposals

- 2.1. Having set revenue and capital budgets at the start of the financial year, the Council needs to ensure service delivery within allocated and available resources, which in turn underpins the financial stability of the Council. Consequently, progress is regularly monitored, and corrective action taken when required.

2.2. Appointments to Norfolk County Council owned companies and Joint Ventures

The delegation of authority to senior officers to act on behalf of the County Council requires the consent of the County Council before they can make certain decisions including the appointment of directors, and the County Council's [Financial Regulations](#) confirm that (5.10(f)) "*The appointment and removal of directors to companies, trusts and charities in which the County Council has an interest must be made by Cabinet, having regard to the advice of the Director of Strategic Finance.*" Following consideration of vacancies in Norfolk County Council appointed directors, the Director of Strategic Finance has reviewed the below list of appointees and advises that they are suitable. The Director of Strategic Finance therefore recommends the following appointments to Cabinet for approval, which will support to ensure the continued effective management and oversight of the limited companies owned by the County Council, and joint ventures in which it is a partner.

- **Norse Eastern Limited (07445476)** - to appoint Justin Galliford, Zoe Repman, Andy Wood and Cllr Greg Peck as directors, replacing Neil Carle,

Nick Maddox and Dan Vanstone and to note that Jason Glasspoole remains a director of Norse Eastern Limited

- **Norse Transport (04372409)** - to appoint Cllr Greg Peck and Jason Glasspoole as directors of this subsidiary.
- **NPS Property Consultants Limited (02888194)** - to appoint Zoe Repman, Nick Maddox and Cllr Greg Peck as directors, and to note that Justin Galliford and Andy Wood remain as directors of this subsidiary.
- **Norse Care Limited (07445484)** - to appoint Nick Maddox and Cllr Greg Peck as directors, and to note that Justin Galliford, Zoe Repman and Andy Wood remain as directors of this subsidiary.
- **East Hampshire Norse Limited (14382834)** - to appoint Dan Vanstone and Yvonne Perkins as directors of this subsidiary replacing Justin Galliford

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. The impact of this report is primarily to demonstrate where the Council is anticipating financial pressures not forecast at the time of budget setting, including the implications of the cost-of-living crisis, inflation and rising interest rates, together with a number of other key financial measures.
- 3.2. The additional proposals cover a range of financial matters which will support good governance and robust financial management.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1. Three appendices are attached to this report giving details of the forecast revenue and capital financial outturn positions and the background information concerning the other recommendations included in this report:

Appendix 1 summarises the revenue outturn position, including:

- Forecast over and under spends
- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

Appendix 2 summarises the key working capital position, including:

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

Appendix 3 summarises the capital outturn position, and includes:

- Current and future capital programmes
- Capital programme funding
- Income from property sales and other capital receipts.

- 4.2. Additional capital funds will enable services to invest in assets and infrastructure as described in Appendix 3 section 4.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1. To deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in this report. In terms of financing the proposed capital

expenditure, no further grant or revenue funding has been identified to fund the expenditure, apart from the funding noted in Appendix 3.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. As stated above, the forecast revenue outturn for 2023-24 at the end of P10 is a balanced budget linked to a forecast 97% savings delivery. Forecast outturn for service reserves and provisions is **£137.192m**, and the general balances forecast is **£25.410m**.
- 6.2. Where possible service pressures have been offset by underspends or the use of reserves. A narrative by service is given in Appendix 1.
- 6.3. The Council's capital programme is based on schemes approved by County Council in February 2023, including previously approved schemes brought forward and new schemes subsequently approved.
- 6.4. Other specific financial implications are set out throughout the report.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1. None, apart from financial information set out in these papers.

8. Other Implications

8.1. Legal Implications

In order to fulfil obligations placed on chief finance officers by section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Director of Strategic Finance continually monitors financial forecasts and outcomes to ensure resources (including sums borrowed) are available to meet annual expenditure.

8.2. Human Rights implications

None identified.

8.3. Equality Impact Assessment

In setting the 2023-24 budget, the council has undertaken public consultation and produced equality and rural impact assessments in relation to the 2023-24 Budget. An overall summary Equality and rural impact assessment report is included on page 341 of the Tuesday 21 February 2023 Norfolk County Council agenda. [CMIS > Meetings](#)

The Council's net revenue budget is unchanged at this point in the financial year and there are no additional equality and diversity implications arising out of this report.

8.4. Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA)

DPIA is not required as the data reported in this paper does not drill down to the personal data level.

9. Risk Implications/Assessment

- 9.1. Corporate risks continue to be assessed and reported on a quarterly basis to both Cabinet and the Audit Committee. The Council's key financial based corporate risk (RM002 - The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams) has been reviewed and refreshed in February 2023

to incorporate the 2023/24 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2027 being set. Key risk mitigations include amongst others regular (monthly) financial reporting to Cabinet, working to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and setting robust budgets within available resources.

- 9.2. Unlike many other parts of the public sector such as the NHS, local authorities are required by law to set a balanced budget. As part of their duties, the Director of Strategic Finance has a responsibility to report to members if it appears to him that the authority will not have sufficient resources to finance its expenditure for the financial year. At this stage the Director of Strategic Finance has taken mitigating action to release reserves to offset the forecast overspends in services and ensure that a balanced budget is achieved in 2023-24.

10. Select Committee comments

- 10.1. None

11. Recommendation

- 11.1. Recommendations are set out in the introduction to this report.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. Summary Equality and rural impact assessment [CMIS > Meetings](#) page 341

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Appendix 1: 2023-24 Revenue Finance Monitoring Report Month 10

Report by the Director of Strategic Finance

1 Introduction

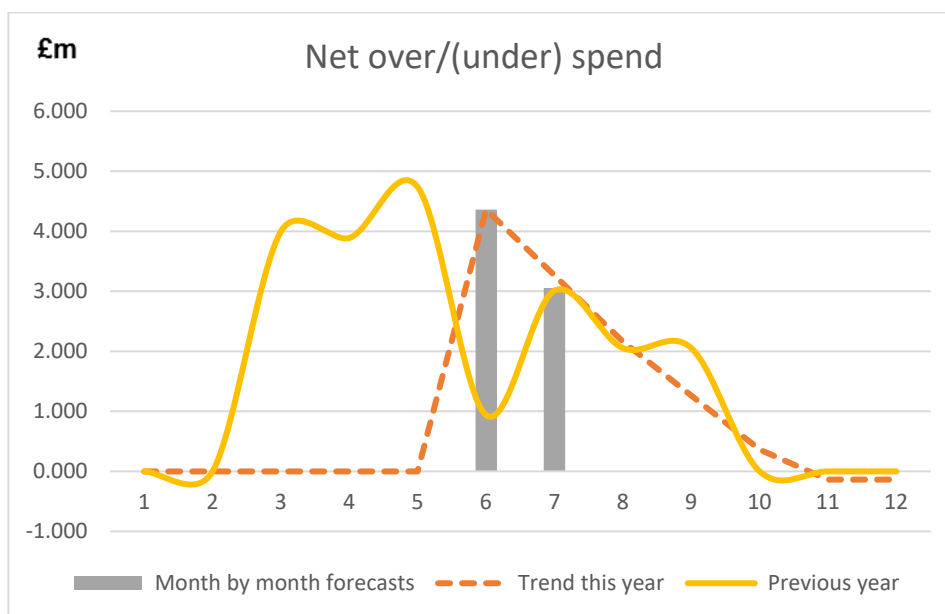
1.1 This report gives details of:

- the P10 monitoring position for the 2023-24 Revenue Budget
- additional financial information relating one-off funding, cost pressures and delivery of savings initiatives
- forecast General Balances and Reserves as at 31 March 2024 and
- other key information relating to the overall financial position of the Council.

2 Revenue outturn – over/(under)spends

2.1 At the end of January 2024, a balanced budget is forecast against a net budget of £493.707m.

Chart 1: forecast /actual revenue outturn 2023-24, month by month trend:



2.2 Executive Directors have responsibility for managing their budgets within the amounts approved by County Council. They have been charged with reviewing all their cost centres to ensure that, where an overspend is identified, action is taken to ensure that a balanced budget will be achieved over the course of the year.

- 2.3 Details of all under and overspends for each service are shown in detail in Revenue Annex 1 to this report, and are summarised in the following table:

Table 1: 2023-24 forecast (under)/overspends by service

Service	Revised Budget	Cost Pressures	(Under spends/ Savings)	Earmarked Reserves & Provisions Utilised	Net (under)/ overspend	%	R A G
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Adult Social Care	249.396	22.539	(15.097)	(5.519)	1.923	0.8%	A
Children's Services	232.638	12.342	(-0.342)	(1.000)	11.000	4.7%	R
Community and Environmental Services	188.744	3.272	(-3.272)	0.000	0.000	0%	G
Strategy and Transformation	27.621	0.903	(-0.903)	(0.353)	0.000	0%	G
Chief Executive's Office	4.421	0.236	(-0.300)	0.064	0.000	0%	
Finance	(209.113)	0.651	(13.574)	0	-12.923	6.2%	G
Total	493.707	39.943	(33.135)	(6.808)	0.000	0.0%	G

Notes:

- 1) the RAG ratings are subjective and account for the risk and both the relative (%) and absolute (£m) impact of overspends.
- 2) Planned use of Earmarked reserves and provisions set aside in 2022-23 in order to meet and fund additional pressures in 2023-24 are built into the revised budget. The table above highlights the use of reserves over and above the plan.

- 2.4 **Children's Services:** The forecast outturn for period 10 (end of January) remains at £12m overspend, partially mitigated by (£1m) use of ear-marked reserves. Upward pressures remain, particularly for both social care placements and support and home to school transport, but it is anticipated that those pressures will be managed within the overall forecast position at this stage.
- 2.5 The forecast overspend for social care placements and support remains at c. £7m primarily due to the increase in average cost for external residential and external supported accommodation and continued high demand for social care services. There has been an increase in demand for community short-break provision, potentially reflecting the additional pressures that families are experiencing in the current economic climate.
- 2.6 The number of children being looked after (excluding separated migrant children) continues to remain relatively stable since the start of this financial year, following a small increase in the latter quarter of last financial year. This remains counter to the experience of many other local authorities and an outcome of the significant transformation in recent years from the front door and community & partnership teams, through family support and into social work teams. Our in-house residential services have been supporting some young people with very complex needs and additional costs have had to be incurred to meet these needs and to support staff to undertake their roles safely.
- 2.7 The Home to School Transport forecast for the year is c. £6m overspend, despite the additional budgeted resources provided for 2023-24. The primary cause of the pressures includes a combination of fuel inflation, cost of vehicles and National Living

Wage rises, alongside insufficient supply and competition. The average cost of transport per child has significantly increased year-on-year, with this percentage increase being similar for both SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and mainstream cohorts. On the demand-side we can see some specific trends linked to areas of school admissions pressures. Action is under way to positively impact both the demand-side and the supply-side factors.

- 2.8 Norfolk is not alone in continuing to see cost pressures despite significant investment in the Children's Services budget in recent years. Nationally, many local authorities are reporting very significant overspends for their Children's Services, and it is due to the level of growth budget resources available to the department to meet pressures for 2023-24 that the overspend position in Norfolk remains at a lower level than many others are facing. Nationally, areas of cost pressures are the same as for Norfolk; key demand-led budgets for social care placements and support along with home to school transport. The longer-term impact of Covid-19 and lockdowns upon children and families, the cost-of-living crisis, high levels of inflation, and challenging market forces continue to exist outside of the control of local authorities, including Norfolk.
- 2.9 Analysis published ahead of the Autumn Statement shows that, by 2024/25, cost and demand pressures will have added £15 billion (almost 29 per cent) to the cost of delivering council services since 2021/22 (Local Government Association (LGA)).
- 2.10 Local authorities are now forecasting that they will overspend their budgets in 2023/24 by a combined £639m; an average of £16m per council, despite delivering challenging savings and recourse to unsustainable use of one-off reserves and asset sales (County Council's Network (CCN)).
- 2.11 While all council frontline services are experiencing higher than expected costs, increasing demand and an acute rise in the costs of placing children in care mean in-year spending on children's services is rising particularly acutely, with almost half (£319m) of the projected £639m overspend attributable to Children's Services (CCN). This primarily relates to three key areas:
- **Children's Social Care** where the greater level of complexity of need combined with the dysfunctional private care market is driving huge increases in the unit cost of placements. This has been exacerbated by the impact of the global pandemic and national shortfall of mental health support which has clearly resulted in a cohort of young people who have experienced substantial trauma and require very high levels of support. Local authorities across England spent approximately £4.7 billion on children's social care placements in 2022/23, resulting in a cumulative overspend of almost £670 million (16%). On average, private residential care providers have made profits of 22.6% per year (Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)) with average price of a residential care placement now well over £250k per child per year, and more than 1,510 children nationally whose cost of care exceeds £10k every week (> £500k per year). (LGA). Nationally numbers of children in care are also rising; this is not the case in Norfolk where our programme is keeping more families together, but the cost of care increases are having a huge impact on spending.
 - **Special Educational Needs** – where nationally the number of referrals for an educational health and care plan increased by 23% in a single year in 2022/23 to 114,457. With some of these young people requiring thousands of pounds in support after a schools' contribution is spent, councils have accrued significant deficits in their SEND budgets. Last year, the national deficit stood at £2.4bn, with

councils in county areas accounting for half of this. Left unchecked, the national deficit for all 152 councils in England is expected to rise to £3.6bn. This national increase in numbers of children with high SEN is mirrored clearly in Norfolk.

- **Home to School Transport** – where the cost of transporting children has dramatically increased because of increasing levels of special education needs, inflationary pressures on providers, and a lack of sufficient provision/competition for specialist transport contracts. The CCN says its 37 members are spending more than £700m a year on school transport for 85,000 children with SEND, compared with less than £400m five years ago; an increase of more than 75% in that period. This national increase in spending on transport is seen clearly in Norfolk, with the inflationary increase in the unit cost per mile being the primary driver of overspending in 2023/24.

2.12 Children's Services continues to undertake a substantial transformation programme to both improve outcomes for children and young people as well as delivering financial savings. These aim to mitigate risks and pressures that emerge and accompanies management action within the department that continues to be taken to reduce these risks and cost pressures wherever possible.

2.13 **Adult Social Services:** The forecast outturn as at Period 10 (end of January 2024) is a £1.923m overspend. With Adult Social Care (ASC) being a demand led service, the budget to provide it always operates under a degree of uncertainty. The ASC service has a significant savings and transformation agenda it is seeking to deliver this financial year. In addition, within its recovery programme there is a significant emphasis on reducing the backlogs that had developed during the COVID pandemic. We are pleased to have seen reductions in a number of these areas, with success in reducing our interim care list from 700 to 100 people in the last 12 months. The financial position for the department is being materially impacted by new demand emerging and the clearance of backlogs.

2.14 Our Purchase of Care budget is experiencing overspends in several places:

- Learning Disabilities has experienced significant price increases, contributing to the overspend, with further details noted in paragraph 2.16
- Savings related to Physical Disabilities have not been delivered as described in paragraph 6.7,
- Older People care budget is experiencing financial pressure due to increasing numbers of people requiring our support.

Previously these overspends were being offset by wider underspends within the department. However, the increase in recent periods has meant this is now unlikely to be the case. The department is taking actions to mitigate the risk of overspend but at this stage these are not wholly compensating for the underlying overspend.

2.15 As over 70% of the ASC budget is spent with independent providers, it is only right to acknowledge the continued financial risk the current economic conditions place on these care markets. Whilst the Council was able to invest £30m into the market as part of its 2023/24 fee uplift, the continued economic uncertainty may well have a destabilising impact on individual providers. We are now experiencing upward pressure on price, in particular, those care packages supporting people with a

Learning Disability in Residential Care. We continue to work with our care providers and the Care Association to understand the steps required to provide sustainability and quality improvement, including our work on both the Market Position Statement and the Market Sustainability Plan. Our Operations and Commissioning teams, especially those supporting the Learning Disabilities market, are actively working with a number of providers to determine viability and future market intentions. Our ability to find alternative placements for those care providers exiting the market is becoming limited and therefore replacement services are coming at a price premium.

- 2.16 The department continues to work with its partners in the Integrated Care System (ICS) to manage system pressures around hospital discharge both from acute hospital and the wider Transforming Care Programme (TCP). Whilst supporting discharges under TCP is required, it does create an additional financial pressure for the Council with care packages in the community often exceeding £4,000 per person, per week. We work robustly with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to ensure we collectively support these discharges into cost effective placements and only pay the fair share of our costs. The ICS itself continues to operate in a challenging financial environment, with the ICB having to undertake a significant reduction in operating costs.
- 2.17 Both internally to the department, and within the wider care sector, availability of staff continues to be a challenge. Internally we have had more success recently in recruiting and retaining certain types of roles. Equally, a number of vacancies have been removed via the Strategic Review and therefore it is unlikely that the department will see the level of staff underspends that it has had in previous years. However, there are certain qualified roles that remain hard to fill at scale and therefore it is important we deliver on our longer term workforce plan.
- 2.18 Whilst recognising the uncertainties described above, the level of ASC departmental reserves to manage the majority of these risks in the short term remain strong. In previous period we deployed additional reserves to bring down the underlying overspend. This mitigates the in-year risks but will impact on the department's ability to deliver on its 2024/25 reserve commitments. The underlying deficit in 23/24 has been considered when setting the 24/25 budget with a balance of growth and wider compensatory savings added to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The national landscape of Social Care remains uncertain with elements of its reform delayed until at least October 2025, a newly introduced inspection/assurance regime, and no long term funding settlement.
- 2.19 **CES:** The forecast outturn as at Period 10 (end of January 2024) is a balanced position.
- 2.20 There are pressures currently being faced within Corporate Property primarily related to utilities, the forecast overspend for the service stands at £1.179m. Whilst significant inflationary uplifts were applied to the budgets for 2023-24 these were insufficient given the sustained price increases in both electricity and gas.
- 2.21 Culture and Heritage are also forecasting an overspend position (£0.721m) driven by Norfolk Museums Service as the main income streams are improved compared to last year, however, are still falling short of target given the sustained reduced offer at Norwich Castle whilst the renovations are completed.
- 2.22 These forecast overspends are being offset primarily by Highways and Waste. Waste volumes at Recycling Centres and kerbside collections have been highly volatile over

the last two years. The current forecast for Waste is a £1.439m underspend driven by residual waste with the latest available data on volumes and unit costs. New legislation with regards to DIY waste came into effect from 31 December 2023. This requires the Council to give householders a free allowance for a given amount of DIY waste at a given frequency. Given this change is unfunded, it is expected to create an annual pressure of around £1m per annum. The pressure related to 2023-24 is expected to be managed within the current forecast underspend position.

- 2.23 For Highways, the reported underspend position (£1.833m) at this stage is primarily driven by the reduced insurance premium, higher street works income and increased level of staff recharges.
- 2.24 The other services within CES continue to be challenged by the level of inflation which places greater risk on achieving the budget across all services but particularly utilities and maintenance costs. These services combined are reporting a net overspend of £1.372m. We will continue to monitor this closely and mitigate cost pressures where feasible.
- 2.25 **Corporate services:** The Strategy and Transformation directorate is forecasting a balanced position making use of reserves. The Chief Executive Office is also reporting a balanced position, meeting extra costs of by-elections and pay award with extra income and vacancy management from within the service.
- 2.26 **Finance:** Finance forecast for P10 is an underspend of £12.923m. Forecast underspends are due to interest payable costs being £2.72m less than budgeted due to the timing of borrowing and sustained low interest rates on borrowing undertaken in 2022-23. The same higher interest rates and cash holdings has contributed to an increased interest receivable forecasted of £5.905m over budget for both treasury and non-treasury investments held. In addition, the Minimum Revenue Provision for 2023-24 is £0.926m lower planned due to Capital Programme slippage from 2022-23 and this is offset by £0.651m of miscellaneous cost pressures. There is also £1.1m accumulated surplus business rates returned to local authorities as part of the distribution of the 2022-23 Pool Funds and a release of £2.923m Business Rates Reserves to offset service area cost pressures noted above.
- 2.27 Further details are given in Appendix 1: Revenue Annex 1.

3 Approved budget, changes and variations

- 3.1 The 2023-24 budget was agreed by Council on 21 February 2023 and is summarised by service in the Council's Budget Book 2023-24 (page 19) as follows:

Table 2: 2023-24 original and revised net budget by service

Service	Approved net base budget	Revised budget P10
	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	249.526	249.396
Children's Services	232.593	232.638
Community and Environmental Services	191.754	188.744
Strategy and Transformation	22.941	27.621
Chief Executive's Office		4.421
Finance	(203.107)	(209.113)
Total	493.707	493.707

Note: this table may contain rounding differences.

- 3.2 The P10 Budget fully reflects the main elements of the Strategic Review restructure including the creation of the Chief Executive's Office which comprises the Governance (Legal Services) and Democratic and Regulatory Service.
- 3.3 It should be noted that there may be further small budget changes. However, these adjustments will not change the overall County Council Budget for 2023-24 of £493.707m.

4 General balances and reserves

General balances

- 4.1 At its meeting on 21 February 2023, the County Council agreed a minimum level of general balances of £25.340m in 2023-24. The balance at 1 April 2023 was **£24.410m** following transfers of £0.570m from a contribution to General Balances and Finance General underspends at the end of 2022-23. The forecast for 31 March 2024 is **£25.410m**, assuming a balanced budget is achieved in 2023-24 and a £1m contribution to general balances provided for in the 2023-24 budget.

Reserves and provisions 2023-24

- 4.2 The use of reserves anticipated at the time of budget setting was based on reserves balances anticipated in January 2023. Actual balances at the end of March 2023 were higher than planned, mainly as a result of grants being carried forward, including Safety Valve and COVID-19 grants and reserves use being deferred.
- 4.3 The 2023-24 budget was approved based on closing reserves and provisions (excluding DSG reserves) of £162.995m as at 31 March 2023. This, and the latest forecasts are as follows.

Table 3: Reserves budgets and forecast reserves and provisions (excluding LMS/DSG)

Reserves and provisions by service	Actual balances 1 April 2023	Increase in March 2023 balances after budget setting	2023-24 Budget book forecast 1 April 2023	Latest forecast balances 31 March 2024
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Services	56.058	10.860	45.198	21.165
Children's Services (inc schools, excl LMS/DSG)	13.951	7.533	6.418	9.584
Community and Environmental Services	65.691	13.179	52.512	55.086
Strategy and Transformation	5.669	0.204	5.465	11.538
Chief Executive's Office				2.230
Finance	44.235	11.460	32.775	29.190
Schools LMS balances	16.078	-4.549	20.627	10.796
Reserves and Provisions including LMS	201.682	38.687	162.995	139.589
DSG Reserve (negative)	(45.877)	27.736	(73.613)	(79.412)

- 4.4 Covid grants and other grants and contributions brought forward at 31 March 2023 resulted in reserves and provisions being £38.687m higher than had been assumed at the time of budget setting. The majority of these reserves will be used to address planned service provision during 2023-24. The latest forecast net total for reserves and provisions at 31 March 2024 has decreased by £62.093m when compared with the opening balance at 1 April 2023, down to £139.589m. The bulk of the forecasted movement in reserves relates to the planned use of reserves to mitigate cost pressures in service areas. This forecast will adjust further through the year as services undertake mitigating actions and savings plans, bringing the forecast closer to the Budget Book forecast for 31 March 2024 of £119.518m.
- 4.5 **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG):** The latest forecast DSG Reserve is based on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Recovery Plan combined with the latest information available. This includes amendments for the timing of opening of new provision as school organisation processes have progressed, along with revised costings as a result of teacher and support staff pay increases and inflationary pressures for HNB funded provision and continued demand increasing the level of support to enable mainstream schools to effectively meet need and to reduce escalation to specialist provision.
- 4.6 The forecast is currently an in-year deficit of c. £41.035m is forecast, which is £15.887m above the budgeted deficit of £25.149m, which is partially offset by contributions from NCC and DfE through the Safety Valve agreement. In 2023-24, NCC are contributing (£5.5m) contribution received to date is (£2m). This will increase the DSG Reserve to £79.412m by 31 March 2024, much of which is due to the invest to save element of the plan that will deliver significant savings (and subsequently a balanced in-year budget) in future years.
- 4.7 The increase in the forecast since the previous report is primarily due to ongoing pressure to support provision in mainstream schools, early years provision and post 16 provision, all of which are to enable needs to be met without escalation to specialist provision. Demand remains very high with drivers, such as the medium-term effect of the pandemic and difficulties for young people accessing timely mental health and wellbeing provision, exacerbating pressures already underlying in the system. Similar

patterns are seen across the country. The alternative to funding for mainstream schools would be the funding of additional specialist provision which would be more costly, take time to become available and, for many, would lead to poorer outcomes than supporting them to remain in mainstream settings.

- 4.8 Additionally, the increase in the forecast has been driven by demand for support for children who are not currently on a school roll, particularly with demand for alternative provision being high. This increased demand reflects similar drivers to the increase in needs within mainstream schools. The final significant movement was correction of a forecasting error in previous months, rather than a change in trends, in relation to post 16 provision other than at further education colleges.
- 4.9 Costs for independent places remains high, with schools experiencing the same inflationary pressures as other parts of economy. However, the volume of places remains relatively stable and in line with expectations.
- 4.10 The focus on increasing the number of children and young people with high needs SEND to be supported to remain in mainstream provision is a key part of Local First Inclusion. A key intention of the strategic DSG recovery plan is to make additional resources and funding available to mainstream schools to help them meet needs without the need for a referral to specialist settings. As such, the model incorporates an additional strategic investment in funding for mainstream schools for this purpose. Schools are engaging well with this intention more quickly than anticipated when the model was developed and, as a result, we are adjusting the model for future years to reflect greater deployment of this resource which supports positive outcomes for children and remains considerably more cost-effective than specialist provision. It is also promising from the viewpoint of mitigating needs from escalating in future years.
- 4.11 Given the scale of the challenge, the Local First Inclusion programme is complex, with 80 individual projects across five over-arching workstreams. The programme started formally in April 2023 and significant progress has been achieved across the programme. However, as would be expected with a six-year programme of activity the benefits, to children and young people and to the budget, are planned to accrue throughout the period 2023 to 2029 and in the short-term the pressures continue. Indeed, the referrals for Education Health & Care Plans are continuing to rise at record levels. Additionally, inflation levels have been significantly higher than expected bringing additional cost pressures throughout the education system, as seen elsewhere.
- 4.12 All elements of the DSG budget will continue to be kept under close review given the demand-led nature of these budgets. In addition, further work is underway to seek additional mitigations to minimise the impact of additional pressures above the budgeted deficit into future years. Significant work continues to take place between NCC, Norfolk Schools Forum, groups of school leaders and the wider system to reshape the system in Norfolk to ensure that the right specialist provision is in the right place to meet needs (i.e. the capital investment), whilst also progressing work to transform how the whole system supports additional needs within mainstream provision.
- 4.13 NCC reports the forecast position to the Norfolk Schools Forum, in line with DfE expectations and feedback from the Forum continues to be sought. In addition, NCC will reports regularly to the DfE in relation to progress with the Local First Inclusion programme. Norfolk has entered into a period of enhanced monitoring and support with the DfE (from October 2023 to March 2024) to ensure that our overall plan remains on track. We are currently undertaking a 'stock-take' of all activity across the

programme to review the future years' modelling alongside a comprehensive programme refresh that will identify new initiatives and mitigations that will revise the trajectories and introduce new initiatives with the aim of bringing the plan back on track to ensure that the joint DfE and NCC investment continues to address the needs of children and young people and addressing the underlying budgetary pressures.

4.14 Provisions included in the table above

The table above includes forecast provisions of £31.871m comprising:

- £11.708m insurance provision,
- £14.971m landfill provision (this provision is not cash backed),
- £3.415m provisions for bad debts,
- £1.639m business rates appeals provision, and
- £0.139m - a small number of payroll related provisions.

5 New/Confirmed Funding

- 5.1 **Supported Accommodation Reforms:** On 28 April 2023 the government introduced new requirements for providers of supported accommodation for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17. This new legislation will require all providers of supported accommodation to be registered and regulated by OFSTED from 28 October 2023. The Minister of State for Education announced an extra £14.550m funding to support local authorities in delivering these new requirements. Norfolk County Council's share of this funding is £0.787m, to be received in 4 quarterly instalments of £0.196m.
- 5.2 **Sustainability and Improvement Fund:** On 28 July 2023 the Minister of State for Care announced the [allocation for the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund](#) which provides additional support to local authorities to make tangible improvements to Adult Social Care to increase the social care capacity and retention of workforce to reduce waiting times and increase fee rates paid to social care providers. Norfolk County Council's share of this funding is £6.355m. Additional funding is also anticipated for 2024-25 and will be reflected in the budget process.
- 5.3 **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG):** On 7 September 2023, DLUHC announced £102m additional funding for the DFG split across 2023-24 (£50m) and 2024-25 (£52m). This capital funding is aimed at providing home adaptations to help eligible older and disabled people to live independently and as safely as possible in their homes. With the express agreements of the district councils, this funding can also be used for wider social care capital projects. In accordance with the Better Care Fund policy, Norfolk's share of this funding is £0.799m, and it will be passed on to the District Councils to deliver the small scale adaptations required.
- 5.4 **Wraparound Childcare Programme :** On 15 March 2023, the government announced an investment of £289m for a national wraparound programme to achieve their ambition of supporting all families who need to access wraparound childcare. The Department of Education (DfE) announced an allocation of £7.421m to Norfolk to build a self-sustaining programme and develop flexible ways of providing childcare. Further details of the plans to deploy this funding are available elsewhere in the individual cabinet member decision report.

6 Budget savings 2023-24 summary

- 6.1 In setting its 2023-24 Budget, the County Council agreed net savings of £59.703m. Details of all budgeted savings can be found in the 2023-24 Budget Book. A summary of the total savings forecast to be delivered is provided in this section.
- 6.2 The latest monitoring reflects total forecast savings delivery of £57.858m at year end.
- 6.3 The forecast savings delivery is anticipated as shown in the table below:

Table 4: Analysis of 2023-24 savings forecast

	Adult Social Services	Children's Services	Community and Environmental Services	Strategy and Transformation	Finance	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Budget savings	28.040	12.517	10.904	2.542	5.700	59.703
Period 10 forecast savings	26.540	12.462	10.614	2.542	5.700	57.858
Savings shortfall (net)	1.500	0.055	0.290	0.000	0.000	1.845

Commentary on savings risk areas

- 6.4 The forecast savings for 2023-24 as at January 2024 is £57.858m against a budgeted savings target of £59.703m. A shortfall of £1.500m has been reported in Adult Social Services, £0.055m in Children's Services and £0.290m in Community and Environmental Services. Some saving programmes have highlighted risk areas which will need to be kept under review. Any updates to the forecast delivery of savings will be included in future monitoring to Cabinet.

Adult Social Services

- 6.5 Adult Social Services has a significant £28.040m savings target in 2023/24 comprising additional benefits from existing savings initiatives such as the Connecting Communities Programme (ASS030), delivering market utilisation efficiencies through contract performance management (ASS031), continued implementation of the Learning Disabilities transformation programme (ASS032), ongoing benefits from use of Assistive Technology and substantial further use of reserves.
- 6.5 Our major departmental transformation Programme "Connecting Communities" continues to work at pace to embed the new ways of working across the service and to ensure that the benefits are sustainable.
- 6.7 As flagged in previous monitoring reports, it is now necessary to identify an element of forecast non delivery within the Adults Savings Programme relating to prior year savings targets. The non-delivery of these savings directly impacts the revenue forecast but is not included in Table 4.

Norse Care

Our Norse Care contract has had a multi-year savings target to deliver a wholesale transformation of the offer and ensure it is fit for the future types of demand we expect to face. Due to significant delay to the transformation programme it won't be possible for recurrent savings to be achieved this year. The service is working towards one off partial mitigations but a £1m shortfall in savings delivery is now being forecast for 23/24 relating to a prior year savings target.

Physical Disability Service

It is also now very unlikely that the £1.5m savings associated with the Physical Disability service are to be achieved this year. This is in part due to the delay of the creation of an 18-65 operational service which would have provided increased resource in this area. At the same time, we have seen an adverse underlying movement in cost due to increased numbers of people requiring our support and increased unit costs of care packages. A recovery plan is being put in place in order to try to bring down the overspend as much as possible.

Partly as a result of these shortfalls in savings, Adults is declaring a forecast £1.923m overspend at P10.

Children's Services

- 6.10 It is currently anticipated that all 2023-24 budgeted savings within Children's Services will be delivered in 2023-24 as an overall programme, except for S2324CS035 Post 16 transport: remove option to pay a daily fare (currently only available on local buses which charge fares) £0.055m saving which will no longer be delivered.
- 6.11 Additionally, there is a saving that was partially delayed from 2022-23 (CHS014 £0.1m) that was expected to be delivered within 2023-24 but is now not expected to be delivered until 2024-25. This saving relates to the development of a joint initiative with Norfolk ICB and NSFT, including capital development, co-location of services and additional service offer for young people on the edge of Tier 4 mental health provision. Feasibility work is ongoing for the capital works, funded by NHS England, and the work is complex. All partners are committed to delivering the project and the work will continue.
- 6.12 The forecast assumes that remainder of the savings will be delivered during the remainder of the financial year; significant deviation from these plans could result in an overspend forecast. Therefore, expected delivery of savings will continue to be kept under close review.

Community and Environmental Services

- 6.13 At this stage it is anticipated, unless stated separately, all budgeted savings within Community and Environmental Services will be delivered in 2023-24. One of the savings (S2324FCS021) relates to further income from commercialisation of property assets including County Hall. Given the new tenants were not utilising the space from 1 April there will be an estimated shortfall against the saving in 2023-24 of £0.190m due to rent not being charged for the full year.
- 6.14 An increased income target had been applied to Adult Learning over the past two years linked to the development of a creative hub at the Wensum Lodge site. This project is not progressing as it is no longer viable, and as the service will also be withdrawing from the site, the 2023-24 saving of £0.100m is no longer achievable (S2021CES001).

2024-25 to 2026-27 savings

- 6.15 Budget setting in 2023-24 saw the approval of further investment in essential services through both the removal of previously planned savings and the recognition of cost pressures. As such, the savings plan assumes an increase in budget of £6.197m for 2024-25 followed by savings of £0.669m for 2025-26 and £2.285m savings in 2026-27.

The deliverability of these savings, including any 2023-24 savings that are permanently undeliverable, has been considered as part of the budget setting process for 2024-28.

Revenue Annex 1

Forecast revenue outturn

Revenue outturn by service

The forecast net balanced budget is a result of a range of underlying forecast over and underspends which are listed below.

Revenue budget outturn by service – detail

	Revised Budget	Overspend	Under spend	Forecast net spend
		£m	£m	
Adult Social Services				
Purchase of Care		21.890		
Director of Assurance & Commissioning			(0.278)	
Director of Communities, Prevention and Partnerships			(0.183)	
Director of Community Health & Social Care		0.649		
Director of Community Social Work			(0.092)	
Director of Strategy & Transformation			(0.140)	
Public Health		0		
Management, Finance & HR			(14.404)	
Use of Reserves			(5.519)	
Net total	249.396	22.539	(20.616)	251.319
Children's Services				
Sufficiency, Planning & Education Strategy (including Home to School Transport)		6.000		
Family Help & High Needs (including Client Placements)		5.042		
Partnership, Inclusion & Practice		1.300		
Management, Finance and HR			(0.342)	
Use of Reserves			(1.000)	
Net total	232.638	12.342	(1.342)	243.638
Community and Environmental Services				
Cultural and Heritage cost pressures		0.721		
Highways underspends and additional income			(1.833)	
Waste underspends and additional income			(1.439)	
Corporate Property Utilities inflation cost pressure		1.179		
Other CES cost pressures		1.372		
Net total	188.744	3.272	(3.272)	188.744
Strategy and Transformation				
I&A overspends		0.031		
Communications overspends		0.220		
HR cost pressures		0.333		
SDD			(0.460)	

IMT Digital Services overspends		0.319		
Growth and Investment			(0.090)	
Use of reserves			(0.353)	
Net Total	27.621	0.903	(0.903)	27.621
Chief Executive's Office				
Elections			(0.300)	
NPLaw cost pressures		0.236		
Use of reserves		0.064		
Net Total	4.421	0.300	(0.300)	4.421
Finance				
Interest Payable – savings secured on borrowing undertaken in 22-23 at lower interest rates			(2.720)	
Minimum Revenue Provision – 22-23 capital slippage			(0.926)	
Interest Receivable			(5.905)	
Miscellaneous cost pressures and underspends		0.651		
Business Rates release of prior year pool			(1.100)	
Business Rates Risk Reserve			(2.923)	
Net total	(206.466)	0.486	(12.923)	(219.388)
TOTAL	493.707			493.707

Revenue Annex 2 – Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve

	Reserve as at 31 Mar 23	Budgeted Reserve as at 31 Mar 23	Forecast Spend (B)	Forecast Reserve as at 31 Mar 24
<i>Dedicated schools grant</i>				
High Needs Block			41.035	
DfE Safety Valve funding			-2.000	
NCC Safety Valve contribution			-5.500	
Increase in net deficit to be carried forward			33.535	
Forecast (over) / under spend				
Net deficit (DSG Reserve)*	(45.877)	(73.613)		(79.412)

*The Budget Reserve of (£73.613m) was set before the Safety Valve Agreement was confirmed and therefore does not include the £28m received from the Department for Education in March 2023.

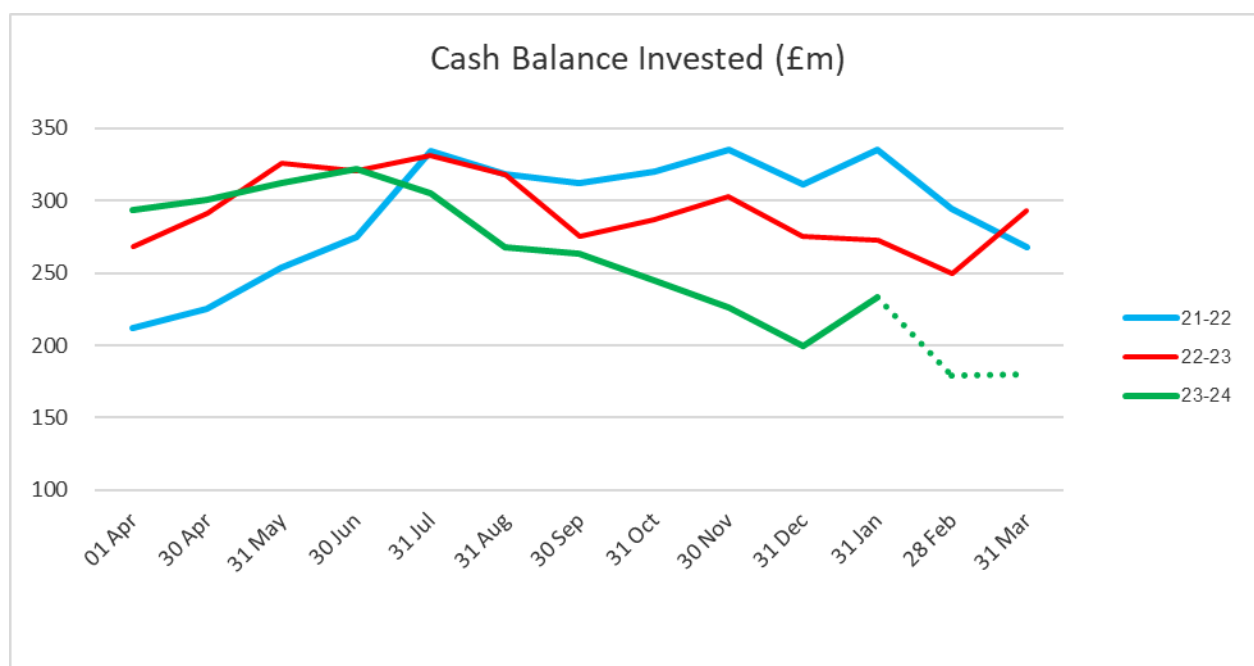
Appendix 2: 2023-24 Balance Sheet Finance Monitoring Report Month 10

Report by the Director of Strategic Finance

1 Treasury management summary

- 1.1 The corporate treasury management function ensures the efficient management of all the authority's cash balances. The graph below shows the level of cash balances over the last two financial years to 31st March, and projections to March 2024.

Chart 2: Treasury Cash Balances



- 1.2 The Council's Treasury Strategy allowed for £65m new borrowing in 2023-24 to fund capital expenditure in year. However, following the review of the Mid-Year Outturn at the Treasury Management Panel meeting in December 2023, the decision was taken to delay the planned borrowing to 2024-25. The forecast cash flow above takes into account the current capital expenditure forecast, resulting in a closing cash balance of approximately £179.721m.
- 1.3 The Council has healthy cash balances for the immediate future with cash balances of £233.190m as at the end of January 2024. The P10 forecast of Interest receivable from treasury investments held by the Council is £6.5m; which is a £5.3m saving against the revenue budget. The interest receivable from non-treasury investments and capital loans is forecast at £2.363m which is a £0.549m saving.
- 1.4 PWLB and commercial borrowing for capital purposes was £822.143m at the end of January 2024. The associated annual interest payable on existing borrowing is £30.452m.
- 1.5 The forecast interest payable for 2023-24 for P10 is for a £2.778m saving against budget assuming there is no new borrowing in 2023-24.

- 1.6 In accordance with the guidance set out in the Prudential Code 2021 (139) and the Treasury Management Code 2021(1.6), the Council sets out its current and full year forecast Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators in Table 1 below.

Table 1: CFR and Net Borrowing Indicators

Prudential and treasury indicators	31.01.24 Actual – YTD £m	2023/24 TM Strategy £m	31.3.24 Forecast £m
Capital expenditure	178.853	251.054	233.611
Capital Financing Requirement:	995.845	1,029.268	1,016.679
Gross borrowing	866.428	975.118	860.249
External debt	822.143	935.045	819.295
Investments	233.190	218.203	179.721
Net borrowing	633.238	756.915	680.528

- 1.7 To date the Council has not increased its PWLB borrowing and has repaid £23.055m of its external debt. As such the P8 Gross Borrowing and External Debt balances are below the 23-24 TM strategy estimates set out in Table 2:

TABLE 2

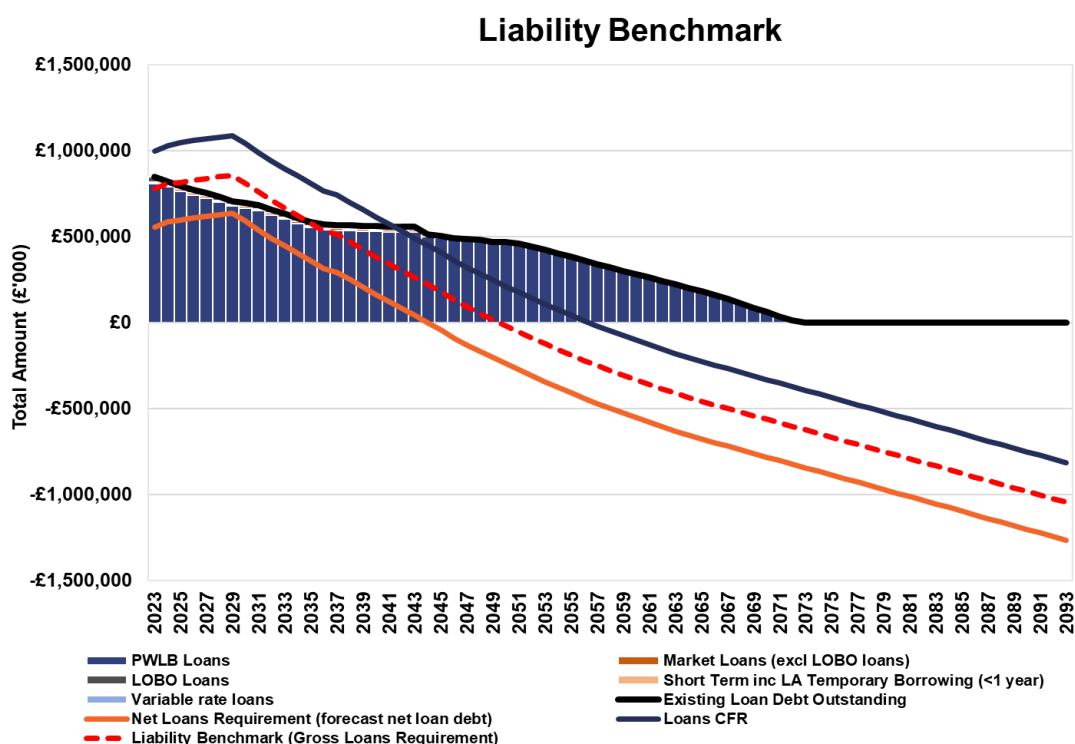
Prudential Indicator 2023/24	P10 2023-24 £m	2023-24 Strategy £m	Forecast 2023-24 £m
Authorised Limit		1082.735	
Maximum Gross Borrowing position during the year	894.617	934.618	867.843
Operational Boundary		1029.268	1,016.679
Average Gross Borrowing position	834.529	891.835	830.157
Financing Costs as a proportion of net revenue stream (£788.209)		9.12%	8.09%
Capital Financing Requirement		1,029.268	1,016.679

- 1.8 The forecast Prudential Indicators in Table 2 takes into account the P10 Capital Programme, the forecast assumes that reprofiling existing projects in line with historical Capital Programme trends will bring the borrowing requirement down to the £65m

borrowing limit set out in the Treasury Management Strategy. Service Managers are actively working on rephasing their capital projects out to the future years 2024-2028 to close this gap and stay within the Operational Boundary Limit of £1,029.268m.

- 1.9 The Liability Benchmark (LB) as set out in Chart 3 is a new prudential indicator for 2023/24. As noted in the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023-24, this prudential indicator will be reported to Cabinet at the end of each quarter. Chart 3 has been updated to reflect the current capital forecast and the current borrowing profile. It shows a net under-borrowed position against the CFR until 2042. This indicator provides a useful snapshot of the Council's current debt and will be updated each month as the Council's capital programme and borrowing profile changes.
- 1.10 The Authority is required to estimate and measure the LB for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years, as a minimum. The LB below remains consistent with the TM strategy as the Prudential Indicators Forecast in Table 2 remains below the TM limits.

Chart 3: Liability Benchmark



- 1.11 There are four components to the LB: -

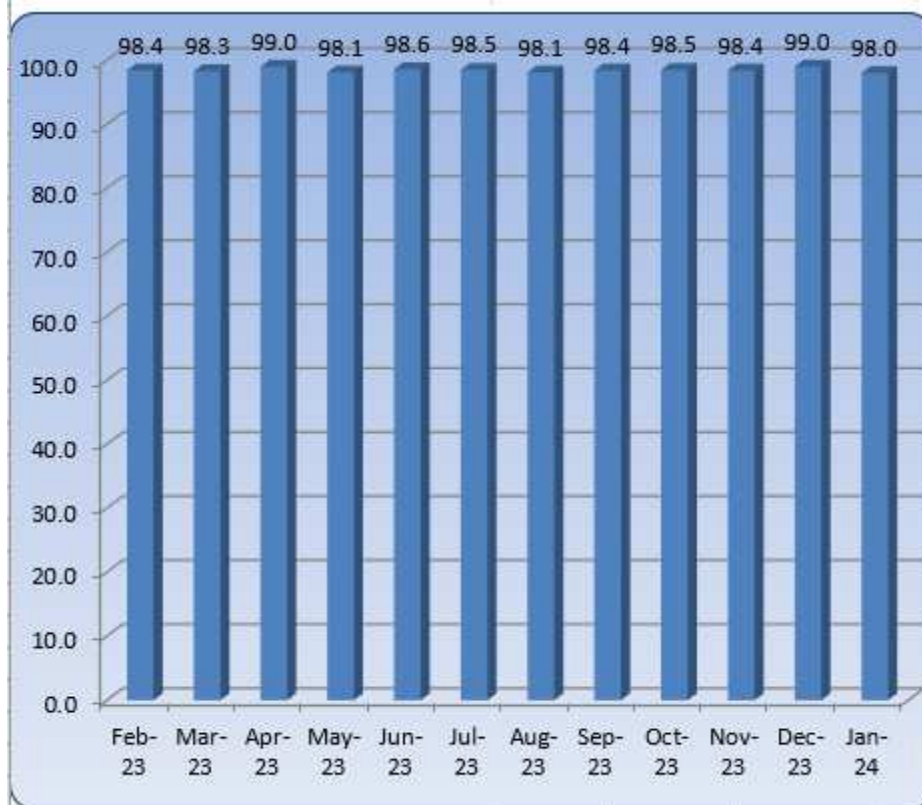
- Existing loan debt outstanding: the Authority's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
- Loans CFR: this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP.
- Net loans requirement: this will show the Authority's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.

- Liability benchmark (or gross loans requirement): this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance.

2 Payment performance

- 2.1 This chart shows the percentage of invoices that were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received. Some 470,000 invoices are paid annually. 98% were paid on time in January 2024 against a target of 98%. The percentage has returned to above the target of 98% since February 2023.

Chart 4: Payment performance, rolling 12 months



Note: The figures include an allowance for disputes/exclusions.

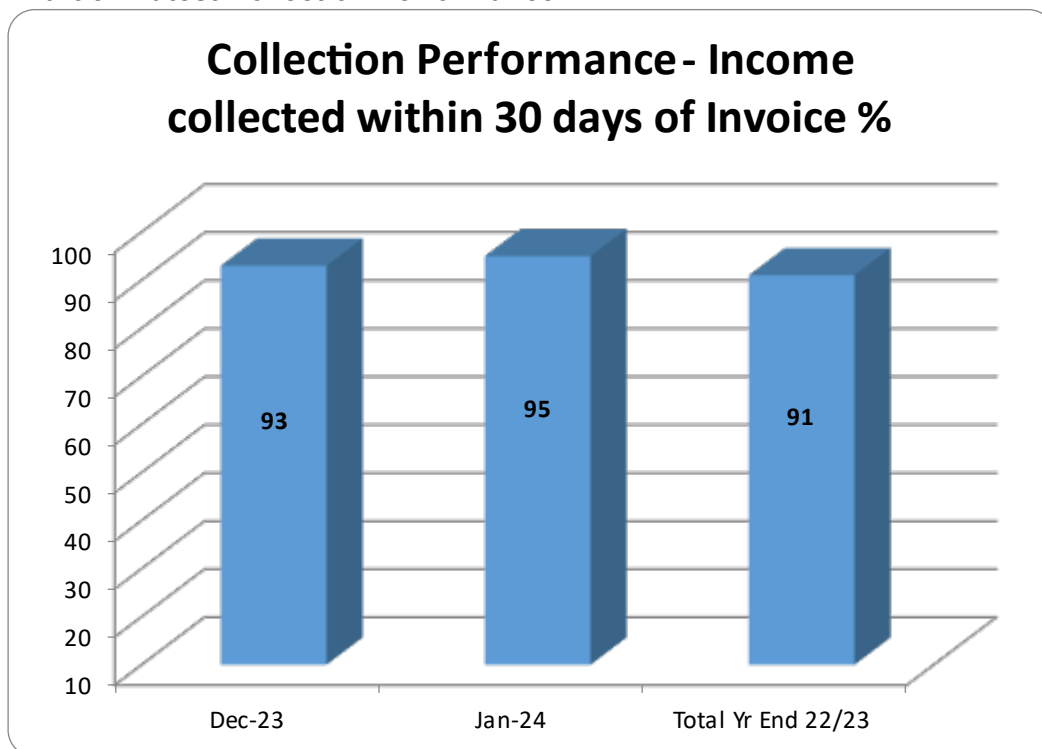
3 Debt recovery

- 3.1 **Introduction:** In 2022-23 the County Council raised over 126,935 invoices for statutory and non-statutory services. These invoices totalled in excess of £1.197bn. Through 2022-23 91.2% of all invoiced income was collected within 30 days of issuing an invoice, with 98% collected within 180 days.

Debt collection performance measures – latest available data

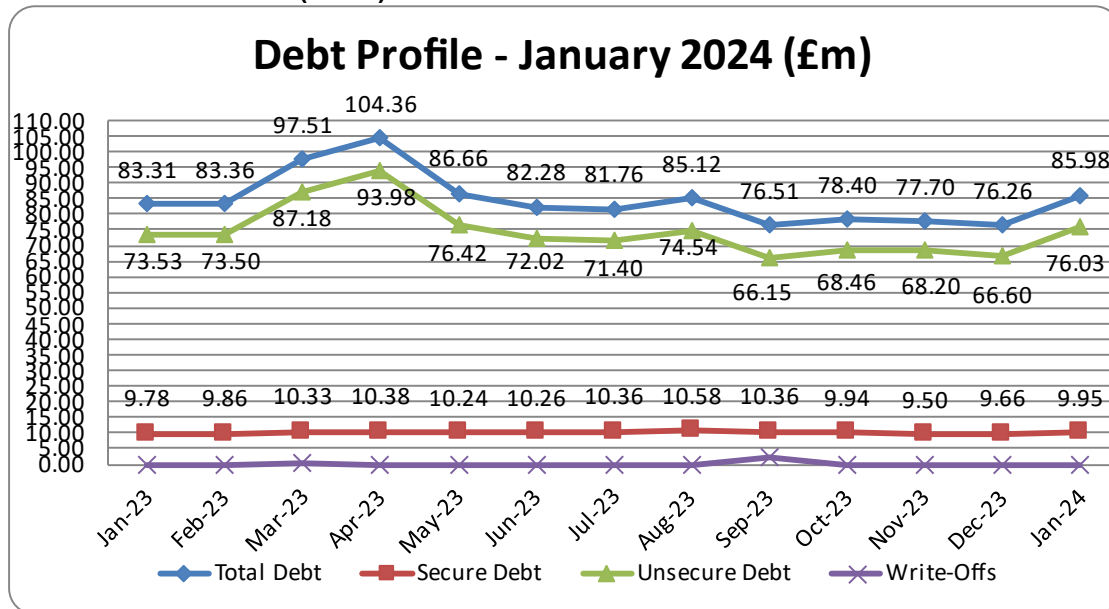
- 3.2 The proportion of invoiced income collected within 30 days for invoices raised in the previous month – measured by value – was 95% in January 24.

Chart 5 : Latest Collection Performance



- 3.3 The value of outstanding debt is continuously monitored, and recovery procedures are in place to ensure that action is taken to recover all money due to Norfolk County Council. The level of debt is shown in the following graph:

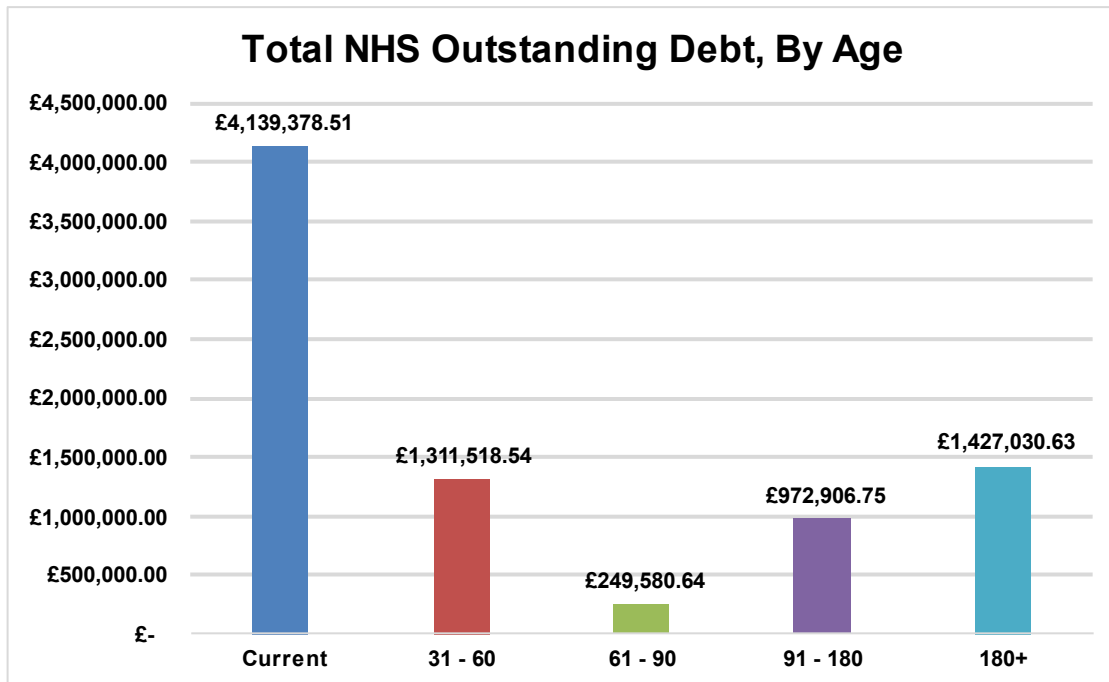
Chart 6: Debt Profile (Total)



- 3.4 Secured debts amount to £9.95m at 31st January 2024. Within this total £3.16m relates to estate finalisation where the client has died, and the estate is in the hands of the executors.
- 3.5 The overall level of unsecure debt increased by £9.43m in January 2024. Of the £76.03m unsecure debt at the end of January 24; £21.68m is under 30 days, £1.80m has been referred to NPLaw, £1.26m is being paid off by regular instalments and £14.37m is awaiting estate finalisation.
- 3.6 The largest area of unsecure debt relates to charges for social care, £59.26m, of which £13.31m is under 30 days and £8.1m is debt with the Norfolk and Waveney ICB (formerly Norfolk CCG's) for shared care, Better Care Pooled Fund, continuing care and free nursing care. The overall debt with the ICB has decreased by £1.09m in January 24 as ICB continues to work through its oldest debts as part of the debt resolution agreement with the Council.

3.7 **Norfolk and Waveney ICB Debt**

Chart 7 below shows the debt aging profile of the remaining ICB debt at 31 January 2024



The Council received the ICB net payment of £4,826,974 relating to the Historic Payables and Receivables arrangement agreed at Cabinet in September 2023. Work is now progressing between the organisations to complete the wider elements included within the agreement. This includes:

- An end to end process review of both parties collective payments processes
- A focus on recovery of newer debt
- Formal written agreements for some key areas of transactions

3.8 **Debt write-offs:** In accordance with Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures, Cabinet is required to approve the write-off of debts over £10,000. The Director of Strategic Finance approves the write-off of all debts up to £10,000.

3.9 Service departments are responsible for funding their debt write-offs. Before writing off any debt all appropriate credit control procedures are followed.

3.10 For the period 1 April 2023 to 31st January 2024, 232 debts less than £10,000 were approved to be written off following approval from the Director of Strategic Finance. These debts totalled £19,322.44. In addition, the Director of Strategic Finance has in February 2024 approved the write off of 45 debts each less than £10,000 totalling £151,528.80.

3.11 For the period 1 April 2023 to 31 January 2024, there are 8 debts over £10,000 to be approved by Cabinet for write off totalling £122,025.21, as follows:

Debt Type	Amount	Reason
Residential Care charges (142874)	£11,586.26	Estate exhausted
Residential Care charges (44757)	£15,242.79	Estate exhausted
Residential Care charges (137316)	£11,017.12	Estate exhausted
Residential Care and Home Care charges (58098)	£15,862.99	Estate exhausted
Residential Care charges (220475)	£11,157.66	Estate exhausted
Residential Care charges (169944)	£14,289.14	Legal options exhausted – uneconomical to pursue
Residential Care charges (207728)	£10,147.98	Estate exhausted, legal options exhausted and uneconomical to pursue
Residential Care charges (197978)	£32,721.27	Estate exhausted, legal options exhausted and uneconomical to pursue

All the debts listed above have previously been provided for in the 2022-23 accounts and any decision to write-off will not affect the outturn position.

- 3.12 Following the agreement reached between Norfolk County Council and NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Cabinet approved the write off for £2.4m.

Norfolk County Council Finance Monitoring Report 2023-24

Appendix 3: 2023-24 Capital Finance Monitoring Report

Report by the Director of Strategic Finance

1 Capital Programme 2023-27+

- 1.1 On 21 February 2023, the County Council agreed a 2023-24 capital programme of £351.054m with a further £605.917m allocated to future years', giving a total of £956.971m. This was based on a forecast outturn for 2022-23 of £283.583m
- 1.2 The Capital Programme was increased by £62.938m in March 2023 following the receipt of various sources of external funding. The bulk of this additional funding was reprofiled into 2023-24 leaving a Capital Outturn of £217.273m for 2022-23 as reported to Cabinet on 5 June 2023.
- 1.3 £125.940m was moved from 2022-23 into 2023-24 and future years resulting in an overall capital programme at 1 April 2023 of £1,085.104m. This prompted a review of the capital programme – Review Round 1, to address the viability of delivering a £462.690m capital programme in 2023-24. Further in-year adjustments have resulted in the capital programme shown below:

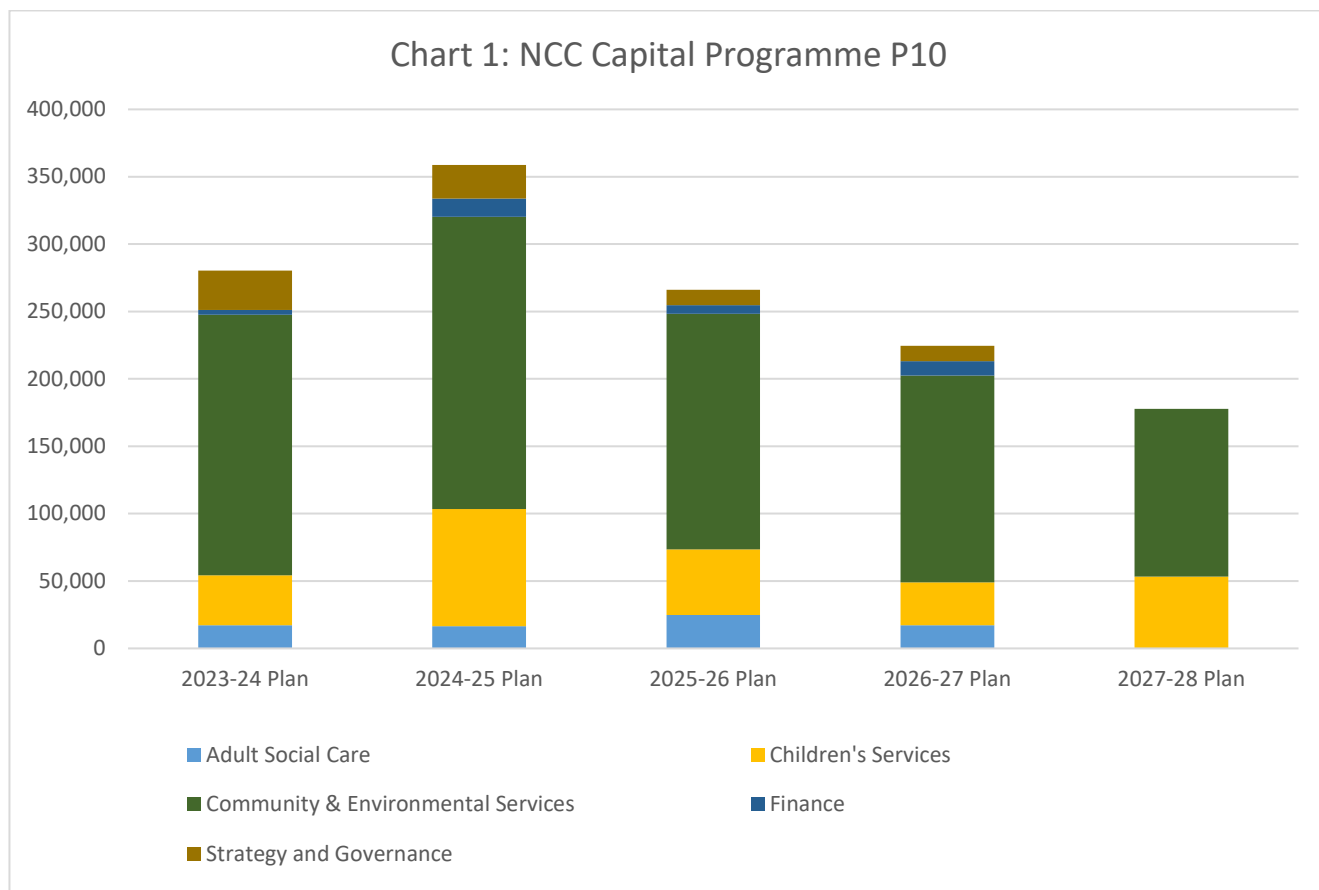
Table 1: Capital Programme budget

	2023-24 budget	Future years
	£m	£m
Uplifts to existing schemes approved in February 2023	1.219	4.548
New schemes approved in February 2023	13.685	20.737
Previously approved schemes brought forward	336.150	580.632
Totals in 2022-27+ Budget Book (total £956.971m)	351.054	605.917
Schemes re-profiled after budget setting (£125.940m)	109.443	16.497
New schemes approved after budget setting including new grants received	2.193	
Revised opening capital programme (total £1,085.104m)	462.690	622.414
Net Re-profiling since start of year	-211.488	211.488
Other movements including new grants and approved schemes	29.082	193.383
Total capital programme budgets (total £1,307.569m)	281.310	1,017.959

Note: this table and the tables below contain rounding differences

- 1.4 The P10 review of capital schemes takes into account the progress to date resulting in a net reprofiling total from 2023-24 into future years of £211.488m. The review also adjusted for changes in NCC borrowing required and updates for grant funded projects resulting in a net increase of £8.3m in P10, made up of the following changes:

- £8.3m uplift to NCC Borrowing to fully reflect the Norse Project One capital loan drawdown previously approved by Council in September 2023

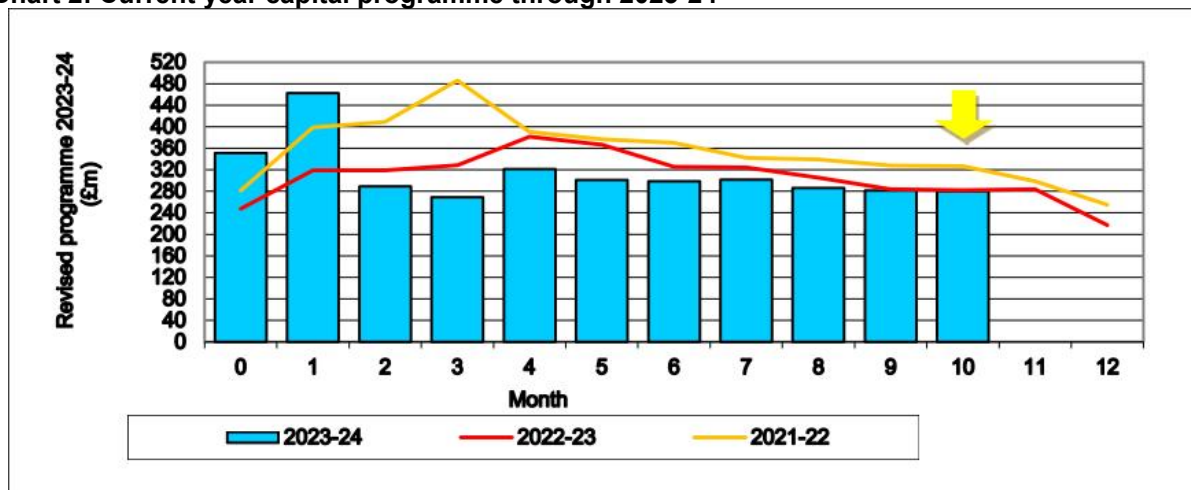


- 1.5 Chart 1 shows the continued reprofiling efforts to address the “spike” in 2024-25 budgets bringing it closer to the average run-rate of the Council’s annual capital programme. The forecast indicates that a further £50m will be reprofiled into 2024-25 in Q4. Therefore the 24-25 Capital Strategy seeks to address this by further reprofiling into future years to bring the 2023-24 and 2024-25 capital programmes down to a sustainable run rate of around £260m per annum.
- 1.6 The full impact of Capital Review Board’s scrutiny of schemes in the capital programme will be reflected in Capital Monthly Reporting to cabinet in future months.

Changes to the Capital Programme

- 1.7 The following chart shows changes to the 2023-24 capital programme through the year. The current year capital programme is following the same trend of building up in the first half of the year as the Council receives notification of central government capital grants and then gradually settles down to a sustainable delivery level as projects are profiled and reprofiled as schemes develop.

Chart 2: Current year capital programme through 2023-24



- 1.8 Month “0” shows the 2023-24 capital programme at the time of budget approval, with schemes reprofiled from the prior year after budget setting shown in month 1, followed by the most up to date programme. The current year programme will change as additional funding is secured, and when schemes are re-profiled to future years as timing becomes more certain.
- 1.9 The P10 Capital Programme of £280.284m is approximately £40m higher than the capital programme delivered in the last two years (£217.0m – 22-23 and £254.87m – 21-22). Therefore, we can expect a similar trend of late slippage in Q4 to occur in 2023-24 and this has been factored into the 2023-24 forecast.
- 1.10 In P10 the Council departments continued their review to identify any reprofiling due and to release any budgets that are no longer deemed to be economically viable given the current climate of rising interest rates. This resulted in £2.025m being reprofiled into future years in P10.
- 1.11 Following the Strategic Review restructure of services, the capital projects have been moved into their new service areas. The opening programme has been restated to reflect the new structure. The current year’s capital budget is as follows:

Table 2: Service capital budgets and movements 2023-24

Service	Previous reported Current Year Budget	Reprofiling since previous report	Other Changes since previous report	2023-24 latest Capital Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	17.267	0.000	0.000	17.267
Children's Services	36.955	0.000	0.000	36.955
Community & Environmental Services	195.487	-2.026		193.461
Finance	2.401	1.000		3.401
Strategy & Transformation	29.200			29.200
Total	281.310	-1.026	0.000	280.284

Note: this table may contain rounding differences.

- 1.12 The revised programme for future years (2024-25 to 2027-28) is as follows:

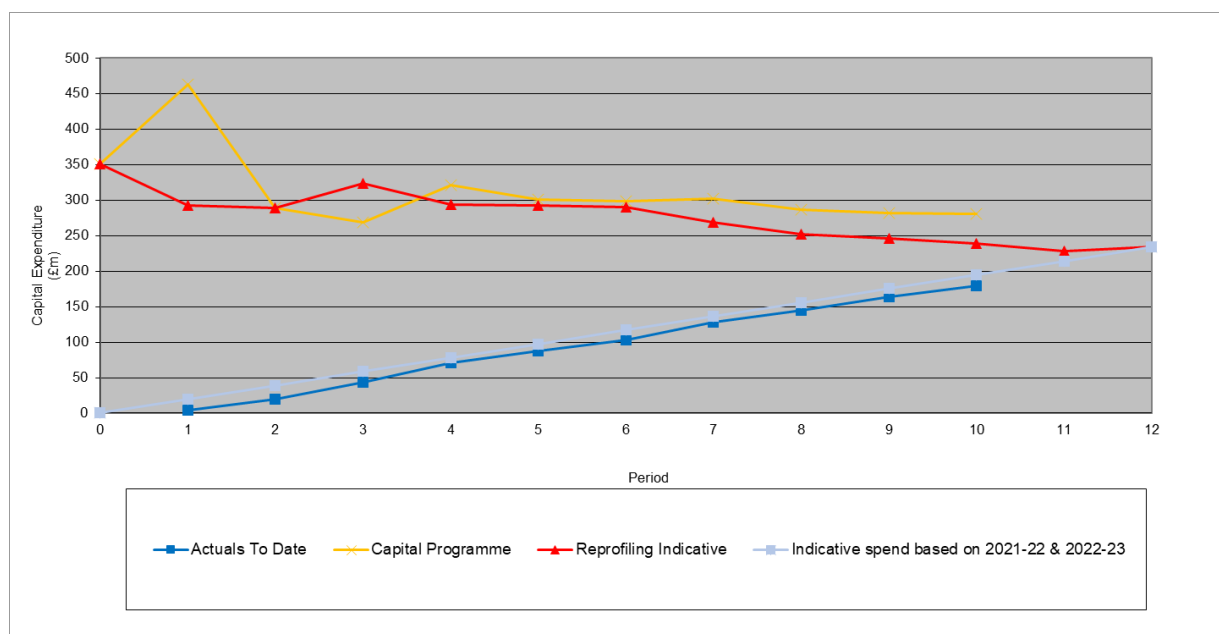
Table 3: Capital programme future years 2022+

Service	Previously reported future programme	Reprofiling since previous report	Other Changes since previous report	2024+ Future Capital Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	58.571			58.571
Children's Services	220.724			220.724
Community & Environmental Services	667.587	2.026		669.613
Finance	23.366		7.300	30.666
Strategy & Transformation	47.712	0.000	0.000	47.712
Total	1,017.959	2.026	7.300	1,027.285

Note: this table contains rounding differences

- 1.13 Chart 3 below shows the movement on the current year capital budget and year to date capital expenditure:

Chart 3: Actual Capital Expenditure to date



- 1.15 The graph shows that actual year to date capital spend is ahead of the opening forecast, which was based on the opening capital programme and an indicative calculation based on previous years' expenditure. It also shows that expected reprofiling of budgets to future years as the progress on projects becomes clearer. As a result, capital expenditure 23-24 forecast at P10 remains £233.613m.
- 1.16 Whilst the forecast takes into account the historical tendencies for capital slippage, it does not fully reflect recent inflationary cost pressures in the costs of construction. We are also currently seeing high levels of inflation on the cost of construction schemes, particularly in the Castle Keep refurbishment project and the major Highways projects. The Council will continue to monitor this risk and review the potential pressures on the capital programme. The impact of cost pressures on the capital programme forecast will be picked up as part of the regular capital monitoring process.

2 Financing the capital programme

- 2.1 Funding for the capital programme comes primarily from grants and contributions provided by central government and prudential borrowing. These are supplemented by capital receipts, developer contributions, and contributions from revenue budgets and reserves.

Table 4: Financing of the capital programme

Funding stream	2023-24 Programme	Future Years Forecast
	£m	£m
NCC Prudential Borrowing	63.212	400.721
Supported Borrowing	8.309	29.750
Use of Capital Receipts (see note 3.3)	22.171	0.000
Revenue & Reserves	1.037	3.005
<i>Grants and Contributions:</i>		0.000
DfE	23.157	76.808
DfT	118.948	463.150
DoH	9.977	0.190
DLUHC	0.330	0.000
DCMS	0.000	0.000
DEFRA	0.139	0.000
Developer Contributions	9.859	42.547
Other Local Authorities	3.408	0.688
Local Enterprise Partnership	1.375	0.000
Community Infrastructure Levy	3.476	0.654
National Lottery	3.039	0.000
Academies	0.000	0.000
Commercial Contributions	0.000	0.000
Business rates pool fund	0.000	0.000
Other	11.847	9.772
Total capital programme	280.284	1,027.285

Note: this table may contain rounding differences

2.3 For the purposes of the table above, it is assumed that capital receipts will be applied to short-life assets and through the flexible use of capital receipts as set out in section 3 below and will be applied in line with the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Statement.

2.4 Developer contributions are funding held in relation to planning applications. Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) contributions are held in relation to specific projects: primarily schools, with smaller amounts for libraries and highways. The majority of highways developer contributions are a result of section 278 agreements (Highways Act 1980).

3 Capital Receipts

3.1 The Council's property portfolio is constantly reviewed to ensure assets are only held where necessary so that capital receipts or rental income can be generated. This in turn reduces revenue costs of the operational property portfolio.

3.2 The capital programme, approved in February 2023, gave the best estimate at that time of the value of properties available for disposal in the four years to 2026-27, totalling £18.744m.

Table 5a: Disposals capital programme forecast

Financial Year	Property sales forecast £m
2023-24	3.678
2024-25	4.640
2025-26	6.641
2026-27	3.785
	18.744

The timing of future year sales is the most optimistic case and may slip into future years if sales completions are delayed.

- 3.3 The revised schedule for current year disposals is as follows:

Table 5b: Capital receipts and forecast use current financial year £m

Capital receipts 2023-24	£m
Capital receipts reserve brought forward	21.947
Loan repayments – subsidiaries forecast for year	6.356
Loan repayments – LIF loan repayments to date	1.131
Capital receipts to date	
Capital receipts in year	2.367
Capital Receipts forecasted for asset disposals subject to contract	3.178
Secured capital receipts to date	5.545
Potential current year farms sales	0.000
Potential current year non-farms sales	0.000
Potential development property sales	0.000
Potential capital receipts	0.000
Forecast available capital receipts	34.979
Forecast use of capital receipts	
Maximum flexible use of capital receipts to support transformation costs (ASC £2.25m and Strategy & Transformation £1.517)	4.517
Repayment of CIL supported borrowing and Capital Loans	3.987
To fund short-life assets – IT and VPE	17.959
Total Capital Receipts Utilisation	29.963
Capital Receipts Reserve to carry forward	5.061
Norwich Western Link Reserve	5.061
Remaining Capital Receipts Unutilised	0.000

- 3.4 As can be seen from this table, sufficient capital receipts have been secured to support the use of capital receipts to support transformation costs, short-life capital expenditure and the Norwich Western Link project, previously approved by County Council.
- 3.5 Further sales will contribute to the capital receipts reserve which can be used to reduce the external borrowing requirement, fund debt repayments, flexible use of capital receipts or to directly fund capital expenditure, thereby reducing the Capital Funding Requirement (CFR).

- 3.6 On 10 February 2021, the DLUHC announced that the flexibility granted to local authorities to utilise capital receipts to support transformation costs has been extended for a further 3 years. Table 5b includes £4.517m earmarked for this in 2023-24, of which £2.25m has been utilised within the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and a further £1.517m has been allocated to the Strategy & Transformation Programme.

4 New capital budget in the pipeline

- 4.1 The Norse Project One Norse Loan of £10m was authorised in September 2023 by the Council and as at P10 £2.7m has been drawn down. The first £1.7m drawn down at P8 was included in the prior month's report. The P10 capital programme has been adjusted to reflect the full £10m facility resulting in a net increase of £8.3m in the NCC Borrowing allocation.
- 4.2 On 29 November 2023 the Department of Transport issued the details of the additional £8.3bn funding for local highway maintenance for the next 10 years from 2023 to 2034. Norfolk County Council's share of this additional funding from the Road Resurfacing Fund amounts to £4.510m in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Over the course of the next 10 years the Council is set to receive an additional £141.2m. The Highways team will review incorporate this uplift in funding into the Local Transport Plan and provide an update to Cabinet in March 2024. This budget uplift has been included in the 2024-25 Capital Strategy and will be updated following ratification by full Council in February 2024.

ANNEX A: Movements in Capital Budgets – P10 January 2024

SR Department	SR SubCom	Funding Type	Project code	Project Description	Sum of 23-24 reduction	Sum of 23-24 increase	Sum of Reprofile 23-24	Sum of FY movement	Sum of Reprofile FY
Finance Directorate	Capital Programme Management	NCC Borrowing & Capital Receipts	CPM005	CPM005 : Cap loans facility subsidiary companies		1,000,000		7,300,000	
Finance Directorate	Capital Programme Management Total					1,000,000		7,300,000	
Community & Environmental Services (Directorate)	Highways	NCC Borrowing & Capital Receipts	PM9999	PM9999 : Other Highways Schemes Budget & Forecast			- 1,749,720		1,749,720
Community & Environmental Services (Directorate)	Highways Total						- 1,749,720		1,749,720
Community & Environmental Services (Directorate)	Offices	NCC Borrowing & Capital Receipts	CA2271	CA2271 : Childrens Homes Refurbishment Programme (20/21)			- 276,000		276,000
Community & Environmental Services (Directorate)	Offices Total						- 276,000		276,000
Overall Total movements					-	1,000,000	- 2,025,720	7,300,000	2,025,720

Cabinet

Item No: 16

Report Title: NCC Companies Business Plans

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Harvey Bullen, Director of Strategic Finance

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 9 November 2023

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

The County Council has created several companies to assist in the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives.

This report seeks Cabinet approval for each of the four main companies to operate within their 2024-25 Business Plan as approved by their respective Boards.

The Business Plans have already been reviewed by the NCC Companies Governance Panel at their meeting in February and are recommended for Cabinet consideration.

In order to aid good governance, Cabinet is responsible for reviewing and approving the 2024-25 Business Plans for Hethel Innovation Ltd, Independence Matters C.I.C, Norse Group Limited and Repton Property Developments Limited to ensure they reflect the aspirations of the shareholder.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Review and approve the Hethel Innovation Ltd 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix A.
2. Review and approve the Independence Matters C.I.C 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix B.

3. Review and approve the Norse Group Limited 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix C.
4. Review and approve the Repton Property Developments Limited 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix D.
5. Delegate to the Director of Strategic Finance to review and extend the term of the Repton Property Developments Limited loan facility currently in place with the County Council.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. The 2024-25 Business Plans of the Council's four most significant companies have been approved by their respective Boards.
- 1.2. The NCC Companies Governance Panel reviewed the four 2024-25 Business Plans at their meeting on 7 February 2024 and agreed that they should be recommended to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.3. In accordance with the Financial Regulations, the Business Plans for the period to 31 March 2025 are presented to Cabinet for final approval.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. Cabinet is asked to review and approve the four 2024-25 Business Plans set out in Appendices A-D of this report.
- 2.2. In addition, it is proposed that Cabinet delegate to the Director of Strategic Finance to review and extend the term of the Repton Property Developments Limited loan facility in place with the County Council. Further details are set out in the financial implications section of this report.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. Approval of the Business Plans will help to ensure that the directors of the four companies are clear on the shareholder's requirements, and Cabinet is fulfilling its responsibilities to monitor and receive reports on the Business Plan of a Norfolk County Council owned company.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1. Each company's board has approved a 2024-25 Business Plan and are seeking Cabinet's consent to operate the company in accordance with their Business Plan.

5. Alternative Options

5.1. NCC, as shareholder, could set alternative objectives for the company and request a revised Business Plan.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. These are set out in each attached Business Plan.

6.2. For Repton Property Development Limited, the Council will extend the loan facility from its current expiry date of 31 March 2025 to 31 March 2030. This will enable the company to continue to deliver against its long term strategy, including the anticipated payment of dividends to the Council, as set out in the appended Business Plan. The Repton Board has approved the 2024-25 Business Plan on the basis that the loan facility provided by the Council will be extended on terms which are consistent with the current facility in place, subject to compliance with subsidy control. There will be no increase in the maximum loan facility available to Repton.

7. Resource Implications

7.1. Staff:

None. Each company employ their own staff apart from Repton Property Developments Limited. Repton Property Developments Limited utilises NCC staff and reimburses NCC for the cost of their time.

7.2. Property:

None. Although the intention is for NCC to continue to sell surplus land at market value to Repton Property Developments Limited. The sites will then be developed, and the new homes sold to the public or a housing association.

7.3. IT:

None for NCC.

8. Other Implications

8.1. Legal Implications:

None for NCC.

8.2. Human Rights Implications:

No specific human rights implications have been identified. The directors of each company are responsible for ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

8.3. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

None. The directors of each company are responsible for ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

8.4. Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None.

8.5. Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

The directors of each company are responsible for discharging the health and safety duties of the company.

8.6. Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

No specific implications, although company boards are mindful of NCC's aspirations and expectations as articulated in shareholder directions to each company.

8.7. Any Other Implications:

None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1. If Cabinet decide not to approve the business plans, it runs the risk of causing operational delay and additional costs for each company. Each company has its own comprehensive risk register which is monitored and managed by the company directors.

10. Select Committee Comments

10.1. None.

11. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Review and approve the Hethel Innovation Ltd 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix A.
2. Review and approve the Independence Matters C.I.C 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix B.
3. Review and approve the Norse Group Limited 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix C.
4. Review and approve the Repton Property Developments Limited 2024-25 Business Plan in Appendix D.
5. Delegate to the Director of Strategic Finance to review and extend the term of the Repton Property Developments Limited loan facility currently in place with the County Council.

12. Background Papers

12.1. None.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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Email: titus.adam@norfolk.gov.uk



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Hethel Innovation Business Plan

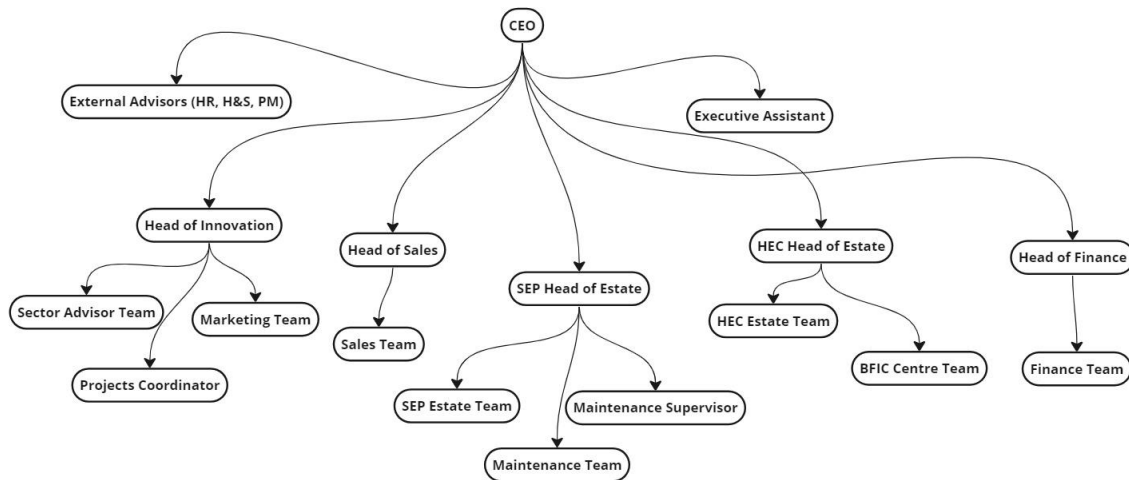
April 2024 – March 2025

With the new 2024 – 2029 strategy looking at the longer-term growth plans for Hethel Innovation, this business plan is a short-term focused outline of the activities to be undertaken within the 2024 – 2025 financial year. As this business plan has been developed alongside the strategy document, it is a more concise plan than previous years. This ensures the strategy document is the lead source of direction, whilst the business plan provides the KPIs, financial targets, and objectives to be delivered.

Objectives

- Sales & Marketing - Invest in our sales and marketing resources to ensure these functions are serving all income generating departments equally, including proactively sourcing and winning projects for the Innovation Team to deliver.
- Expand our presence - Secure work outside of Norfolk across a number of our product offerings, including our first out-of-county site, further site consultancy projects, and delivering business insight projects.
- Develop the 'Hethel Way' - Develop the standardised site community template and implement this across all HIL operated sites, adapting this to each individual sites' needs to grow an engaged and satisfied member community.
- Secure Phase 4 - Secure funding (equity, grant, and loan) to deliver the Phase 4 extension at Hethel Engineering Centre following planning approval.
- Review our business structure - Work with the Shareholder to agree the most effective business structure for Hethel Innovation, including a review of board positions and options for subsidiaries, which will deliver upon the 24-29 strategy.
- Improve the matrix structure:
 - Introduce a centralised Maintenance Team to serve all sites, sitting under the responsibility of the SEP Head of Estate.
 - Incorporate the BFIC Centre Management as a responsibility of the HEC Head of Estate.

- Review the responsibilities of the Innovation Advisors to align them to the sector development focus of the 24-29 strategy.



Key Performance Indicators

Our KPIs focus the departments on shared goals to achieve by working together. They drive us towards delivering economic outputs and being financially stable. This year, we will:

- Deliver economic growth through:
 - 46 new jobs across our sites
 - £2.2m additional GVA
 - 5 start-ups supported
 - 20 businesses upskilled
 - 6 NPPS supported
- Increase the percentage of actively engaged community members to 30% at Hethel Engineering Centre, 30% at Broadland Food Innovation Centre, and 15% at Scottow Enterprise park.
 - Qualified through the percentage of members at each site who have attended an event, submitted survey responses, or had a member check in.
- Establish a baseline to measure Average Customer Satisfaction
- Average occupancy rate of 85% at Scottow Enterprise Park and 98% at Hethel Engineering Centre (lettable space)
- Maintain the level of overdue debtors below 10% of turnover and bad debt to 4% of annual turnover.
- Keep staff turnover below 10% across all HIL departments.
- Completion of the ISO 9001, 14001, and 45001 audits achieving no major non-conformances and no more than 5 minor non-conformances.
- Completion of the NAS assessment with only low priority findings raised.

Financial Overview

HIL's cash and profit budget should both be considered in a forward assessment of the business' expected performance for the year, as HIL has a number of significant non-cash profit items (loan interest, grant income associated with the construction of HEC Phase 3, and depreciation), as well as significant cash items which do not appear in HIL's P&L (loan repayments and capital works at HEC).

2024/2025 Cash Budget

Operating cashflows	£'000
Operating inflows	
Rent and recharges	3,610
Other site income	125
Innovation	262
	3,997
Operating outflows	
Salaries	(1,288)
Premises direct costs	(1,707)
Other overheads	(648)
	(3,642)
VAT – net inflow	40
Net operating cashflows	395
Capital outflows	
Loan payments	(443)
Plant and machinery	(70)
	(513)
Net outflow before financing	(118)
Net financing – short term facility	50
Net outflow after financing	(68)
Cash position B/F	190
Cash position C/F	122

2024/2025 P&L Budget

Revenue	£000
Rent and recharges	3,681
Other site income	127
Innovation	265
	4,073
Expenditure	
Salaries	(1,291)
Premises direct costs	(1,710)
Other overheads	(645)
	(3,646)
Other income including grant income	158
Interest payable	(306)
Profit Before Tax	279

Comments on profit and cash performance:

- Forecast accounting profit stands at £279k, with circa 50% of these profits generated in the final 3 months of the financial year (January-March 2025), once units formerly occupied by the major former tenant who became insolvent are then re-let;
- The net cash movement in the year is a net £118k outflow. Due to timing differences between cash and profit movements cash profit from trading in the financial year (including VAT net movements) is forecast to be £395k, which offsets expected loan and capital expenditure of £513k (loan payments of £443k and capex of £70k).
- A small net drawdown of £50k from the short-term credit facility is therefore expected to be required by the end of the financial year to maintain HIL's cash buffer of more than £100k (required to fund short term fluctuations in operating capital requirements).

Budget – Key Assumptions

- Tenancy income (the largest line in the P&L) has been assessed on a line-by-line basis, referring to tenant lease status and the best available information the HIL team.
- To take account of 'unknown unknowns' of HIL's core tenancy cycle, the total number of tenant departures has been assessed on a unit category basis, to ensure the estimate of related lost income and expenditure arising is comparable to previous years.

- Other income and cost items have been incorporated using a hierarchy of information quality. In descending order: contracted agreed income and costs; direct market information; predicted income and costs based on historic usage, adjusted for inflation.
- In response to the insolvency of a major tenant, HIL has over the last few months modelled a range of cost-saving measures as well as options for support from its shareholder. The budget now incorporates a combination of cost saving and support measures (see next section).

Tenant Insolvency

The above financial overview accounts for the impact of the failure of a large strategic tenant. Without significant support measures their failure would have a significant impact on HIL's financial position and its longer term objectives.

In response to normal credit control escalation procedures HIL became aware of the likely insolvency at an early stage, which gave us an opportunity to model likely scenarios and plan mitigation. 3 scenarios were modelled: no cost mitigation and no reletting in 23/24 and 24/25, cost mitigation and no reletting in 23/24 and 24/25, and finally cost mitigation and reletting across 23/24 and 24/25. This modelling exercise has informed the budget for 24/25, with the cost mitigation and reletting scenario being input into the final budget.

Specifically, the financial impact which was calculated included:

- £190k has been removed from the tenancy income for the foregone rent this business would have paid.
- £7k has been removed from other site income for the foregone utilities and site hire this business would have paid.
- £41k has been added to our rates expense for the additional liability the units will incur whilst unoccupied, payable by HIL.
- £30k has been added to our dilapidations expense for the works HIL will have to finance on the units as part of the reletting programme.

To address these serious financial and strategic consequences the HIL management team prepared a stringent programme of mitigating actions, both to improve our income and reduce our costs, that will ensure HIL can lessen the impact of this business failure. The shareholder has subsequently proposed support measures which may enable HIL to avoid the worst of these mitigating actions; however HIL management will keep the performance of HIL under regular review and implement these mitigating actions if required.

Independence Matters

'the life you choose...'

Independence Matters Group Business Plan 2024-25



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1: Executive Summary

This document sets out the Business Plan for the Independence Matters Group (IMG) for the next twelve months to 31 March 2025, linked to our Group Strategic Ambitions for 2020-25 and the Norfolk County Council (NCC) Commissioning Statement for Independence Matters Group. It provides the group's vision and purpose, an overview of the two care companies, current ownership, governance arrangements, objectives, and the financial forecasts and risks that sit behind the plan.

Summer 2023 saw Independence Matters (IM) celebrate 10 years of trading and Home Support Matters (HSM) 5 years, and we are proud of all that has been achieved during that time. In 2023, Independence Matters became a wholly owned (Teckal compliant) company of the Council and over 80% of its activity must be commissioned with the council, as its sole shareholder. We are working beside commissioner colleagues to explore what this means, and to understand how the two care companies can support with innovation in the marketplace, become change agents and support with market solutions.

Whilst 2023-24 felt much more like business as usual, with Covid restrictions on the care sector lifting, coming out of the pandemic years has been challenging. We are now seeing the true costs of delivering care again, set against an unfavourable economic climate of rising operational costs, static government funding levels, and lower inflationary contract uplifts. We cannot pass the increased costs through to our customers.

The financial forecast for FY25 is unstable and fluctuating. IMG is currently predicting a deficit budget, given the previous two year's higher than predicted and funded inflation and the unexpected 10% rise in the National Minimum Wage in 2024. This coupled with the commercial challenge of potential funding changes, including the shift from our Independence Matters block contract to frameworks and spot purchasing, means that group financial viability and sustainability are the focus. There is challenge and risk in the transitional financial arrangements, as we re-base the contract delivery hours and re-size the overall business, reviewing all our service offers and central overhead costs. We need to mitigate inflation, control expenses, manage cashflow and serve our customers well, whilst ensuring that our quality of support does not suffer.

In FY24 to support with this transition, IM made a significant investment into a revised management structure to support frontline operations through the proposed changes to the way in which our services are commissioned and procured and build in capacity for development and growth. The service contracts will require close monitoring regarding outcomes for customers, quality of services and value for money, to ensure that all income is recovered, and opportunities maximised, ensuring IM remains a viable business as we move forward into the next decade of trading.

We operate in a regulated sector and IMG has also invested into its quality, training, and co-production. We are committed to the principles of ethical commissioning and achieving 'Good' Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings, providing the 'right support, right care and the right culture.' This comes at a price which should be absorbed into our unit rates; however, the challenge that we have is that framework and contract prices are set and despite inflationary increases, some contracts are becoming

unsustainable and loss making for IMG. We are an ethical employer and provider and will not compromise on our values which support the service to our customers and families and ensure that we can employ and support, enthusiastic, well-trained colleagues, promoting social care as a great career choice. At the time of authoring this report, our employee churn in the previous 3 months was 1.5%.

Despite the financial operating challenges, FY25 is a further year of transformation and consolidation, investing from our reserves, as we move towards becoming a digitally enabled organisation and prepare our next 5-year business plan, which takes us to the end of the IMG/NCC Partnership Agreement in 2029. Investment in technology will enable us to manage expenses within our control. Our aim is to automate as many routine tasks as possible to provide meaningful work for our teams and focus resources towards supporting customers better.

IMG have a strong and collaborative working relationship with NCC commissioners through its monthly Performance and Transformation Boards, and the Annual Steering Group. We want to ensure that our shareholders receive value and quality for their investment and support.

We have received the NCC Commissioning Statement, which further develops the joint vision commitments agreed in 2022 and provides clarity on requirements for the two care companies. The contents have been considered whilst setting this year's objectives and will be explored whilst IMG formulate its longer-term business plan, driving the business towards a clear future ambition, underpinned by strategic growth, finance and workforce plans.

The statement reflects the Council's vision and the Adult Social Services (ASSD (Adult Social Services Department)) market position statement (MPS), for the citizens of Norfolk, to have choice and control about where they live and the support they need to live independently for longer. IMG values, vision and ambitions are aligned to this. We are aware of the demographics and service demands that a large rural county like Norfolk brings. More people need to be supported to stay at home for longer and people's needs are becoming increasingly more complex to support.

IMG will actively engage in the NCC Promoting Independence through a Home First Approach and ASSD will proactively engage IMG in the development/implementation of strategy. For HSM, their focus in FY25 will be the mobilisation of the Principal Provider Home Care Contract in the East and Northern Villages. The continuing challenge for home care providers is the fluctuating customer base associated with the older people's marketplace and commissioning where changes to contracts or delivery hours have a significant impact on income and can quickly destabilise the business model, its infrastructure and sustainability.

Both care companies require a volume of delivery hours to ensure that they are viable.

If stable, the IMG can provide the infrastructure to support growth of care and resilient capacity in the marketplace which includes the development of new services in line with Adult Social Services Department's (ASSD) commissioning priorities, however, there are estate resource and capacity implications to this, which need investing in.

Our IMG ambition remains to be exemplars of best practice, and, doing the right things the right way continues to drive us forward, building resilience for the future.

IMG was set up in 2013, to deliver the following key objectives:

- core care values in the existing services, meeting customer, carer, and parent-carer expectations for community living, fulfilled independent lives and employment opportunities.
- security and risk management of these services to ensure that customers have consistent quality and continuity of services.
- a strong partnership with the County Council, with governance and accountability arrangements which include NCC Officer representation at Board level.
- employee engagement and seats at Board level
- co-production with our stakeholders (customers and family carers) and seats at Board level
- good relationships and partnerships with voluntary and community groups, supporting the Connecting Communities work.

In addition to this the IMG aims to:

- provide the commercial environment and infrastructure to develop new services, innovation and support the principle of market resilience and failures.

Commissioners and IMG acting together:

- provide a transformation and market development route for both care companies, whilst enabling the Council to retain control through 100% share ownership.
- balance running the care companies like a constituent of a group business and a 'department' of NCC.

2: Group Purpose

Group Vision, Mission and Values



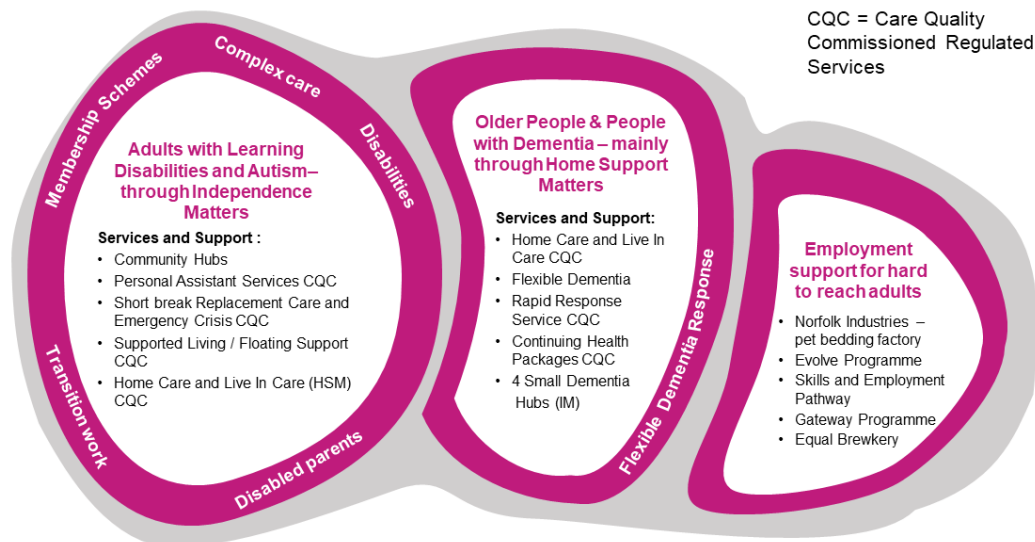
Our approach is based on three interdependent themes **'Social Purpose, Inclusive Governance and Financial Sustainability.'**

We want a future where people with learning or physical disabilities, autism, associated mental health problems, older people and people with dementia and their carers have equitable access to a mix of services to create a support package that suits their individual needs and aspirations, enabling them to remain as independent as they wish to within their own homes and communities.

The purpose for our companies is based on: Enablement + Prevention = Independence, through providing community-based, in-home, and replacement care solutions. By offering flexible packages of support we enable independent lifestyle choices, preventing people and their families/carers from becoming isolated, lonely, and dependent.

3: Operational Overview

Beneficiaries – Customer Groups



3.1 Independence Matters (IM)

Independence Matters is a provider of support and enablement services for adults with learning disabilities, autism, dementia and associated physical disabilities and mental health problems through a variety of service lines; Day Opportunities, Personal Assistant Support, Replacement Care, Supported Living, Floating Support Services and Sheltered Employment. We are a community-based business, serving the whole of Norfolk. We support people to play an active part in their local communities and to access the wide range of opportunities and facilities available to them.

Independence Matters Contracts

Strategic Partnership Agreement and Service Category Contracts



Short Break Replacement Care Support: CQC registered bed-based replacement care services provide support for family carers to enable them to have time away, so that they can continue with their caring responsibilities. Operating from three specially

designed NCC premises, where we hold Tenancies at Will, in Sprowston, Kings Lynn and Repps with Bastwick. Replacement care support is also available to individuals and families in times of crisis such as illness or other emergency situations under Safeguarding and Adult Protection Placements. The Lodges also provide accommodation for people discharged from hospital or transitioning to more independent living.

Personal Assistant/Community Support: CQC Registered 24/7 support packages to individuals enabling people to lead active lives in their own communities, promoting social inclusion and access to opportunities and facilities in the community, and supporting people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. This can include support to get out with friends, taking up hobbies, being a volunteer, going on holiday, transitioning to more independent living. The service can also offer practical support with daily tasks into the home such as assistance with personal care, shopping and preparing meals. Support includes responding to people in times of crisis and illness and end of life care.

Community Hub Day Opportunities Services: Teams working across eleven building based NCC resources with Tenancies at Will, offer a range of day opportunity activities, opportunities for learning (Gateway Award Programme), information, and guidance to people and their families. Making links and partnerships with the community and local groups and businesses. This service provides daily replacement care and is also available to families in times of crisis such as illness or other emergency situations. There are four specialist **dementia support** services.

Supported Living and Floating Support Service: CQC registered support for forty people living in tenanted schemes across the County. In addition, we provide light touch 'floating support' to people in the community. This support is designed to enable people to live independently for as long as possible at home. We offer practical advice on matters such as paying bills, tenancy issues, staying safe and medication. This support can be on-going, in times of crisis or when there are difficulties with finances and other arrangements. Our services are flexible and tailored to the specific needs of the individual from an hour a week to round the clock support, seven days a week.

Norfolk Industries for Disabled People: The sheltered NCC workshop/factory environment manufactures pet bedding. It is a small business with half the paid workforce comprising of employees with disabilities. The company manufactures pet bedding products by recycling waste material, selling to the British market and exporting products into Europe. Norfolk Industries offers Employment Skills and Work Placement opportunities through its EVOLVE and Gateway Award programmes and offers volunteering opportunities, enabling people to gain skills towards employment.

The Equal Brewery; We are aligned to a small social enterprise, which brews beer and bakes artisan bread. It is run by volunteers and offers our Gateway Award programme. The aim is to sell the beer and create paid jobs. It is currently looking for new premises for 2024.

IM's focus is to provide services and support to FACS (fair access to care services) eligible people in Norfolk through the commissioned marketplace. All services are available to people who fund their own care alongside people who are eligible for social

or health care on Personal Budgets or Continuing Health Care Budgets. There is little opportunity for private paying customers within the Learning Disabled & Autism marketplace, from a commercial perspective.

Small additional income streams come from:

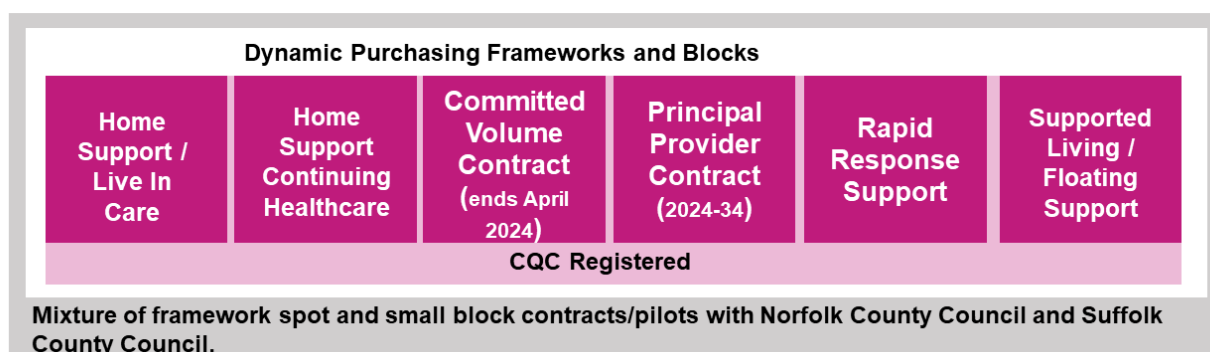
- The NHS (National Health Service) via Continuing Health Care monies.
- Older people whose access to a day care service is self-funded.
- External income generated through other activities including Norfolk Industries, a sheltered workshop which manufactures pet bedding from wastepaper.
- Extended use of existing premises, such as sessional hire of rooms to community groups and like-minded voluntary organisations.

3.2 Home Support Matters (HSM)

Home Support Matters delivers a wide range of home and specialist care services across Norfolk and the Waveney Valley region of Suffolk. We provide domiciliary care, live-in care, reablement care for those recovering from illness or injury, care for the elderly, expert clinical care with nurse oversight, crisis support, flexible support for people with dementia and supported living/floating support for people with disabilities. All services are CQC Registered.

Home Support Matters Contracts

Service Contracts – no large block agreement



Home Care; Provides ongoing support for individuals who want to remain in their own homes within their local community. Care provision is provided around the persons needs and routines. Many people are opting for care at home because it puts them back in control of the support they receive. With one-to-one personal support, ranging from 30 minutes a week to four visits a day or overnight support, our care plans are designed around the individual. IM have been awarded the **Principal Provider** contract for the East and Northern villages, which will be subcontracted to HSM and mobilises from April 2024.

Individuals can also opt for a live-in care worker at home. Our **live-in, care at home** offers a valuable source of companionship. Seeing a familiar face every day, brings comfort, and a feeling of safety and friendship.

Continuing Health Care; Offering continuing health care home support to provide care for patients with a primary health care need who are eligible for NHS CHC funding. This enables patients to achieve the best possible quality of life, through working with other health services, especially GP primary medical services, specialist palliative care services, mental health, learning disabilities and community social care. Our continuing health care patients are case managed by a Registered Nurse.

Committed Hours Volume Service; Provides, unplanned, short term, same day home support for a limited duration across the Norwich area 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with the aim of transitioning the person to a Home Care package or return to full independence with no long-term package required. This is person-centred, enabling support in the person's home, which is focused on stabilising and motivating the individual, so they can live safely and independently again. This block contract ends on the 31st of March 2024

Flexible Dementia Service; Provides support to enable people with dementia in a crisis or an apparent or predicted deteriorating situation to remain living at home. The service provides a specialist intermediate care and support service for people with dementia that is focussed on reablement and sustaining people's capacity to maintain their independence. The support can offer same day, short-term reablement support, working closely with Dementia Intensive Support services, other reablement and other Admission Prevention services. Consideration of needs and potential for Assistive Technology/Telecare, are a central part of the service to support the person/family carer.

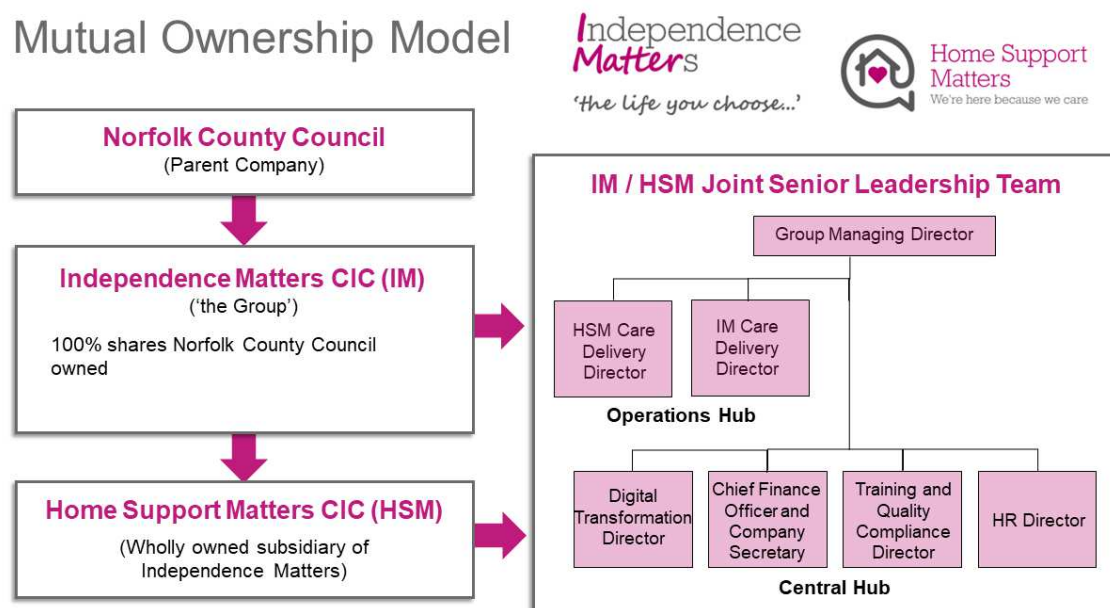
Rapid Response; This service delivers an unplanned rapid response night sitting service that supports customers to remain in their own home and reduces the need for admissions to hospital or a care home while the individuals normal care is unavailable. The unplanned night sitting service is arranged by the Emergency Duty Team daily in accordance with the customer's needs. Deployment of the team is across the county of Norfolk.

Supported accommodation offers an alternative to residential care and empowers individuals to choose the right amount of support - how and when they need it - so that they can lead an enriching and fulfilling life. **Supported living** – Individuals can choose to live independently in their own home with as much or as little support as they need **Shared living** – We support individuals who might want to live independently too but are not yet ready to live alone. Individuals have their own space but benefit from socialising with other like-minded people, sharing the communal spaces and sharing the costs of household bills.

HSM's key focus is to provide services and support to FACS eligible people through the commissioned marketplace. Our services are available to people who fund their own care privately, however, this makes up a small percentage of HSM business.

4: Group Ownership

Mutual Ownership Model



Independence Matters is a **Community Interest Company (CIC)** limited by shares. The CIC ensures that assets are locked within the company and any profits (surplus) are retained by the CIC and reinvested in community benefits and the people that we serve.

Independence Matters has been a wholly owned Teckal compliant subsidiary company of Norfolk County Council since April 1st, 2023, having transferred its 51% employee-owned shares back to the council. Articles of Association have been amended along with Board membership to reflect the change in shareholder ownership.

The ten-year **Partnership Agreement** between NCC and IM signed in 2019, did not alter due to the change in share ownership and remains in place. It is a framework to:

- Manage how additional costs incurred by the Enterprise as a result of employing staff from the Council will be dealt with. This includes a trajectory showing the anticipated reduction of Legacy Costs over time.
- Manage how both Parties will work together collaboratively to achieve the desired transformation of the estate and deliver good services for the future which meet Norfolk changing needs.

Home Support Matters is a wholly owned subsidiary of Independence Matters.

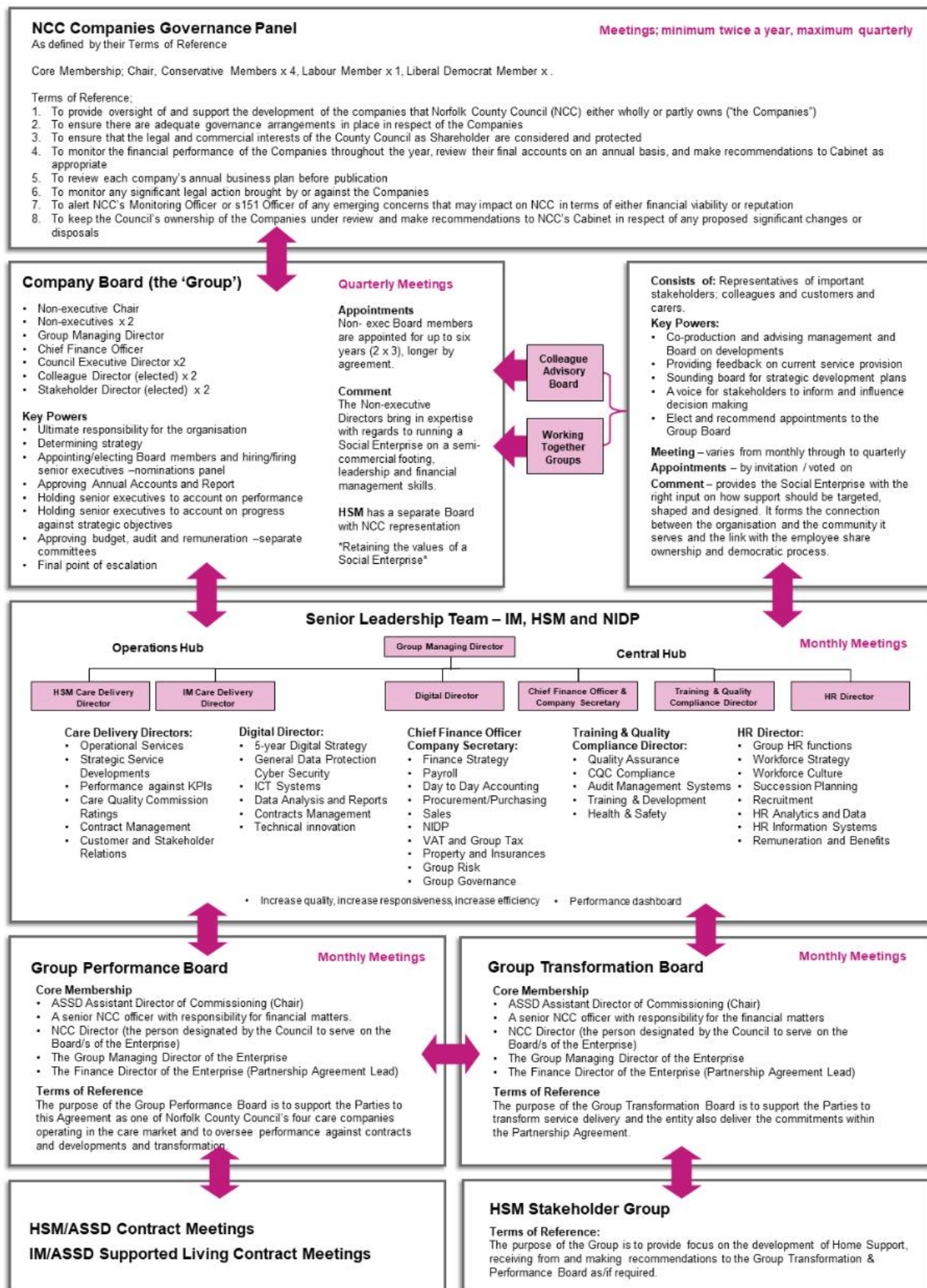
Norfolk Industries (NI) is a Social Business within IM providing paid employment for people with disabilities and supporting employment and work preparedness opportunities for hard-to-reach groups.

The IMG is well placed to align to the NCC vision for the citizens of Norfolk, as outlined in the Commissioning statement, upholding the values, cementing collaborative working, supporting the ASSD commissioning priorities and developing growth opportunities.

DRAFT

5: Group Governance

Governance Reporting Structure



Leadership and governance are through a formal **IM Group Board** of Non-Executive, IM Executive Directors and NCC Directors, a **Group Performance Board** comprising of the Council and IM representatives, which together, set the group's strategic direction and oversee the performance of the two care companies. **HSM** has a separate Board, which mirrors the IM one, and its contracts are monitored through the relevant contract review meetings. The IM Group Board meets quarterly, with IM Group Board monthly catch ups in between. We have an Annual Strategy Day, where we look at medium to long term plans. The Group Performance Board meets monthly.

Feeding into the IM Group Board are the **Audit and Risk Committee**, **Remuneration Committee**, and a **Nominations** Panel.

Colleague and **Stakeholder Advisory Boards** ensure customers, carers and colleagues have a voice and influence in the democratic governance of IM and co-production. These Boards provide input on how current and new services could be shaped and developed. Elected Colleague and Stakeholder Directors have seats on the Company Board. These Boards and Directors form the connection between the company and the community of people it serves and are an important part of the governance structure.

Under the NCC/IMG Partnership Agreement (2019-2029) IM and HSM work in a strategic partnership with NCC commissioners through a monthly **Transformation Board** to ensure that we maximise the impacts for the existing customers we serve and explore gaps in the care market, support delivery of the commissioning intentions of NCC ASSD and deliver the objectives of the partnership agreement.

6. Business Objectives

6.1 Group Ambitions 2020-2025

The Future Matters: Group Strategic Ambitions 2020-2025

Supporting independence and to *'live the life you choose...'* through reliable and innovative support, which is: well led, safe, caring, effective and responsive

Our Priorities



Quality Matters



Money Matters



Technology and Working SMARTER Matters



Co-Production and Outcomes Matter



Colleagues Matter



Growth and Innovation Matters

Quality Matters



This means:

- Being a safe social care provider.
- Achieving CQC rating of 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.
- Being a reflective and learning organisation.
- Responding to changing regulations.
- Measuring our social impact and customer outcomes.

To achieve this we will:

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to implement our ten point Quality Assurance Framework.
- Deliver service improvement plans to support CQC actions and requirements.
- Embed the Access Quality Compliance Tool.
- Monitor trends across the Group and be proactive in responding and sharing learning.
- Collect and collate qualitative data, asking customers how they feel about our support to monitor impact and outcomes.

Colleagues Matter



This means:

- More people will recommend us a 'Place to work' and a 'Place for care' each year.
- Supporting colleagues to have rewarding, productive and fulfilling careers
- Recruiting and retaining talented people
- Deliver blended training, coaching and talent development plans.

To achieve this we will:

- Focus on wellbeing; mental and physical health.
- Celebrate and implement a Reward and Recognition Strategy.
- Implement a Leadership Behaviours Framework.
- Promote the Colleague Advisory Board and Colleague Director roles.
- Upskill colleagues to work SMARTER and be confident to use Information Management Technology.
- Celebrate and encourage diversity.

Co-Production and Outcomes Matter



This means:

- Co-Production and stakeholders are at the heart of everything we do.
- Listening to our customers and families and responding to their needs.
- Measuring and improving customer and carer experience and satisfaction.

To achieve this we will:

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement.
- Ensure that customers and families are central to support planning and reviews.
- Co-design an Involvement and Participation Strategy.
- Develop a 'Working Together Matters' booklet about involvement opportunities.
- Develop support and services based upon customer behaviours after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Technology and Working SMARTER Matter



This means:

- Process efficiency, reducing costs and overheads.
- Developing and implementing standard operating models to eliminate unwarranted variation.
- Only doing what adds value to the customer journey and Group mission and purpose
- Not allowing data to manage us.

To achieve this we will:

- Invest in IMT equipment, software, systems and infrastructure; mobile, social and cloud.
- Deliver meaningful and accurate data to drive outcomes and decision making.
- Review and implement a streamlined Group Risk Matrix.
- Standardise our suite of reporting documents across the Group and make use of InfoGraph software.
- Maximise use of existing systems, review and/or update/replace.

Money Matters



This means:

- Improved financial performance year on year and cashflow monitoring.
- Operational efficiency and workforce productivity to reduce cost base.
- Working with Norfolk County Council Transformation and Performance Boards.

To achieve this we will:

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to ensure the delivery of the Finance Business Plan.
- Continue SMARTER ways of working post Covid-19 with investment into technology and flexible workspaces.
- Review Legal and Governance Structures to ensure they are 'fit for purpose'.
- Deliver under the joint NCC/IM Finance workstream as part of the Transformation Plan.

Growth and Innovation Matters



This means:

- Organic growth.
- Scaling up business; growth and market penetration.
- Takeovers and mergers.
- Innovation and product development.

To achieve this we will:

- Monitor the marketplace we operate in.
- Do more of what we are good at.
- Avoid 'Mission Creep'; doing what we are not good at.
- Work with NCC and SCC Commissioners to align growth with commissioning ambitions.
- Scale up both care companies to take on new business.
- Grow Norfolk Industries employment and work placement opportunities.
- Invest in services, buildings and infrastructure.

Our services will be:

- **Evidence-based** and of the highest quality.
- **Highly reliable**: high quality whatever the day of the week or hour of the day.
- **At scale**: creating benefits for people through best practice.
- **Trusted**: providing safe, effective and compassionate support.
- **Connected**: seamlessly delivering what matters most to people and communities.
- **Creative**: continuously innovating and improving support and services.

As a Group the overarching Business Objectives up to 2025, cover.

Quality and Co-production Matters; to improve customer and carer experience and satisfaction through ensuring that services and support are of a high quality with a minimum of 'Good' for all IMG Care Quality Commissioned (CQC) Services. Working transparently with NCC Integrated Quality Service colleagues to ensure we deliver safe services and support under Provider Assurance Market Management Solution (PAMMS). Strive for 'Outstanding' rated services. Listen to our users' voices as the experts-by-experience, through our Working Together Groups.

Money Matters; to ensure that our income covers all base and fixed/variable overhead costs with the sole purpose of improving the customer offer. Short term this is about financial sustainability, for both companies in the turbulent economic landscape. Both companies require a volume of delivery hours to be viable. Re-basing our service offer and right sizing the business. Providing quality value for money and doing good ethical business.

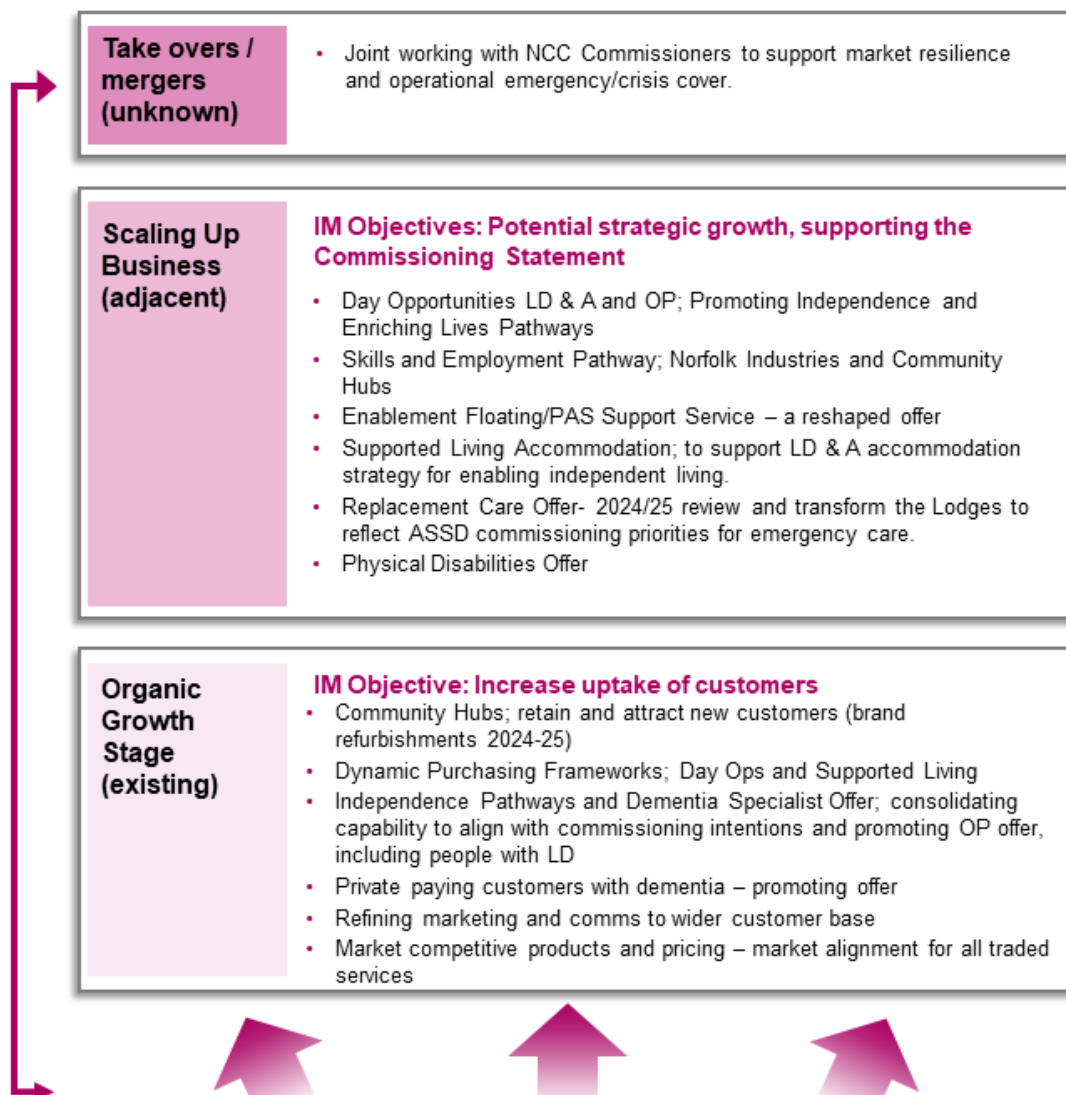
Colleagues Matter; to ensure that employees feel valued and supported through paying competitive market salaries and rates providing an ethical remuneration and recognition package. Offer fair and anti-discriminatory employment practices, flexible working arrangements, safe and healthy working environments and access to high quality training, skills development, and mentoring opportunities for professional growth. Promoting social care as an excellent career choice through strong leadership and an empowering workplace culture.

Technology and working SMARTER; recognising that the world is becoming more digitalised, ensuring that the group becomes digitally enabled, invests in ICT equipment for employees and maximises and innovates the use of Assistive Technologies for customers to improve their experience. Ensuring that data and data production does not become an internal industry and distraction. Be clear about what data the group is producing/collating, why and who for to ensure that it is necessary. Ensure that the group adhere to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and are Cyber security conscious.

Growth and Innovation Matters; to use any surplus to strengthen the businesses and reinvest into current service offers and the care estate to keep improving the brand and reputation with our existing customer base. To grow current capacity, respond to tender opportunities and develop new service solutions to meet changing customer and market demand, working in partnership with NCC commissioning colleagues.

In the diagrams below, we have mapped for both care companies where we see the growth opportunities are, ensuring that they support the NCC vision and the principles of the commissioning statement.

Independence Matters; Origins of Growth 2024-2029



W A R M I N G U P

Leads to networking and raising the profile of Core Offer

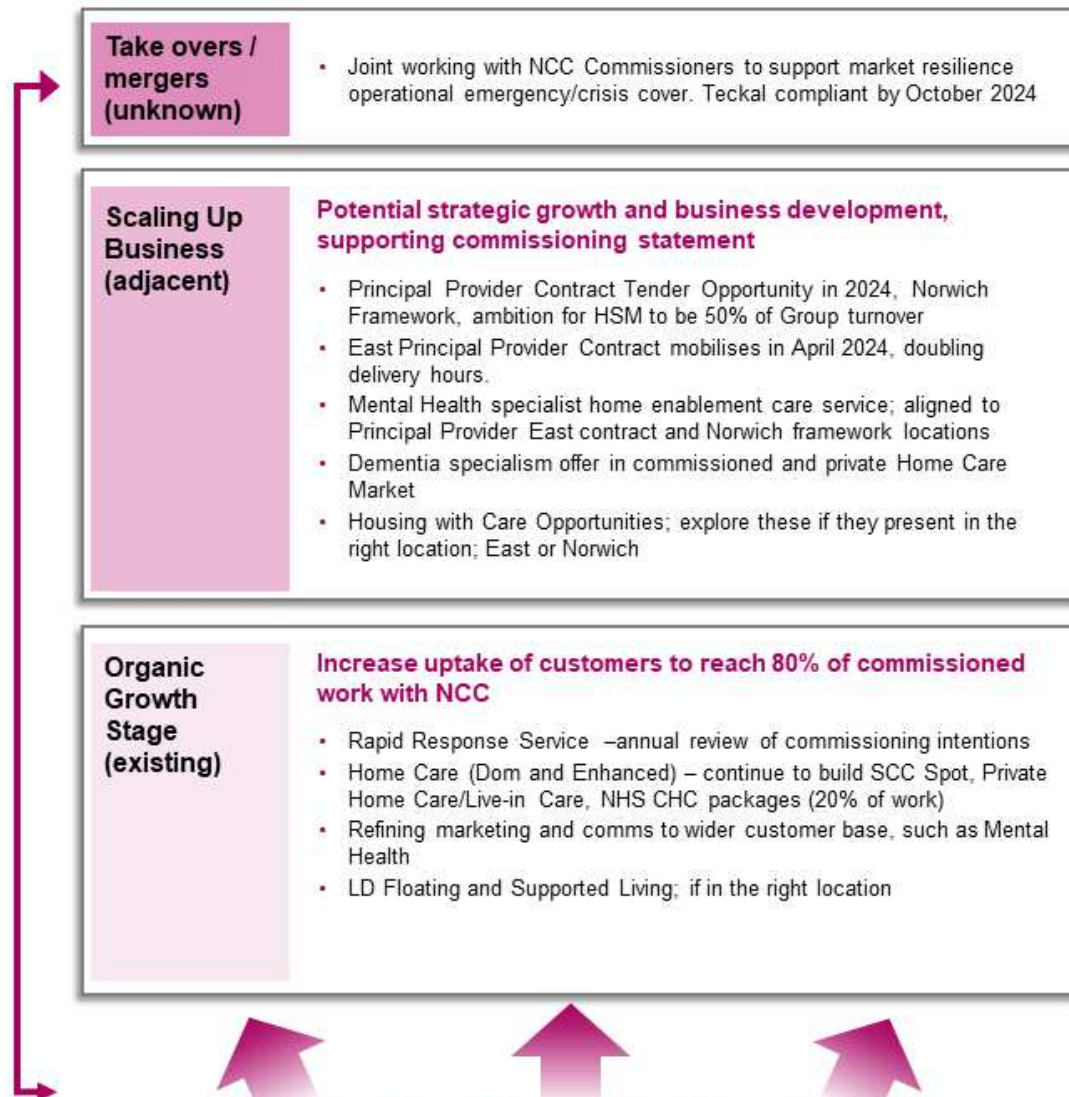
NCC Strategic and Local Commissioners / Providers Forums and Networks / Social Media and Brand Awareness



IM Objective: Community-based Support and Home Solutions

Transformed services, operational efficiencies and continual business development

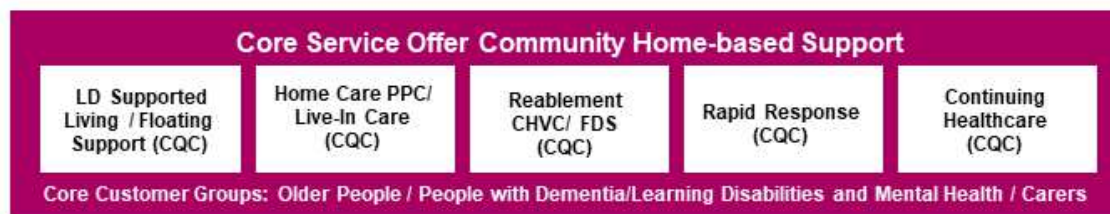
Home Support Matters; Origins of Growth 2024-2029



W A R M I N G U P

Leads to networking and raising the profile of Core Offer

NCC and SCC Strategic and Local Commissioners / Care Providers Forums and Networks / Social Media and Brand Awareness



HSM Objective: Home Solutions and Community-based Support

Operational efficiencies and continual business process improvements

6.2 Group Objectives 2024-25

Quality and Co-production Matters;

- Requires 100% of CQC and Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) ratings to be Good if inspected in 2024 (IM)
- Requires 85% of Good PAMMS ratings for non-CQC registered services (IM)
- Requires Good CQC rating if inspected in 2024. Norfolk CQC Registration (HSM)
- Ethical Commissioning; play a key part with NCC in designing and delivering care principles to ensure that the Norfolk's Ethical Vision is delivered (IMG)
- Embedding Involvement and Co-Production Strategy; Easy Read documents produced with the Working Together Groups (IM)
- Stakeholders to be involved in training/audit and recognised and rewarded for work via a payment structure to support the Employment Skills Pathway (IM)
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS); develop an accessible statement of policy and practice commitment, with the Working Together Groups, for colleagues, customers, and carers (IMG)
- Review PBS training to align to contract requirements, embedding PBS throughout the organisation (IMG)
- Quality Compliance and Training Director to be the Executive Team/Board PBS lead (IMG)
- Review all training requirements, against essential and desirable criteria, to ensure that efficiencies are driven in line with the financial business plan (IMG)
- Review our Hub care estate and work with NCC on the property maintenance deficit and investing into the long-term fabric of buildings to ensure that they provide a safe, adapted, and appropriate environment to deliver all 3 Day Opportunities Pathways and support customers with the most complex learning disability and physical needs (IM)
- Continued investment into furnishings and fixtures to enhance customer and colleagues' environments as required. Work with NCC H&S colleagues to identify and put business cases forward to ensure that the aging care estate is maintained and safe for customers (IM)

Money Matters;

- Managed financial transition of the block contract to frameworks/spot funding and controlling costs in 2024; move to new provider frameworks, new service specifications and contractual terms and conditions (IM)
- Provision for subsidy and legacy control costs (IM)
- Balance the budget. Financial strategy to reverse substantial FY25 budget deficit. (IMG)
- Financial due diligence on current Supported Living Schemes (52 tenancies) and proposed tenders to reduce/reverse the FY25 budget deficit and return to breakeven/surplus. (IMG)

- Develop Financial Strategy to underpin 5-year Business Plan, reviewing all costs, reflecting re-based contracts, right-sized overhead costs, and re-engineering business processes where possible (IMG)
- VAT Review; review with NCC to include vat-able services considering the change in share ownership and Group VAT status (IM)
- Comply with the submission of HMRC Tax returns now a wholly owned subsidiary (IMG)
- Block Contract Transition; support Heads of Service with financial contract monitoring (IM)
- Ensure 80% overall contract activity and income is commissioned by NCC (IMG)

Colleagues Matter;

- Employee Benefit Package and Retention; modern pay and reward strategy for our colleagues to support with recruitment and retention, ensuring our benefits are at the upper quartile of the market if affordable (IMG)
- Workforce Strategy to underpin the 5-year Business Plan (IMG)
- Organisational Transformation, support required for workforce transformation as IM transitions from block contract to service category frameworks and re-bases its contract delivery hours and right sizes its central functions (IMG/IM)
- Organisational Transformation, support required for workforce transformation as HSM mobilises the Principal Provider Contract, doubling home care delivery hours requiring substantial increase in workforce capacity (HSM)
- SMARTER ways of working; upskill colleagues with training and advice and guidance to support the digitalisation strategy (IMG)
- Career Pathways and Succession Planning to support rising stars and succession planning for key positions (IMG)

Technology and working SMARTER Matters;

- Digitalisation Strategy and 4-year roadmap, requires investment in a digital team for IMG to become a digitally enabled organisation, some short term, some longer-term roles (IMG)
- Digital Inductions; training and guides (IMG)
- Centralised Systems Administration, including IT asset management and investment in IT kit for colleagues to enable the digitalisation programme (IMG)
- Centralise Data and Information Security (IMG)
- Strengthen relationships with NCC ICT (IMG)
- HSM Principal Provider, support with systems and user onboarding (HSM)
- eCare Plan software; linked to roadmap, there may be different solutions for the two care companies. (IMG)
- Internal Communications; Intranet transfer to SharePoint and Communication Strategy (IMG)

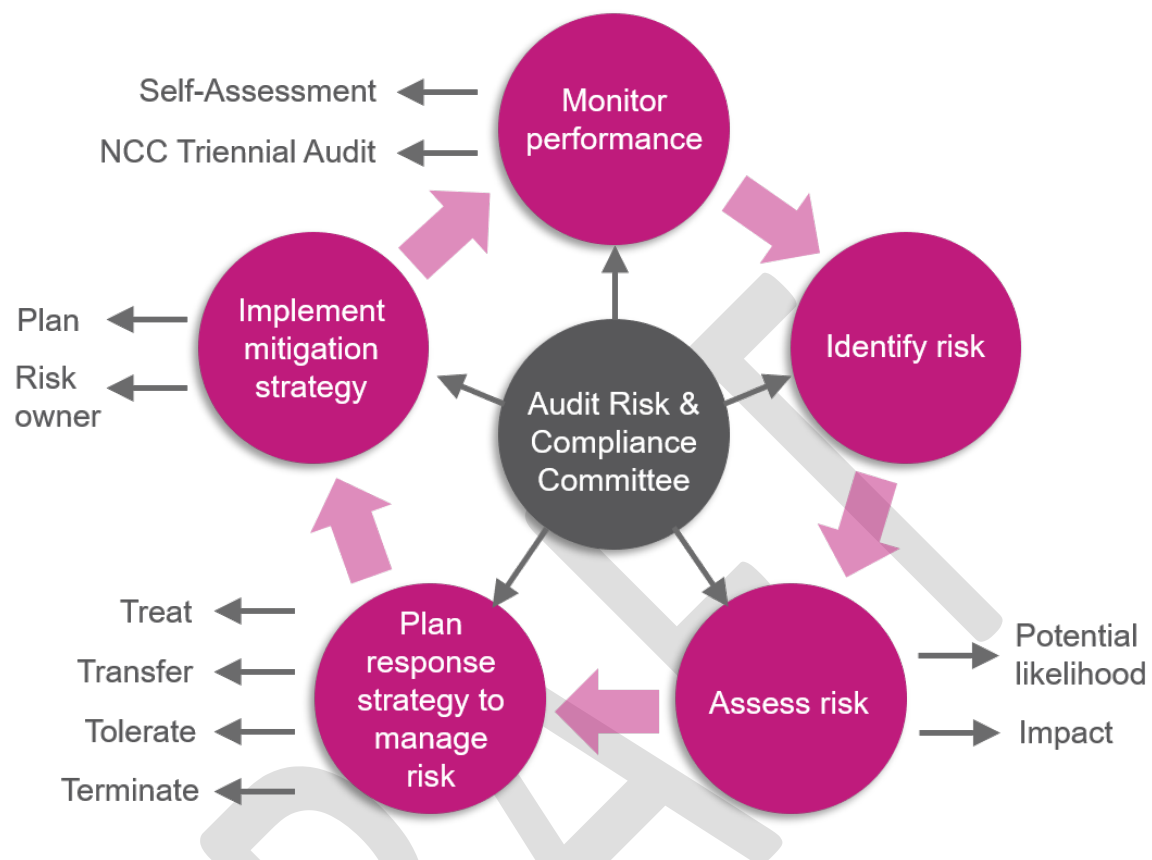
Growth and Innovation Matters

- SWOT and PESTLE analysis; review for 2024 to understand the internal and external environments IMG operate within (IMG)
- 5 Year Group Business Plan; growth, profit improvement and turnaround strategies (IMG)
- Replacement Care Review; NCC to review and co-produce new service proposition starting in 2024. IM and the three Replacement Care Lodges to be pivotal in the developmental work. It will include a review of the physical buildings which are NCC owned, to ensure that the environments meet the regulations and good practice requirements for the needs of customers with more complex social and health care needs. The residential framework is due to be re-tendered in 2017 and replacement care will be part of this. IM and NCC will undertake a cost analysis and market benchmarking to ensure value for money. (IM)
- Supported Living; Engage in opportunities as advertised on the Norfolk tender portal. Exciting opportunities to bid for schemes in Norwich and Kings Lynn, to come on stream in summer of 2025. Potential for additional thirty-five tenancies, which may make the current forty tenancies viable (IMG)
- Supported Living; IM have expressed an interest in in the 10-12 units coming online in 2026, for people with complex needs, having spent a substantial amount of time in hospital settings. (IM)
- Skills and Employment Pathway; consolidate our inclusive employment offer within the 5 LD Community Hubs, and Norfolk Industries, underpinned by the accredited Gateway and Evolve Programmes. Develop partnerships with organisations, businesses and NCC teams that specialise in finding/offering employment opportunities for learning-disabled people to maximise employment opportunities and support with transition for Adult Life (IM)
- Norfolk Industries; to continue to increase market penetration and sales within the pet bedding marketplace and increase packing operations to remain financially sustainable; move from a loss to breakeven in 2024 (NI)
- Day Opportunities Learning Disabilities and Autism Tenders; transition from block contract to framework and submit tenders for Enriching Lives and Promoting Independence pathways for all five hubs, maintaining and growing our existing customer base. Be part of pilots and actively engage in the on-going transformation work within the Day Service market, collaborating with commissioners to determine capacity and demand within the market and geographical locations, considering Thetford, Swaffham, Aylsham, Diss, Watton and Fakenham if IM consider any further delivery locations (IM)
- Review our Hub care estate, aligned with the commissioning statement, with a vision and ambition to provide modern, and stimulating environments for customers delivering all 3 Day Opportunities Pathways and support customers with the most complex learning disability and physical needs, making use of assistive and digital technologies. (IM)
- Day Opportunities Older People; be part of the Strengthening Communities market engagement to shape the Dementia Day Service provision. Review current locations and environments to ensure that they remain viable and meet the needs of people with dementia and those with complex physical needs. Look at re-purposing the contract income to develop an outreach model from

hubs. Submit tender for framework in March/April and review financial viability of moving from current block contract to spot packages based on current referral rates and potential for customer growth. Increase sales to private customers (IM)

- With the mobilisation of the East Principal Provider contract, recovery to HSM being 25% of IM Group activity with an ambition to become 50% of group activity and income by 2030 (HSM)
- Develop specialist Mental Health home care offer, aligned to East Principal Provider contract (HSM)
- Norwich Principal Provider Home Care Tender October 2024; timeframe to be confirmed. (HSM)
- Build-up HSM NCC commissioned delivery hours to be 80% minimum activity levels (HSM)
- HSM to be Teckal compliant by October 2024 (IMG)
- Physical Disabilities; provision of supported living and accommodation-based respite or replacement care for people with complex needs related to physical disabilities are two areas for which there is under-provision in Norfolk. IMG can confirm these are areas of provision that we may would want to develop into. This would require more engagement with commissioners and clarity to understand the need and investment potentially in buildings, adaptation, and equipment (IMG)

7: Risks and Risk Mitigation



IM Group has a robust Risk Management Policy and Risk is managed at all levels:

- Board
- Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
- Senior Leadership Team
- NCC Internal Audit
- By every colleague

IM Board determine the Risk Appetite annually referencing seven risk categories; Financial, People, Operational, Regulatory Compliance, Legal Compliance, Health and Safety, and Strategy. The Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee (AR&CC) provide assurances to the Board regarding the operations of the entire system of internal control, including governance, compliance, and systems in place to ensure that key risks are identified, monitored, and addressed. Separate risk registers are maintained for each risk category and responsibility for updating and maintaining these registers lies with and is shared between SLT (Senior Leadership Team). These registers are updated by individual SLT members in between AR&CC meetings. From these individual registers, the most significant risks are replicated on the IMG risk register which is then discussed by AR&CC.

The AR&CC meet a minimum of quarterly and makes recommendations upon its findings to IMG Board.

All risks are risk scored and assessed and a response strategy determined; Treat, Transfer, Tolerate or Terminate, following which a mitigation strategy is implemented and reviewed.

IM Key risks / challenges

There are risks associated with the delivery of the financial business plan:

- New commissioning structure during 2024 with funding based upon actual hours delivered not Block requiring a more agile operating model.
- The need for a robust, enhanced, and integrated operational and financial monitoring model to support the new Operational Management structure and ensure the accurate and timely invoicing of all income under the new commissioning structure.
- Reviewing the commercial and financial viability of all services following the 24/25 financial settlement.
- Review and decision on continued provision of the Supported Living service. The Framework rate for 24/25, including 5.85% uplift is significantly below the actual cost of service delivery generating deficits before as well as after overheads. Annual deficits for each of the last two budget years have been £500K and the 24/25 funding settlement when combined with the NMW will not abate this level of deficit generation. The deficits generated from the provision of this service will be the major contributing factor to the overall budgeted trading deficits for both IM and HSM for 24/25. Extensive discussions and the provision of detailed open book costings for both prior and the current final years have failed to secure additional funding from NCC to improve service viability.
- Cash flow forecasting and monitoring
- Pressures associated with cost-of-living crisis.
- Heightened requirement to Recruit, Reward and Retain colleagues.
- Achieving / maintaining Good CQC ratings for **all** registered premises
- Active monitoring, tackling and reduction of staff sickness.
- Implementation of Digitalisation strategy following appointment of Digital Director to improve efficiency of working practices.
- NCC vision for service provision locations and continued use or otherwise of current properties.

HSM Key risks / challenges

There are risks associated with the delivery of the financial business plan:

- Delivery of Prime Provider Contract commencing April 2024.
- Reviewing the commercial and financial viability of services following the 24/25 financial settlement.
- Cash flow forecasting and monitoring
- Pressures associated with cost-of-living crisis.
- Heightened requirement to Recruit, Reward and Retain colleagues.
- Care market pressures
- Maintain Good CQC rating at premises.
- Review Supported Living service to determine commerciality.

8: Financial Forecasts

Group Financial Headlines

The Financial Business Plan for FY25 reflects a year of transition with key challenges and risks for both Independence Matters CIC (IM) and Home Support Matters CIC (HSM). These are as follows:

- Working with NCC to deliver the NCC Commissioning Strategy for IMG.
- New procurement legislation to be enacted in October 2024 and its impact on the Teckal status of HSM to be clarified. This is essential should NCC need the flexibility to directly award HSM contracts.
- IM will move onto Framework contracts which may mean that in 2024 it may no longer receive a block payment but will move to a spot model of payment which will be dependent on the Service Hours delivered. Both companies require a volume of delivery hours to be viable.
- Successful implementation of Prime Provider Contract by HSM.
- Implementation of the digitalisation strategy to drive change where required, streamlining processes, making them more efficient and effective.
- Financial settlement for 24/25 compared to cost-of-living and NMW pressures and impact on IM, and HSM, that as people focused businesses it is essential to **R**ecruit, **R**eward and **R**etain colleagues.
- IM will offer a competitive reward package to all colleagues.

Due to the level of inflationary uplifts and the NMW announcement within the Autumn Statement trading is forecast to be extremely challenging for 24/25 with trading deficits forecast meaning that balanced budgets will be achieved by a planned use of reserves. This call from reserves will be in addition to previously earmarked allocations. The Reserves policy sets out all predicted calls from reserves for the next 3 years.

24/25 BUSINESS PLAN	£000's IM	£000's HSM	£000's IMG
Income	£15,895	£6,088	£21,983
Expenditure	(£16,315)	(£5,982)	(£22,297)
Surplus/(Deficit) before transfer from reserves	(£420)	£106	(£314)
Transfer from reserves - trading deficit	£11	£0	£11
Transfer from reserves - transformation costs	£409	£0	£409
Surplus/(Deficit) after transfer from reserves	£0	£106	£106



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1. CEO's Statement

Our mission is to offer an integrated approach to providing public sector services – generating sustainable long-term relationships and returns fairly and ethically for the benefit of our clients, employees and wider stakeholders.

Our Strategic Business Plan outlines how we will deliver this over the next five years.

Ongoing austerity and an inflationary environment continue to place significant pressure on public spending within the local authority sector. Despite this, Norse Group's offering remains consistently in demand. We know that, whilst cost pressures will continue to present tougher-than-ever challenges for local authorities, our partnership approach to flexible service provision coupled with our ownership by Norfolk County Council will continue to present an offering that is as unique as it is well-trusted. These unique selling points position us well to grow sustainably. This is demonstrated through a strong pipeline of potential partnerships over the next five years.

Generating an ethical profit for both our shareholder and partners alike remains as important as ever – returning much needed funding back to the public purse. We are continuing to drive forward our Foundational Strategy in order to do this; growing our wholly owned brands within the public sector whilst also partnering with councils through our joint venture model.

A particular strength of the Norse Group is the wide range of services it offers to customers. Developing solutions for customers by joining discreet services together from across the Norse Group will allow us to support and contribute to the challenges of our public sector customers in new ways.

To do this we are investing in our people. Our new HR operating model, supported by a new HR system will help embed our people strategy – ensuring we remain an employer of choice.

As the Group grows, we will continue to ensure those services we provide for Norfolk County Council remain at a consistently high standard. The provision of school catering, home to school transport, highways maintenance, residential care for the elderly, property and facilities management services for the Council illustrates the breadth of services we offer across the Norse Group. In addition to the annual shareholder dividend equivalent, we will continue to drive efficiency and value into these services wherever possible to deliver value for money.

The Norse Group Senior Executive Team have prepared this plan to outline how they will continue to grow the Group, ensuring it remains the largest LATCo in the country, whilst at the same time returning a substantial annual shareholder dividend equivalent.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Galliford', written over a white background.

CEO Norse Group
Justin Galliford
BSc(Hons) MSc MBA DipMC

“We are the country's largest Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo), with a diverse range of services including facilities management, property services and specialist care facilities. We have over 30 partnerships across England and Wales...”

2. Executive Summary

This summarises the budget for FY24/25, and then outlines the Group's plans for growth over the following four years.

Financial Year 24/25

Despite a weak outlook for the UK economy and a challenging environment across all Norse divisions, pre-tax trading profit is forecast to be £1.2 million for FY24/25. This will facilitate a rebate of £2.7 million to the shareholder, Norfolk County Council.

Performance across the Group's main entities for the year ahead are mixed, reflecting the anticipated difficult trading environment. They can be summarised as:

£m	Revenue		Trading profit	
	FY23/24 forecast	FY24/25 budget	FY23/24 forecast	FY24/25 budget
NCS	279.6	276.1	7.4	7.3
Norse Consulting Group	25.5	24.3	1.6	1.8
Norse Care	49.7	54.5	(3.2)	(1.2)
Business Support	11.1	11.3	(5.2)	(6.7)
Norse Group Holdings	3.3	3.9	0.3	0.1
Consol Adjs	(11.8)	(12.0)		
Total	357.4	358.2	0.9	1.2
NCC rebate equivalent (£m)			2.7	2.7
Closing cash headroom (£m)			10.0	22.3

During the year, one long-term joint venture within NCS will conclude, with an immaterial impact on profit. Whilst there are no substantial new joint ventures planned for FY25, new partnerships are expected to commence in the following and subsequent four years, which will deliver substantial profit within NCS (see budget and five year plan summary table in section 8).

Norse Consulting Group is operating at a manageable level and produces a solid return. Norse Care revenue increases as a result of the contractual uplift mechanism and some private sales. The budget does not assume major growth to replace these joint ventures 'in-year'.

This is predicated on the fact that the current major business pipeline looks likely to mature into revenue from FY25/26, so requisite due diligence modelling and contract negotiations are assumed in-year, with subsequent allocation of supporting resources. Business Support revenue is flat year-on-year, but with additional costs associated with new systems: 'Project One'. With a year of transition between legacy and new systems and an amount of 'doubling-up' within FY24/25; in future years the benefits of change will be seen. Additionally, some of these costs may be capitalised as part of the project finance arrangements – subject to both project approval by the Norse Group Board and capitalisation tests.

Despite the absence of large additional turnover ‘blocks’ attributed to new joint ventures, various areas of smaller growth are assumed. These include:

	Assumed Revenue Growth	Assumed	EBITDA
Entity	£m	Margin%	£m
NCS: South West Norse	6.4	6.6%	0.4
NCS: Infinity	1.0	8.3%	0.1
NCS: Highways	1.7	8.2%	0.1
General bids/business development	1.9	3.6%	0.1
Total	11.0	-	0.7

NCS will focus on the growth of its wholly owned brands by expanding relationships with existing customers. This reflects the Group’s strategy and is an important preparatory step for long-term growth.

Revenue for Norse Consulting is largely derived from the project pipeline of existing customers and growth will be pursued with new and existing clients. This includes traditional property management professional services and advisory services. The division will look to increase margin by adjusting its cost base in-year, pursuant to the longer-term Group strategy.

Norse Care will focus heavily on cost management and reduction strategies, whilst at the same time ensuring quality of care remains high. This work complements considerations around block contract renewal with Norfolk County Council in 2026.

During the year a number of strategic actions will also continue to be progressed as part of the Group’s Foundational Strategy.

These include:

1. The ongoing implementation of the Norse Group People Strategy. Launching our new operating model and software platform, along with increasing our focus on wellbeing, inclusion and staff support.
2. The ongoing strategic review of our Group values, culture and brand. This will include the launch of our rebrand for the Norse Group, designed to promote our unique capabilities and operating model for both public and private sector clients.
3. Enhancing the Group’s ESG strategy, with a particular focus on a plan towards ‘Net Zero’. Having established our carbon footprint, we will launch our long-term plan to achieve Net Zero by 2050. This will sit within our wider Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy.
4. Realising the accommodation strategy for our head office. The Group will move to new offices - adjoining our current head office site. This will allow us to bring support service staff together in one building, whilst also delivering better value for money than our current use of numerous buildings.
5. Improving our core back-office systems: “Project One” will go live via various stages throughout the year, delivering new finance, payroll, and HR systems.
6. Reorganising Norse Consulting Group: NCG will continue to develop strong strategic consultancy opportunities with clients whilst refining both cost base and operating model to ensure margin potential is increased.

7. Enhancing our Group Sales function: Implementing our “Go to Market” strategy, aided by our re-launch of the Norse Group brand. We will continue to develop our long-term pipeline of potential partnerships, whilst also tendering for work in both the public and private sector.
8. Reorganising NorseCare: We will focus on maintaining high levels of care quality, cost management and mitigation strategies, and the ongoing implementation of digital care plan systems.
9. Evolving our Governance to support business change: ensuring oversight, scrutiny and support as the Group delivers the Foundational Strategy. This includes evolving LATCo best practices such as the Group’s Governance Handbook.

Whilst all these actions will require dedicated focus, particular Group effort will be dedicated to the replacement of the core back-office systems. The intention is to replace both finance and HR systems in order to ensure the Group can continue to grow quickly and easily from FY24/25 onwards.

Overall, whilst Group revenue is constant from FY23/24, trading profit increases slightly (from £0.9m to £1.2m). This, combined with cash headroom of £22.3m, growing from £10.0m following the sale of a number of surplus properties, leaves the Group in a strong position for growth from FY25/26 onwards.

3. Introduction

Our Purpose

Our aim is to **Improve People's Lives**.

As the largest local authority trading company LATCo in Britain, ensuring we put people at the heart of what we do is integral to the ethical value proposition for our stakeholders and shareholder.

Our current Group business activity, and our growth over the next five years, will centre on the provision of services in support of communities across England, Scotland, and Wales. Our employees are from these communities and will be based within them, working as part of Norse Group to help Improve People's Lives.

We will seek to work with unitary, county, and district councils along with clients from the education, care, NHS, and charitable sectors.

Providing employment and career opportunities in the locations we operate in is a key element of what Norse Group does; and in this way adding to local investment in local economies.

Through the three main trading divisions of the Group, Norse delivers a wide range of services.

Commercial

provides essential frontline (including statutory) services for councils which include:

- Environmental Services, such as domestic refuse collection and street cleansing
- Facilities Management, incorporating building maintenance of estates and public spaces or cleaning, catering and grounds maintenance
- Highways maintenance

Consulting

Our property management company, provides services focused on:

- Estate Management
- Surveying
- Architecture and Design
- Project advisory and management services

Care

Has 20 residential homes and supports a further 15 housing with care schemes, with more than 1,500 beds throughout Norfolk.

Its services incorporate:

- Residential and enhanced care
- Dementia care
- Housing with care support

Our Group service portfolio and public sector ethos allows us to focus upon ensuring the safety of the people who live within the communities we serve.

We do this through the delivery of high quality and regulated statutory building maintenance tests across housing and local authority portfolios; CCTV monitoring services; static guarding; and by providing essential maintenance services for the NHS and fire and rescue services.

We will continue to demand the highest safety standards are met within our own operations, protecting the health and wellbeing of our dedicated staff.

Our aim is to continue to offer our services in an increasingly integrated delivery model, underpinned by a culture of long-term partnership working and ethical profitability for local communities.

These priorities will build durability into our services in three ways:

1. Providing services of consistently high standards, monitoring customer satisfaction
2. Generating ethical returns for partnering customers and our shareholder. Margins may be lower than market on an annual basis, but we will seek longer-term relationships which benefit us over time as we further embed our services in the location in which we operate
3. We will seek to invest in our people. They will continue to be our biggest market differentiator. By ensuring our employees feel valued and engaged we will retain them in the longer-term. This will drive service standards and facilitate professional development and increase the skills base of those living within local communities.

Our Values

Our Group values are **Quality, Innovation, Respect and Trust.**

They have served us well and will continue to do so over the next five years. We will work with our staff to ensure our values remain relevant and translatable to all parts of the Group, regardless of changes within our operating markets or service mix.



Quality

Quality must be built in to all that we intend to do. Whilst our customer base is sensitive to price, high quality services will remain a pre-requisite requirement.

This is an important differentiator for our Group; we will not sacrifice quality due to a short-term view on contract terms, an approach commonly seen within the marketplace, taken by larger competitors who operate traditional transactional contracting business models.

We will continue to build quality into our services with a deep understanding of our customer's requirements, having the right knowledge and skills mix to discuss and negotiate contracts, and maturing our integrated management systems (including quality management system elements) across our Group and its processes.



Innovation

Innovation will be key to our growth plans over the next five years. Our customers and staff will drive this and listening to them will help shape our innovative approach.

Flexibility in working arrangements, alternative service delivery models, solutions to net zero carbon goals, and an increased demand for data driven decision making, are likely to be the drivers for our innovative approach.



Respect and Trust

As part of our five-year plan, we will challenge the way we work

Ensuring that our staff respect and trust each other and demonstrate this every day, in how they behave towards colleagues and our clients, is an essential to forming teams that perform at their optimum.

It is a clear indication of a positive and sustainable organisational culture, which is imperative in ensuring we retain the right staff and that we attract the best talent as we grow. By ensuring trust and respect are 'lived' values demonstrated by all our staff, our business will continue to grow and succeed.

Long-term partnering arrangements, alternative models of delivery, and high-quality frontline services managed on behalf of councils, requires strong organisational relationships based upon respect and trust. Embedding these values in what we do will ensure our wider culture positively aligns with that of our customers.

Our Approach

The wider group approach to delivering services for customers will become increasingly important, and thus valuable, as we seek to differentiate our offering in the marketplace.

As the largest LATCO in Britain, sound governance, corporate social responsibility (with an increasing focus on environmental performance) and clear communication with our stakeholders regarding the value we generate for them is essential in ensuring we are trusted and respected by our customers.

Improving the lives of those living where we operate means we must seek to engage and support communities. We will do this through our Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy (ESG) which aims to create social value in addition to profit.

A particular focus of our ESG Strategy will be the continued drive towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Reducing the impact of our services on the environment means we will positively support similar actions of those living in the communities we serve. The next five years will see us develop further our ESG Strategy and continue our net zero journey.

To support this, we will monitor and report our ESG activities, reporting back to stakeholders on a triple bottom line basis providing data transparently to facilitate independent review and scrutiny of our performance.

Good governance and a strong ESG Strategy will complement our approach to enduring relationships with customers, built on our values to generate and share ethical profits.



8,750

**employees whose stated
mission is to Improve
People's Lives**

4. Clients and Markets

We will continue to operate and grow within our current markets over the next five years.

We will also look to expand into Tier one government markets – central government departments such as the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice – as part of our long-term growth strategy.

We will continue to use our three main trading areas to deliver services but will increasingly market and sell services as “Norse Group” to offer a more integrated single service offering.

Our main markets and customers are:

Local Authorities:

We will continue to work with district and county councils. Historically, our clients have been primarily district councils, but in more recent years we have begun to attract more unitary councils. We will use our unique and successful Teckal compliant, joint venture, service delivery model within the local authority market.

Care Sector:

This remains a key marketplace, and we must continue to adapt to meet the evolving demands of changing demographics and clients, as well as bringing together a wider set of solutions across the care lifecycle.

Education Sector:

Our main customers will continue to be junior, primary, secondary, and high schools. These will be under the control of either local authorities or Academy Trusts. We will also look to provide more services to both higher and further education markets, that is, colleges and universities.

Healthcare Sector:

The Group currently provides services to a small number of NHS community hospitals, GP practices, and NHS Trusts. Customer numbers are small, and the range of services is limited by type and contract length. Our aim over the next five years is to grow into this market, identifying relevant segments as the right opportunities to develop long-term relationships.

Social Housing:

Current clients include Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Housing Associations. This market is complimentary to the housing stock services we provide on behalf of several of our joint venture council partners. We will continue to work in this market as the national demand for social housing continues.

Charitable Sector:

Over the next five years we will seek to work with large charities (financially sound), preferably of national scale, allowing us to deliver services across the geographical spread of our Group. This market is seen as largely unattractive to our competitors but is a good fit for Norse Group as it aligns with our aims, values, and ethical philosophy on profitability.

Private Sector:

We will continue to work within the private sector on an opportunistic basis where we see a specific fit for our services, values, and culture. We will work with those who want to work with us in a long-term strategic, partnering model. We will only take transactional work if entry costs are low, and margins are strong. We will not bid for work where we compromise our values or standards to achieve the right tender price.

The table in Appendix one reflects a high-level summary of Norse Group services / client fit.

5. Delivery of the strategy

The business plan will be delivered as a product of successfully implementing the Norse Group Strategy.

Implementation will depend upon three key elements:

- 1) Clear, simple, goals
- 2) A deep understanding of our markets and customers
- 3) An objective appraisal of Norse Group resources

Clear, Simple, Goals

It will be essential to communicate our strategy to staff and our stakeholders clearly and simply, setting measurable goals.

This requires a Communications Strategy to ensure our messaging is consistent, clear, pertinent to the target audience(s), and timely. In doing this, we will align with our People Strategy – engaging and motivating our staff to help deliver common, defined, goals for a clear purpose. These will tie-back to Norse Group's overall aim - **Improving People's Lives.**

Understanding our markets and customers

Our markets will remain broadly similar over the next five years.

We will continue to work in the local authority market, education sector, healthcare, and charitable sectors.

We intend to expand into the central government marketplace in the latter part of our implementation plan, that is in year four.

As we currently do, we will be opportunistic in the private sector as the right opportunities present themselves.

Norse Care will continue to offer its services to individual private clients as well as providing statutory care provision for Norfolk County Council.

We are confident that customers within our core markets will identify with our Group's aims, and with our ethical values and ethos.

Our customers will respond well to high-quality professional relationships centred upon notions of long-term partnering, transparency, and ethical profitability - sharing this profit with our partners over a certain size / commitment threshold.

Staying informed about emerging market trends will be essential in delivering the strategy. The public sector market is likely to remain in flux over the next five years from both a policy and funding perspective.

The long-awaited 'levelling-up' agenda from central government, the Environment Bill, and social care reforms are three examples of significant change and challenge to which we will respond.

Staying abreast of how the challenges will impact our existing and potential customers will ensure our services remain relevant.

In support of the strategic prospects pipeline, we will continue to identify short-term, lower value, contract opportunities through our traditional Bid Team function. Careful selection of potential tender opportunities will remain a distinguishing characteristic of our approach.

We will continue to focus on opportunities for customers for whom we can deliver a quality solution, and who want to work with us. This approach will give us the best opportunity to seek contract extensions and variant bid models centred around long-term partnerships.

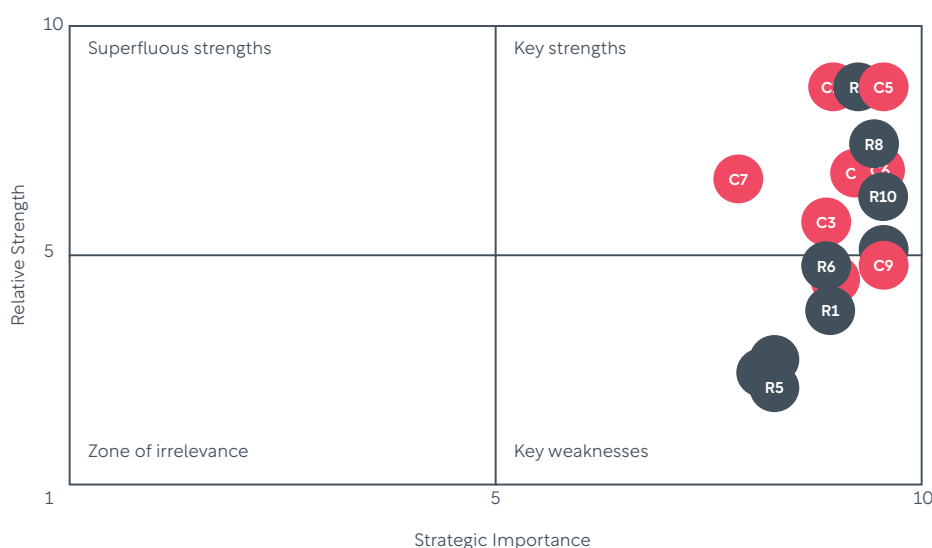
An objective appraisal of resources

To deliver our business plan and Norse Group Strategy we must ensure we have an appropriate mix of resources and capabilities.

An initial analysis demonstrates that elements of the business will need to be improved to strengthen the Group value chain and optimise the strategy moving forward.

Appendix two includes an initial Norse Group resource and capability assessment. Resources and capabilities have been evaluated against a very broad comparison with other organisations competing in the same markets.

The strength and importance of each resource or capability has been ranked on a scale of 1-10. A score of five is broadly comparable to market. The results are presented diagrammatically in figure two.



Key areas which are a focus for development:

Business development:

Support the Business Development Director in strategic development of relationships with long-term, higher value customers. At the same time, ensure the traditional sales and bid team grow contractual sales based on a customer experience which lays the foundation for longer-term, partnering arrangements.

Support Service Processes and Systems:

HR, Payroll and Finance services currently operate non-scalable processes and systems which the Group has outgrown in recent years. Implementation of new systems during the financial year will create significant benefits for the Group, including the ability to grow more easily.

HR:

A People Strategy has been developed, and is being implemented. This strategy, catalysed by new systems, will be fundamental to the growth of the Group – helping us attract and retain the best talent.

Financial Standing:

To meet pre-qualification criteria for our longer-term strategic aims (partnership working with central government departments such as FM work with the MOJ, and partnership working with NHS Trusts, etc) it is likely that we will need to strengthen our financial position and balance sheet to ensure we are viewed as a financially safe partner. We will need to design and implement a Strategic Financial Plan over the next five years to ensure we can enter these markets and strategic relationships without undue concern regarding our financial standing.

People

The Norse Group has a workforce of approximately 8,750 people whose stated mission is to Improve People's Lives.

Combined these people are the Norse Group's asset. This strategy focuses on simple principles around how the Norse Group behaves, recruits, makes decisions, and operates through the actions of our leaders and managers.

Through this, we make the Norse Group a better place to work, where employees are engaged and not only able to do their job well but want to do their job well.

We have seen significant change within our senior leadership team, and like many other large

organisations, our staff turnover and vacancy figures have reached high levels. This, coupled with ongoing budget cuts against a background of salary wars, has placed our operations under pressure.

Despite these challenges we have seen extraordinary resilience from our people.

It is imperative that we can demonstrate to our staff that we will do all that we can to support and encourage them, improve their lives at work, building an organisation and culture that they are proud to be part of.

How different elements of the plan are implemented will vary cross the businesses, but there are several core areas of focus as part of the People strategy.

Managers:

An employee's relationship with his or her direct manager is the most important single factor in employee engagement. But currently there is no agreed skillset for management and there is a need to offer managers better development and support programmes.

The basics of sound management are clear; objective setting, structured performance reviews, honest and open feedback and communication. Respected well-trained managers boost morale. Improved morale aids retention, and ultimately the performance of our business.

The short-term plan is therefore to improve the consistency of our managers' skillsets.

We want our managers to inspire employees, create trust and lead by example in line with the Group's mission, vision and values.

Values and Culture:

Belonging to the Norse Group and believing in its values is the long-term objective that ensures the culture and engagement of staff is that which the group is aiming for.

Our values define our organisation, but these need to be led from the top and owned by our employees.

We need our employees to translate and understand what the values mean to them both personally and professionally, turning them from mere words into actions and behaviours that they believe in.

Ultimately our values should be the touchstone of everything we do, and our employees should recognise this and are the building blocks that create the pathway for the culture and any changes to this.

Communication:

Our strategic communications approach will ensure that we celebrate our successes, we promote and highlight our dedicated workforce, we message our ethical ethos and values-based approach, and, essentially, that we communicate our Norse Group Strategy.

Strategic communication within Norse has been recognised as needing development and resource. A Communications Director will be appointed to devise, implement, and manage the Group's Communication Strategy which will be key in successfully engaging staff and wider stakeholders.

We will do this through clear, timely, concise, pertinent communications using various communication channels – to communicate with staff more readily across the Group.

Systems:

Systems underpin our processes and play an important role in the progress of this strategy.

Our current processes can still be improved significantly, and through further investment in systems can be made more efficient.

Project One has been commissioned to provide an improved system solution in respect of People and Financial processes, that aims to maximise service delivery and enable managers to have ready access to their people data, with increasing automation of processes as well as providing a single point of entry/action for users. This will then allow these systems to drive optimisation of the business needs and support data-driven people decisions.

Recruitment:

Since the pandemic, what employees seek and how they want to work has changed, and the UK employment market has become increasingly competitive as a result.

Now more than ever we must attract and retain individuals who will believe in the Group's values, who will work towards these and will embrace our mission to improve people's lives.

Improving every aspect of Norse's appeal to candidates, ensuring their experience of Norse from the outset is what they experience when they arrive, as well as ensuring that staff are developed to continue their journey with Norse, is key.

Learning and Development:

The Norse Group needs to accelerate its programme of continuing professional training & development and encourage staff to be passionate for their own personal improvement. Without doubt, talent already exists within the Norse Group – giving people the chance to grow is one of the most rewarding things we can do.

Providing opportunities for people to move up, or across functions can enhance employee performance and improve retention. We will do this by:

- Developing and implementing a well-designed and targeted learning and development framework aligned with our strategic priorities supported by regular career conversations.
- Providing access to professional support, such as coaching, mentoring, role modelling and senior sponsorship.
- Increasing our utilisation of the apprenticeship levy.

Health and Wellbeing:

Norse is committed to ensuring that we keep our employees safe and well, physically, and emotionally.

One of our commitments to wellbeing is that we are looking to achieve accreditation to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter which provides a national accreditation for organisations which are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

The Charter is built on a solid framework which will drive us to have every aspect of the workplace wellbeing covered.

Systems, Processes and Technology

Over the term of this business plan, the focus is on three key areas:



1. Back Office Solutions

Maximise integration, automation and the value of information captured with a single point of entry/action for users that drives efficiency across the business.



2. Infrastructure

Ensure robust, secure, but flexible working solutions that can adapt to the requirements of the business over time.



3. Operational Solutions

Develop a suite of preferred solutions that maximise service delivery and the latest developments - integrated into the wider system landscape.

1. Back Office Solutions Solutions

These sit within the Core Systems category covering all People and Finance related processes and requirements of the Group.

Project One will comprise the change to these new systems for Finance and HR & Payroll, going live throughout the financial year – following two years of planning and design.

	Prime	FY23	FY23	FY24	FY24	FY24	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY25
Project One										
Programme Management	Norse									
Change Coordination	Norse									
Project One: Finance										
Phase 0: Vision	KPMG									
Project & Change Management	Norse									
Data Cleanse & Migration	Norse									
BR1 – Standard D365	HSO									
Integration	Norse									
BR2- Optimisation	HSO									
Project One: HR & Payroll										
Project & Change Management	Norse									
Phase 0: Preparation	Norse									
Phase 1: Role Profiles	Venture Secure									
Phase 1: Pre employment checks & Engage (E/E Comms)	Silver-cloud									
Phase 1: Recruitment & Case Management	Silver-cloud									
Phase 1: Core HR System inc integration	Silver-cloud									
Phase2: Payroll System inc data	Lite									
Phase 2: Learning System	Lite									
Phase 2: WFM (Care)	Lite									
HR Development	Praenato									

The current complexity of systems is difficult to comprehend – with a complex network of systems and integrations.

The primary project aim is to leverage best practice processes within modern platforms and adopt the most suitable of these as the preferred ‘Norse Way’. This approach will be supported by the selected systems that enable access to information in a highly accessible way.

Whilst a single solution does not fit all the needs of the Group, it will improve current performance considerably by removing manual inefficiencies.

Project One is a significant investment in the business. It will deliver improved back-office efficiencies, improved staff engagement / retention, and improved operational efficiencies.

2. Infrastructure

The primary focus is to ensure robust and secure solutions that continue to support the changing (and flexible working) solutions needed by the business that can adapt to the requirements of the business over time.

Security

As the business increasingly moves towards digital systems, the potential impact of a successful cyber-attack is increased. Cyber security, contingency planning and disaster recovery will remain key areas of focus throughout the year.

Ways of Working

The Group has until recently operated a predominantly office based, desktop environment.

As the needs of the business increasingly move to mobile access, flexible working from different devices / access points, we will continue to selectively move digital applications to cloud based solutions.

3. Operational Solutions

Outside of the 'core' systems, numerous secondary systems are used at a local level to support delivery of various service disciplines. Noted as 'Secondary' in the Group's IT strategy they are critical for operational management.

Historically, the Group has novated client systems during contract mobilisations. Broadly, 80% of the business operates on c.10 key operational platforms, with a significant tail of smaller systems. However, all of these require some form of integration into our "core" systems, introducing complexity.

Our focus, therefore, remains to develop a smaller suite of preferred solutions – ensuring these also integrate into new Finance, Payroll and HR systems in order to leverage maximum investment benefit.

Changing our ways of working

Changes to the platforms used in operations will require changes to the way in which the Group operates.

The training, and focus on learning and development, noted within the People strategy supports the changing skill needs of the business accordingly.

6. Key Strategic Risks



The People Challenge

The current environment has created real pressure recruiting and retaining the resources the business needs.

Ensuring that the Group can adapt to the changing expectations, be it from flexible or other ways of working to the work environment itself, rewards and benefits, and the culture and approach of managers are all key to ensuring that the Group can secure the resources it needs to deliver its frontline services and to develop and grow.



Consulting

The property consultancy business of Norse has seen notable change in client expectations in recent years, but also more recently caused by the volatility of capital projects driven by the challenges of the pandemic.

With an increasing focus on carbon neutral, Net Zero is an opportunity, but while also being a risk if the business doesn't ensure that it adapts to the changing needs of clients.



Cyber Security

The ever-present threat of hacking and potential introduction of viruses, when the business is increasingly moving to a digital model means that the impact of such an attack, if successful, is ever increasing.

Whilst Cyber Essentials has been obtained, and external security advice and penetration testing is undertaken, this remains a priority due to the severity of any successful attack. Disaster Recovery and the Group's defences against attack are a constant area of review as a result.



Defined Benefit Pensions

The group continues to accommodate defined benefit pensions because of its commitments to date. These pensions incur significant additional costs and the liabilities in respect of these can move significantly.

Ensuring these are appropriately managed to reduce the risk of any adverse impact is a key priority. While these commitments remain however, there will continue to be a significant financial risk as a result.

7. The role of the Board

The Board is responsible for:

- creating and delivering sustainable shareholder value through the management of the Group's businesses
 - determining the strategic objectives and policies of the Group to deliver such long-term value, providing overall strategic direction within a framework of risk appetite and controls
 - ensuring that management strikes an appropriate balance between promoting long-term growth and delivering short-term objectives
 - demonstrating ethical leadership and promoting the company's values, culture and behaviours and acting in a way that promotes the success of the company for the benefit of our shareholder
 - ensuring management maintains systems of internal control that provide assurance of effective and efficient operations, internal financial controls and compliance with laws and regulations
 - ensuring management maintains an effective risk management and oversight process at the highest level across the Group
- having regard for what is appropriate for the Group's business and reputation, the materiality of the financial and other risks inherent in the business and the relative costs and benefits of implementing specific controls
 - deciding other matters of importance which would be of significance to the Group as a whole because of their strategic, financial or reputational implications or consequences.

Specific key decisions and matters have been reserved for approval by the Board. These include decisions on the Group's strategy, approval of risk appetite, capital and liquidity matters, major acquisitions, mergers or disposals, Board membership, financial results and governance issues, including the corporate governance framework

The voting rights of Directors

- Non-executive Directors (NCC Officer or Member) - seven votes each
- Independent Non-Executive Directors - one vote each
- Executive Directors - one vote each

Whoever chairs the Board has a casting vote.

Our Board Members



Andy Wood
Chair



Justin Galliford
Chief Executive
Officer



Zoe Repman
Chief Financial
Officer



Greg Peck
Non-Executive
Director
appointed by
Norfolk County
Council



Brian McCarthy
Non-Executive
Director
and Audit
Committee



Craig Dearden-Phillips
Non-Executive
Director and
Remuneration
Committee
Chair



Lord Gary Porter
Non-Executive
Director

Board advisory committees

Particular Board responsibilities are referred to the following Board advisory committees:

- Audit Committee
- Remuneration and Nomination committee
- Care Advisory Board

The Care Advisory Board provides assurance to the Group Board regarding quality of care and regulatory compliance.

the the This structure allows particularly detailed or complex matters to be given special scrutiny and oversight.

Except where decisions are specifically delegated, each committee reports and submits recommendations back to the Board for its review and, where necessary, decision.

Each committee operates within clearly defined terms of reference, which are reviewed annually by the relevant committee, and, if necessary, approved by the Board to ensure they remain appropriate and reflect any changes in good practice and governance.

The Group's **Audit Committee** provides effective governance over the appropriateness of the Group's financial reporting, and the performance of both the internal and external audit functions. The committee also oversees the Group's internal control systems, business risks management and related compliance activities.

The **Remuneration and Nomination Committee** evaluates the composition, diversity, experience, knowledge, skills and independence of the Board and its committees. This allows the appropriate balance to be maintained and ensures the continued effectiveness of the Board.

The committee also ensures that appropriate succession plans for the Non-Executive Directors, Executive Directors and the Group's senior management are also kept under review, taking into account the challenges and opportunities

facing the Group, and the diversity, skills and expertise that are therefore required in the future.

The Group's committees are chaired by a Non-Executive Director and directly report back to the Norse Group Board.

Shareholder Officer Panel

As part of its governance of the Norse Group, Norfolk County Council appoints a member to represent its interest as shareholder. The Shareholder Representative is invited to all company board meetings and the company's annual general meeting.

In addition, the Group is monitored by a County Council Shareholder officer panel which supports the development of the Group and provides feedback to the council on decisions made by the Board.

The Shareholder officer panel considers all the matters reserved for shareholder approval and the Shareholder Representative then takes the committee's recommendations to the shareholder for final agreement.

The Shareholder officer panel meets quarterly and regularly receives updates on financial performance and business development opportunities.

Key personnel

To direct and support the day to day activities of the Group, the Senior Executive Team is responsible for executing the Group's objectives, strategies, tactics and activities along with upholding the Group's values and strong culture and ethos.



£2.7m

return to our shareholder

8. Financial Projections

Budget and Five Year Plan

£m	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Revenue	358.2	365.8	382.3	404.1	417.0
EBITDA	12.9	15.2	19.1	22.7	26.1
Depreciation	(9.7)	(9.7)	(9.7)	(9.7)	(9.7)
Net interest payable	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)
Trading profit	1.2	3.6	7.5	11.1	14.4
Trading profit %	0.3%	1.0%	2.0%	2.7%	3.5%
Net tax payable	0.6	0.2	(0.2)	(0.5)	(0.7)
Profit after taxation	1.8	3.8	7.3	10.6	13.8
Rebate - partnerships	(2.9)	(3.1)	(4.3)	(6.0)	(8.0)
Retained profits pre rebate	(1.1)	0.7	3.0	4.7	5.8
Retained profits pre rebate %	(0.3%)	0.2%	0.8%	1.2%	1.4%
Rebate - NCC	(2.7)	(2.7)	(2.7)	(2.7)	(2.7)
Retained profits post rebate	(3.7)	(2.0)	0.4	2.0	3.1

Trading profit by Division

	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
NCS Contracts	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.0
NCS Partnerships	4.5	4.8	7.1	9.6	12.1
Norse Consulting Group Ltd	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Norse Care	(1.2)	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.8
Business Support	(6.7)	(6.9)	(5.4)	(4.0)	(3.2)
Norse Group Holdings	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Group	1.2	3.6	7.5	11.1	14.4
Cash Headroom	22.3	21.0	22.2	25.0	28.8

Cashflow Forecast

£m	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Cash inflow from operations	6.9	9.4	11.7	13.9	15.3
Interest paid	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)	(2.0)
Taxation	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.5)	(0.7)
Net capital expenditure	8.1	(7.0)	(7.0)	(7.0)	(7.0)
Cash inflow/(outflow) pre debt movements	13.0	0.4	2.8	4.5	5.7
Movement in net debt	(0.7)	(1.7)	(1.6)	(1.7)	(1.9)
Total cash inflow/(outflow)	12.3	(1.3)	1.2	2.8	3.8
Opening cash	10.0	22.3	21.0	22.2	25.0
Closing cash	22.3	21.0	22.2	25.0	28.8
Movement	12.3	(1.3)	1.2	2.8	3.8

Appendix One - Norse Group Services and Client Fit

	Local Authorities					Education			Healthcare				
	Parish Councils	District Councils	County Councils	Unitary Councils	Social Housing	Schools	Colleges	Universities	Community Hospitals	NHS Trusts	Charitable Sector	Private Sector	Central Govt. Depts.
Cleaning		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Catering						X	X	X	X	X		X	
Portering		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	
Grounds	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Transport						X	X				X	X	
Building Maintenance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Printing	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
Security, Fire and Alarms		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assistive Technologies		X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
Environmental Services	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Highways Maintenance			X	X									
Housing Repairs		X	X	X	X								
Advisory Services		X	X	X	X			X		X		X	X
Building Design Services		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Estates Management		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Adult Care			X	X	X				X	X	X	X	

Norse

norse
CONSULTING

norse
care

Appendix Two

- Resource and Capability Assessment

Importance ¹	Relative strength ²	Comments
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Resources

R1	Finance	8	4	Norse Group retained profit margin of approx. 2%. This is below market average – strategy is to target minimum 3%.
R2	Assets	7	3	Balance sheet strength is considerably less than competitors due to private ownership. Accordingly, accessing capital is not as quick to achieve as competitors. Current balance sheet strength restricts Tier 1 (Central Gov.), NHS trusts, and larger charity opportunities (albeit these are not envisaged within the Group's strategy for three to four years)
R3	Support Service Processes and systems	7	3	HR, Payroll and Finance currently operate non-scalable processes and systems which the Group has outgrown in recent years. These are facilitated by various applications with several bespoke integrations.
R4	HR	7	4	People Strategy has been developed and must now be implemented to ensure Norse Group retains talent, attracts new talent, and delivers overall Norse Group Strategy.
R5	Line of Service Technology	7	4	Increasingly complex variety of applications, individual to joint ventures, businesses, and operating divisions. Hard to achieve full integration with core business applications and easily produce integrated management information. Varying adoption of mobile workflow applications and hardware across Norse Group.
R6	Location	8	4	Norse Group has operations across England. Limited presence in Wales and no presence in Scotland.
R7	Reputation	9	8	Norse Group reputation is strong within the joint venture market (local authorities). Well-known for collaborative partnership working. Whilst also established in private sector, much less so than key competitors.
R8	Brand	9	7	Brand affirmation across market sectors through soft marketing approaches. Norse Group branding is complex (multiple brands) and not as visible as competitors. Customer advocacy within market sectors due to careful selection of work which Norse Group can deliver sustainable margin and positive outcomes for partners.
R9	Culture	9	5	Norse Group's historic roots and local authority ownership enable it to be a knowledgeable, open and honest partner alongside its operational expertise and capability.
R10	Skills	9	7	Broad range of service specific skills, at varying management levels retained within Norse Group. Strong focus on staff retention, and internal "upskilling" via dedicated Skills Hub.

¹ Scales for importance and relative strength: 1 = very low, 10 = very high

² Resources and capabilities are compared with broad overview of competitors. 5 equals parity of strength

Importance ¹	Relative strength ²	Comments
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Capabilities

C1	Financial Management	9	8	Strong reliance on traditional management accounting principles. Robust and prudent assessment of all new business opportunities (joint ventures and contracts). Strong governance controls in place to ensure approval is obtained from shareholder for key investment / borrowing requirements.
C2	Management Development	9	6	Strong ethos of internal recruitment and progression through management positions. Experience valued at equal parity with management qualifications. Staff retention closely monitored – monitored as a business KPI.
C3	Strategic Innovation	8	6	Successful use of Teckal compliant joint venture model with local authorities. Sometimes conservative in innovating through new ways of working / technical solutions.
C4	Comprehensive Integrated Management Information Systems	8	4	Management information produced varies in detail, quality, and ease of reproduction between joint ventures and operating divisions. Production of some Management Information can require considerable manual processing. This can impact on ability to produce information in a timely fashion, as well as on consistency of quality.
C5	Volume Driven Efficiency Generation	9	8	Cultural business approach centres upon volume driven efficiencies and savings as key unique service offering. Key business ethos used to establish long-term partnering relationships. Long-term relationships preferable to short-term, high margin work.
C6	Continuous Improvement in Operations	9	6	Improvements can be deemed as efficiency saving, due to strong business ethos (as C5). Not as quick as major competitors to identify capital dependant service improvements.
C7	Flexibility / Speed of Response	7	7	Norse Group approach to partnering requires strong level of flexibility. Sometimes this requires input / validation from multiple parties depending upon specific joint venture's / operating division's requirements). Decisions generally apace with response required by partners.
C8	Marketing: Brand Management	9	4	No defined Marketing Strategy. Consistent, subtle, brand affirmation through limited, marketing channels. Numerous Group brands – can be confusing for customers. No hard selling philosophy. Enduring relationships built gradually.
C9	Business Development	9	5	Business Development Director to be appointed, to develop relationships with potential customers for long-term, strategic value, and motivate sales team.

³ Scales for importance and relative strength: 1 = very low, 10 = very high

⁴ Resources and capabilities are compared with broad overview of competitors. 5 equals parity of strength



United in Purpose

Business

Plan

2024/25

Author:	Repton Property Developments Ltd Board
Date:	7th February 2024
Adopted by Board:	tbc

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the Business Plan for Repton Property Developments Ltd for the immediate future with an emphasis on the next four years and covers the four sites being managed by Lovells, the seven smaller sites managed by Torrington and one site managed by Norse Consulting. It provides the company's vision and broad strategic objectives, as well as the financial forecasts that sit behind the Business Plan.
- 1.2 Repton Property Developments Ltd was established in 2017 with the primary objective of undertaking direct property development to maximise the financial returns (capital receipts and revenue income) to Norfolk County Council. This will support service delivery, with a dividend payable once the company has distributable profits - currently projected to be in respect of the 2023-24 financial year.
- 1.3 In addition, the Council is seeking wider social, economic, and environmental outcomes and the following secondary objectives were also established:
- Contributing to meeting Norfolk's growing housing demand.
 - Provision of quality homes to raise design and performance standards.
 - Providing economic stimulus by increasing overall capacity for property development and by taking control of developing specific sites, preventing land banking.
 - Supporting creation of quality jobs and economic growth.
- 1.4 Initially the company is developing land that is surplus to Norfolk County Council use. This land is sold by the County Council to Repton at a fair value based on the status of the land - and following a viability assessment.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This is an update of previous Business Plans and represents a rolling 5-year forecast based primarily on cashflow projections provided by the Development Service Providers and reviewed by Richard Utting Associates, Cost Consultants.
- 2.2 Repton is performing well against its objectives in a challenging environment and providing a range of environmental and social benefits. The company has developed a firm pipeline of projects, and the first two sites are set for completion and there is substantive progress on a number of other sites. The company is developing high quality and essential affordable housing – going beyond the 'policy compliant' level on the first three of its consented schemes (Acle, Hopton, and Attleborough).
- 2.3 The Lovell Contract has reached the end of its first 5-year cycle. Lessons learned are being applied to a renegotiation of the terms but overall, the relationship has been a great success and a renewed partnership is very much the objective.
- 2.4 Three of the Lovell sites are in contract and being built out. Two of these are nearing completion in the financial year 2024/5. The planning permission at the second

Attleborough site has been preserved and is in for reserved matters determination – due Q1 2024.

2.5 Planning permission has been achieved on three of the smaller, Torrington, sites (Lingwood, Caister and Hunstanton) and of those, Caister and Hunstanton, after much negotiation, are in contract and on site. Lingwood has been delayed at the last minute by the ongoing Nutrient Neutrality planning issue but with a clear path set out to achieve a start on site.

2.6 The nature of development is that, due to working capital requirements utilising early revenue, income is returned near the end of the scheme; Repton has now reached the stage of delivering this. So far, the company is exceeding the targets for private sale receipts and has entered into major contracts with registered providers who have or are purchasing the affordable housing elements.

2.7 The first two Repton sites will be built out (Acle and Attleborough) in their entirety by Q2 2024.



[Completed show homes at Attleborough]

2.8 Norfolk residents benefit from apprenticeships and the use of a local supply chain with corresponding economic multipliers.

2.9 The Company has identified opportunities to develop existing Council owned assets with the potential to create more than 600 residential properties, including 215 affordable dwellings. We expect that 187 homes will be at or near completion in the current financial year including 113 affordable homes. Current estimates show 116 completions in 2024/25. Although this is a lower number overall, it includes an increasing proportion and number of profitable open market homes.

2.10 A pipeline of potential additional NCC sites is currently being reviewed and individual ones may come forward in this financial year subject to the company's financial capacity which is linked to the Shareholder's dividend expectations.

2.11 Norfolk County Council's budget includes the expectation of a dividend of £1m in the financial year ending March 2024. Due to increased mortgages rates and other economic

factors, sales have slowed and costs increased and the company's ability to pay a dividend will not be confirmed until the accounts have been audited.

3. OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS TO DATE

Primary Objectives	
To maximise financial return to the shareholder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open market sales to date - £36.7m • Affordable Homes income to date - £26.1m • Land payments to NCC – c£5.8m • Interest paid to NCC - £2.6m
Secondary Objectives	
Contributing to meeting Norfolk's growing housing demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses Started: Private 198 Affordable 178 • Houses completed: Private 138 Affordable 46
Provision of quality homes to raise design and performance standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All homes to Nationally Described Space Standard • Smaller-sites programme targeting 15% energy efficiency improvement on 2010 Building Regulations.
Provide economic stimulus by increasing overall capacity for property development and by taking control for developing specific sites preventing land banking.	<p>Repton has increased available capacity for property development by achieving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Planning achieved on 6 sites (Acle, Hopton, Attleborough, Lingwood, Hunstanton and Caister). • Planning potentially expected in 2024 on a further 3 (Attleborough 2, Attleborough Chapel Road and Trowse)
Support creation of quality jobs and economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 94 daily jobs supported on Acle, Attleborough and Hopton currently • twenty six apprentices • >40% local supply chain (excluding Suffolk) • 2 x Women into Construction work placements • 212 hours staff volunteering though Enterprise Adviser role and at events • £1.99 spend in the local economy for every £1 contract spend with Lovell. This equates to a c.£69m local spend to date.

Additional benefits	
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Space 400m² play areas - Acle 8,582m² open space - Acle 1-hectare informal open space + footpath to Jubilee Wood – Acle 9,373m² open space – Hopton 2,129m² open space - Attleborough • Community infrastructure 355m footpaths/ cycleways (non-adopted) - Acle 2,074m footpaths (adopted) - Hopton • 167 facilitated this year • Hopton also includes Electric Vehicle infrastructure to all 200 properties • 48 solar systems installed in 2023 • Small sites programme designed around fabric-first approach with air source heat pumps • Reuse of existing buildings where possible to save embodied carbon
Educational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 engagement events with local schools • Royal Norfolk Show with Wensum Trust

4. PRODUCT

- 4.1 The main product remains residential dwellings for market sale. The site layout and home types will be designed to meet the requirement of maximising return from the developments subject to planning policy compliance and, where applicable, Repton secondary objectives.
- 4.2 The affordable housing elements to meet or exceed planning policy compliance, where viability allows, will be acquired by registered providers procured through tender. The affordable element could include social rent, affordable rent and shared equity offers – as informed by the Local Planning Authority and best offers.
- 4.3 The management and maintenance of the public realm elements will either be offered to the Parish Council or, more usually, a management company will be established for each development.
- 4.4 Repton's homes will respond to evolving energy efficiency standards in future building regulations. Subject to agreement by the Shareholder and maintaining forecast profitability, Repton has aspirations to:
- Achieve 15% above 2010 building regulations environmental performance on the smaller sites – where still applicable (New, more stringent, Building Regulations came into force in 2023 and achieving 15% above these newer regulations, is currently beyond Repton's financial capacity);
 - Futureproof homes for new heat sources on the larger sites;
 - Provide facilitating infrastructure for electric vehicle charging on all homes with parking spaces, whilst also designing public realm for active travel to create modal shifts;
 - Retain and improve biodiversity and existing natural features on its sites wherever possible
 - Work with its supply chain to minimise supply chain emissions in accordance with developing good practice.
- 4.5 There will be a particular focus, for the purpose of brand building, on ensuring that non-latent home defects are eliminated by the point of sale and that Repton maintains high standards of customer service and aftercare through its contractual relationships with its development partners. Particular care will be needed to achieve this with the newer, smaller contractors on smaller sites.
- 4.6 Repton will provide a high-quality product in all its homes. Particularly through the small sites programme, Repton will seek to distinguish itself and its product through good design.

5. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL PARAMETERS

5.1 Each site is appraised on its individual merits and a balanced portfolio approach is taken with regards to primary and secondary objectives.

5.2 To assess the viability of individual scheme, on the larger sites contracted with Lovell, the company uses:

1. Return on Capital Employed (ROCE*) is required by the shareholder as a viability measure and is used as a hurdle rate for viability assessment at all stages.

*Baseline ROCE considers the return from a developer's point of view. The returns to Repton are lower because the return to Repton is after taking into account the contracting margin, finance costs, and the contractors profit share. Repton calculates ROCE both before and after these costs as internal measures.

2. Profit as a percentage of income is another measure used within the Business Plans - presented at viability and also to ascertain profit share within the business relationship. Each site has an approved return which is set at the post-planning appraisal stage and is useful as a comparator across all sites.

5.3 The smaller sites programme, with Torrington and Norse Consulting, uses a measure of 'profit on-cost'. Typically, schemes must make a profit of 15% -20% included within the Gross Development Costs. The residual balance of the scheme's income is the value Repton can offer for the land.

6. LAND ACQUISITION

6.1 Repton's current approach is to acquire bare land or brownfield sites from Norfolk County Council. The sites at Acle, Hopton, Attleborough, Caister and Hunstanton have been acquired by Repton and construction is now under way.

6.2 The two sites listed below have planning permission and at the appropriate point will move into contract, subject to formal development appraisal and associated viability conditions being met:

Attleborough, Land East of Hargham Road
Lingwood, Former Lingwood First School

6.3 Five additional sites are also being appraised to assess viability. These sites do not yet have planning permission for residential development and will be put forwards for appropriate acquisition and development decisions at key milestones.

6.4 The programme of actual and estimated completions including the next financial year is outlined in the table below. Dates are target and subject to change:

	2021-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Market	61	62	76	115	101	22
Affordable	47	109	37	13	2	9
Total	108	171	113	128	103	31

6.5 Norfolk County Council also has sites available that have not yet been allocated for residential use in the relevant local plan. NCC is likely to offer Repton the opportunity to promote some of these opportunities and it is likely be at the company's risk, however Repton anticipates this will be on the basis of a greater return for the company.

6.6 A pipeline of potential additional NCC sites is reviewed on a regular basis and sites may come forward in this financial year subject to the company's financial capacity and the Shareholder's dividend expectations.

6.7 It is not anticipated that Repton will acquire 3rd party sites on the open market, however, it reserves the right to investigate and acquire adjoining parcels to improve existing sites and to explore possibilities brought forward by existing development partners.

7. MODUS OPERANDI

7.1 A comprehensive procurement exercise was undertaken in 2018 which culminated in the appointment of Lovell Partnerships Ltd as a single supplier with the full range of development and construction services required to deliver new dwellings to the market and subsequently sell them, for the first four Repton sites.

7.2 An overarching Development Services Agreement was negotiated and signed with Lovell in October 2019. Each development site will then be individually contracted using, normally, a PPC2000 partnering contract or, alternatively, a traditional JCT Design and Build contract where appropriate.

7.3 This arrangement with Lovell Partnerships Ltd has allowed Repton to acquire an off the shelf development structure without the need to appoint staff to carry out these roles. This will enable delivery to be brought forward quickly in the short to medium term. This arrangement was designed to cover the first four sites and is nearing the end of its first 5-year cycle. Board have instructed officers to review the contract conditions with a view to implementing lessons learned for the next 5-year cycle if an agreed position can be found with Lovell.

7.4 Each of the four sites has outline planning consents; the sites at Acle, Hopton and Attleborough West now have full reserved matters and are in contract and being constructed. Acle and Hopton are selling successfully at this time albeit the changes in the mortgage market have had a slowing effect. Attleborough (west of Hargham Road) is being built out as a fully affordable scheme for Orbit Housing Association and will be concluded at the end of March 2024. Attleborough (east of Hargham Road) has been submitted for full reserved matters planning with an expected resolution in 2024.

- 7.5 A further procurement exercise took place in October 2019 which resulted in the appointment of Torrington Properties Ltd as a Development Manager for six smaller sites. Subsequently, an additional site, Sedgeford, has been added to the roster. Torrington Properties Ltd will lead and manage the full range of professional, technical, construction and support service to deliver each site design until the conclusion of after-sales support. An agreement is in place with Torrington Properties Ltd, with an 'Appointment of Development Manager' contract, to be signed per site at the appropriate point for each site. Norse Consulting have been appointed along similar lines for Development Management services at Station Road, Lingwood.
- 7.6 Three of the smaller sites (Caister, Lingwood and Hunstanton) have full reserved matters permission. There is an ambition to also bring forward the Trowse and Attleborough (Chapel Rd), sites to achieve planning permission this financial year, with Sedgeford following shortly after. South Walsham and Station Road Lingwood have been paused due to viability issues caused by tender price inflation and programme uncertainties around Nutrient Neutrality.
- 7.7 Employer's Agent services, providing an extra layer of high level, client-side, cost and design oversight, have also been contracted following a procurement exercise undertaken early in 2019. The supplier is Richard Utting Associates from Norwich.
- 7.8 Legal services advising on contracts and company governance is currently provided by Mills and Reeve LLP based in Norwich.
- 7.9 For auditing and tax advice Larking Gowen have been appointed.
- 7.10 Barclays Bank has been appointed as the company's banker.
- 7.11 NHBC registration has been secured on the larger sites. The small sites are registered ad-hoc.
- 7.12 Repton has successfully passed an internal audit and continues to achieve a fully compliant financial audit from its external auditors.
- 7.13 Board monitors and oversees risk and progress. The Board has overall responsibility for authorising spend and progress on schemes. Officers and the Development Managers present reports and data for questioning and approval. Board meetings are held on an approximately bi-monthly cycle.
- 7.14 The Board has challenged and is content that the highest levels of corporate governance are adhered to, but it recognises the need to learn from other housing companies across the country. The Board has particularly looked at other, Local Authority owned, housing development companies to identify any further lessons.
- 7.15 The Board has looked at the wider macro-economic factors (for example, the potential for any slowdown in the housing market and cost increases in the construction sector) and in addition to the extant robust financial governance, will focus on four key questions:
- The importance of liquidity – modelled against a number of scenarios;

- Stress testing project appraisals;
- Counter-party risk - to ensure robust counter-party viability checks particularly with contractors on smaller sites;
- Energy efficiency, sustainability and the strategy for net zero carbon.

7.16 Board has approved an Environmental Strategy as a critical step toward, amongst other key metrics, reducing Carbon emissions created by Repton activities. This will be monitored through the supply chain and managed via contractual requirements.

8. COMPANY STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 Repton Property Developments Ltd (Repton) is a private company limited by shares wholly owned by Norfolk County Council (NCC) which has ultimate control of its business activities.

8.2 The Company has been established in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 including the appointment of a Board of Directors for the Company and the adoption of Articles of Association.

8.3 All board directors are approved by the shareholder (NCC) and comprise the following:

• Two Councillors	Representatives of the County Council's Cabinet	Cllr G Peck (Chair) Cllr J James
• Two Officers	Selected from with County Council teams as having the appropriate experience	Mr. T Adam Mr. A Collier
• Two independent Non-Executive Directors	Appointed following a competitive process	Mr. S Hardwick Mr. M Spry

8.4 The County Council's shareholder function is discharged through its Cabinet with the actual work delegated to the Director of Strategic Finance.

8.5 Numerous Norfolk County Council staff perform services for Repton and their time is recharged. These services include:

- Development Management services
- Supporting the Board and ensuring governance procedures are carried out.
- Providing insurance.
- Providing financial advice.
- Undertaking procurement.
- Providing audit services

9. FUNDING

9.1 The County Council as shareholder is the key funder for the company. The County Council has established, through its own governance arrangements, the principle of providing loans to Repton. Repton currently has a £35m loan facility with the shareholder, which is

drawn down upon Board approval, or when authority is delegated to specific board members.

10. TAX

10.1 VAT and corporation tax have been registered with HMRC and monthly VAT returns are completed. Repton has also registered for the Construction Industry Scheme.

11. DIVIDENDS

11.1 It is envisaged that any surplus funds/profits will be returned to the shareholder using dividends to the extent it is prudent and legal to do so and consistent with any additions to the development pipeline in terms of future sites that NCC wishes Repton to consider. The Shareholder has budgeted for a dividend of £1m p.a. from the financial year ending March 2024.

11.2 When viewing the company's overall financial benefit to the Council and the County of Norfolk, it should also be noted that the Shareholder receives both a land payment and a return from the interest charged on borrowing as part of the arrangement.

12. SWOT ANALYSIS

12.1 The following is a summary of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Repton Property Development Ltd:

Strengths:

- Ability to secure funding at competitive market rates.
- Council support.
- Initial funding available.
- Several Council owned sites available for redevelopment.
- Sites unaffected by Nutrient Neutrality.
- Lean business model

Weaknesses:

- Not a known 'name' in the tender market equalling a risk premium and potential lack of interest.
- Vulnerable for extended timescales for planning, development and construction before significant number of homes become available for sale and produce income.

Opportunities:

- Increase of affordable housing within the County.
- Income generation for the Council, arising from profit.
- Support for local people to buy a home (or rent from the affordable housing provider).
- Place shaping

Threats:

- Any future government change in the view of council companies /prudential borrowing.
- Downturn in economy leading to a fall in house prices.
- Further increases in interest rates.
- Materials and labour cost inflation
- Supply chain failure
- Nutrient Neutrality

13. TARGETS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

13.1 The proposed targets and key performance indicators are tabled out in Appendix 1 and at this point in the programme reflect priorities of obtaining planning permission, de-risking the affordable homes sales and starting on site. As Repton moves further into a delivery and handover stage, KPIs will inevitably change to reflect new priorities.

13.2 Key performance indicators for health and safety incidents are reported on to Board on each site. Numbers remain low with a cumulative 20 minor incidents on all sites to date as at November 2023. (appendix 1b).

13.3 Detailed customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken on the Lovell sites at 8 week, 12 week and 9 month intervals and Repton currently has the best score in the Lovell group of 100% of customers stating they would recommend the developer (appendix 1c).

13.4 Moving forward additional targets could be considered as the business matures, but only if the return warrants it. For example:

- Increase in energy performance measured using the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) system comparing like-for-like dwellings.
- Number of dwellings constructed on any one development to a “lifetime” standard (following adoption of a defined standard).
- Time taken to move from pre-planning to contract.

13.5 At its Cabinet of 8 November 2021, the council resolved to “commission the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services to report to Cabinet about the options for setting formal low carbon objectives in relation to companies where the County Council is the majority shareholder”. A revised Environmental policy is due to be drafted for Repton in the coming financial year.

14. Financial Business Plan 2024-25

14.1 Appendix 2 includes financial business plan statements for the period up to and including 2024-25: an operating statement and balance sheet are included along with a monthly cash-flow graph.

14.2 The information is based upon the latest cash flow forecasts received from the Development Service Providers, Lovells, Torrington and Norse Consulting, at 31 January

2024, when this plan was prepared. Individual cashflows are produced for each of the sites referenced in section 6, and these are amended in advance of each Board meeting to reflect agreed changes and updated assumptions.

- 14.3 Sales of £29m are anticipated in the year to 31 March 2025. This reflects significant on-going activity and continuing programme of new developments. The comparable forecast for 2023-24 is £30m, and actual sales in 2022-23 were £29m. The sales anticipated in 2024-25 can be analysed as follows:

Developer	Sales £m	Category	Sales £m
Lovells	13.4	Open market	27.6
Torrington	15.8	Affordable	1.6
Total	29.2	Total	29.2

- 14.4 Subject to maintaining the current pace of sales and development, cumulative profits after overheads, interest and tax are estimated to become positive at the end of 2023-24.
- 14.5 The financial statements in Appendix 2 are based on an assumption that all the current schemes will be developed. Subject to on-going discussions with auditors, projected scheme profits are recognised in proportion to the floor area of completions, taking into account margins on contracts with housing associations, on a scheme-by-scheme basis.
- 14.6 Dividend payments of £1m pa from 2024-25 have been assumed in the balance sheet forecasts. Actual dividends will be declared when distributable reserves are confirmed.
- 14.7 Appendix 1 shows the status each of the current Lovells and Torrington site programmes based on the latest forecasts. Forecasts are revised regularly, and subject to change as additional sites are added or market conditions change.
- 14.8 Borrowing is expected to peak at approximately £13m-15m during the summer of 2024 and the second half of 2025 when construction is taking place at several sites and there is a time delay until private sales are achieved. Overall cash flows turn positive in early 2026 as total sales income is forecast to exceed development and overhead costs. Positive net cash flows will allow the loan to be repaid or enable new sites to be added to the programme. Cashflow is a key indicator for the company and reports are presented to each Board meeting. Following the County Council meeting of 21st February 2022, the shareholder has approved a total loan facility of £35m. To date £14.75m of the facility has been used with a balance remaining (borrowing position) of £9m forecast in March 2024.

Appendix 1a.

	Reserved matters	Site acquisition	Start on site	Finish on site	Final sale	Notes	Estimated return (active sites)
<i>Lovell</i>							
Acle	Jun 20	Mar 20	Nov 20	May 24	Apr 24	On site. Affordable housing complete. 84% of open market units sold.	ROCE 38.7%
Hopton	Oct 20	Jul 21	Mar 21	Jan 26	Jul 26	On site. 39% of open market units sold.	ROCE 28%
Attleborough 1	Feb 22	Dec 22	Aug 22	Mar 24	Mar 24	All sales under contract with housing provider	4.6% (all affordable)
Attleborough 2	tbc	May 24	June 24	Jun 27	Jul 27	Awaiting reserved matters planning determination	
<i>Torrington</i>							
Caister	Feb 21	Jul 23	Aug 23	Oct 24	Dec 24	On site	15%
Lingwood Former School site	Jan 22	Apr 24	Jun 24	May 25	Jun 25	In planning, timing affected by nutrient neutrality	
Hunstanton	Sep 22	Jan 24	Dec 23	Aug 24	Oct 24	On site	15%
Attleborough former school	tbc	Jun 25	July 25	Mar 26	Apr 26	In planning	
Trowse	tbc	Aug 24	Sep 24	May 25	Jul 25	In planning, timing affected by nutrient neutrality	
South Walsham	tbc	Jan 25	Feb 25	May 26	Sep 26	Scheme paused,	
Sedgeford	tbc	Apr 25	May 25	Mar 26	Jun 26	In pre-app for planning	
<i>Norse</i>							
Lingwood Station Rd	tbc	Dec 26	Jan 27	Mar 28	Mar 28	Scheme paused, affected by nutrient neutrality	

Notes: Dates in bold are confirmed
 Lovell scheme returns are measured as a return on capital employed, with a target minimum of 25%.
 Other schemes will assess profit as an on-cost of each scheme, with a target of 15%

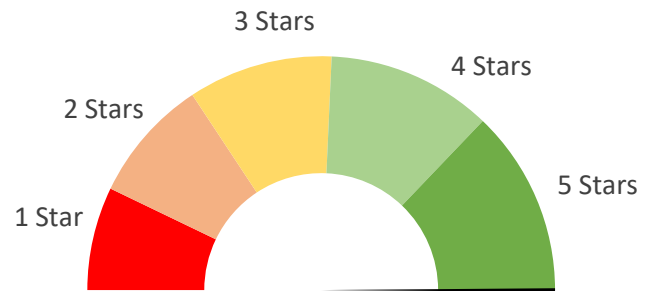
Appendix 1b.

Health & Safety Summary Total Cumulative Figures					
Correct as of November 2023					
	Acle	Hopton	Attleborough (1)	Caister	Hunstanton
Minor	14	6	0	0	0
Major	0	0	0	0	0
RIDDOR	0	0	0	0	0
Fatal	0	0	0	0	0
Combined	14	6	0	0	0

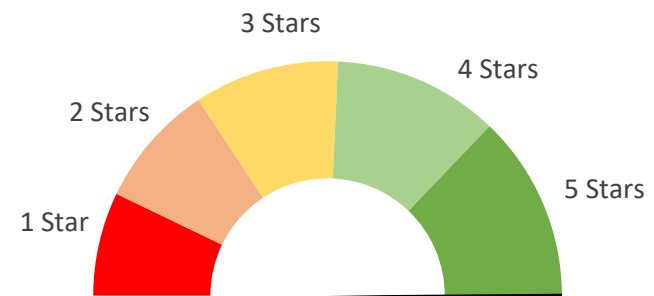
Appendix 1c.

	NHBC 8 Week Survey Summary					
Jan-Dec 2023	Surveys issued	Surveys returned	Response rate	Would Recommend	NPS	Surveys open (minus open investors)
	51	30	59%	100.0%	80.0%	5
	No. of Investors		Total available surveys (minus open investors & released not sold)		Total surveys for year (minus closed and open investors)	
	2		14		58	
	NHBC 8 Week Survey Summary					
Jan-Dec 2023	Surveys issued	Surveys returned	Response rate	Would Recommend	NPS	Surveys open (minus open investors)
	51	30	59%	100.0%	80.0%	5
	No. of Investors		Total available surveys (minus open investors & released not sold)		Total surveys for year (minus closed and open investors)	
	2		14		58	

NHBC 8wk Would Recommend



NHBC 9m Would Recommend



Appendix 2

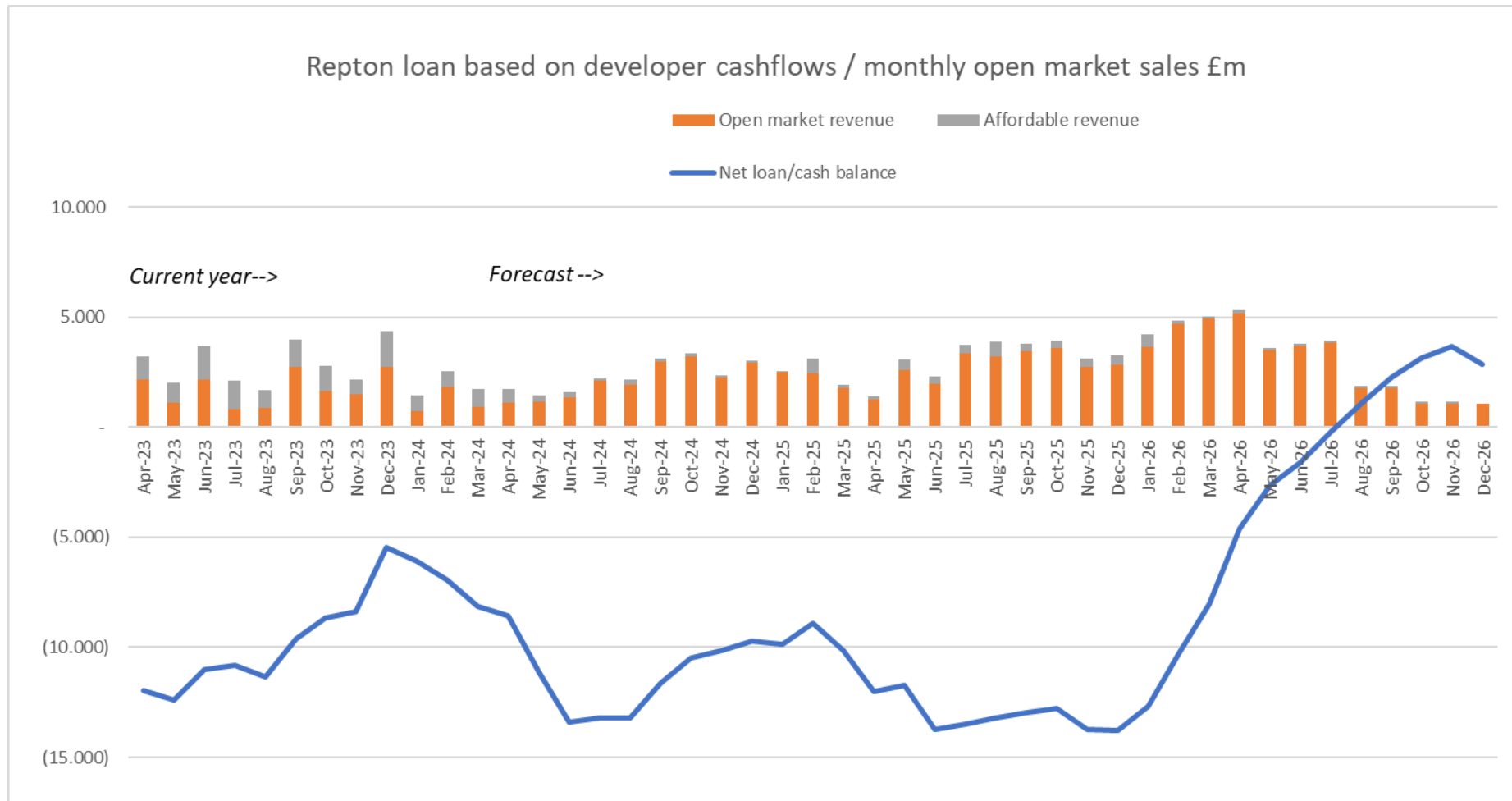
Financial Business Plan Statements

Forecast profit and loss	Mar-23	Mar-24	Mar-25
	£m	£m	£m
	actual	forecast	forecast
Income			
Sales - open market	18.293	18.669	27.683
Sales - affordable	10.810	11.434	1.535
Total income	29.103	30.103	29.218
Cost of sales	27.731	27.748	25.756
Gross profit	1.372	2.355	3.462
Operating expenses			
NCC support including directors	0.350	0.445	0.470
Professional and other fees	0.058	0.054	0.038
Interest not allocated to WIP	0.082	0.263	0.100
Total operating expenses	0.490	0.762	0.608
Net profit	0.882	1.594	2.854
Tax	0.155	0.398	0.714
Profit after tax	0.728	1.195	2.141

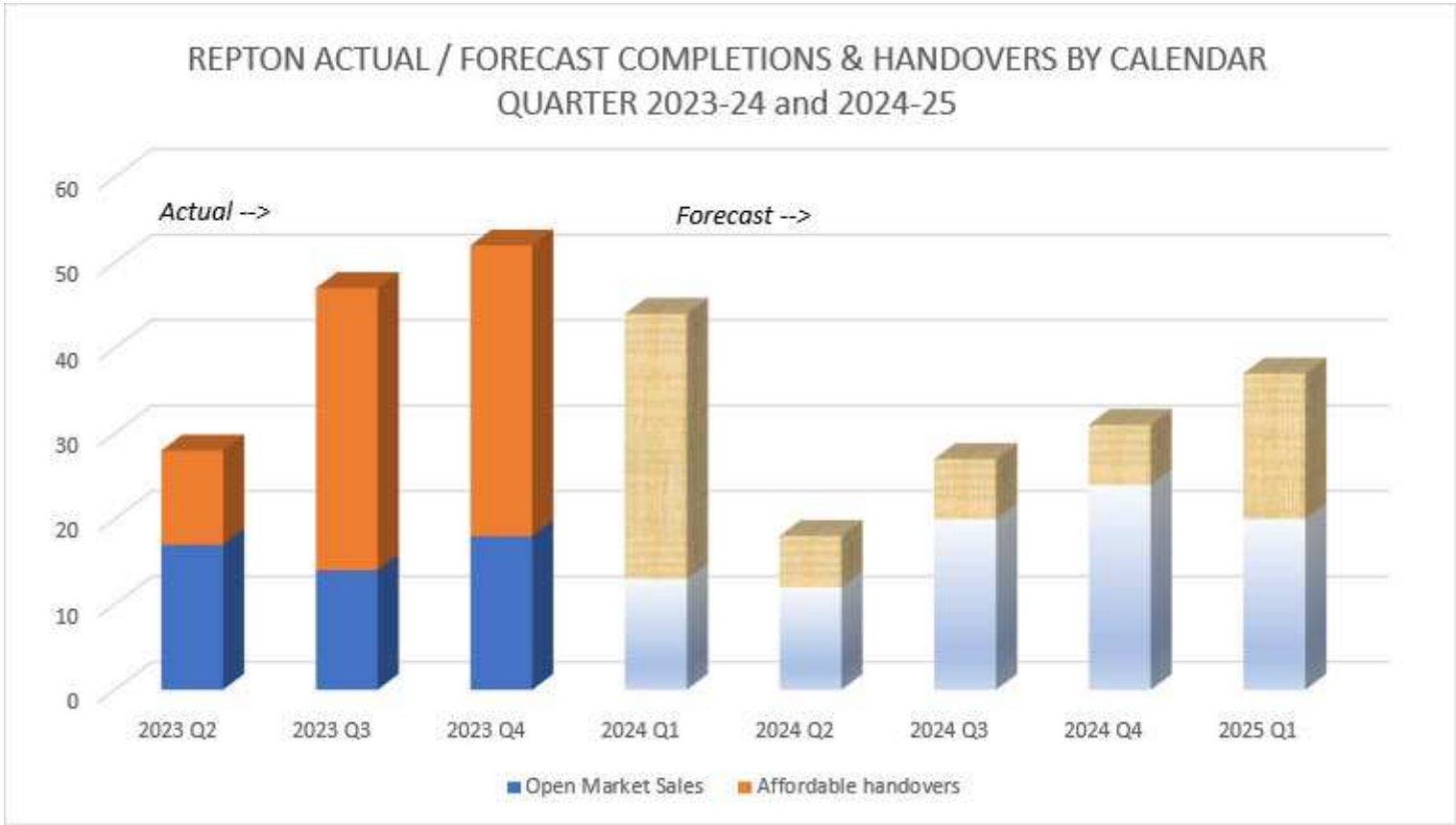
Business Plan Financial Forecasts – Balance Sheet

Forecast Balance Sheet	Mar-23	Mar-24	Mar-25
	£m	£m	£m
	actual	forecast	forecast
Assets			
Current assets			
Bank	0.865	0.514	0.535
Accounts receivable	2.661	0.800	0.152
Work in progress	14.757	13.489	15.196
Refundable deposits held by third parties	2.014	1.851	1.333
Retentions held by third parties	0.924	0.289	0.092
Total assets	21.220	16.944	17.309
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Accounts payable and accruals	2.645	3.879	3.789
House deposits and income in advance	2.841	0.050	0.050
Retentions due to suppliers	-	0.100	0.100
VAT	(0.147)	0.388	0.704
Total current liabilities	5.340	4.418	4.642
Non-current liabilities			
Loan	12.550	9.000	8.000
Total non-current liabilities	12.550	9.000	8.000
Total liabilities	17.890	13.418	12.642
Net assets	3.331	3.526	4.667
Equity			
Capital - ordinary shares	3.500	3.500	3.500
Current and retained earnings – assuming dividend payments	(0.169)	0.026	1.167
Total equity	3.331	3.526	4.667

Business Plan Financial Forecasts – Cashflow



Appendix 3



Appendix 4

Market Analysis

- 1.1. The housebuilding market in Norfolk remains dominated by national and larger regional housebuilders primarily developing along the A11 corridor and within the Greater Norwich sub-region.
- 1.2. In terms of the competition in Norfolk, Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey are the national housebuilders with the largest programs, whilst Barratts, Kier, Hill and Lovells all have sites in the County. Hopkins Homes is the largest of the regional housebuilders, has seen a large expansion in their turnover and were subject to a recent private equity buyout.
- 1.3. Smaller regionals in Norfolk, more on a scale with Repton's aspirations, are Norfolk Homes, Badger Homes and Able Homes.
- 1.4. Housing Associations are relatively recent entrants into the open- market sale sector with Orbit Housing, Clarion, Flagship Housing and Saffron all having significant developments in the region. Housing Associations have, in recent years, taken on a relatively higher proportion of private sale risk and some are now starting to reduce their programmes in light of new market uncertainties, competition for land and S106 requirements driving costs up. Additionally, new Local Authority backed housing development companies, such as Big Sky Living in South Norfolk, are providing much needed housing.
- 1.5. Significant developments have occurred over the last 5 years, particularly post the COVID pandemic, with both unprecedented sales growth and build cost inflation. This has been driven by the increased demand for new homes, coupled with the shortage of labour and increased material prices (predominantly due to increased fuel prices affecting manufacturing and the fact that suppliers have not returned to the output levels pre-COVID).
- 1.6. However, over the past 12 months both sales pace and revenues have been affected nationwide, particularly exacerbated by the lack of a "first-time" buyer product and increased inflation affecting mortgaging lending.
- 1.7. Positively, build costs are likely to settle to more normal levels allowing for greater availability of both labour and materials.
- 1.8. The market has now adapted to the change in Building Regulations (effective from June 2022) which promotes a 31% reduction

of Carbon Emissions in new build dwellings, utilising a fabric first approach, together with the implementation of electric heating systems combined with renewable energy sources. Whilst such changes influence build costs, the slowing sales market has significantly helped to reduce the cost of subcontractors.

- 1.9. The current main cost challenges are focused on adhering to design criteria implemented by Statutory Providers and the requirements of the LLFA around surface water modelling.
- 1.10. The recent slowing of the Sales Market has directly benefited procurement within construction trade, with greater availability of both labour and materials. The true impact is yet to be realised, as both the Sub-Contractor and Main Contractor markets are diminishing (due to insolvency caused by rising costs on fixed priced contracts) reducing competition. Procurement of the more challenging sites could be opportune but being wary of sales stalling effecting the other side of the viability equation.
- 1.11. The recent implementation of Nutrient Neutrality has contributed to the slowing of sites and construction outputs, but Repton is fortunate to have a pipeline which is mostly unaffected. The proposed introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (effective from 12 February 2024) will be a further cost burden and will inevitably erode Land Values.
- 1.12. Repton will take a conservative view of market risk and regular reviews of the current market conditions are undertaken, utilising recent UK housing market updates published by Savills, local intelligence, and the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS). Most important however is the local knowledge of our supply chain.
- 1.13. In respect of target market: A site analysis was undertaken in July 2022 to ascertain data for larger Lovell sites. The St Edmund's Park, Acle site has shown demand is from younger local people wishing to upsize; and older people from the surrounding rural area wishing to move from their larger but older property to newer properties that are easier to look after.
- 1.14. The data for the Land East of Lowestoft Road, Hopton site shows that demand so far is likely to be predominantly from local buyers in the 30-40 age range. Each site in the Repton programme is subject to specific market research from stage 0 and this informs how the site is designed, appraised and taken forward. Some sites may be better suited to an all-affordable product, others may be a high-end sales product. Sensitivity analysis is undertaken for each site to show the effects of changes within the housing market on financial outturns.

Cabinet

Item No:

Report Title: Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property

Date of Meeting: 04 March 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Jane James (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation)

Responsible Director: Grahame Bygrave, (Interim Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A

Executive Summary/Introduction from Cabinet Member

Proposals in this report are aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational needs can be met from elsewhere, and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County.

One of the key actions within the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework is a sharp focus on maximising income through adoption of a more commercial approach to property.

As part of corporate management of property and a systematic approach to reviewing the use and future needs of property assets for service delivery there is a continued emphasis on minimising the extent of the property estate retained for operational purpose. However, on occasion there will be the requirement to acquire or reuse an individual property to support a service to delivers its aims.

By adopting a “single estate” approach within the County Council and sharing property assets with public sector partners through the One Public Estate programme, the Council is aiming to reduce net annual property expenditure.

Consideration is also given to the suitability of surplus property assets for reuse or redevelopment to meet specific service needs that could improve the quality of services for users, address other policy areas and/or improve financial efficiency for the County Council, for example, facilitating the supply of assisted living accommodation and other housing solutions for people requiring care, or undertaking re-development to support jobs and growth.

This means that as well as continuing with the rationalisation of the operational property estate to reduce the number of buildings used by the County Council, a more commercial approach is being adopted over the sale or redeployment of surplus property assets.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is asked:

1.

- a. To delegate authority to the Director of Property, to enter into a lease with Hethel Innovation Ltd to operate and develop Scottow Enterprise Park (1084/013) from 1 April 2024 on the basis set out in this report and in confidential appendix A.
- b. To approve the grant of a 125-year lease of surplus land and building at the former Fakenham High & Sixth Form site (1029/028A) to SEND Academy Trust (SENDAT) and instruct the Director of Property to oversee the completion of the lease on the agreed terms.

2.

- a. To formally declare The Meadow, Cromer (1022/024) surplus to Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
- b. To formally declare Land at Baldock Drive, King's Lynn (2045/014) surplus to Council requirements and:
 - (i) Instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property to Broadland Housing, or
 - (ii) In the event of no satisfactory agreement instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market.In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
- c. To formally declare Norman House, Great Yarmouth (6009/025) surplus to requirements and:
 - (i) Instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property to an Independent Living housing provider, or
 - (ii) In the event of no satisfactory agreement being reached within 18 months of the date of this Cabinet Meeting, instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.

- d. To formally declare Additional Land at St Peter's Farm, Marshland St James (2049/108) surplus to Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.**
- e. To formally declare the Bungalow at Low Farm, Brundall (5013/100) (edged red on the plan) surplus to requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Norfolk County Council (NCC) actively manages its property portfolio in accordance with the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22-2026/27. Property is held principally to support direct service delivery, support policy objectives, held for administrative purposes or to generate income. Property is acquired or disposed of as a reaction to changing service requirements, changing council policies or to improve the efficiency of the overall portfolio.
- 1.2 The County Council challenges the use of its property on an ongoing basis. In the event of a property asset becoming surplus to an individual service need there are internal officer led processes to ascertain whether other service areas have an unmet need that could be addressed by re-using the property asset for that service. This may lead to a change of use of individual properties, for example, an office building may be adapted and reused for operational service delivery. Any proposals for retention are only agreed if supported by a robust business case showing the benefits to the County Council and are funded from approved budgets. This assessment will also consider whether a property could be offered at best consideration to public sector or third sector partners.
- 1.3 The above assessments are carried out by the Corporate Property Officer (the Director of Property) in consultation with the Corporate Property Strategy Group (CPSG). Once it is confirmed there is no further County Council requirement,

Cabinet is asked to formally declare property assets surplus or re-designate for alternative purposes.

- 1.4 The Corporate Property Officer reviews options for maximising income from surplus properties usually by open market sale to obtain the best consideration possible. These will range from selling immediately on the open market (to the bidder making the best offer overall), enhancing the value prior to sale, strategic retention for a longer-term benefit through to direct development of the land and buildings and selling/letting the completed assets, in the expectation of enhanced income for the Council. Most disposals will be by way of tender or auction. In respect of auctions the contract of sale will be formed at the fall of the hammer and where this approach is selected the Corporate Property Officer will determine a reserve below which the property will not be sold. Most disposals will include overage/clawback provisions to enable the council to collect future uplifts in value created by alternative uses.
- 1.5 For properties to be sold immediately there is sometimes a need to consider selling directly to a specific purchaser instead of going to the open market. This may be justified where the third party is in a special purchaser situation and is willing to offer more than the assessed market value. Conversely this might be to a purchaser who is in a unique position of control for the unlocking of the full latent value of the County Council owned site (ransom situation). A direct sale without going to market can also be justified if there are specific service benefits or a special partnership relationship which is of strategic value with service/community benefits.
- 1.6 In making recommendations for direct sale without going to market, or direct property development, the Corporate Property Officer will consider risks, opportunities, service objectives, financial requirements and community benefits.
- 1.7 The recommendations for all disposals, acquisitions and exploitation of NCC property in this report follow detailed assessment by officers of the range of options available. The recommendation for each property is based on existing policies and strategies and judged to provide the best return to the County Council in financial terms and, where appropriate, taking account of community and economic benefits.

2 Proposals

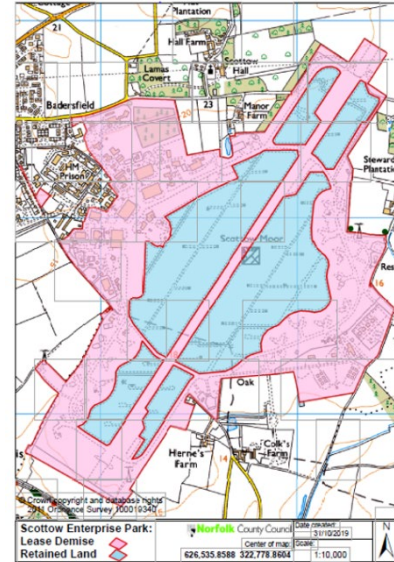
Scottow Enterprise Park (1084/013)

- 2.1 Consideration has been given to what the most suitable arrangements for the operation of the Enterprise Park should be. In particular, to ensure:-
 - The Council's asset continues to be maintained
 - Further development of the site can be taken forward
 - Tenants on site can continue to access business support and advice

- The operation of the site can be placed on an even more commercial footing
- There continues to be a focus on delivery of economic outcomes
- The site can be developed on a way that supports the local economy and community, as far as possible

2.2 In addition, the site is subject to some complex covenant and clawback arrangements with the Ministry of Justice which place some limitations in terms of operation and therefore impacts on the commercial opportunity available. The clawback arrangements expire in January 2037. Until that date, the County Council would need to pay the Ministry of Justice 50% of any uplift in value of the site resulting from a change of use or onward sale. Some of the key actions that would trigger overage are:-

- Disposing of the site or transferring it away from County Council
- Granting leases to tenants that exceed a 7 year term



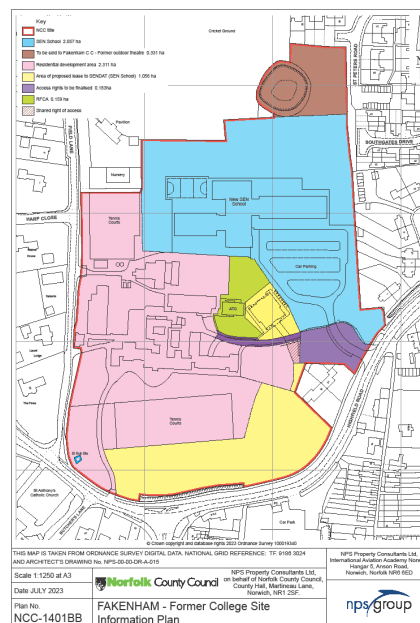
- 2.3 Leasing the site to HIL means that the site would continue to be owned by the County Council, but could be managed and developed by HIL on a more commercial basis, using HIL systems and processes which are already used successfully at Hethel Engineering Centre which is owned and operated by HIL.
- 2.4 The basis of the proposed lease arrangement is set out in the confidential appendix attached
- 2.5 The proposed lease arrangements have been documented in a Heads of Terms document, which has been approved in principle by the HIL Board of Directors and NCC Director of Property.

Fakenham – Land at Wells Road (Former Fakenham High & Sixth Form Site) NR21 9HP (1029/028A)

- 2.6 Cabinet at their meeting on 3 August 2020 declared the land edged red on the plan surplus to Norfolk County Council's requirements and instructed the Director of Property to dispose of it.
- 2.7 Subsequently the County Council has explored disposal options for the site with local stakeholders and has sought to develop a disposal strategy that achieves a mix of local community benefit and financial return for the County Council.

2.8 Consent to dispose of the site has been received from the Secretary of State for Education.

2.9 It is proposed to grant a 125-year lease of the yellow land to the SENDAT academy trust, which operates the adjacent Duke of Lancaster SEN school (shown blue on the plan). The trust proposes to use the land and building to deliver vocational training in horticulture and grounds maintenance to students at the Duke of Lancaster school as well as students from their other SEN schools and to the wider local community, and the lease will restrict use to this purpose. The County Council is supportive of this propose use, which supports its corporate priorities.



2.10 It is proposed to transfer the land and building by granting a supplementary academy lease to SENDAT. This will be co-terminus with the main academy lease for the Duke of Lancaster School and will therefore run for slightly less than 125 years. The County Council is not permitted to charge a rent to an academy trust for use of publicly funded land and therefore a peppercorn rent is proposed. As far as permitted in law, the supplementary academy lease will transfer all property-owning costs and liability to the academy trust.

2.11 The Director of Property considers that the proposed transfer to the SENDAT academy trust represents the most pragmatic and best financial outcome for the Council as it will relieve the Council of future maintenance and legal liabilities for the yellow land and will secure a future use that supports the Council's corporate priorities.

2.12 The Divisional Member has been informed of this proposed disposal.

Cromer – The Meadow (1022/024)

2.13 The property edged red on plan has an area of 1.05 hectares (2.59 acres).

2.14 The property is subject to two leases, one for the land edged blue, the other is for the remainder of the property.

2.15 The leaseholder of the remainder of the property has written to the County Council terminating their lease and returning the property to the County Council. The tenant, North Norfolk District Council, has been responsible for the maintenance of the land but this will revert to the County Council and will be an additional cost for the Council to meet.

2.16 The lease for the land edged blue will remain in place and is not affected.

2.17 The Director of Property has reviewed the property in consultation with CPSG and it has been confirmed that the land is not required for NCC service use.



2.18 Disposal of this will be an open market sale through an auction or by tender.

2.19 The Divisional Member has been informed of this proposed disposal.

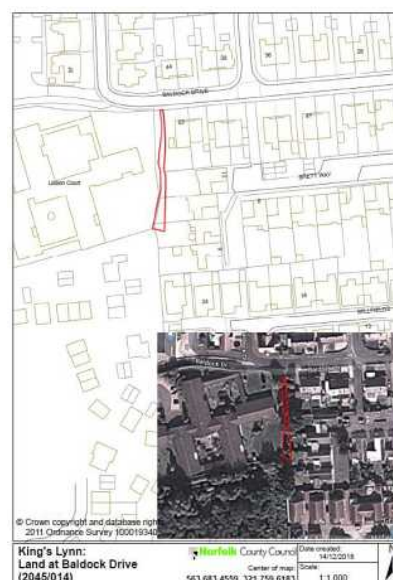
King's Lynn – Land at Baldock Drive (2045/014)

2.20 The property edged red on plan has an area of 0.05 hectares (0.11 acres).

2.21 The property was acquired as part of the adjoining Lisbon Court site but was retained when Lisbon Court was sold in 1997.

2.22 The property consists of a ditch which was recently piped as it was causing erosion to neighbouring properties.

2.23 The Director of Property has reviewed the property in consultation with CPSG and it has been confirmed that the land is not required for NCC service use.



2.24 It is proposed to dispose of the property direct to Broadland Housing, the owner of Lisbon Court. In the event a direct disposal cannot be agreed within 18 months of the date of this Cabinet meeting the property will be offered on the open market through an auction or by tender.

2.25 The Divisional Member has been informed of this proposed disposal.

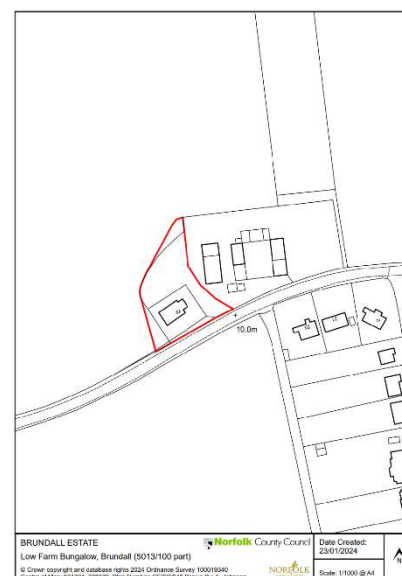
Great Yarmouth – Norman House (6009/025)

- 2.26 The property edged red on plan has an area of 0.34 hectares (0.84 acres).
- 2.27 The property is a former highway depot and the office building is being used by Childrens Services to deliver a frontline service.
- 2.28 The Childrens Service function is being relocated to a County Council owned property to co-locate with other public sector services.
- 2.29 The Director of Property has reviewed the property in consultation with CPSG and it has been confirmed that the property is not required for NCC service use.
- 2.30 It is proposed to dispose of the property to an Independent Living housing provider through a closed-market tender exercise. In the event an agreement cannot be agreed within 18 months of the date of this Cabinet meeting the property will be offered on the open market through an auction or by tender.
- 2.31 The Divisional Member has been informed of this proposed disposal.



Bungalow, Low Farm, Brundall (5013/100)

- 2.32 The property was let to the previous tenant under a 21 year and one day lease and was handed back to the council on the 31st January 2024 it is now surplus to requirements.
- 2.33 The property extends to 0.36ac including bungalow, garden, shed and access. NCC will retain a right of access to the adjacent arable field.
- 2.34 Given the location of the bungalow it does not form part of the agricultural estate and would not support County Farms future delivery.
- 2.35 The Director of Property has reviewed the property in consultation with CPSG and it has been confirmed that the land is not required for NCC service use.



2.36 Disposal of this will be an open market sale through an auction or by tender.

2.37 The Divisional Member has been informed of this proposed disposal.

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 Releasing surplus land holdings and buildings no longer required for service use will contribute to reducing costs and provides the potential for capital receipts. for the council to support the capital programme and hence service delivery. The County Council will apply the capital receipts to meet its priorities.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 Declaring the sites and land holdings surplus to County Council use means that the Corporate Property Team can consider options for the disposal and exploitation of these sites.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 Declaring sites and land holdings surplus is a result of the sites no longer being required for service delivery. The alternative would be to retain resulting in incurring holding costs for an asset that is not contributing to service delivery.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 Disposals outlined in this report will provide the opportunity for capital receipts and savings in holding costs.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 **Staff:** Nil

7.2 **Property:** As described in the earlier parts of this report.

7.3 **IT:** Nil.

8. Other Implications

8.1 **Legal Implications:** For disposals in the usual way the legal implications are around the parties agreeing to the terms of the agreement for each disposal.

8.2 The proposed lease transfers many of the legal risks associated with operating the site to HIL. NCC will discharge its remaining legal duties as freeholder through effective management of the lease with HIL and through representation on the HIL Board. The original 2013 acquisition placed a number of onerous legal

obligations on NCC (e.g. overage and clawback etc), and these remain with NCC to manage.

8.3 Human Rights Implications: No implications.

8.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): No specific EqIA has been undertaken in respect of the cases in this report.

8.5 Data Protection Impact Assessments: No data protection impact implications in respect of the cases in this report.

8.6 Health and Safety implications: No implications for the cases in this report.

8.7 Sustainability implications: Future possible redevelopment of disposed sites will require planning permission and therefore would be mindful of sustainability measures.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The risks around disposals are around the non-agreement of terms. This risk is mitigated using experienced expert consultants.

10. Recommendations

10.1 Cabinet is asked:

1.

- a. To delegate authority to the Director of Property, to enter into a new lease with Hethel Innovation Ltd to operate and develop Scottow Enterprise Park for 7 years (less 1 day), to commence any time before 31 March 2027, on the basis set out in this report and in confidential appendix A.**
- b. To approve the grant of a 125-year lease of surplus land and building at the former Fakenham High & Sixth Form site (1029/028A) to SEND Academy Trust (SENDAT) and instruct the Director of Property to oversee the completion of the lease on the agreed terms.**

2.

- a. To formally declare The Meadow, Cromer (1022/024) surplus to Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.**
- b. To formally declare Land at Baldock Drive, King's Lynn (2045/014) surplus to Council requirements and:**
 - i) Instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property to Broadland Housing, or**

- ii) In the event of no satisfactory agreement instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
- c. To formally declare Norman House, Great Yarmouth (6009/025) surplus to requirements and:
 - i) Instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property to an Independent Living housing provider, or
 - ii) In the event of no satisfactory agreement being reached within 18 months of the date of this Cabinet Meeting, instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
- d. To formally declare Additional Land at St Peter's Farm, Marshland St James (2049/108) surplus to Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
- e. To formally declare the Bungalow at Low Farm, Brundall (5013/100) (edged red on the plan) surplus to requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property on the open market. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Director of Strategic Finance and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.

Officer Contact: If you have any questions about matters contained within this paper, please get in touch with:

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