

Norfolk County Council

Minutes of the Meeting Held at 10am on Monday 21 September 2020

Present:

Cllr Tony Adams	Cllr Keith Kiddie (Chair)
Cllr Tim Adams	Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Cllr Steffan Aquarone	Cllr Brian Long
Cllr Stephen Askew	Cllr Ian Mackie
Cllr Jess Barnard	Cllr Ed Maxfield
Cllr David Bills	Cllr Graham Middleton
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cllr Joe Mooney
Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton	Cllr Steve Morphew
Cllr Sarah Butikofer	Cllr George Nobbs
Cllr Penny Carpenter (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Judy Oliver
Cllr Mick Castle	Cllr Rhodri Oliver
Cllr Stuart Clancy	Cllr Greg Peck
Cllr Kim Clipsham	Cllr Graham Plant
Cllr David Collis	Cllr Richard Price
Cllr Ed Connolly	Cllr Andrew Proctor
Cllr Emma Corlett	Cllr Will Richmond
Cllr Stuart Dark	Cllr Dan Roper
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cllr David Rowntree
Cllr Nigel Dixon	Cllr Chrissie Rumsby
Cllr Danny Douglas	Cllr Mike Sands
Cllr Phillip Duigan	Cllr Eric Seward
Cllr Tim East	Cllr Carl Smith
Cllr John Fisher	Cllr Mike Smith-Clare
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cllr Bev Spratt
Cllr Colin Foulger	Cllr Sandra Squire
Cllr Andy Grant	Cllr Barry Stone
Cllr Ron Hanton	Cllr Margaret Stone
Cllr David Harrison	Cllr Martin Storey
Cllr Chenery of Horsbrugh	Cllr Marie Strong
Cllr Harry Humphrey	Cllr Haydn Thirtle
Cllr Brian Iles	Cllr Vic Thomson
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cllr John Timewell
Cllr Terry Jermy	Cllr Karen Vincent
Cllr Brenda Jones	Cllr Colleen Walker
Cllr Chris Jones	Cllr John Ward
Cllr Alexandra Kemp	Cllr Brian Watkins
	Cllr Tony White
	Cllr Fran Whymark
	Cllr Martin Wilby
	Cllr Sheila Young

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Roy Brame; Cllr Claire Bowes; Cllr Ed Colman; Cllr Fabian Eagle; Cllr Shelagh Gurney; Cllr Thomas Smith and Cllr Alison Thomas.

1 Minutes

- 1.1 The minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 20 July 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman as soon as possible.

2 Chairman's Announcements

- 2.1 The Chairman highlighted that he had hosted a small Battle of Britain Commemoration on Monday 14 September 2020. Due to the restrictions caused by Covid-19 the event had been filmed and was available to view on YouTube at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhlxukY7lsg>
- 2.2 The Chairman announced the sad passing of John Perry-Warnes, County Councillor for Holt Division until 2013, who had passed away on 6 September 2020 aged 87 years. Mr Perry-Warnes had also served on the Norfolk Police Authority and the Board of Governors of Gresham's School. Council held a minute of silence as a mark of respect.
- 2.3 The Chairman, on behalf of Council, thanked all Councillors and staff at Norfolk County Council for their hard work in the recent difficult times.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

4 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5 Questions to Leader of the Council

5.1 Question from Cllr Emma Corlett

Cllr Corlett stated that the national system for booking covid-19 tests was in meltdown and asked the Leader how many wasted appointments there had been at Norfolk testing centres in the past four weeks; how could Norfolk residents access a walk-through test site so people who didn't own a car were not excluded and did he agree with those calling for Norfolk to be excluded from any national lockdown.

The Leader replied the national testing system had experienced some serious problems which had been admitted by Government Ministers and the situation needed to improve so anyone who needed a test if they were experiencing symptoms of covid-19, could access a test and receive the results quickly.

The Leader said that he didn't have the figures for the number of wasted appointments but would look into the possibility of finding out.

Regarding the second part of the question, the Leader said that Norfolk people had generally been good at following the guidelines and, apart from the recent Banham Poultry outbreak, there had been a low incidence of infection in Norfolk and any risks throughout the rest of the country would need to be mitigated.

The Leader continued that Norfolk's economy was still in a fragile state and everything possible needed to be done to support it, although it was recognised the country was currently at a critical point in the pandemic and that the evidence and guidelines across the whole of the UK to prevent the spread of the virus in communities needed to be followed.

5.2 Question from Cllr Dan Roper

Cllr Roper asked what explanation the leader had received for the reported problems and the fall in the availability of tests within the county and was he able to provide any assurances from the information he had received that the situation would improve and if he had, when.

The Leader replied that from a local point of view pressure was needed to ensure Norfolk received the tests it required. Regarding assurances, the Leader responded that, through the Public Health Team, work was being carried out to ensure we received what was needed, not just in Norfolk but across the whole of the country.

5.3 Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield

Cllr Maxfield stated, in this new world of virtual meetings, that it was important everyone had confidence in the way we worked. He asked if the Leader would agree that the permanent record of all votes taken formally should show how individual Councillors had voted, as this would show complete transparency and avoid any need for long-winded recorded votes.

The Leader replied that everyone was still getting used to the new technology and the virtual meetings being attended on a day by day basis and he agreed that there had been a lot of time spent on voting at the Council meeting in July 2020. The Leader continued that recent training sessions had been held about the use of a new voting system, which was quite straight forward and that the new system was going to be used during the meeting, which should speed up proceedings and was also open and transparent.

5.3 Question from Cllr Rhodri Oliver

Cllr Oliver asked if the Leader would join him in praising and commending the excellent work of the Public Health team in reducing the impact of the Banham Poultry outbreak of covid-19 on residents in his constituency and across the whole of Norfolk.

The Leader thanked Cllr Oliver for the role he had played during the Banham Poultry outbreak which was in his division, adding that everyone had recognised the prompt and effective response made by the Public Health team led by the Director of Public Health, Dr Louise Smith. He added that all parties had worked closely with Banham Poultry, Public Health England, the local District Councils

and regional and national partners to control the outbreak and support the business and the staff involved.

The Leader continued that the staff deployed had worked long hours to arrange for the testing of the large workforce, detailed data analysis, specialist advice and to support Banham Poultry staff who needed to self-isolate, which included delivering medicines and testing kits to their homes where required.

The Leader added that Norfolk had appeared on the Government watch-list, although it no longer did, and that the rates of coronavirus in the county had gone down. However, the Leader urged for this not to lead to complacency and that the numbers needed continual daily monitoring. In summing up, the Leader stated that Norfolk County Council and its Partners had all responded at pace and worked extremely hard to provide a timely and excellent response at Banham Poultry. He added that remembering the slogan “Protect Yourself, Protect Others, Protect Norfolk” which was part of Norfolk’s overall approach to covid-19, together with the phrase “hands, face and space” would help keep communities safe.

5.4 Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp

Cllr Kemp stated that she had written to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk and the Chief Constable because Norfolk County Council had passed an Order which would put the public at risk by letting dangerous drivers go free and also put a generation at risk of flooding. She asked if the Leader realised these decisions were the worst decisions in King’s Lynn since the incinerator and what he was going to do about the situation.

The Leader responded by saying that Cllr Kemp was reiterating various emails she had sent and which had been responded to. He added that everything had been done correctly, and there was certainly no issue about a cover-up and no question that any traffic orders violated any laws. He added that everything had been done by the book in his view and would continue to do so, and that he hoped Cllr Kemp would now recognise this.

5.5 Question from Cllr Jess Barnard

Cllr Barnard said over the last few weeks, there had been some rhetoric that young people were to blame for the increase in cases of covid-19. She added that young people made up young carers and they had been front-line workers throughout the crisis by stocking shelves and working in low paid conditions without PPE and asked if the Leader would make it very clear that Norfolk County Council rejected the scapegoating of young people and that we appreciated their efforts during, and throughout, the crisis.

The Leader replied that he didn’t think anyone was trying to apportion any blame, but that it was a recognition of fact in that everyone was trying to play their part in fighting the pandemic. The actual situation was representative of the way people worked and lived and he didn’t subscribe to the view that any group was being stigmatised, although he urged everyone to follow the guidelines in washing hands, social distancing etc. and said if everyone followed those guidelines which were there to be followed, we would get through this pandemic.

5.6 Question from Cllr Sarah Butikofer

Cllr Butikofer wished to pass on her condolences to the family of the late John

Perry Warnes, who had been a fantastic councillor and a real community servant.

Cllr Butikofer said that she had recently attended a meeting of Local Government Leaders where the Prime Minister had confirmed that local authorities were crucial in the fight against the virus and were completely indispensable to the country. She added that later in that week, Cllrs had been told the social care white paper was being delayed again and the funding review was still awaited. She asked if the Leader would agree with her, that now was not the right time for local government reorganisation and devolution.

The Leader replied that it was recognised Local Authorities were crucial, and had been crucial, to the response of the pandemic and were indispensable. He added that it was regrettable that the comprehensive spending review and the social care white paper had been delayed, which put upper tier authorities in a difficult financial position, particularly regarding social care provision.

With regard to devolution and local government reorganisation, the Leader stated that Council would be considering a motion later in the meeting, and that he had no problem with devolution. He continued that he would like to investigate if there were ways that authorities could work together to achieve a devolution deal for the county and possibly further afield that could offer real benefits. He added that his particular view about devolution and reorganisation was “did we really want to set ourselves on a path of navel gazing on local government reform to deliver what”, adding that the most important thing was to continue to provide services for our communities for the future.

5.7 **Question from Cllr Sandra Squire**

Cllr Squire asked if the Leader could confirm if he had been told whether it was not possible for Norfolk to have just one county-wide unitary authority.

The Leader replied that now was not the right time to use scarce resources to reorganise councils, although there had been some interesting reports about financial implications from PWC. He added that he would rather wait for the White Paper to be published, then respond to the White Paper to ensure we had the right approach to the government policy in the future.

6 Cabinet Recommendations from the meetings held on 3 August and 7 September 2020.

6.1 There were no recommendations for Council to consider from these meetings.

7. Cabinet Report (Questions to Cabinet Members)

Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader and Chairman of Cabinet, moved the report of the meetings held on 3 August and 7 September 2020. Council **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the report.

7.1 **Question from Cllr Brenda Jones to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.**

Cllr Jones stated that, on 18 September 2020 the People & Communities Select Committee considered the Adult Social Care Winter and Resilience Planning and the Carers Charter Working Group reports. At the meeting, Cllr Rumsby had asked why the Cabinet Member hadn't attended the meeting and was informed

by the Chair that the Cabinet Member had been invited but had chosen to attend a meeting of the Conservative Group. Cllr Jones asked if the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention would explain why he had chosen to prioritise a political meeting over a Select Committee which was discussing the health and wellbeing of Norfolk.

The Cabinet Member explained that the meeting he had attended had been arranged before he had been asked to attend the Select Committee meeting and given the conflict of having two meetings at the same time, he had reluctantly attended the meeting invitation which he had already accepted.

7.2 Question from Cllr Brian Watkins to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.

Cllr Watkins asked when a report on the Government funding received by Norfolk County Council for the discharge of patients with learning disabilities or autism, or both, from mental health hospitals into the community in Norfolk would be received by the Select Committee.

The Cabinet Member responded that no date had yet been set for such a report.

7.3 Question from Cllr Mick Castle to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Cllr Castle stated that after years of lobbying by the A47 Alliance and the Local Enterprise Partnership and others, Highways England was now ruling out the dualling of the Acle Straight for at least another decade. He asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that we would have been in a better position if local councils had embraced the Norfolk and Suffolk devolution deal in 2016, which had given an agreement enshrining infrastructure priorities and guaranteeing £700m to pay for them, which was a lost opportunity.

The Cabinet Member responded that the Acle Straight, along with the dualling of the Tilney to West Winch part of the A47 had been the main priorities of Norfolk County Council and the A47 Alliance for RIS2 schemes for some time. Lobbying to improve the A47 had been made by MP's, Archant, businesses along the A47, the Chamber of Trade as well as the LEP and Norfolk County Council for the dualling of the entire A47 from Lowestoft to Peterborough. Regarding the point made about the proposed Norfolk/Suffolk devolution deal in 2016, there may have been opportunities, but devolution hadn't happened.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that one of Norfolk County Council's priorities was to make infrastructure better in Norfolk, including the Norwich Western Link; the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing and the Long Stratton Bypass, along with dualling the whole of the A47 to support connectivity from the midlands to Norfolk's energy coast and also improve the safety of the road, particularly the Acle Straight.

The Cabinet Member stated that he did not accept that the Acle Straight couldn't be part of the funding for RIS3 projects and said he looked forward to working with Cllr Castle and other Members and the A47 Alliance to lobby for its inclusion in RIS3 projects.

The Cabinet Member thanked Cllr Castle for his continued support for infrastructure projects and assured Council that he would continue to lobby to

get improvements to the infrastructure across the whole of Norfolk.

7.4 Question from Cllr Graham Plant to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Cllr Plant referred to the A47 and Acle Straight, highlighting his annoyance that Highways England had received £300m from the government in 2014 to fund improvements, yet no work had commenced. He added that he felt it was unacceptable to hear that Highways England had made a decision that the Acle Straight was not to be included before any consultation had taken place. Cllr Plant asked if the Cabinet Member would write to Highways England, asking them how they had made such a decision, and if he would also write to MP's to lobby Highways England. Cllr Plant also highlighted that if, since 2014, the five elements of the A47 had been dualled, additional traffic of approximately £500m would have been received in Norfolk.

The Cabinet Member replied that he was aware that the additional funding had been allocated for the improvements on the A47 and regarding the points made about the economy, better infrastructure was very important to Norfolk's economy to give easier access to the energy coast at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft by offering better connectivity to the Midlands as well as improving road safety for all users. The Cabinet Member said he shared the frustrations and agreed to write to Highways England to ask them how they considered Acle Straight could not be included in RIS3 projects. He added that he would also write to MP's to lobby the Roads Minister and Highways England to ensure the money that had already been allocated to improve the A47 was utilised to complete the works, as well as securing funding to complete the dualing of the Acle Straight.

7.5 Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare to Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Cllr Smith-Clare asked, with the real risk of future lockdowns, what the Cabinet Member was doing to ensure all families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities received the full support and assistance they needed as many families were understandably exhausted and burnt-out.

The Cabinet Member replied that a robust system was in operation to support all special needs schools, with Area Coordinators in place. He confirmed that he was fully aware of the pressures on families and that they would continue to receive the full support they had been receiving throughout the pandemic.

7.6 Question from Cllr Tim Adams to Cllr Andy Grant, Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste.

Cllr Adams stated that he had received a number of complaints following the waste amnesty days at Mayton Woods Recycling Centre, about the chaos in terms of traffic and getting into the site in a reasonable timescale. He added that this was not the fault of staff but given the demand it was apparent further planning was required on amnesty days. He asked if the Cabinet Member would give some consideration to instigating a booking system at recycling centres in future.

The Cabinet Member replied that booking systems tended to be the least workable solution as sometimes people missed their slot; turned up early and

formed queues; turned up late and then tried to get back into the queue. Other authorities had tried booking systems which had proved unsuccessful. He added that amnesty days had been extended and that anyone who was in a queue would be able to dispose of their waste. As the service was extremely popular it was a case of managing each situation individually, adding that traffic management would be in place at sites on future amnesty days to help ease traffic movements.

7.7 Question from Cllr Sandra Squire to Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Cabinet Member for Finance

Cllr Squire asked if the Cabinet Member could tell her the average yearly cost of the three Political Assistants.

The Cabinet Member replied that budget proposals were still being developed and all possible measures to cover the current budget deficit currently were being considered. He added that the approximate cost was just above £100k. He clarified that, following a review by the Association of Democratic Services Officers, a number of recommendations had been made which were currently being considered to review the service to investigate if it could be operated in a more modern way in future. He added that Group Leaders would be fully informed about any proposals.

7.8 Question from Cllr Carl Smith to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.

Cllr Smith asked if the Cabinet Member could confirm that he had worked closely with Independence Matters to ensure there was the least disruption to the service as possible.

The Cabinet Member responded that Norfolk County Council had been briefed on the announcement that Independence Matters was closing 5 of its 17 sites and as a result of that decision, a team of officers had been established to contact all service users, whether they were funded by Norfolk County Council or not. Discussions were taking place to facilitate the wishes of service users and he added that he was pleased this was the case to help ensure they received the service which was right for them.

7.9 Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton to Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Cllr Brociek-Coulton asked how many Norfolk Schools had confirmed a covid-19 outbreak and what the current percentage of teachers and students having to isolate was.

The Cabinet Member replied that he didn't have those figures to hand, although he knew there were a number of staff within Norfolk who were self-isolating because of symptoms within their families or because they had symptoms themselves. He added that there were a couple of schools that had taken extra precautions because of a potential outbreak and he would try to ascertain the figures and circulate these after the meeting.

7.10 Question from Cllr Sarah Butikofer to Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Cllr Butikofer referred to the outdoor learning facility run by Norfolk County Council at Holt Hall and said that, although she understood the funding

challenges faced, she was dismayed at the way the future of Holt Hall, which was an important centre of learning, was being considered. Cllr Butikofer asked what reassurance the Cabinet Member could give her and Norfolk residents, that everything possible would be done to maintain the facility.

The Cabinet Member replied that the future of Holt Hall and Whitlingham Outdoor Learning centres was currently out for consultation. The consultation had commenced in March 2020, stopped during the lockdown and then recommenced in July 2020. He added that no statements could be made at the current time due to the consultation, although he reassured Council that all consultation responses would be considered before any final decision was made.

7.11 Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.

Cllr Maxfield referred to an email from the Disability Network Norfolk Group to the Cabinet Member, which had been copied to all Councillors, about the closure of the Independence Matters Service. The DNNG had asked a number of specific questions and quoted the ones which had not been answered by the Cabinet Member in his answer to Cllr Carl Smith's question:

- Will the Cabinet Member guarantee that service users would attend their new day service for the same amount of hours as they had with Independence Matters?
- If transport costs are increased, would Norfolk County Council fund the increase?
- Are there any other Independence Matters day service sites that were under threat?

Cllr Maxfield added that he didn't know if the Cabinet Member had replied to DNNG yet, but asked if the Cabinet Member would take the opportunity to address those concerns to Council.

The Cabinet Member replied that he had responded to the letter from the Disability Norfolk Network Group and that it was up to them if they wished to share his response.

Regarding the other points raised, the Cabinet Member said that the County Council was working with users to find them suitable alternative provision, which may be the same as it was now, or it may differ depending on the wishes of the service user. He added that due to the new model which was being offered, and which had received cross-party support at a recent Scrutiny Committee meeting, three different pathways were being offered:

1. Wellbeing pathway, providing meaningful activities, social support and care for those with the most complex needs. This was an enhanced level of service over and above that offered in the majority of the centres.
2. Promoting independence and supporting people to develop life skills and access to community provision and services.
3. Skills and employment, supporting people to obtain paid work.

The Cabinet Member continued that the menu of choices for service users had been supported cross-party and was leading to a change in demand for

traditional day services offered and could be one of the reasons Independence Matters was changing their offer. He added that Independence Matters offered 17 sites, and not all the sites were closing and they would continue to deliver services to vulnerable people, which Norfolk County Council was keen to support.

The Cabinet Member also added that, as Independence Matters was an independent service provider, he could not answer questions about possible future closures of sites, although he could reiterate that Norfolk County Council worked with all providers to ensure a service was available for everyone who needed it.

Council was also advised that, as the County Council had been keen to protect the financial viability of service providers throughout the pandemic, Independence Matters had received in full, a grant from Norfolk County Council to cover the cost of the service users, even though they could not attend their services due to social distancing and this meant service providers should not have suffered financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

The Cabinet Member said he looked forward to seeing a healthy and vibrant number of options and providers available after the pandemic, which would provide the best services to protect vulnerable people who wanted to use them.

- 7.11.1 As a point of correction, the Chair of Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Steve Morphew, highlighted the full resolution of the Scrutiny Committee:
- That the Scrutiny Committee agree with the ambitions and the general direction of travel behind the Cabinet decision but would advise Cabinet (and service department) to consider the following issues when implementing the decision:
 - That there should be more co-production in areas such as the service specification, the monitoring arrangements and the reviews of the pilots. This will enable these issues to be better addressed when the implementation is planned and carried out and for the monitoring and review of pilots to be genuine co-productions.
 - That a way should be found to strengthen and improve the flow of information on learning disability issues to Councillors generally.
 - That a full briefing on the outcomes of the pilots should go to the People and Communities Select Committee so as to strengthen strategy development (perhaps through a Working Group of the Select Committee that is already looking into these issues).
 - That, because of concerns about the scale of change for service users, their carers and providers, the new services should be up and running before existing services and contracts are changed.
- 7.11.2 In reply to Cllr Morphew's statement, the Cabinet Member reiterated that the overview and monitoring issues agreed by Scrutiny Committee had been adopted by Cabinet, and reiterated that there was cross-party support for the service.
- 7.12 **Question from Cllr Stuart Dark to Cllr Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management**

Cllr Dark asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that the start of work to build 137 new homes in Acle demonstrated the ambition to build much needed homes for the hard-working people of Norfolk, as well as bringing in revenue to the Council.

The Cabinet Member replied that work had started at Acle and of those 137 homes, 42 would be affordable rent; 26 shared ownership and 69 private sale, which meant 50% of the sites would be affordable homes, exceeding the minimum requirement. He added that there had been a surge in demand in Norfolk for homes since covid-19 which could be seen as a way of ensuring young Norfolk families were not priced out of the market. He continued that the remit of Repton Homes was not only to provide housing for Norfolk but it was also to provide a return to the County Council, as its shareholder. He also added that Repton Homes was a viable business and had five more sites in the pipeline which would provide a further 440 homes. The next site for development was to provide 200 houses at Hopton for which planning approval was likely to be received soon; two smaller sites at Caister and Lingwood were also awaiting planning approval and it was expected two other sites would follow after November 2020. Repton Homes was also looking for further development opportunities in all areas of the county and he hoped the information reassured Council that Repton was delivering on its remit.

7.13 Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Cllr Kemp stated that in her opinion, King's Lynn residents were being treated as third class citizens because of the West Winch by-pass. She continued that £205m had been secured for the Norwich Distributor Road; £98m for the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing but after seven years, no funding had been received for the West Winch by-pass and that the A10 had been refused funding by the Government. She felt it was a problem that the Conservative group didn't know how to challenge the government because there had been an agreement for 350 houses to be built at West Winch before the bypass was completed, and she also felt that the Cabinet Member was being bullied by government. Cllr Kemp stated that the West Norfolk Infrastructure Group comprised of only Conservative Group Members and asked for that membership to change so the government could be challenged on the issues she had raised.

The Cabinet Member replied that a Working Group had been established to look at highways and infrastructure in west Norfolk, although it was the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk who agreed their membership of the group. The Terms of Reference for the Working Group clearly set out the membership and therefore Cllr Kemp should ask the Borough Council to look into this. He added that he didn't accept he was being bullied by anyone.

8. Committee Reports

8.1 Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 22 July and 19 August 2020.

Cllr Steve Morphew, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.2 Corporate Select Committee meeting held on 13 July 2020.

Cllr Karen Vincent, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the

report.

8.3 **Infrastructure & Development Select Committee meeting held on 15 July 2020.**

Barry Stone, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.4 **People & Communities Select Committee meeting held on 17 July 2002.**

Cllr Ed Connolly, on behalf of Cllr Shelah Gurney, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.5 **Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 30 July and 3 September 2020.**

Cllr Penny Carpenter, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.6 **Health & Wellbeing Board meeting held on 8 July 2002.**

Cllr Bill Borrett, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.7 **Audit Committee meeting held on 30 July 2020.**

Cllr Ian Mackie, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.8 **Planning (Regulatory) Committee meetings held on 31 July, 21 August and 4 September 2020.**

Cllr Colin Foulger moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.9 **Standards Committee meeting held on 27 July 2020.**

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.10 **Joint Museums Committee meeting held on 7 August 2020.**

Cllr John Ward, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

9. **Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees (Standard Item).**

9.1 Council **RESOLVED** to note the following change made under delegated powers since the last meeting:

Planning (Regulatory) Committee

Cllr Bev Spratt to replace Cllr Stephen Askew on the Planning (Regulatory) Committee.

Cllr Askew to replace Cllr Spratt as a substitute Member on Planning (Regulatory) Committee.

10. Notice of Motions

- 10.1 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Ed Maxfield and seconded by Cllr Sandra Squire:

Norfolk's natural environment is one of the County's most valuable assets. Every year schools, community groups, businesses and individuals get the chance to show how they are making a positive difference to their local environment through the Council's Eco Awards. The current budget for the Awards is just £5,500 including contributions from sponsors and from Norwich City Council. We can do more to unlock the power of local innovation by adding an 'Environmental Dragon's Den' to the Awards programme with a substantial reward for the best idea that can be rolled out across the county. Accordingly we call on the County Council to:

- Actively seek contributions to the prize fund from the Districts that are not currently contributing to the Eco Awards
- Create a new £10,000 prize to the Eco Awards to support ideas that can be scaled up to make a difference across the county

Include this new prize in the 2021 Eco Awards programme as a trial with a view to making it a permanent feature of the awards.

- 10.1.1 The following amendment was proposed by Cllr Andy Grant and seconded by Cllr Barry Stone:

Norfolk's natural environment is one of the County's most valuable assets. Every year schools, community groups, businesses and individuals get the chance to show how they are making a positive difference to their local environment through the Council's Eco Awards. The current budget for the Awards is just £5,500 including contributions from sponsors and from Norwich City Council. We can do more to unlock the power of local innovation by adding an 'Environmental Dragon's Den' to the Awards programme with a substantial reward for the best idea that can be rolled out across the county. ~~Accordingly we call on the County Council to:~~

Council resolves to:

- **Introduce a new Nature Recovery Award that will replace the Eco and Biodiversity Awards.**
- **Work to an Environment Plan that sets targets for protecting our environment.**
- ~~— Actively seek contributions to the prize fund from the Districts that are not currently contributing to the Eco Awards~~
- ~~— Create a new £10,000 prize to the Eco Awards to support ideas that can be scaled up to make a difference across the county~~
- ~~- Include this new prize in the 2021 Eco Awards programme as a trial with a view to making it a permanent feature of the awards.~~

- 10.1.2 As proposer of the original motion, Cllr Ed Maxfield accepted the amendment which

became the substantive motion.

- 10.1.3 Following debate and upon being put to a vote with 69 votes in favour, 0 votes against and 1 abstention, the motion was **CARRIED**:
- 10.1.4 Norfolk's natural environment is one of the County's most valuable assets. Every year schools, community groups, businesses and individuals get the chance to show how they are making a positive difference to their local environment through the Council's Eco Awards. The current budget for the Awards is just £5,500 including contributions from sponsors and from Norwich City Council. We can do more to unlock the power of local innovation by adding an 'Environmental Dragon's Den' to the Awards programme with a substantial reward for the best idea that can be rolled out across the county.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

- Introduce a new Nature Recovery Award that will replace the Eco and Biodiversity Awards.
- Work to an Environment Plan that sets targets for protecting our environment.

- 10.2 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Andrew Proctor and seconded by Cllr Steve Morpew:

Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper

This Council recognises that there are immediate and serious challenges facing councils and the communities we represent, including:

- Covid-19 is still with us and will be for some time, as will the costs of tackling it.
- The economic impact of the pandemic will have profound and lasting effects on our communities and will flow through into additional pressures on our core budgets.
- Local economies will have to be rebuilt and revitalised through collective effort and collaboration.

This Council, therefore, welcomes the opportunity the Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper may offer in devolving greater fiscal freedoms and powers to local areas to support the levelling up of the economy and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

This Council Notes:

- Norfolk's response to the pandemic has proven how well councils and partners can work together and has underlined the transformative role we can play to support our communities and economies if given the freedom to deliver.
- An open, transparent and structured approach to devolution presents an opportunity to deliver more effective services for residents, build a stronger economic recovery and deliver broad ranging benefits for residents and the business community
- Notwithstanding the benefits proper devolution can bring, local authorities

need additional and sustainable funding to continue to deliver the services our people and communities value

This Council Resolves:

- That until such time as the White Paper is published, initiating work on any form of local government reorganisation is both premature and not the best use of our collective resources at a time when we are focused on Covid-19 impact and recovery.
- To continue to work better together with all our partners across Norfolk to get the best for our people, economy and place.

10.2.1 Following debate and upon being put to a vote, with 73 votes in favour, 1 vote against and 2 abstentions, the motion was **CARRIED**.

10.3 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Brian Watkins and seconded by Cllr David Harrison:

Public health

Local authorities in England play a pivotal role in preventing mental health difficulties through their public health responsibilities as well as through the provision of early years services, youth services, support for schools and colleges, and social care for people of all ages. Public health services have stepped up during Covid-19 to protect health in their communities. They also have a crucial role in securing the public's mental health and preventing suicides in local communities.

Yet financial constraints have held public health services back and led many to cut the very services that are known to prevent later problems and support resilience in their communities. An Institute of Fiscal Studies (2019) report on Sure Start centres, for example, demonstrated that they significantly reduced the chances of hospital admissions on children from more deprived backgrounds, yet spending on these services fell by two thirds between 2009/10 and 2017/18. This is one example of cost-cutting policies leading counter-productively to a concentration of resources in high-cost services resulting from a lack of earlier, cheaper, help (O'Shea, 2018).

Public health services are critical for better mental health. They will be at the frontline when it comes to preventing mental health problems resulting from the pandemic.

Recommendation: This Council should write to the County's MPs and ask for their support in lobbying Central Government for a five-year settlement for public health services, growing at least at the same rate as the NHS, which would enable the Norfolk County Council through our Public Health team to invest now for better mental and physical health for all and to address the health inequalities in our local communities.

10.3.1 Cllr Watkins, as mover of the motion and in accordance with the Norfolk County Council Constitution Appendix 7, paragraph 11.8, **WITHDREW** the motion. The withdrawal of the motion was endorsed by the seconder, Cllr David Harrison.

The meeting adjourned at 12.10pm and reconvened at 12.30pm.

- 10.4 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Steff Aquarone and seconded by Cllr Dan Roper:

The Local Electricity Bill

This Council notes:

- Local authorities play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated, renewable electricity.
- The very large setup and running costs associated with selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers prevent local renewable electricity generators from doing so.
- Making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for councils to supply locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people and businesses.
- Revenues received by councils from the sale of local renewable electricity can be used to help fund measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and to help fund local services and facilities.
- The recent reintroduction of the Local Electricity Bill under the Ten-Minute Rule. If enacted the new law would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply.
- This Bill has received the support of 151 Members of Parliament.
- We should make every attempt to build a sustainable Britain after the Coronavirus crisis has passed. Our support for the Bill and this motion helps us achieve that.

Council resolves to:

- Write to the relevant Government Minister(s) asking them to enact this legislation as soon as possible.
- Ask our local Members of Parliament to support the Bill.
- Write to the campaign promoting the Bill, Power for People, (at 8, Delancey Passage, Camden, London, NW1 7NN) expressing the Council's support for the campaign and the Local Electricity Bill.

- 10.4.1 Cllr Aquarone, as mover of the motion and in accordance with Norfolk County Council Constitution, Appendix 7, paragraph 11.8, **WITHDREW** the motion. The withdrawal of the motion was endorsed by the seconder, Cllr Dan Roper.

- 10.5 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Mike Smith-Clare and seconded by Cllr Chrissie Rumsby:

Hungry Children in Norfolk

A government social outcomes report estimates that of the 4.6 million children that live in poverty only 1.3 million children receive free school meals. (The number of children living in poverty is set to rise to 5.2 million by 2022.) The Child Poverty Action Group estimates that only around 30% of school-age children that live in food poverty receive free school meals in the UK- that's around 3.3 million children who do not receive free school meals and are potentially going hungry. A study published in SAGE journals in May 2018 indicates food insecurity during school

holidays can lead to a child's learning stagnating or even declining, as well as causing suffering to health and well-being. Council recognises its responsibility for educational attainment and helping children and families achieve the best outcomes from their education.

Norfolk Against Holiday Hunger seeks to provide a voice to all those across the county who find it unacceptable that children in Norfolk, and across the entire country, continue to have to miss meals and face hunger in 21st century Britain. We commend the brilliant work of organisations, volunteers and donors across Norfolk who continue to work to ensure that those most in need are not going hungry.

Council notes the steps Suffolk County Council are taking to support their residents from low income families relying on foodbank parcels. Suffolk County Council's food justice action plan aims to help address the county's efforts in eradicating food poverty with a dedicated officer being recruited.

Council resolves

1. to support campaigns to expand the entitlement to free school meals to include families earning above the current £16,200 and to include children of families who have no recourse to public funds.
2. support campaigns to extend the current scheme to include all school and half-term holidays.
3. Ask the cabinet member for Children's Services to write to the government conveying the support of this council for measures to ensure children in Norfolk don't go hungry.

10.5.1 Following debate and upon being put to a recorded vote (Appendix A), with 29 votes in favour, 43 votes against and 2 abstentions the motion was **LOST**.

10.6 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Brenda Jones and seconded by Cllr Emma Corlett:

Day Centres

Council believes day centre provision continues to provide crucial support to many in Norfolk. Council resolves to request cabinet to protect day centre provision unless agreement has been reached with service users on suitable alternatives.

10.6.1 Following debate and upon being put to a recorded vote (Appendix B), with 29 votes in favour, 42 votes against and 3 abstentions, the motion was **LOST**.

10.7 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Brenda Jones and seconded by Cllr Danny Douglas:

County Hall accommodation and car parking

The council is currently facing unprecedented financial challenges and major uncertainty in the face of the Covid-19 epidemic. However, it is clear the next few years will be very different to the past.

Despite this the Council is pushing ahead the major capital investment of nearly two million pounds to build additional parking spaces, based on past levels of need and affordability. The proposed car park development could be a waste of money to solve a problem we may not even have and encourage car usage rather than new

forms of working and alternative modes of travel to county hall.

Council therefore resolves to delay any further steps to build new parking spaces on the county hall site until the impact of changing working practices on the need for it, and the impact of budget restrictions on its affordability, have been reassessed in light of the fundamentally changed situation which we face.

10.7.1 Following debate and upon being put to a recorded vote (Appendix C), with 26 votes in favour, 41 votes against and 4 abstentions, the motion was **LOST**.

10.8 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Steve Morphew and seconded by Cllr Terry Jermy:

Councillor Allowances

Council recognises that the fallout from the COVID 19 pandemic is leaving many Norfolk residents unsure of their job security, many families facing the trauma of unemployment and hardship they have no control over and many businesses unsure of their future viability. Council is also conscious that before the pandemic the Independent Panel had already strongly recommended councillors forego any increase for this year because of the already difficult financial position of the council and the increases in excess of 14% since 2017.

Under the circumstances, council welcomes the decision of those councillors who have committed to refuse the 2020 allowances increase or pledged to use the increases to benefit their community rather than themselves. However, council believes that in times like these that does not go far enough in showing residents and business we are Together for Norfolk.

Council resolves to

1. reverse the decision to apply the 2.75% increase in councillor allowances backdated to April 2020 and to recoup any amounts already paid by April 2021.
2. use the unspent budget to help bridge the budget deficit in Adult Services rather than leave it in the councillor allowances budget as an unspent sum that could in future be used for higher allowances or to increase the number of roles attracting a special responsibility

10.8.1 Following debate and upon being put to a vote, with 23 votes in favour, 44 votes against and 3 abstentions, the motion was **LOST**.

10.9 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Sandra Squire and seconded by Cllr Mick Castle:

Council notes that Public Transport - bus and rail - is currently reliant on the public purse to prevent bus and rail companies from going bankrupt transporting much smaller numbers of passengers at high cost.

Council acknowledges that at some point when the pandemic is over routes to and from Norfolk's main conurbations are likely to return to profit and demonstrate their inherent sustainability whilst for those in rural areas recovery may be protracted and patchy.

Council calls upon the Cabinet to develop as a matter of urgency a coherent long-term strategy for sustaining bus services linking rural communities to key Market Towns. This development of this strategy should involve significant input from District & Parish Councils, local County Councillors and Bus Operators.

- 10.9.1 The following amendment was proposed by Cllr Colleen Walker and seconded by Cllr David Rowntree:

Council notes that Public Transport - bus and rail - is currently reliant on the public purse to prevent bus and rail companies from going bankrupt transporting much smaller numbers of passengers at high cost. Council acknowledges that at some point when the pandemic is over routes to and from Norfolk's main **routes** are likely to return to profit and demonstrate their inherent sustainability whilst for those in rural areas **and urban areas** recovery may be protracted and patchy. **Currently we are facing service cuts to the Newtown and the Magdalen Estate in Yarmouth. In Norwich this includes Lakenham and Northfields and (pre COVID) on Heigham Street.**

Council calls upon the Cabinet to develop as a matter of urgency a coherent long-term strategy for sustaining bus services linking rural communities to key Market Towns **and urban estates to urban centres**. This development of this strategy should involve significant input from **passengers**, District & Parish Councils, local County Councillors and Bus Operators. **The strategy should consider including franchising arrangements, education transport, a growth in community transport and bus/rail integration to take a view to increase appropriate supply to minimise costs and increase accessibility.**

- 10.9.2 As proposer of the original motion, Cllr Squire accepted the amendment which became the substantive motion.
- 10.9.3 Following debate and upon being put to a vote, with 24 votes in favour, 40 votes against and 2 abstentions, the motion was **LOST**.
- 10.10 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Alexandra Kemp and seconded by Cllr Sandra Squire:

Climate Change, Flood Risk and Development

This Council, as the Local Lead Flood Authority believes that housing development should not take place in the Rapid Inundation Zone, potentially placing lives at risk.

Council further believes that developers, and particularly local authorities, should always take heed of the advice of the Environment Agency on flood-resilient measures.

Council therefore instructs its officers to write to all District Leaders, Chief Executives and Chief Planning Officers and ask them to be Climate Change resilient and not allocate areas for residential development in local plans, where the Environment Agency advises that homes should not have ground floor habitable accommodation or ground floor sleeping accommodation, due to the rapid inundation zone flood risk.

The University of East Anglia predicts a 50% increase in coastal flooding over the next 80 years, due to Climate Change. Norfolk is at 10th greatest risk of flooding

and should be building lifetime homes that are safe for all to live in.

- 10.10.1 The following amendment was proposed by Cllr Mike Sands and seconded by Cllr Emma Corlett:

Climate Change, Flood Risk and Development

This Council, as the Local Lead Flood Authority believes that housing, **commercial and industrial** development should not take place in the Rapid Inundation Zone, potentially placing lives at risk. Council further believes that developers, and particularly local authorities, should always take heed of the advice of the Environment Agency on flood-resilient measures.

Council therefore instructs its officers to write to all District Leaders, Chief Executives and Chief Planning Officers and ask them to be Climate Change resilient and not allocate areas for residential development in local plans, where the Environment Agency advises that homes should not have ground floor habitable accommodation or ground floor sleeping accommodation, due to the rapid inundation zone flood risk. The University of East Anglia predicts a 50% increase in coastal flooding over the next 80 years, due to Climate Change. Norfolk is at 10th greatest risk of flooding and should be building lifetime homes that are safe for all to live in.

Council resolves that wholly owned Repton Property Development Ltd will commit to a policy of never building or proposing residential, commercial or industrial development in the Rapid Inundation Zone

- 10.10.2 As proposer of the original motion, Cllr Kemp accepted the amendment which became the substantive motion.
- 10.10.3 Following debate and upon being put to a vote, with 24 votes in favour, 38 votes against and 3 abstentions, the motion was **LOST**.

11. To answer questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules

No questions were received.

12. Proportional Allocation of Seats on Committees

- 12.1 Council received the report by the Executive Director of Strategy & Governance setting out how the political balance on the Council had changed following the resignation of Cllr Ed Maxfield from the Liberal Democrat Group and his move to the Independent Group.
- 12.2 Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader of the Council, introduced the report and moved the recommendation.
- 12.3 Council **RESOLVED** to:

Approve the allocation of committee places and note that there will be 1 extra place to the Independent Group and 1 less place to the Liberal Democrat Group on the People and Communities Select Committee.

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm.

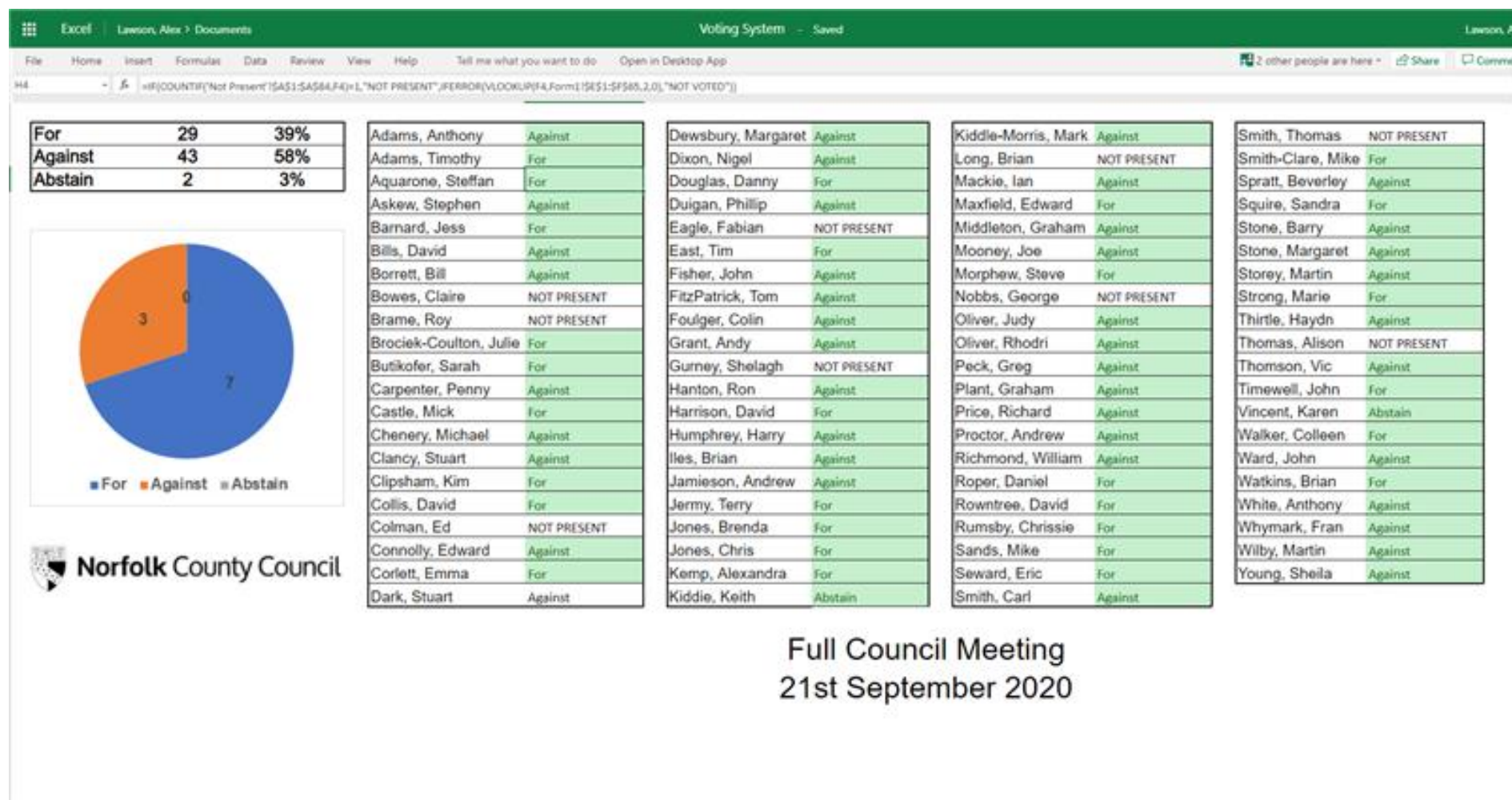
Chairman



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Motion 5 – Hungry Children in Norfolk.

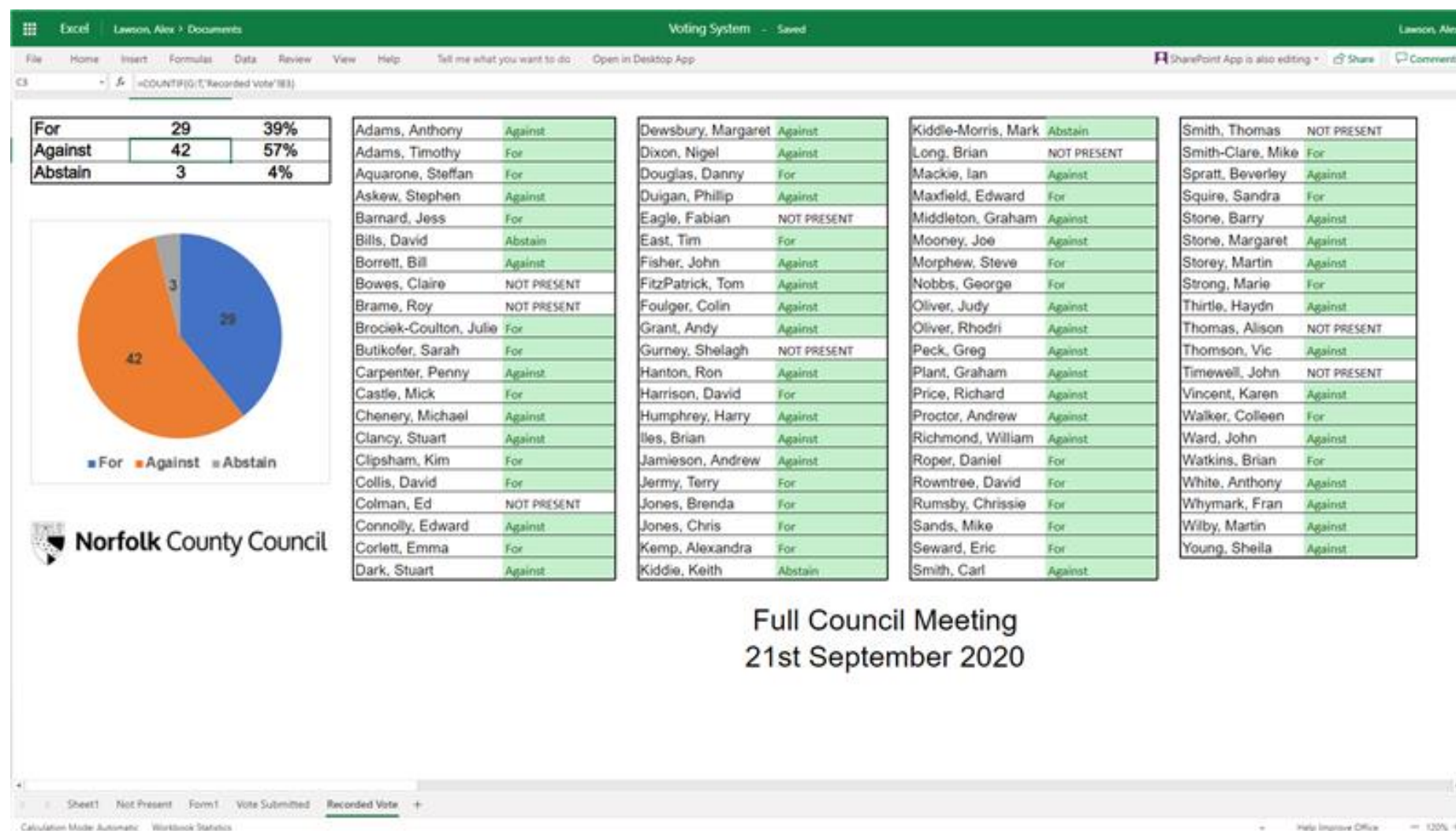
Proposed by Cllr Mike Smith-Clare and seconded by Cllr Chrissie Rumsby:



With 29 votes in favour, 43 votes against and 2 abstentions the motion was **LOST**.

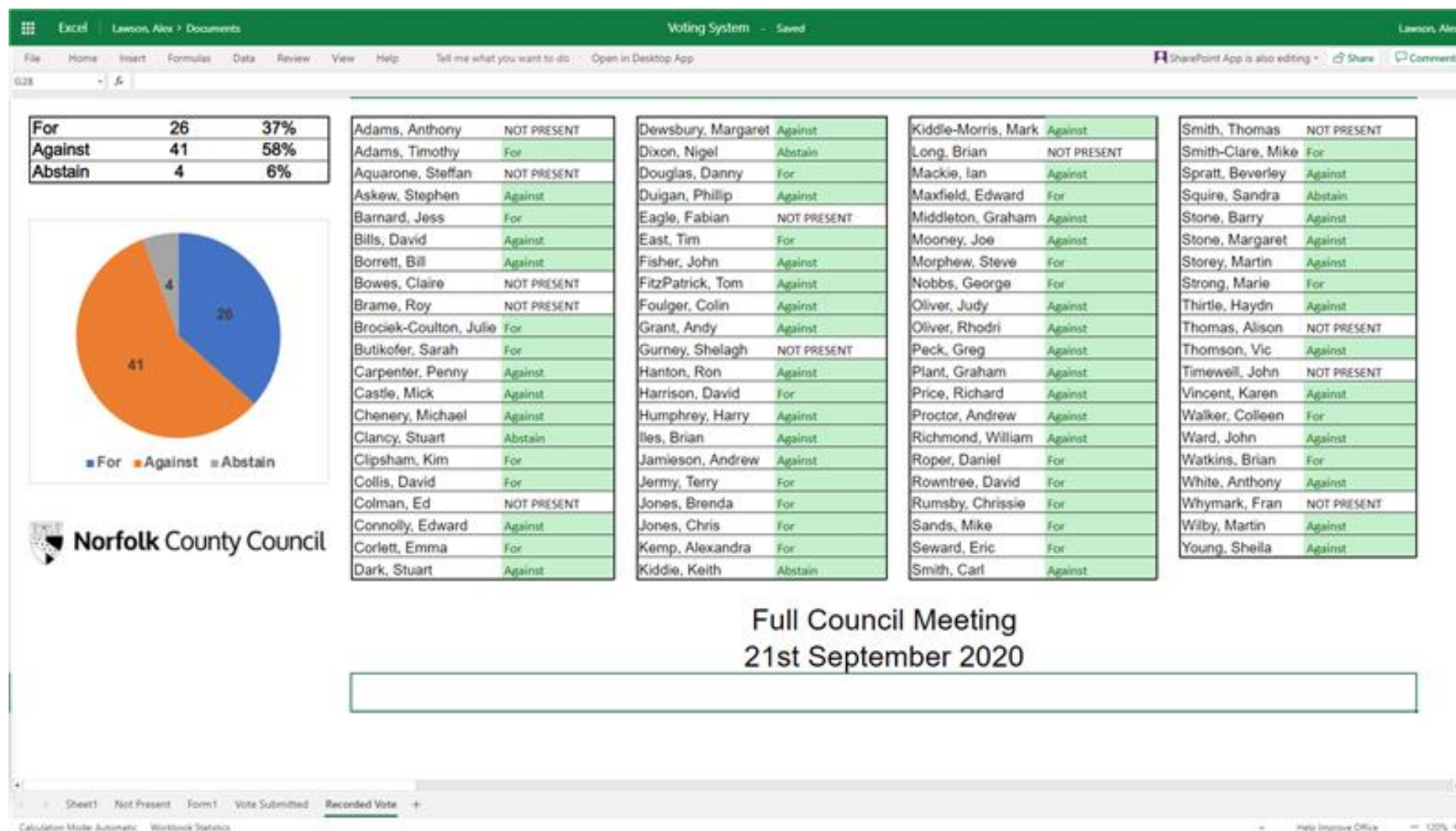
Recorded vote – Motion 6 – Day Centres

Proposed by Cllr Brenda Jones and seconded by Cllr Emma Corlett.



With 29 votes in favour, 42 votes against and 3 abstentions, the motion was LOST.

Recorded Vote – Motion 7 – County Hall Accommodation & Car Parking Proposed by Cllr Brenda Jones and seconded by Cllr Danny Douglas



With 26 votes in favour, 41 votes against and 4 abstentions the motion was **LOST**.

Questions requiring responses from the Council Meeting – Monday 21 September 2020

	Question and response:
<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett to the Leader.</p>	<p>Cllr Corlett stated that the national system for booking covid-19 tests was in meltdown and asked the Leader how many wasted appointments had this led to at Norfolk testing centres in the past four weeks; how could Norfolk residents access a walk-through test site so people who didn't own a car were not excluded and did he agree with those calling for Norfolk to be excluded from any national lockdown.</p> <p>Response: The Leader replied the national testing system had experienced some serious problems which had been admitted by Government Ministers and the situation needed to improve so anyone who needed a test if they were experiencing symptoms of covid-19, could access a test and receive the results quickly.</p> <p>The Leader said that he didn't have the figures for the number of wasted appointments but would look into the possibility of finding out.</p> <p>Regarding the second part of the question, the Leader said that Norfolk people had generally been good at following the guidelines and, apart from the recent Banham Poultry outbreak, there had been a low incidence of infection in Norfolk and any risks throughout the rest of the country would need to be mitigated.</p> <p>The Leader continued that Norfolk's economy was still in a fragile state and everything possible needed to be done to support it, although it was recognised the country was currently at a critical point with the pandemic and that the evidence and guidelines across the whole of the UK to prevent the spread of the virus in our communities needed to be followed.</p>
<p>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p>	<p>Cllr Brociek-Coulton asked how many Norfolk Schools had confirmed a covid-19 outbreak and what the current percentage of teachers and students having to isolate was.</p> <p>Response: The Cabinet Member replied that he didn't have those figures to hand, although he knew there were a number of staff within Norfolk who were self-isolating because of symptoms within their families or because they had symptoms themselves. He added that there were a couple of schools that had taken extra precautions because of a potential outbreak and he would try to ascertain the figures and circulate these after the meeting.</p>