

## **Business and Property Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 3 July 2018 at  
10:00 am in the Edwards room at County Hall**

**Present:**

Mr K Kiddie (Chairman)

Mr T Adams

Mr R Brame

Mr F Eagle

Mr B Iles (Vice-Chairman)

Mr A Jamieson

Mr T Jermy

Mr M Kiddle-Morris

Mr C Smith

Mr J Timewell

Mrs K Vincent

Mrs C Walker

### **1. Apologies and Substitutions**

- 1.1 Apologies were given from Mrs C Bowes. Mr T Adams would arrive late.

### **2. Minutes**

- 2.1 The minutes of the 15 May 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman subject to the agreed amendment at 10.2.9 of the January 2018 minutes, to read: *"The Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan states the Norwich North East Link Rd, also known as the East-West link road, is ready to proceed with a start date of 2017. As we have passed that date please can we have an update. This road infrastructure is not only essential to deliver planned housing growth north of Norwich but also link employment centres at Norwich Airport and Broadland Business Park."*

### **3. Members to Declare any Interests**

- 3.1 The following interests were declared:
- The Director of Finance and Commercial Services declared a non-pecuniary interest as Non-Executive director of Equinox Enterprises at Great Yarmouth
  - Mr A Jamieson declared a non-pecuniary interest as non-executive director of Norse
  - Mr J Timewell declared a non-pecuniary interest as a family member rented units at Scottow Enterprise Park

### **4. Urgent Business**

- 4.1.1 The Chairman took the item of centenary fields as urgent business under section 100B of the Local Government Act 1972, subsection 4b, due to the tight time scale involved in the project.
- 4.1.2 Mr Kiddle-Morris spoke in support of the report as local Member. It was planned to create an area on the site to commemorate those who fell in the First World War.
- 4.2 Mr T Adams arrived at 10.07.
- 4.3 The Chairman was fully in support of the proposal.

- 4.4 The Committee **AGREED** to part of field 21 on the Brisley County Farms estate being dedicated as a Centenary Field.

## 5. Public Questions

- 5.1 No public questions were received.

## 6. Member Questions

- 6.1 A member question was received from Cllr Maxfield and circulated; see appendix A.

## 7. Verbal update/feedback from Members of the Committee regarding Member Working Groups or bodies that they sit on.

- 7.1 The following updates were received from Members:
- The Chairman had attended:
    - An Interreg Programme international meeting in Caen in France as part of the Interreg Cross Channel Programme
    - A Symposium in Portsmouth as part of the Interreg Programme
    - The Armed forces convention held by NCC in Norwich Football Club which he helped host as Member Armed Forces Champion
    - A Hethel engineering board at Scottow
  - Mr T Smith reported, as Deputy Leader at Great Yarmouth Borough Council, the first cruise ship had been welcomed into Yarmouth
  - Mr R Brame reported that the Greater Thetford Development Board were developing terms of reference & functions; he would bring updates to Committee when available
  - Mrs C Walker reported that the Great Yarmouth Town Centre Development Board meeting was due to take place the following Tuesday

## 8. Appointments to outside bodies

- 8.1 The Committee considered the appointments to Norwich Airport Board and Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- 8.2 The Committee **AGREED** to appoint:
- Cllr Proctor to the Norwich Airport Board (Non-Executive Director), with Cllr Plant as substitute
  - Cllr Proctor to the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## 9. Opportunities for the Digital Economy

- 9.1 The Committee received the report introducing Tech East Ltd, whose start-up had been funded by Norfolk and Suffolk local authorities alongside the Local Enterprise Partnership. A presentation was heard from the Chief Operating Officer of Tech East Ltd (see appendix B):
- Tech East Ltd had plans to create income through project work and membership
  - Tech city UK was set up to stimulate growth in the London cluster and evolved into a national programme renamed Tech Nation
  - The Tech Nation report gave an annual update on performance of clusters around the UK
  - Start-up businesses found Norfolk had a helpful tech community

- New Anglia LEP commissioned a skills plan which was published in November 2017

- 9.2.1 Challenges to realising the tech corridor were queried; the Chief Operating Officer of Tech East Ltd. replied that challenges identified by businesses varied and included broadband “hot & not” spots. It would be important to identify strengths along the corridor and clusters such as Hethel and Thetford to support it to be a centre of excellence.
- 9.2.2 A concern was raised that creating jobs in advanced technology may cause job losses in other sectors; the Chief Operating Officer of Tech East Ltd. recognised this but noted that there would be a balance overall.
- 9.2.3 With reference to a query about Better Broadband for Norfolk the Chief Operating Officer of Tech East Ltd. noted the importance of connections across Norfolk, noting digital freelance businesses in seaside towns such as Cromer. It was suggested that discussions with BT would be useful. The Chief Operating Officer offered further discussion with NCC to develop practical solutions to promote digital connectivity and broaden the benefits outwards from the Norwich tech sector.
- 9.2.4 A Member queried fundraising methods; the Chief Operating Officer of Tech East Ltd. gave the example of collaborating with other businesses on bids. Partnership with the Cranfield Centre in Cambridge was key due to the low number of investors in the sector.
- 9.2.5 Access to superfast broadband had increased from 42% to 91% in the last 4 years; a £3000 business grant was available from OpenReach for Superfast Broadband access.
- 9.2.6 The Chairman noted that the last Sync the City event was dynamic and fascinating.
- 9.2.7 The Committee **NOTED** the report and associated presentation

## 10. Forward plan and delegated decisions

- 10.1 The Committee reviewed the report setting out the Forward Plan for the Business and Property Committee and delegated decisions taken by Officers.
- 10.2.1 The Chairman had asked the Head of Property to add a review of Scottow Enterprise Ltd to the September 2018 Committee meeting, who confirmed that Members' queries about capital expenditure would be answered in this report.
- 10.2.2 Mr Kiddle-Morris asked for County Farms reports to be public. The Head of Property replied that following on from the audit, Officers were mindful to produce exempt reports to allow open discussion with Members; a County Farms Annual Report with a summary on performance would be brought to Committee as a public item.
- 10.3 The Committee
1. **REVIEWED** the Forward Plan, noting the addition of a report on Scottow Enterprise Park Ltd.
  2. **NOTED** the delegated decisions.

## 11. Finance monitoring

- 11.1.1 The Committee considered the report providing information on the revenue budget

position for services reporting to Business & Property Committee for 2018 -19, use of reserves and details of the capital programme.

- 11.1.2 It was noted that Corporate Property Team outturn forecast on p33 should read 0.854.
- 11.2.1 The Director of Finance and Commercial Services anticipated that all corporate property reserves would be spent by the end of 2018-19, and those for economic development would decrease.
- 11.2.2 It was confirmed that paragraph 2.3 on page 33 should read 2018-19, and net revenue budget should read £7.901m, as in table 1.
- 11.2.3 It was **requested** that changes, such as the decreases to revenue budget, be explained in future reports.
- 11.2.4 Mr Eagle proposed that sums over £100,000 related to Scottow Enterprise Ltd be referred to the Chairman & Vice-Chairman before being filled out. The Director of Finance & Commercial Services **agreed** to explore the issues around this; making such a change would be a restraint on Chief Officers involved in operations of the business.
- 11.2.5 Scottow Enterprise Ltd had now been trading for 2 years; it would be a decision for Policy and Resources Committee whether it became a limited company.
- 11.2.6 It was suggested it would be useful to tabulate income raised from, and forecast of future disposal and exploitation of properties; the Director of Finance & Commercial Services **agreed** to include this in future reports.
- 11.2.7 The impact on the budget for 2019-20 of reducing reserves was raised; the Director of Finance & Commercial Services replied that when setting the budget for 2019-20, a target for reducing property costs could be looked at to avoid front line cuts.
- 11.2.8 A Member queried whether the estate was being rationalised quickly enough, noting the plans to use reserves; the Director of Finance & Commercial Services replied that it could take longer than expected to get out of buildings, impacting on use of reserves.
- 11.3 The Committee **NOTED**:
  - a) The 2018-19 revenue position for this Committee
  - b) The 2018-19 to 2020-21 capital programme for this Committee
  - c) The 2018-19 reserves position for this Committee

## **12. Performance Management**

- 12.1 The Committee received the report based on the revised Performance Management System implemented as of 1 April 2016, with data against the new 2018/19 vital signs list.
- 12.2.1 The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services confirmed that sustainability of start-ups was recorded via the Local Enterprise Partnership, with the key timescale being 2-3 years.
- 12.2.2 A Member queried whether NCC should re-evaluate their support for business start-ups. The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services reported that the Council worked with Tech East, the Local Enterprise Partnership and Norfolk Chamber of Commerce to support start-ups by influencing partner organisations' programmes.
- 12.2.3 There was concern that start-up rates were lower than expected; The Executive

Director of Community & Environmental Services replied that working together across organisations was important; it was key to encourage the Local Enterprise Partnership to be part of conversations.

- 12.3 The Committee **REVIEWED** and **COMMENTED** on the performance data, information and analysis presented in the body of the report and determined that the actions identified were appropriate.

### 13. Risk Management

- 13.1 The Committee considered the report providing the latest departmental level property risks as at July 2018 following the latest review conducted in June 2018.

- 13.2.1 The Risk Management Officer updated the Committee, from information shown in Appendix B, that the latest available figures from 2016/17 showed the Council was at 44% against a 50% Carbon Reduction Commitment target by 2020. When the figures for 2017/18 became available later in July 2018, the 50% target was expected to have been met and exceeded.

- 13.2.2 A question was raised as to why the new Climate Change Levy active from 2019 had a target date of 2050 attached to it. The Risk Management Officer explained that this date was set by central government, and not set by officers at Norfolk County Council.

- 13.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED**:

- a) the reconciliation report in Appendix A of the report, which is designed to detail any significant changes to the Committee's corporate and departmental level risks
- b) Risk RM14200 - Failure to meet NCC Carbon Reduction Target presented for information purposes to provide Members with sight of the changes to score and progress (Appendix B of the report)
- c) the summary of current corporate and departmental level risks for this Committee in Appendix C of the report
- d) The list of possible actions, suggested prompts and challenges presented for information in Appendix D of the report
- e) The background information to put the risk scoring into context, shown in Appendix E of the report

### 14. Disposal and acquisition of properties

- 14.1.1 The Committee discussed the report looking at exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, releasing property assets with latent value and acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County.

- 14.1.2 The Chairman had received concerns about parking at the Vauxhall Centre (recommendation ix) and the Trimmingham camp site (recommendation xiii).

- 14.2.1 A Member **suggested** that it would be useful to see whether the local Member had reviewed and supported each recommendation to help identify issues for discussion.

- 14.2.2 No concerns had been raised related to any other recommendations in the report.

- 14.3 The Committee **AGREED** all recommendations except for recommendations ix and xiii which they took separately after discussion, below.

#### 14.4.1 Recommendation ix; Vauxhall carpark

- a note was received from the local Member, Cllr Corlett, raising concerns about the

land being used for parking

- Officers noted that it was a target for the Committee to create as much revenue for Norfolk County Council as possible, and this site had been determined to have a better opportunity in the open market
- as part of the work carried out to the 77 parking spaces, the Council had put in lighting, sprinklers and CCTV, making it an attractive location for tenants
- services such as Community & Environmental Services, Adult Social Services and existing tenants of the Centre may wish to become tenants
- existing tenants of the Centre were consulted and raised no concerns

14.4.2 The Head of Property confirmed that 6 months free was a standard lease term, reflecting that the carpark had not been trading; the consultation followed the statutory process, and the Local Member and tenants should have been informed as part of this process.

14.4.3 The Head of Property reported that it was deemed most appropriate for a private operator to manage the carpark rather than a subsidiary business of the Council, mitigating the legal issues surrounding issuing of tickets and fines.

14.4.4 Mrs Walker discussed the Local Member's concerns around the consultation process, regarding whether all those involved in the Centre had been contacted. Mrs Walker **proposed**, seconded by Mr Jermy that the decision be deferred until a later date.

14.4.5 The Head of Property reported that the cost of works was £150,000 and would bring roughly £650,000 per year income with a 3-year payback. He reiterated that the consultation followed the statutory process; the Cllr Corlett would receive a full reply to her concerns.

14.4.6 With 2 votes in favour and 10 against, the proposal was **lost**.

14.4.7 With 10 votes for and 2 against, recommendation ix was **AGREED**.

14.5.1 **Recommendation xiii, Trimingham camp site;**

- Trimingham Council had contacted the Committee to raise concerns about the lease of the site for glamping; see also Member question at Appendix A.
- The Head of Property updated Members that the site had originally been declared surplus by Policy & Resources Committee in May 2018 and earmarked for disposal
- 4 tenders were received for the site; Swallowtails Ltd's was the most advantageous

14.5.2 The tender was advertised in the trade press, to camping operators, on the non-NPS website, through a specialised NPS contacts group and in the local paper. The foundation who were in current ownership of the site had bid for the tender.

14.5.3 The risks were queried; the Head of Property confirmed that the asset value applied to the freehold value and did not affect renting of the site. Norfolk County Council's legal and property team had confirmed there were no covenants on the site.

14.5.4 The Head of Property agreed to circulate information to Members on where the tender was advertised.

14.5.5 With 9 votes for and 3 against recommendation xiii was **AGREED**.

14.6 Business and Property Committee:

- (i) Formally **DECLARED** the land north of Norwich Road Acle surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the

land to Repton Property Developments Ltd, and **AUTHORISED** the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee to agree the value of the land at which it is to be sold and report the sale at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting.

- (ii) Formally **DECLARED** the former Chapel Road School site, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting
- (iii) Formally **DECLARED** the Land South of New Road, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting.
- (iv) Formally **DECLARED** the Old Westgate Farm Barn beet pad, Binham surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:
  - The adjoining owner on the best terms possible
  - Or
  - In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open marketIn the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting
- (v) Formally **DECLARED** the Market Garden Land, Hopton on Sea surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting
- (vi) **AGREED** to the leasing of the land to the Rear of 101 – 106 Norfolk Street, King's Lynn to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for £3,500 per annum for 10 years
- (vii) **FORMALLY** declared the land at Wootton Drift, King's Lynn surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting.
- (viii) Formally **DECLARED** the land at Whittington Hill, Northwold surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:
  - The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.
  - Or

In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting.

- (ix) **With 10 votes for and 2 against, AGREED** to the leasing of Vauxhall Centre carpark, Norwich to RCP Parking (Vauxhall) Ltd for £65,000 per annum (first 6 months' rent fee) for 10 years on terms laid out in the tender documents.

- (x) Formally **DECLARED** the land at Parkside Drive, Old Catton surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:

The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.

Or

In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting.

- (xi) Formally **DECLARED** the Land at School Road (Burlingham Estate), South Walsham surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property considering in addition to price the economic growth and community benefits. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a Subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting

- (xii) Formally **DECLARED** the land off Wards Chase, Stow Bardolph surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of Business & Property Committee is **authorised** to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Business & Property Committee meeting

- (xiii) **With 9 votes for and 3 against, AGREED** to the leasing of Trimingham camp site to Swallowtails Leisure Ltd for £10,000 per annum plus 5% of turnover (less the base rent), first 6 months' rent fee, for 15 years on terms laid out in the tender documents

## **15. Exclusion of the public**

- 15.1 The Committee **AGREED** to exclude the public from discussion of items 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21, below, under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraphs 1, 3 and 3.5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

## **16. Norwich Airport Industrial Estate**

- 16.1 The Committee considered the report and **AGREED** the recommendations.



**17. Joint Venture Housing Development with Breckland Bridge Ltd**

17.1 The Committee considered the report.

17.2 With 4 votes in favour and 8 against the Committee **RESOLVED NOT** to **AGREE** the recommendations.

17.3 With 10 votes in favour and 2 against, the Committee **AGREED** to defer the decision, and for Officers to come back with a wider review of options.

**18. Repton Property Developments Ltd – update.**

18.1 The Committee considered the report and **AGREED** the recommendations.

**19. County Farms Estate Management Update**

19.1 The Committee considered the report and **AGREED** the recommendations.

**20. Exempt minutes**

20.1 The Committee **AGREED** the exempt minutes of the 15 May 2018.

**21. Any other business**

21.1 The Chairman updated Members about upcoming events in the Thetford Festival “Celebration of the Sikh”

The Meeting ended at: 13:06

**Chairman,  
Business and Property Committee**



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## **MEMBER/PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE : Thursday 03 July 2018**

### **6. MEMBER QUESTIONS**

#### **6.1 Question from Cllr Edward Maxfield**

Officers will be aware of the considerable local disquiet generated by the proposed lease of this land to a 'Glamping' campsite operator. I would like to ask the following questions:

- what consideration has been given to the Council's potential exposure to future liability arising from the presumed existence of a Restrictive Covenant that applies to this land and which would likely prevent the kind of commercial activity that is proposed from taking place?
- what consideration has the Council given to the likely need for planning permission for infrastructure works at the site and how such works would appear to fall outside what is permitted by NNDCs current planning policy in respect of this area?
- what steps were taken to consult with the local community and with its own Highways officers and to consider the impact of the huge increase in traffic movements that will follow from the opening of a campsite on this field. Gimmingham Road is a very narrow lane which regularly gives rise to concerns from local residents about the volume and speed of traffic using it. While residents are supportive of the site's current use by the Kearns Foundation which results in occasional access by minibuses, a campsite would result in a huge increase in traffic movements and likely increase in the number of large vehicles (camper vans and delivery lorries) using the road to access the site.

#### **Response by Chairman of Business and Property Committee**

- There is no restrictive covenant applying to the use of this land. This was checked prior to marketing and a copy of the deeds can be provided if required.
- The site has planning permission for a camping use and can be used as such. If planning permission is required for any infrastructure works this will be for tenant to seek appropriate permission from North Norfolk District Council and for the independent planning process to assess any proposed works.
- The proposal is for twenty 'glamping pitches' and not for a caravan / camper van site.
- We do not normally consult with Highways unless the land has a strategic benefit to the network (i.e. if it could be used to put in a new road) or if a substantial change of planning is required. The new proposed operators are an established company with experience of operating campsites and have spent some time looking at the site and access.

# TechEast briefing

Business and Property Committee, 3 July 2018

Tim Robinson, Chief Operating Officer

@TechEastUK



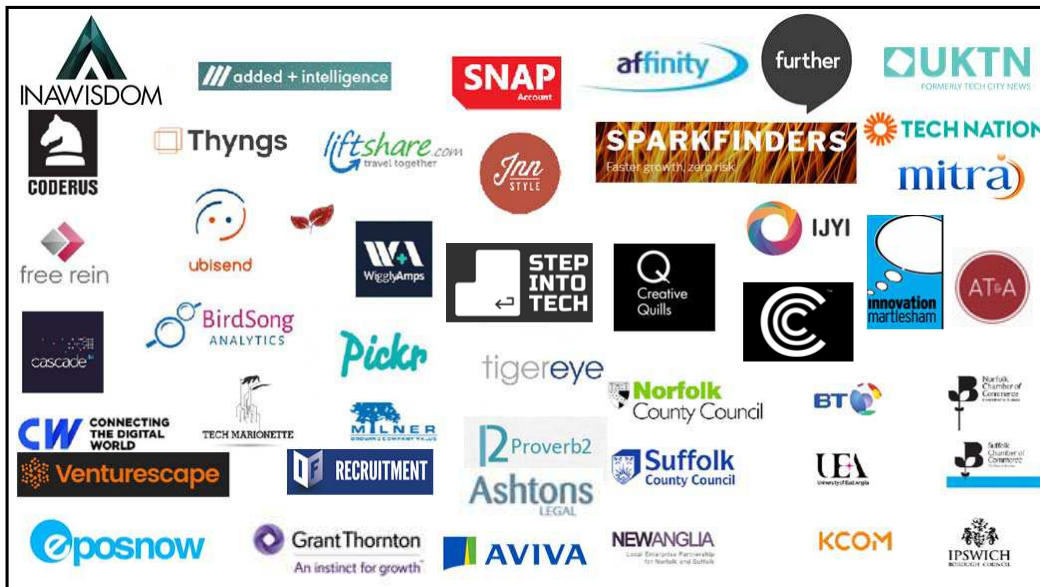
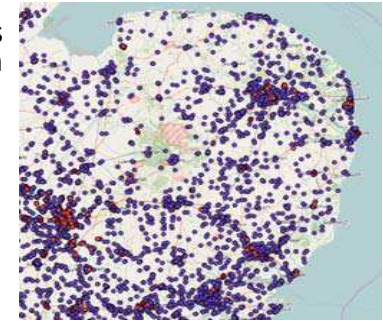
## TechEast mission

- + 5,000 jobs
- + £650m GVA
- Top 5 UK tech cluster

**1. Connect** join up the dots in the East of England ecosystem = leverage more collaboration

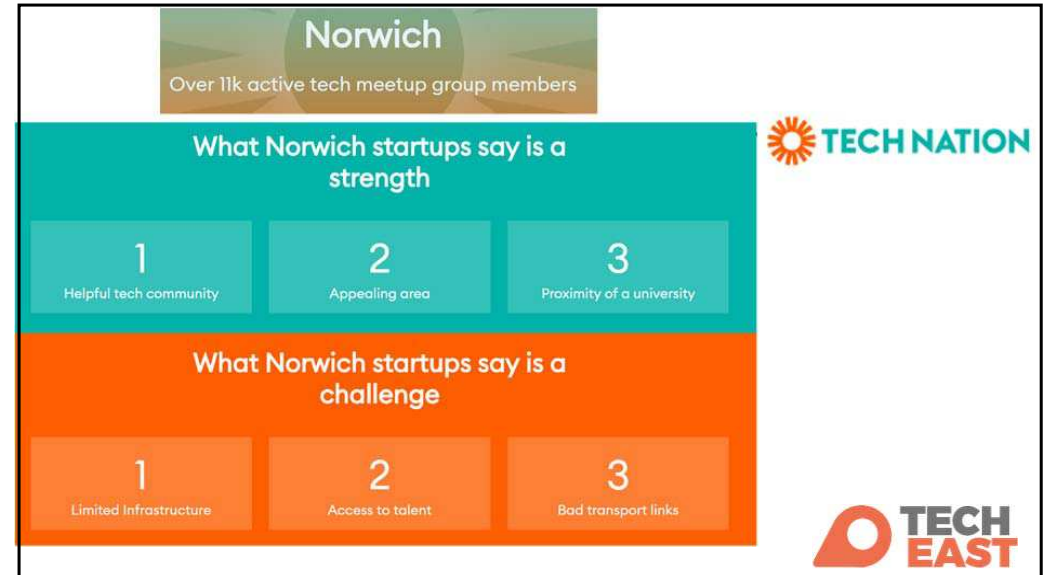
**2. Accelerate** enable members to succeed and showcase them

**3. Lead** be a recognised, trusted voice for New Anglia digital tech economy

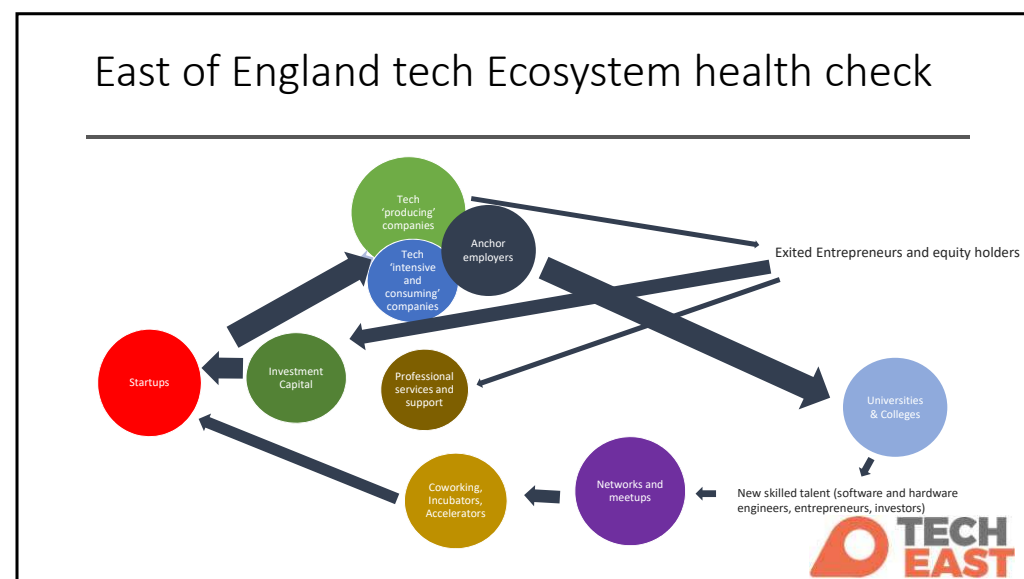
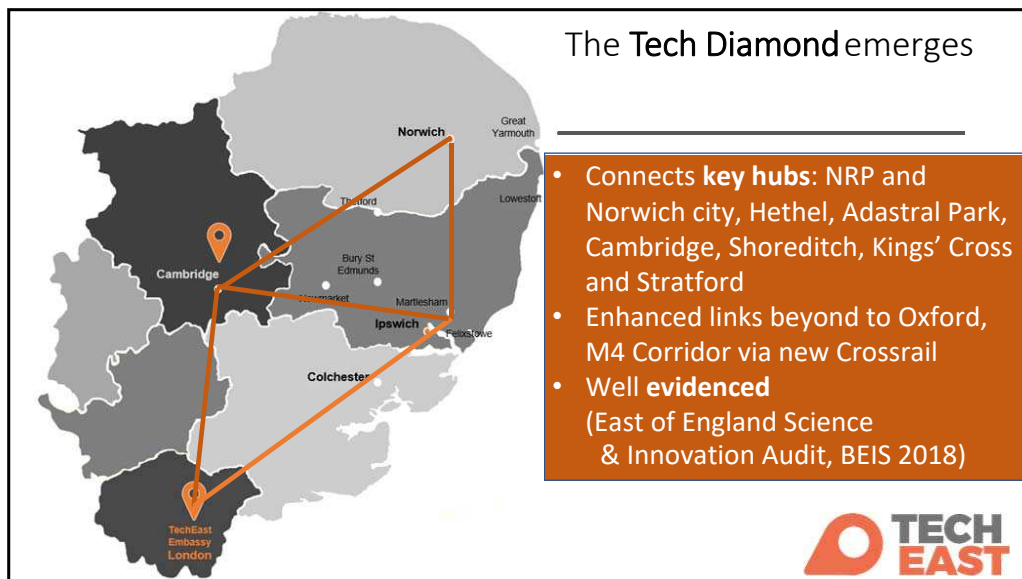


## Norfolk businesses gaining national recognition









## Upgraded London Embassy @ Runway East

**Member benefit**

- Hot desking
- Bookable meeting rooms
- 5 mins from Liverpool Street

**TechEast value**

- Showcase events (120 capacity auditorium)
- Membership pipeline development
- Partnership development

**TECH EAST**

## Skills and talent

**ACTIVITY**

- Digital Tech Skills Plan published Nov 2017
- Task force formed Jan 2018:
  - Business, education, public sector and skills groups
  - Chair: Chris Sargisson, Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
- Bid being submitted to become Local Digital Skills Delivery Partnership (DCMS)
- Distinctive local skills initiatives

**netmatters™**

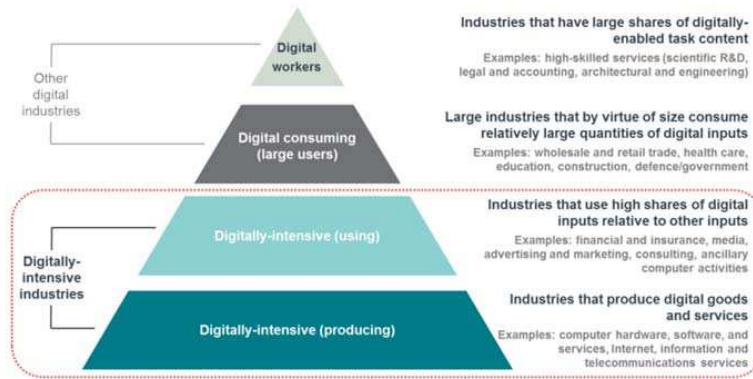
**THE SCION COALITION SCHEME**

Powered by Skills Gateway

Norfolk to develop their own developers.

**TECH EAST**

## Sector itself and supporting other sectors



## 2018: strategic priorities

### ECOSYSTEM-FOCUSED

- Skills and talent #1 business ask
- Cementing our place in UK ecosystem (Tech Nation, DCMS)
- Closer collaboration with adjacent sectors which digital underpins (e.g. culture, fintech)

### MEMBER-FOCUSED

- Rapidly extending network through free *Community* option
- Enhanced London and Cambridge presence
- 1:1 support for firms
- Targeted, differentiated events