

Cabinet
Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 5 June 2023
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	Vice-Chair. 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

Deputy Cabinet Members Present

Cllr Shelagh Gurney	Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Cllr Lana Hemsall	Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport
Cllr Greg Peck	Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance

Executive Directors Present:

Harvey Bullen	Director of Strategic Finance
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Kat Hulatt	Assistant Director of Governance
Tom McCabe	Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Children's Services

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from the Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 10 May 2023

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May as an accurate record.

3 Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 None 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 No updates were given

6. Public question time

6.1 The list of public questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.

6.2.1 Anthony Cain asked a supplementary question:

- Mr Cain noted that the answer to his substantive question stated that the Council was investigating technology however he felt that looking at the state of the highways would suggest that the investigations should reach some conclusions. Mr Cain suggested the machine he referred to could do 4 to 6 times the workload from a mechanical point of view, opposed to the traditional way of repairing roads.

6.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport replied that, as described in the response to the substantive question, the council was looking at various technologies for carrying out pothole repair and spray patching. Norfolk had fewer potholes than its neighbours however were investigating methods and speed of repair, as well as way to increase the time in which a pothole would return. The Council therefore was still investigating Mr Cain's suggestion.

7 Local Member Questions/Issues

7.1 The list of Local Member questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix B.

8. Corporate Delivery Plan 2023 – 2024

8.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Corporate Delivery Plan for 2023-24

8.1.2 The Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The Corporate delivery plan was completed each year as part of the Council's planning process. The report on the 2023-24 plan had been deferred from the May 2023 meeting
- The Plan was a way to reflect the Council's short-term contributions to the longer term strategy, Better Together for Norfolk
- Following Cabinet's agreement, it would be cascaded to officers, and a further report would be brought back to Cabinet in due course.

8.2 The Chair noted that this built on the work already done and the manifesto given to the public at the general election in 2019. This Plan would allow the council to ensure that services to the public were as good as possible.

8.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

1. Approve the Corporate Delivery Plan for 2023-2024
2. Agree that the plan will form the basis of the next annual report at the start of the business planning cycle

Evidence and Reasons for Decision

N/A

Alternative Options

N/A

9. A County Deal for Norfolk: Consultation and findings

- 9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the response from the public consultation and engagement exercise about the County Deal for Norfolk.
- 9.1.2 The Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The report set out the outcome of the consultation on the Norfolk County Deal. Completing the consultation was a requirement in the deal and the results of this had been shared with the Scrutiny Committee, Norfolk County Council and district council Members and leaders of the district councils.
 - This was a factual output of the consultation. Questions were open questions structured around key themes linked to the deal text. A free text space was provided with each question for people to provide their own feedback.
 - There was no pass mark required for the consultation; this was a factual exercise for engaging with the public.
 - The next task was to pass the results of the consultation to Government to consider.
- 9.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care noted that Cabinet were being asked whether to refer the results of the consultation to Government; the public had made their comments on the potential of a County Deal, and she felt it was the Council's duty to provide their views to the Government.
- 9.3 The Vice-Chair agreed with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care' comments and noted that the deal would bring £6m funding to the county including £7m for brownfield sites.
- 9.4 The Chair pointed out that the consultation results had been pre-scrutinised. She asked The Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy if the Council had done all they had been asked and if this was fit for purpose. The Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy replied that this was the case.
- 9.5 Cabinet considered the contents of the report, including the responses from the public consultation and engagement exercises and **RESOLVED** to submit the findings to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 9.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
- N/A

9.7 **Alternative Options**

N/A

10. **Delivering Norfolk County Council's Net Zero Pledge: Retrofitting our buildings**

- 10.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out details of the programmes of work being undertaken across Norfolk County Council buildings to reach its target of net zero carbon by 2030.
- 10.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation introduced the report to Cabinet
- A large amount of work was being carried out by the council to achieve the target of net zero by 2030, including removing fossil fuels from buildings starting from 2023. This work would be led by the Corporate Property team and would span 193 sites.
 - Some were freehold and some were leasehold sites.
 - The highest priority programme related to freehold sites, using fossil fuels, looking at space heating and hot water.
 - 160 buildings across 100 sites had been surveyed so far and retrofitting improvement plans had been completed. These buildings were primarily ones from which frontline services were provided such as libraries, children's homes and fire stations. These reports set out the energy improvement measures needed to remove carbon emissions down to zero as well as reducing energy consumption to the lowest possible levels
 - The next stage would be tendering of construction work and appointing the design and build contractor.
 - Subsequent programmes relating to electricity only sites, leased in and leased out buildings and a catch-all for all buildings would be developed, but as at the time of reporting heated use of fossil fuels had been compiled as shown in the report.
 - The combined programme would achieve net zero fossil fuel use by the 2030 target date and reduce energy consumption to the lowest possible.
 - The price of this project would be £82.5m; this was a large figure, but it would be irresponsible to not highlight the size of the task. The team had challenged the survey costs and there had been robust reductions in the costs now presented.
 - The project would start with the changes that would make the biggest impact and a phased approach would provide a deliverable plan, allowing for reviews and adaptations in approach if needed.
- 10.2 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing noted the size and cost of the task however felt this was the only way net zero could be delivered as the council needed these buildings to deliver services. This investment would allow the council to reduce carbon emissions while maintaining services. The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing challenged residents and businesses in Norfolk to think how they could deliver similar solutions in their own buildings.
- 10.3 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport congratulated the Cabinet Member and her predecessor for bringing forward this piece of work; she noted that this piece of work would not be cheap but would be necessary to achieve the targets set by the council.

- 10.4 The Vice-Chair welcomed this stage of the strategy which was well thought out to achieve net zero by 2030, targeting actions bringing the largest impact first. The first tranche of work would cost £22.5m and the council would expect significant assistance from Government for the remainder due to the high cost. Grant funding had already been received as part of the Salix programme so further central Government funding may be available. Expenditure above the initial tranche of £22.5m would be subject to further Cabinet reports and grants would be sought where possible.
- 10.5 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships discussed the importance of keeping library buildings up to date as they were an important community asset, with computer access, places for people to find information on councils and organisations, access activities and meet and access warm rooms in winter.
- 10.6 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport discussed the Great Yarmouth library and attached museum which was from the 1700s. He was sure that the changes would help achieve net zero in this building and across the Council's estate.
- 10.7 The Chair discussed that this was an ambitious programme; libraries were essential, providing a range of services and were the hub of the community. It was important to look after the Council's buildings as well as its environmental credentials. Norfolk County Council as a pioneering Council was doing all it could to reach its net zero target.
- 10.8 The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 10.9 **Cabinet RESOLVED**
1. To approve continuation of this programme of works to maintain progress towards NCC's 2030 Net Zero Carbon Target, which will in turn allow:-
 - i. Tendering of design and build contractual arrangements through which the main programme of works can be delivered
 - ii. Tendering and appointment of the consultant teams to manage and quality assure delivery
 - iii. Scoping out and defining works for other programmes, including electric only sites, and leased in/leased out properties, that will be undertaken in future years.
 2. To delegate to the Director of Procurement and Sustainability in consultation with Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and innovation and the Director of Property approval to award the necessary contracts.
 3. To note the likely cost of over £80 million and that NCC will look to engineer cost, seek external funding, and identify programme efficiencies to reduce this. Spend will be between 2023 and 2030.
 4. To note that the work will be carried out in tranches and approve the first tranche of £22.5m covering 2023/24 and 2024/25
 5. To note that subsequent tranches will be subject to future Cabinet reports.
 6. To note the existing funding provision of £5.8m and recommend to full council that £16.7m is added to the capital programme to be funded from prudential borrowing in the first instance to enable the delivery of tranche 1 (The

prudential borrowing amount will be reduced by any external funding received).

10.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Continued support for the retrofit works to ensure NCC meets the Climate Strategy targets

10.11 **Alternative Options**

Not to undertake this programme would mean NCC not achieving the targets to reducing CO2 emissions and so there is no other viable option.

11. **Market position Statement**

11.1.1 Cabinet received the report detailing the Norfolk Market Position Statement for 2023, setting out the social care landscape for the area and the direction of travel required.

11.1.2 The Assistant Director, Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Services, introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The Market Position Statement set out the Norfolk position of care provision across the county and the trajectory. It was part of how the county achieved its responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 and helped people to have choice.
- It was also important for social care providers by setting out the direction of travel, setting out needs, giving a forecast and showing the council's requirements
- The Market Position Statement included a continued commitment to improve care quality in Norfolk and address the quality needed across services for people with learning disabilities and autism, and the continuing need for more high-quality nursing care.
- There was an aim to work with organisations as part of the Connecting Communities approach, reinforcing the ongoing commitment to support older people with more opportunities for independent and supported living.

1.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This was a statement for Cabinet to agree each year and was an opportunity to engage with the care market.
- There was an aim to move the Market Position Statement to a more digital platform so those providing care could access information more easily.
- There were elements within the Statement which were repeated to allow people to "dip in" and get the information they needed.
- It was important to consider the challenges in the system, the same as in previous years, such as recruitment and retention of staff.
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care acknowledged the value of people in the care sector to both the council and the people they care for.
- There was more to do, including work on improving quality of care in care homes, with an aspiration to reach 85% good rated by 2024. The Care Quality Commission would be unlikely to assess all care homes in this time frame so there would not be an official record of reassessment, although quality may improve.

- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care highlighted new schemes being opened which offered 124 new care homes, with one more opening in 2024 and 4 more being planned. In-home care had worked to reduce the interim care list
- Paragraph 2.2 of the report showed the work being done with the integrated care board to identify which tasks could be provided by public health colleagues.

11.3 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport acknowledged the work of NorCa (Norfolk Care Association) with care providers which was helping bring all care aspects and practices up to date, respecting people's rights and needs.

11.4 The Vice-Chair welcomed the Market Position Statement. He pointed out that over 70% of the Adult Social Care budget was spent on independent care providers, so working with them to give clear messages on what was expected and how care services were promoted was key. Connecting Communities and Promoting Independence would support the Council's commitment to help people to be independent for longer.

11.5 The Chair was pleased to see this Market Position Statement which would help provide services to residents with the goal of providing a seamless service. She was also pleased to see the progress being made in this area.

11.6 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care moved the recommendations as set out in the report

11.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the draft Market Position Statement 2023

11.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

N/A

11.9 **Alternative Options**

N/A

12 **Trading Standards Service Plan 2023/24**

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report describing Trading Standards Service Plan and associated sub-plans (as annexed to the main plan) that set out the service priorities for 2023-24, taking account of the service budget set in February 2023.

12.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:

- In 2023, the service responded to 65 avian flu outbreaks in Norfolk by providing foot patrols and mailshots to residents in affected areas to advise poultry keepers and prevent spread of the disease. There were 306 outbreaks in the country, meaning around one fifth of outbreaks were in Norfolk. People from other services at the council and other county councils helped with door knocking.
- Despite the need for refocussing services, the service continued its surveillance on illegal goods such as e-cigarettes, vapes, second hand

cars and sub-standard food. Vaping was mentioned when this report was taken to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, as this was seen to be increasing in younger children due to marketing. A Member had asked what they could do to help; Members could put out warnings to local people at parish meetings and other places.

- Fifteen new no cold-calling zones had been put in place, bringing the total in Norfolk to 310, supporting 14,500 properties.
- There was a shortage of trading standards staff and there were people retiring from the service so 11 trainees had been supported on the qualifications pathway; in summer of 2023, trainees would sit their qualifications.
- The Plan focussed on 5 elements:
 - Responding to business and consumer vulnerabilities arising from the cost of living crisis
 - Environmental protection: ensuring:
 - businesses are supported to comply with new green legislative requirements, and
 - the service operates in a manner to support the council's net-zero ambitions.
 - Investment in the workforce to develop a resilient service: recruitment and development of Trading Standards Officers and trainee Trading Standards Officers to ensure the service has the staffing resources necessary now and, in the future, to fulfil its statutory duties and address the county council's priorities.
 - Greater integration with the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service to realise improved services for businesses and communities and inhouse efficiencies.
 - Development of commercial services: increasing income, primarily through calibration and chargeable business advice functions to reduce reliance on grant funding.

12.2 The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth credited Cllr Proctor who had been the most senior politician in the UK raising the seriousness of bird flu during its outbreak, which businesses appreciated. He hoped that the council would lobby Government for extra funds towards the costs in dealing with this outbreak, noting that several councils had no outbreaks, bringing a significant cost to Norfolk County Council.

12.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted the discussion of calibration, verification, testing and hire of weighing and measuring equipment which generated income for the council. The addition of the new no cold-calling zones, work on food allergen work, complaints on food standards, and work with second hand car traders to identify un road worth cars showed how the service was keeping people safe in the county and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport congratulated them for their work.

12.4 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing noted that the service planned to focus on preventing sale of alcohol, cigarettes and e-cigarettes to young people, and work with the tobacco alliance and alcohol partnership. This would disrupt illegal activity in the county which put young people and all people at risk through unlicensed products. The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing noted that illegally sold cigarettes, as well as having more unsafe ingredients, did not have self-extinguishing characteristics so had a higher fire

risk. The work in this plan aligned with the overall campaign of the council to encourage people to make healthy decisions in life.

12.5 The Chair agreed that the Council should be lobbying Government for money towards the costs of addressing the avian flu outbreak. She was concerned about the prevalence of vaping in young people and the ability of young people to obtain them illegally. Carrying out work in partnership with schools to address this would be beneficial.

12.6 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

12.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree and adopt the Trading Standards Service Plan and associated Annexes set out in Appendices 1 to 4 of the report

12.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The Trading Standards Service Plan, inclusive of Annexes I, II and III (Appendices 1 to 4 of the report), is considered to be the most effective way to demonstrate how the service intends to fulfil its regulatory/statutory responsibilities, taking into account the available intelligence, resources and the Better Together, for Norfolk priorities we are seeking to support.

12.9 **Alternative Options**

The proposed Plan and associated documents have been prepared following staff engagement and are considered to set out the most effective approach and best fit with the strategic direction of Norfolk County Council. Alternative approaches could be taken, but these would require further work to develop, may be constrained by the need to ensure we have capacity to fulfil our statutory duties, and may result in a need to secure additional funding to deliver.

13 **Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022-23**

13.1.1 Cabinet received the report and the attached annex providing details of the 2022-23 treasury activities and highlighting compliance with policy and strategy previously approved by Members in relation to treasury management.

13.1.2 The Director of Strategic Finance introduced the report to Cabinet. This was a statutory report looking at 2022-23 treasury management activities, which Cabinet were asked to consider before consideration by Full Council.

13.1.3 The Vice-Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This was a backwards looking report, tying in with item, 15 “Finance Monitoring Report 2022-23 Outturn”, giving an overview of treasury activities over the previous financial year and in compliance with the policy approved by Members.
- The Council’s gross external debt as of 31 March 2023 was £893.4m, slightly lower than in 2021-22, and less than forecast. This included debt for PFI schemes and leasing.
- The level of actual debt borrowed was less than £849m. Norfolk County Council had committed to pay the unitary charge including debt to PFI and lease payments to leasing companies, so gross external debt was higher than actual debt.

- During the year the council borrowed £10m in November 2022 at 3.56%; this was less than the planned £80m due to deferring capital projects and positive cashflow from underspend against interest rates.
- This year, 2023, the situation was different as public loans work rates were around 5%, so the Council would be attentive to reviewing capital projects and they would be subject to rigorous scrutiny by the Capital Review Board.
- Spending departments would be required to submit bids to a centrally held pool of capital.
- Appendix B of the report showed £15m had been repaid, saving £762,000 interest. Some of the debt repaid during 2022-23 had interest over 8%. Cost of carrying would continue to get lighter as higher interest payments were stripped out, creating savings of around £800,000 to £1m. However, it was possible that similar rates may be seen in the future
- Financing costs as a proportion of revenue stream was 6.46%, rising to 8.17% including MRP. This was not expected to rise substantially.
- Rising repayments and rising interest rates along with and end to a period of previously overprovided MRP had meant a repositioning of how the MRP was provided for. Use of capital receipts of £21.9m to provide for capital expenditure had now reduced MRP for future years.

13.2 The Chair moved recommendations as set out in the report.

13.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to Endorse and recommend to County Council the Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022-23 as set out in Annex 1 of the report

13.4 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The annex attached to this report sets out details of treasury management activities and outcomes for 2022-23, including:

- Investment activities
- Borrowing strategy and outcomes
- Non-treasury investments
- Prudential indicators.

The Council's Treasury Management Panel has discussed and endorsed the recommendations in this report.

13.5 **Alternative Options**

In order to achieve treasury management in accordance with the Council's treasury management strategy, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendation in this report.

14 **Notification of Exemptions Under Contract Standing Orders**

14.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out exemptions to standing orders granted for the award of contracts valued in excess of £250,000.

14.1.2 The Vice-Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Following the success of the bid for the bus service improvement plan funding, Norfolk County Council received £50m in funding; Norfolk was the only county in the East of England to receive this funding.
- The Council were now starting to award contracts using this funding. The first five contracts set out in the report were to improve bus services including to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- The other of exemptions showed good governance as they were extensions to existing contracts and were necessary as caused by a delay in the publication of the Government's National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

14.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted the funding received to help with bus services across Norfolk. These contracts were awarded by the Department for Transport to enhance existing bus services. There would be several schemes as part of this and this was part of this improvement.

14.3 The Chair was pleased to see that the Council had received this money from Government and that they were investing in Norfolk.

14.4 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

14.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED**, as required by paragraph 10.b of Contract Standing Orders, to note the exemptions over £250,000 that have been granted under paragraph 10.a.ii of those orders by the Director of Procurement & Sustainability and Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

14.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

N/A

14.7 **Alternative Options**

N/A

15 **Finance Monitoring Report 2022-23 Outturn**

15.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out a summary of the outturn position for the 2022-23 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2023, together with related financial information.

15.1.2 The Director of Strategic Finance reported that this gave the final position for 2022-23 and the information had been transcribed to meet statutory reporting requirements. The draft statement of accounts for 2022-23 had been published on 31 May 2023.

15.1.3 The Vice-Chair introduced the report to Cabinet

- This report looked back over the last year, 2022-23 and a balanced outturn had been achieved. This was achieved while managing in-year pressures in Children's Services of around £18m and having allowed for the impact of ongoing pressures as part of the 23-24 budget setting process.

- Adult Social Services and Children's Services would face increased demand and complexity of need moving forward. In the response to Cllr Watkin's question at item 7 of the agenda, it was discussed that work had been done to increase the quality of services and reduce cost of delivery through the Connecting Communities Work to deliver £18m savings.
- Elsewhere, pressure from hospital discharge would be managed by working with the ICS, and there was a rising challenge of increased financial pressure on the care market.
- Children's services, along with ongoing cost avoidance, had pressure on the home to school transport budget and cost of care budgets were its main focus.
- General reserves increased to £24.1m in line with the policy to maintain the general fund at 5% of the main budget.
- Departmental reserves and provision sat at £202.463m at year end. Adult Social Care reserves were strong, while the ability of Children's Services to offset overspend with reserves was limited. In Children's Services, the position of the Dedicated Schools Grant had improved due to the contribution towards it of the Safety Valve Project by Department for Education. Local First Inclusion, to implement this, would see elimination of the deficit of £48.77m.
- 85% of last year's target saving had been achieved. Permanently undeliverable savings had been considered as part of this year's budget.
- Slippage, deferment and removal of capital budget had meant that only £10m was borrowed in 2022-23.
- Cash balances were over £293m at the end of 2022-23, which meant interest receivable was higher than anticipated at the end of last year 2021-22.
- Lower than anticipated increased borrowing and debt being repaid at an interest rate higher than rates currently had resulted in an interest rate repayable of £24.69m
- The total capital programme was £217m; of this was £10m additional borrowing and £79m financed internally or for capital receipts. The balance of £128m came from Government and other external sources. Capital expenditure would come under increased scrutiny moving forward.

15.2 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing congratulated the Cabinet Member and team on bringing the budget within £70,000 of the forecast. He noted the difficult times experienced in the Covid-19 pandemic which caused disruption for the Council and residents. Bringing the council in in budget showed the rigour which had been applied.

15.3 The Chair also gave her congratulations for the finances being brought in under budget and noted that the Council were looking at how to bring Children's Services under budget. She was confident that the finances would be under budget next year with the help of officers.

15.4 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report

15.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To recognise that the revenue outturn for 2022-23 is a **balanced budget after transferring £0.570m to the general fund;**

2. To note the COVID-19 funding utilised in year of **£21.572m**, and the carry forward of **£9.553m** COVID-19 funding to 2023-24 to mitigate the on-going cost pressures and risks associated with infection prevention;
3. To recognise the saving shortfall of **£4.300m**; being 85% savings delivery in 2022-23, as described in Appendix 1 paragraph 6 of the report, which has been offset by other savings;
4. To recommend to Full Council that the General Balances at 31 March 2023 be increased to **£24.410m** after a transfer of £0.570m from a contribution to General Balances and underspends in Finance General.
5. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2023-27 capital programmes, including the (reprofiling of £126.940m from 2022-23 into 2023-24 addition of £62.938m to the capital programme to address the capital funding requirements from various external sources as set out in Appendix 3, paragraph 1.3 of the report.

15.6 **Reasons for Decision**

Three appendices are attached to this report giving details of the forecast revenue and capital financial outturn positions:

Appendix 1 of the report summarises the revenue outturn position, including:

- Forecast over and under spends
- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

Appendix 2 of the report summarises the key working capital position, including:

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

Appendix 3 of the report summarises the capital outturn position, and includes:

- Current and future capital programmes
- Capital programme funding
- Income from property sales and other capital receipts.

Additional capital funds will enable services to invest in assets and infrastructure as described in Appendix 3 section 4 of the report.

15.7 **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 of the report.

16 **Financial and Strategic Planning 2024-25**

- 16.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out sets out the framework for how the Council will approach budget setting for 2024-25 to be read in conjunction with the 2022-23 Financial Outturn report at item 15.
- 16.1.2 The Director of Strategic Finance stated that this was a forward-looking report starting the budget setting process for 2024-25.

- 16.1.3 The Vice-Chair introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This report represented the start of the budget setting process for 2024-25.
 - The Finance Team had been working on efficiencies with departments and the first budget challenge would be held in July 2023.
 - It would be important to look at ongoing operational costs with total savings required representing a significant sum given the pressures highlighted in the report.
 - It was previously thought that funding from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities would be for the life of the Medium-Term Financial Settlement however last year, the local government finance settlement was for only one year, impacting on the council's ability to plan ahead. Major changes in long term funding reform were unlikely in the near future.
 - Assumptions on growth of pressures and savings were set out in tables 1 and 2 of the report and gaps were highlighted in table 8.
 - This year, the council was looking within a whole council context of savings targets, with a minimum target of £10m outside of the frontline within operational service departments by implementing insights gained in the strategic review.
 - An estimated £25m demand driven demographic pressures consistent with previous years pressures emerged as part of the budget setting process, however this would be held centrally to be drawn down in the case of competitive business cases drawn up by spending departments.
 - Capital commitments were now subject of challenge of the Capital Review Board. Including MRP for every £50m borrowed would at 1% to council tax so a maximum amount to be borrowed would be held centrally, to be bid for by spending departments, including a new review of the councils spending and asset activities.
 - Spending departments had been asked to focus on and mitigate cost pressures and look for new savings.
 - The medium-term financial settlement ran to 2027-28 and showed a gap of £145.211m. This was not materially larger than previous figures.
 - The robust and well-tried budget process of the council meant that a balanced book had always been achieved so far. A gap was seen each year as funding did not keep up with increased costs.
- 16.2 The Chair noted that this report set out the challenges for 2024-25 and she had confidence that the team would put together a balanced budget. One year of funding settlement made planning ahead difficult for the Council.
- 16.3 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 16.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
1. To consider the overall budget gap of £126.522m included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) set by Full Council in February 2023, and agree:
 - a. the gap of £46.216m to be closed for 2024-25; and
 - b. the extension of the MTFS by a further year (to 2027-28), adding a further £18.689m to the gap and resulting in additional pressure assumptions to be addressed and leading to an overall gap for planning

- purposes of £145.211m over the next four years. (Section 2 of the report).
2. To review the key budget risks and uncertainties as set out in this report. (Section 10 of the report).
 3. To consider the principles of the proposed approach to budget setting for 2024-25, noting that there may be a need for flexibility within both the process itself and the assumptions applied, and agree:
 - a. the process and indicative timetable set out in Section 3 of the report, including the proposed consultation process for 2024-25.
 - b. that there should be a detailed review of cost pressures and growth already provided within the Budget (including 2023-24 inflation provisions) against actual costs experienced to identify any opportunities for budget reduction.
 - c. the minimum savings targets allocated to each Department to be found (Table 8 of the report), and that these will be kept under review throughout the budget process.
 4. To approve the initial budget virements for 2023-24 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, reflecting budget transfers for whole services between departments as a result of the Strategic Review, while noting:
 - a. The virements do not change the overall Council Budget.
 - b. That there will be further 2023-24 budget virements as a result of the Strategic Review, which will be reported for approval as required later in the year through regular financial reporting to Cabinet.

16.5 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 5 of the report

16.6 **Alternative Options**

Please see section 6 of the report.

17 **Norfolk County Council Local List for Validation of Planning Applications 2023**

- 17.1.1 Cabinet received the report advising them of the consultation to the draft Local List for the validation of planning applications and present a revised Local List to be adopted.
- 17.1.2 The Head of Planning introduced the report to Cabinet:
 - The draft Local List was used for validation of all planning applications received by the planning authority. It was not exhaustive and set out the minimum level to set out a planning application to take to determination.
 - Information should be proportionate to the scale of the development, relevant, necessary and link to material considerations.
 - The validation process was a tick box exercise and not a critical assessment of the proposal and did not preclude the county planning authority asking for additional information.
 - The list had been significantly reformatted, and the main changes were for minerals and waste developments and for county council developments. In each there were additional comments made for biodiversity and net gain due to a change of legislation, net zero carbon to demonstrate how

proposals would put in place measures to achieve this target, and nutrient neutrality to show appropriate measures are in place.

- The department had consulted widely, and comments and feedback received were attached for Cabinet's consideration.
- This information was also considered by the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee in May 2023.

17.2 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

17.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

1. To formally adopt the Norfolk County Council Local List for Validation of Planning Applications 2023
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning Services, to make future amendments to the Local List in response to any relevant new legislation, policy and guidance introduced within the 2-year review period

17.4 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 4 of the report

17.5 **Alternative Options**

Please see section 5 of the report.

18 Planning Obligation Standards 2023

18.1.1 Cabinet received the report which set out the 2023 Planning Obligations Standards, supporting the County Councils Better Together for Norfolk priority for infrastructure to be in place to support housing development, inward investment, and sustainable growth.

18.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport introduced the report to Cabinet:

- These standards had been in place since 2000 and determined what the Council could seek in monetary or land obligations from housing developers to mitigate impacts from new developments including education, green infrastructure and fire hydrants. The highway authority responded directly to planning authorities.
- Each planning application was assessed on a site-by-site basis and only required mitigations were sought.
- Planning obligations were secured through section 106 agreements set out in the report for education mitigation for early years, primary, secondary or sixth form expansion of provision, land for new schools, library mitigation for expansion of book stock, library expansion or new build libraries, green infrastructure to improve public rights of way, monitoring fees to fund monitoring of agreement sites and highways improvements directly through the highway authority.
- Planning obligations standards had been secured from 462 housing developments.
- The 2023 review took an evidence-based approach with officers from across departments to review the costs sought. Education and library costs were found to be lower than needed to introduce infrastructure and

it was proposed that they were increased in line with national guidance and neighbouring county councils

- The following changes were proposed to be made to the Standards 2023:
 - To seek planning obligations for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) places
 - Increase the cost per place for education places in alignment with government multipliers and County Councils in the region
 - The inclusion of minimum and maximum land requirement for new school sites
 - The addition of text detailing school capacity. Detailing that a range of factors are considered, including total number of places, permitted development within the area and numbers on roll to ensure sufficient capacity within schools
 - Increase the cost associated with libraries infrastructure in alignment with government guidance and County Councils in the region
- Amendments would ensure that S106 were sought effectively to address the impact of developments on services and allow infrastructure to be provided for new and existing residents. Amendments also gave greater certainty around what the council could seek from new housing developments of 20 houses or more.
- This updated policy was taken to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee who recommended it for approval.

- 18.2 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport asked about the threshold for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities collection of 100 dwellings, which she felt seemed high. The Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services **agreed** to look into whether this was a threshold applied locally or a national requirement, and ensure it was correct.
- 18.3 The Vice-Chair noted that the report showed that a future levy for home to school transport was being considered, which would support the cost of this budget.
- 18.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care noted the impact of large developments on communities and infrastructures they relied on; contributions around new schools were noted however contributions on the pupils in the schools would be welcomed.
- 18.5 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care also noted the demands of new developments on communities and asked if negotiations for contributions towards health provision was part of this policy. The Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services noted that this specifically looked at formal obligations on the Council but would continue to discuss this aspect with planning authorities and work with the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing. The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing added that health partners could be encouraged to look at this with the support of the Council.
- 18.6 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted the increased costs sought through planning obligation standards which were deemed fair and in line with others across the region.

- 18.7 The Chair noted the importance of working with district councils on new health provision, who would have plans to put in place for new doctors and dentists.
- 18.8 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services felt that work could be done with developers to ensure land was released for health to build provision at an earlier stage, as well as with health colleagues to ensure they built modern health centres for residents and took up land when it was provided.
- 18.9 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 18.10 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve for the Planning Obligation Standards 2023 to be adopted from 5 June 2023.
- 18.11 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
- The increased costs sought through the 2023 Planning Obligations Standards will support the County Council to continue to deliver infrastructure in the right places to benefit Norfolk residents. The increased costs are deemed to be fair, reasonable, and align with government guidance and costs sought by County Councils from across the region.
- 18.12 **Alternative Options**
- The alternative option would be to continue with the County Council's existing Planning Obligations Standards (2022), however, if the evidence-based costs for education and libraries are not increased there is a risk that the required infrastructure in Norfolk may not be able to be delivered.
- 19 Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property**
- 19.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out proposals 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.
- 19.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation introduced the report to Cabinet:
- There were 9 proposals in the report, 2 of which were for re-use and others of which were related to properties which were surplus to Council requirements.
 - The proposals also included an opportunity for for further commercialisation to bring in revenue to the council by leasing 2 floors of County Hall
- 19.2 The Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing noted the proposal for Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust to move into County Hall, where the Integrated Care Board was also based. This campus of public bodies would help the council to be integrated with health and social care. Health partners deciding to move here would help make a difference by establishing trust and relationships between services.
- 19.3 The Chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report. Cabinet

confirmed that they would not discuss the contents of the exempt appendix and therefore would not exclude the public from the meeting, however they confirmed that accepted the figures within this exempt appendix.

19.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To acknowledge the permanent acquisition of 37.6 hectares (93 acres) of County Farms Estate land, temporary use of a further 39.9 hectares (98.5 acres) and the temporary use with permanent rights acquired of another 9.1 hectares (22.5 acres) by National Highways in accordance with Compulsory Purchase provisions in support of the A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Improvement Scheme.
2. To formally declare the individual land parcels at Banningham Road, Aylsham surplus to County Council requirements and:
 - (i) Instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the land parcels to the adjoining owners, or
 - (ii) In the event of no satisfactory agreements instruct the Director of Property to dispose of all or remaining land parcels 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.
3. To formally declare the Land at Saxon Way, Dersingham (2020/023A) 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.
4. To formally declare 18 Kings Arms Street, North Walsham (1074/011) 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.
5. To agree to the granting of a lease of floor 6, County Hall, Martineau Lane Norwich NR1 2DH to Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust on the agreed terms.
6. To agree to the granting of a lease of floor 7, County Hall, Martineau Lane Norwich NR1 2DH to Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust on the agreed terms.
7. To formally declare the Land at Main Road, Rollesby (6017/100 & 6017/104) 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.
8. To formally declare the Additional Land at Hall Lane, South Wootton (2072/011), edged red on plan, 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.

9. To formally declare the Land at Main Street (2101/011 & 11A), Wormegay 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.

19.5 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please see section 4 of the report

19.6 **Alternative Options**

Please see section 5 of the report

20 **Appointments to Internal and External bodies**

- 20.1.1 Cabinet received the report detailing that authority to appoint to internal panels/boards/working groups and external bodies had been delegated to the Leader of the Council.

- 20.1.2 The Chair stated that the list of these appointments was still being finalised and would be appended to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting once agreed.

- 20.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note that the Leader is in the process of making appointments to the appropriate joint committees, internal panels/boards/working groups and external bodies, consulting with Group Leaders as to their appointees, where appropriate. The final list of appointments will be circulated following the meeting.

20.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The Council has delegated authority to the Leader of the Council to appoint to the internal and external bodies.

20.4 **Alternative Options**

N/A

21 **Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting**

- 21.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **note** the Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting

22 **Exclusion of the Public**

- 22.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED NOT** to exclude the public.

23 **Disposal, Acquisition & Exploitation of Property: Exempt Appendix 1**

- 23.1 Upon resolving item 19, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to accept the figures included in the exempt appendix. Cabinet did not discuss the contents of the appendix due

to them being exempt from public disclosure.

The meeting ended at 11:39

Chair of Cabinet

Cabinet
5 June 2023
Public & Local Member Questions

	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question from Anthony Cain Have the department considered purchasing or leasing a JCB Profile Pro machine, so that it could speed up Pothole repairs. I ask this question as the number of potholes increase by the day on Norfolk roads and potholes that are repaired are done to a very low standard.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport We are aware of the JCB Pothole Pro system and we do maintain a careful eye on emerging technology. We have not engaged with JCB to explore this further at this stage. Our maintenance teams have been utilising alternative innovative methods for pothole hole repairs such as spray injection patching. This alternative has been operating in Norfolk for several years and is a proven, quick, effective and reliable method to repair potholes, and complements the existing patching resource utilised routinely via our supply chain.</p> <p>In addition to spray injection patching, we are also trialling an alternative thermal method for surface patching which if it proves advantageous could also be deployed to repair potholes.</p>
6.2	<p>Question from Paul Hill Why is the council going ahead with LTNs? Having just heard on the local news that Norfolk County Council are planning to trial LTNs.</p> <p>I must strongly protest over this decision, it is an attack on public freedoms and has no place in this country.</p> <p>These schemes are being forced onto people up and down the country and they are undemocratic.</p> <p>It seems that the council has forgotten that they work for the people not the other way round. We tell you what we want you to do and we do not want LTNs, 20 minute neighborhoods, 15 minute cities, ULEZ or anything else that has come from the WEF.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport There are currently no plans to introduce any Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Norfolk. The future development of a scheme like this anywhere in Norfolk, would follow full consultation with locally elected representatives, the local community and other key stakeholders.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing the evidence for, and potential benefits and disbenefits of low traffic neighbourhoods - based on experience and feedback from across the country. However, this work is at a very early stage and there are no plans at the current time to undertake preliminary design or consultation on any scheme.</p>
6.3	<p>Question from Eleanor Laming Cabinet agreed the Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy on 10 May 2023. How do the priorities outlined for decarbonisation of Norfolk's transport sector align with</p>

the closure of the Postwick Park and Ride, which if reinstated using a suitable business case and sufficient advertising would contribute to reduction of carbon emissions?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste / Highways Infrastructure and Transport

We fully recognise the role that the Park & Ride service, including that from Postwick, can fulfill for our Climate Strategy. This must be measured against the comparatively low patronage that Park and Ride has experienced post-pandemic and re-opening the site and service would add up to £200k to the subsidy that Norfolk County Council have had to find since the pandemic to open and run the other sites. We have every intention of re-opening the site once passenger numbers on the P&R service as a whole have recovered to 75% of pre-covid levels, which will ensure that we have sufficient funds to run all the sites.

Supplementary Question from Eleanor Laming

Why did the bid for Bus Service Improvement Plan Funding in 2022 not include a funding request to help reinstate Postwick Park and Ride?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

A key criteria for Bus Service Improvement Plan funding, set by the DfT was that it could not be used to subsidise services that had been commercially viable and were now struggling and at risk of withdrawal. As the P&R service was commercially run by the bus operator before the pandemic, the funding and therefore the Plan could not be used to reinstate the Postwick P&R service.

6.4

Question from Benedict Gallagher

This question particularly affects Norfolk because it relates to excess deaths amongst Norfolk residents that requires explanation.

In response to a recent parliamentary question the government has declined to investigate the cause of excess deaths, see <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-05-22/186120>. This government response is attracting scathing criticism from healthcare experts.

With central government failing dying Norfolk residents will the council commission independent research to investigate, without fear or favour, the reasons for excess deaths to help prevent them?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Thank you for your question.

The Council regularly reviews death rates and the causes behind deaths – you can find information on our JSNA eg [PowerPoint Presentation \(norfolkinsight.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/PowerPoint%20Presentation) and [State of Norfolk and Waveney health report 2022 \(norfolkinsight.org.uk\)](https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/State%20of%20Norfolk%20and%20Waveney%20health%20report%202022). The former of these two will be updated in the coming months as the data becomes available.

Supplementary question from Benedict Gallagher

Does the council acknowledge that during the pandemic central government announced daily death rates for people who died within 28 days of a positive covid test, but does not do the same for excess deaths today, despite them often being at comparable levels?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Thank you for your question.

The Government currently announces daily death rates for people who died within 28 days of a Covid 19 test on a weekly basis.

Cabinet
5 June 2023
Local Member Questions

	Member Question Time
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins Back in January last year, the Conservative administration approved a decision to spend £6 million on Newton Europe consultants to transform Norfolk's adult social care services, and to save up to £50 million over five years. The move was criticised by Liberal Democrats and other opposition groups at the time. What evidence can you currently provide that the use of expensive consultants is being vindicated, and is proving to be money well spent by the Council?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Thank you for your question</p> <p>The programme called Connecting Communities, which brought on board Newton Europe, has begun to deliver real change through a new model of care and a refocus on early help and prevention. For example, the impact can be seen in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better response times for people calling us through our 'front door'. Our lines are always open and our practitioners are helping more people straight away, reducing pressure on our community care teams • More people are receiving reablement support in their homes from our Norfolk First Support Team. This has increased from around 5000 new starts a year when we began the programme to over 7300 a year. • Our changing approach – re-emphasising strengths based working – is showing early signs that more people are able to stay in their homes with alternative support, rather than residential care • Using our data differently, we are offering people at risk of a fall preventative services, through partnership with public health, the fire service, and voluntary sector <p>Staff have worked incredibly hard to embrace changes particularly over the pressured winter months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As reported to Cabinet in April, we delivered a near £1m savings in 22/23 against a plan of £2m. This short-fall against original planning reflected the later start time of the programme. In the current year, based on our latest delivery profiles we are expecting to catch up and have targeted £9.7m across all our changes this year. We are currently still on track to achieve the £18m recurrent saving in the future which will mean a cumulative c£55m benefit over the first five years of the Programme. Rigorous monitoring of performance is being undertaken to ensure new ways of working are embedded and are sustainable for the future. <p>Second question from Cllr Brian Watkins Norfolk continues to receive a raw deal from the Government's levelling up schemes, with its funding, delivery and allocation being heavily criticised in a recent</p>

cross party parliamentary report. There has been little or no feedback on why some bids for levelling up cash have been rejected, and there appears to be too much emphasis on one-off short term initiatives. Once again, the County is in danger of being left behind. What role does the Cabinet member think that the Council can play in trying to address these challenges and to secure a better deal for Norfolk in the longer term?

Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance

Norfolk continues to pursue every opportunity to secure much-needed funding for programmes and initiatives that will add value to the county and improve the lives of residents, communities and businesses. We have, and continue to lobby government to expand the criteria for projects and to take a longer term view of what will benefit a place. That said, we believe strongly that we should move from a position of having to bid for a broad range of funding opportunities at ongoing cost to us and no guarantee of success, to an allocation of growth funds for Norfolk. This is why we are pursuing a devolution deal for Norfolk, to secure more un-ringfenced and flexible funding, that could and should include Levelling up funds as others have done before us, and to strengthen Norfolk's voice and influence in Whitehall. And that is why colleagues from across the political spectrum should be supporting devolution and the County deal and the best possible deal for Norfolk.

7.2

Question from Cllr Lucy Shires

NHS England's 2015 Report, 'Future in Mind' set out a vision for improving support for children and young people with mental health problems. Since then efforts have been made to expand access to services, but the Covid-19 pandemic significantly slowed progress and there are growing concerns that funding is not reaching the frontline fast enough. Of particular concern is a lack of early intervention and prevention support. Can the Cabinet member outline the current picture across Norfolk and give an assurance that children and young people's mental health is not becoming a 'cinderella' service alongside the growing pressures on other important NHS services?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

As a system we recognise the importance of working with partners across the system to ensure the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of our children and young people are met holistically. Many of our services are developed and co-delivered with children, young people, families, Children's Services and VCSE partners. Despite the pandemic, Norfolk & Waveney ICB has continued to increase funding and improve access to children and young people's mental health services, increasing funding from £23m (2018/19) to a planned spend of just under £35m (23/24).

In 2019 NHS England published the Long-Term Plan, and there were a number of commitments made in relation to improving children and young people's mental health services which was supported by a significant increase in funding. Key areas of focus within the NHS Long Term Plan for improvement were: Increasing access through early intervention, Eating Disorder Services and Crisis Services. Locally this has resulted in:

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHSTs) (£3,055K + £800k (April 24) - N&W has mobilised 8 MHSTs across N&W with another 2 planned for January 2024. Each MHST supports around 20 schools and 500 children, providing early

intervention for mild to moderate needs, promotes a whole school approach supporting mental health champions in schools and identifies children and young people who require more specialist support. By January 2024, 50% of schools across N&W will have access to an MHST, and there is an ambition to increase this to 100% coverage.

Increasing funding to VCSE organisations (£4852K) - N&W is committed to working with a range of VCSE partners and recognises the important role they play, particularly in addressing the holistic needs of children, young people, and their families. Key funded partners include MAP, Ormiston Families, YMCA, MIND, LGBTQ+, NANSA and Fresh Start New Beginnings. Our VCSE partners are funded to see approximately 4000 children and young people each year

Integrated Front Door (£800K) - N&W is in the process of developing an Integrated Front Door (IFD) for all emotional wellbeing and mental health support. We have currently mobilised phase 1 which enables children, young people, families, and professionals to request support through Just One Norfolk or Just One Number. The model provides a stepped approach of self-help, advice & guidance, and therapeutic support, building resilience into the system and ensuring everyone gets the right support the first time.

Eating Disorders (£3478K) - It is recognised that early intervention for individuals presenting with an eating disorder is critical to delivering positive outcomes and a full recovery. As a result, NHSE published an Access and Waiting Time Standard to ensure 95% of all children and young people were in treatment within 1 week for urgent presentations and 4 weeks for routine. The pandemic had a significant impact on children and young people, and in particular those presenting with an eating disorder. Presentations and acuity increased dramatically, both locally and nationally. N&W focussed on developing an all age eating disorder strategy to ensure we had the right services and capacity to meet the demand. Over the last four years the ICB has invested an additional £2.4m into children and young people's eating disorder services and the teams are now delivering an exceptional service

Funding has:

- Increased capacity within the team
- Developed a new Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) service which accounts for about 1/3 of all eating disorder presentations
- Developed an Intensive Day Service "The Lighthouse" which provides an alternative to admission and intensive support so children and young people who are very unwell.
- Embedded mental health practitioners on acute paediatric wards to support children and young people if they are admitted for medical stabilisation.
- Trained and upskilled teams and the wider system
- Commissioned a disordered eating service, where eating is a primary concern, but there isn't a diagnosable eating disorder.

Crisis Services - A key commitment within the NHS Long Term Plan is to ensure all children and young people have access to 24/7 crisis provision. N&W ICB has invested an additional £500K into the CYP Crisis team, £300K into embedding mental health practitioners onto acute paediatric wards, £200K into an expediated pathway for CYP presenting in A&E with self-harm.

	<p>Key development priorities for the future include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing an All Age Urgent and Emergency Care Strategy• All Age mental health liaison service (assessments and support in A&E)• Integrated Practice Model between Children's Services and health, to risk assess and care plan children with complex needs presenting in crisis• Intensive Day Service• 72 short stay provision for children presenting in crisis• Parent / carer support• VCSE offer
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone</p> <p>It was recently reported that Norfolk County Council is considering closing its reablement centres at Benjamin Court and Grays Fair Court. These centres provide a vital service for people who are well enough to come out of hospital, but who still need extra support before returning home. The closures could also result in the loss of 86 jobs. What assessment has been conducted to determine the effect these closures will have on local health and care provision and the effect on the residents who rely on such settings to recover fully?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The proposed change through our consultation with staff is about re-purposing our reablement service to be home-based rather than in-patient based.</p> <p>The staff at Grays Fair Court and Benjamin Court are highly skilled and highly valued and we are really keen to retain them and their expertise. There are a range of options available to them including some opportunities for promotions, or to remain working in housing with care, as well as posts working in home-based reablement. We are not proposing to make redundancies</p> <p>Since Covid, demand for home-based reablement has increased and this is why we are proposing tailoring our service to provide more support in this way, with the NHS focusing on in-patient support for people with higher medical needs. Our current bed based reablement is not set up to deal with such medical needs and this has led to falling occupancy levels at both sites. There have been many changes in health and social care, and particularly in the out of hospital care in recent years. The NHS has been able to increase its community based care for people with medical needs, leaving hospital for example through virtual wards and therapy-led recovery in community hospitals. Much of this provision wasn't there when we set up our beds in Grays Fair and Benjamin Court.</p> <p>Our role as adult social services is to concentrate on supporting people in their homes – which is why we have expanded our NFS service, as a result of these changes the service will be able to support 1,500 more people in 2023.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale</p> <p>The one million trees promise, commenced in November 2019, is so far behind with only 249,000 planted. This leaves 751,000 to be planted in the next 2 planting seasons. The recent announcement to create a new country park or parks with</p>

500,000 trees is welcome, but has only come about as it seems this Conservative administration has been asleep at the wheel and has just woken up at the final corner. Can the Cabinet member guarantee that land will be found and purchased, trees planted and access measures including public transport will be in place for these country parks?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

The current total of trees planted is now 276,293, a figure which shows very positive progress, despite losing two planting seasons due to the pandemic. In terms of the plan to create new country parks, this has been in development for some time. For such a significant project much research and due diligence is required to ensure that the case is strong enough to put to Cabinet, something which I hope to be able to do soon.

Officers are currently working to identify land in suitable locations that already have strong transport links including walking and cycling. We will ensure that the land will also be the correct grade and will not take land out of active agricultural production. In addition, we are exploring working in partnership with Forestry England through a lease option agreement. This would de-risk delivery as they have confirmed they have both the resource and capacity to deliver 500,000 trees planted by March 2025.

Supplementary question from Cllr Paul Neale

About a quarter of the trees and shrubs planted along the route of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road died resulting in 3,000 trees needing replanting and probably some of them have since died.

Could the cabinet member give me the number of the 249,000 that have been planted to date (out of the target of 1million) that have died and what is the management plan for history to not repeat itself?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

The trees planted by the 1 Million Trees project have been delivered through a wide range of initiatives. A significant proportion have been planted by groups and individuals outside of NCC either through partnership work or tree schemes where we have supplied trees to be planted on private or community-owned land. For these trees we ask that the parties commit to maintenance and to taking part in follow-up surveys so we can monitor success. This is a condition of receiving any trees through NCC.

We also provide much guidance regarding planting and maintenance to ensure that people have sufficient information for the trees to thrive. Regarding the planting on NCC-owned land, we take measures when planting to maximise success. Early feedback has suggested that this has been beneficial. However for the last season's planting, which accounts for at least 55,000 of the total, it is too early to report on success. We have a programme of monitoring previous years' planting which we will share later this year when complete. Whilst we endeavour for all our planting to survive and thrive, there is inevitably a degree of loss to external factors outside our control. Last year saw unprecedented hot weather and drought and we expect this to have had some effect on survival rates. We will know more after the monitoring data is gathered later this year.

7.5

Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn

Government research warns that one in ten childcare providers are facing closure, and more than half are struggling to cover their costs. Can the Cabinet Member tell me if there has been an assessment of the risks of childcare providers closing and the potential impacts on the Norfolk economy as well as developmental outcomes for children? I would like to stress that the additional Government funding announced in March will not necessarily help, and may even worsen the situation, as many childcare providers receive a rate for “funded” hours that is lower than what it costs them to provide the childcare.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services

Working families will be supported through an extension of the funded childcare on offer, which doubles the support currently in place. The intention is to enable families to stay in work, make childcare more affordable and more accessible, reduce the barriers preventing some parents from going back to work and keep the economy growing. The budget also included confirmation that there will be £204m additional funding this year (from Autumn 2023), increasing to £288m by 2024-25. The actual amount each local authority will receive is yet to be disclosed. Current information from DfE suggests the average will be around £8.00 per hour for 2-year-olds and over £5.50 for 3- and 4-year-olds. Norfolk usually receives an amount below the national average. The current formula methodology is the outcome of annual consultations with providers offering the funded entitlement. The grant received via the Early Years Block from central government is allocated to maximise the base rates to all providers, apply supplements where certain criteria are met, retain a minimum contingency, and remain affordable to the council. The formula approach must also be compliant with statutory guidance issued and monitored by DfE.

Providers can access both a SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) to support children where their observations indicate that a child may benefit from additional support. The aim of SENIF is to support providers to secure better outcomes for children. The funding is available to all providers offering funded places and in 2022-23, £1.298m was paid to those that applied. EYPP aims to close the attainment gap between those that attract the funding and their peers. In 2022-23, £0.580m was paid directly to providers for children meeting the national criteria, and where they collected the necessary information for the local authority to complete eligibility checks. There is also funding for children with more complex / medical need or an agreed EHCP. This funding is also paid directly to providers and in 2022-23 £0.756m was passed to settings.

We monitor closures and risk of closures to ensure that we can meet our statutory requirement to secure sufficient funded early years provision for families. Timing of setting closures are often organised to enable governance, families, and staff to plan to minimise impact. Unexpected closure usually occurs because the business cannot legally operate, for a variety of reasons. Where closures happen, we can offer a brokerage service to help families in their search for alternative childcare. In addition, through our Early Years and finance teams we offer, grant opportunities to support sustainability, development, quality, and inclusion, provide communication on existing funding streams to ensure additional funding opportunities are not missed, provide subsidised training programme to assist with mandatory training and CPD and a recruitment website to enable them to advertise vacancies. We

	<p>always encourage settings to engage with the early years team as soon as possible to seek support when issues occur.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Jamie Osborn In February, the NWL planning application was suspended indefinitely. Now it has been delayed again, with no explanation as to the reason. Please can the Cabinet Member provide a comprehensive list of the risks to the project associated with the delay in the planning application, and the associated cost impacts?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The reporting of the NWL project and the associated planning application submission have been delayed as we are awaiting a decision from DfT approving the Outline Business Case. Risk is considered within the project risk register that is discussed at project board meetings, member group meetings, and is copied to you (Cllr Osborne). You will hopefully be aware from the forward plan that we plan to bring a report to the July meeting of Cabinet to provide a project update.</p>
7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Matt Reilly There are continuing concerns about the safety of students and incidence of harassment around the UEA. A petition has been started to reverse the part time street lighting so students and others can feel safer. Will the cabinet member agree to leave the street lights around the university on in future and join me in meeting students to discuss their concerns?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Part Night Lighting was introduced in response to ongoing energy cost rises, our commitments to cut carbon and CO² emissions and to reduce our contribution to light pollution. More recently we have seen a steep increase in our energy and ongoing maintenance costs putting more emphasis on the need to introduce and maintain saving initiatives such as PNL. All our initiatives are fully assessed to ensure that they consider the safety and security of our residents.</p> <p>The process used to determine which roads were suitable at the time of implementation, and the mechanisms used to review such decisions, is balanced and justified. The process assesses the safety of users of the highway and implications to crime and disorder and at the time consultations were carried out with residents, the police and other emergency services in which we received little to no adverse comments which would lead us to retain lighting throughout the night in this area.</p> <p>If the residents feel strongly that the lighting in the area should no longer be on a part night light regime, it is recommended that these concerns are raised at their local Safer Neighbourhoods Action Panel or 'SNAP' meeting. Residents can ask for their concerns to be put on the meeting agenda and discussed and if Norfolk Police indicate that they believe crime has increased as a result of part night lighting, this can be reviewed by Norfolk County Council.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby</p>

	<p>Will the cabinet member explain her intended approach to using rapidly developing AI in the light of the increasing debate over its use and efficacy?'</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation We see the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a complementary technology to assist our staff with administrative activities and decision making rather than as a replacement. We will continue to proactively evaluate all available AI opportunities to improve the quality and efficiency of our services, building on the intelligent automation approaches which are already well established across the Council. We will risk assess any new approaches to ensure risks to data security or decision making accuracy are fully understood</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare The message from across Norfolk is our roads are in a poor state and the county council is not listening to local residents. Residents increasingly report they feel the county council takes little notice of their views and makes remote top down decisions only changed through dispute rather than discussion. Councillors close to communities affected by decisions and elected to reflect local views don't have a structure through which they can properly influence decisions. Doesn't the cabinet member for highways agree it is time there were joint arrangements involving district and county councillors at district level so local views and priorities can be properly taken into account in future?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The County Council maintains the highway in accordance with the Transport Asset management Plan (TAMP) and is the Council's strategic approach that identifies the required allocation of resources for the management, operation, and maintenance of the highway infrastructure for future needs. This method has served Norfolk well with the County performing highly in the annual national road maintenance survey.</p> <p>To help deliver the objectives of TAMP, there are a number of ways that residents can report issues with county roads which are directed to the relevant maintenance teams for inspection and ordering of remedial works. The best way to do this is via the website report a problem page.</p> <p>With regard to larger scale highway projects, the County Council works closely with stakeholders to consider local views and encourages responses as part of individual consultation processes.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones Can the cabinet member outline future plans for Benjamin Court and Gray Fairs court?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Thank you for your question.</p> <p>As set out above in the answer to the question from Cllr Stefan Aquarone, we are proposing to re-purpose our reablement services to be home-based rather than in-patient services.</p>

	<p>Both Grays Fair and Benjamin Court have other services on site which will continue. Both sites offer potential for alternative health and social care uses so it is our intention to work with partners to explore other opportunities.</p>
7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy A young 15 year-old Thetford resident tragically lost his life recently following a collision with a car. This follows the death of another resident just a few years ago on the Mundford Road and other incidents locally that have resulted in cyclists and pedestrians being injured.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member confirm what he is doing to address road safety issues in areas such as Thetford where members of the public are now obviously very concerned?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport? It is distressing to hear of this recent tragic incident and of other traffic crashes which occur on the highway network. Norfolk County Council receives accident data from the police where an injury has occurred and routinely reviews the number, severity and causation of accidents across the county to determine whether engineering intervention is required. I will arrange for you to be contacted directly with regards to concerns in Thetford.</p> <p>You will also be contacted shortly concerning the ongoing programme of Road Safety Community Fund schemes which will be delivered in South Norfolk and Breckland in 2024/25, requesting your input on where funding could be directed within your division.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett What advice has the cabinet member received about the risk of putting in a planning application for the Norwich Western Link before the funding and OBC for the NWL have been approved and has accepting that advice led to the item being slipped another month on the cabinet forward plan?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The advice from the officers involved in the delivery of the NWL is very clear and has informed our decision making regarding the timing of reporting to Cabinet. Until a funding decision is confirmed by DfT (ie approval of our Outline Business Case), and therefore without being able to demonstrate that funding has been established, it would not be prudent to commence with formal statutory approval processes (that includes the planning application, compulsory purchase orders and side road orders). As set out in the response to Cllr Osborne's question, you will hopefully also be aware from the forward plan that we plan to bring a report to the July meeting of Cabinet to provide a project update.</p>
7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb Whilst it is welcome that the cabinet is considering imposing a levy on developers for SEND school places, how does using the number of children with EHCPs as the measure for determining developer contributions align with the DfE Safety Valve</p>

agreement and Local First Inclusion which is underpinned by the council's ambition to reduce the numbers of EHCPs?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Whilst it is welcome that the cabinet is considering imposing a levy on developers for SEND school places, how does using the number of children with EHCPs as the measure for determining developer contributions align with the DfE Safety Valve agreement and Local First Inclusion which is underpinned by the council's ambition to reduce the numbers of EHCPs?

There is a technical aspect to this which requires us to use EHCP data in a specific way now. However, this measure has recently been introduced and we do expect it to evolve over time as the 'real world' application of it develops and, in this way, we believe that there will be ways to ensure that it assists rather than works against our Local First Inclusion programme in the context of the DfE 'safety valve' investment.

Therefore, the technical aspect is as follows. The levy being proposed is based on the overall pupil population and determines those with EHCP for SEND in order to comply with the LA's statutory duty to respond to sufficiency needs, noting in particular that EHCP is required for admission to special school. This measure will be reviewed annually to adapt to the possible changing landscape but will also reflect the level of need and therefore the proportion of need amongst the pupil population.

We will assess the pupil needs from data sources and apply a measure against the proportion of housing, which is in line with how we apply measures for other phases of education in the mainstream sector. Developing this measure will ensure the LA keeps pace with the changing SEND landscape overtime.

Regarding implications for Local First Inclusion, we will determine the use of the funds received to support our plans for increased specialist provision. We will review the commissioning requirement when allocating funds to any project and in time these funds will be reported within the capital SEND spending planning as the demand grows.

7.13

Question from Cllr Ben Price

Last week's Climate Change Committee report showed that 9% of the UK workforce are in sectors that are expected to grow in the transition to net zero, and most notably the retrofit sector is expected to grow significantly. But this is dependent on strong signals, at regional as well as national level, of policy commitment to growing supply chains and ensuring skilled workers are in the right place. Can the Cabinet Member provide details on how training programmes for the retrofit sector are being reinforced with policy and economic strategy commitments to invest in retrofitting to provide certainty to that sector?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Our climate strategy sets out seven key themes, one of which is *promoting a green economy*. In Norfolk this will include not just retrofit but benefitting from green tourism, from electric vehicle sales and maintenance, and from the offshore wind energy being generated off our coastline.

I am pleased that Norfolk is already substantially ahead of the national average in the number of MCS-certified renewable energy installations being undertaken in homes, which is a sign of market confidence in retrofit, especially for households that are not on the gas grid. We and partners aim to further improve confidence through a number of measures, including:

- Our own programme of retrofit, which will include in the contractual arrangements a requirement for the prime contractor to work with both its supply chain and skills providers on skills and apprenticeships
- The £350,000 *Fast Followers* funding awarded to the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership by Innovate UK to support public awareness of low carbon adaptation opportunities and stimulate the supply chain
- The Norfolk Investment Framework funding of a retrofit skills programme

Second question from Cllr Ben Price

Located within the night-time economy area, the SOS bus helps reduce A&E visits, provides onsite sanctuary to vulnerable users of the night-time economy and is estimated to save the ambulance service around £270,000 annually. Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that if this service is lost it will lead to more cost pressures at the N&N hospital, also potentially putting lives at risk and will they represent those concerns to the CCG?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

Thank you for your question.

Norfolk County Council do not run this service but our Public Health Team does make a contribution to its cost and has committed funding until March 2025. Norfolk CCG's were abolished a while ago with responsibility being transferred to the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board (ICB) and I will happily forward your comments on to their Chief Executive.