

Cabinet
4 October 2021
Local Member Questions

Agenda item 7	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale National Highway's figures show the three A47 schemes around Norwich would release a combined total of 140,000 tonnes of CO2 from construction before 2025. If built, they would then release around 12,500 tonnes of CO2 each year in addition to Norfolk's already increasing transport emissions. This is before other schemes such as the Norwich Western link. Why is the Council only making minor changes to the Local Transport Plan (LTP4), rushing it back to November Full Council, and not revising the Strategic Environmental Assessment to assess the cumulative carbon impacts of these schemes which lie in the plan's period.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste / Highways, Infrastructure and Transport NCC considers that cumulative impact has been reasonably and proportionately addressed in the development, assessment and appraisal of the LTP, but does not recognise the figures to which you refer. The county council is now taking into consideration government guidance published during LTP4 adoption process and is allowing sufficient time to enable it to do this prior to bringing forward the LTP for adoption.</p> <p>Supplementary Question from Cllr Paul Neale The United Nations advises a 45% carbon emissions cut this decade, the UK has committed to a 68% emissions reduction by 2030 under the Paris Agreement, and hosting COP 26 this month. With the Transport Decarbonisation Plan mandating local transport carbon targets, will the Leader suspend the "Just Dual It/Just Fund It" campaign and review whether supporting the A47 schemes is consistent with local and national policy, and international efforts to tackle climate change?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste / Highways, Infrastructure and Transport There is an overwhelming case for A47 improvements. The A47 does not perform its role as the strategic road into the county in its current state. Dualling the road would spread prosperity throughout the region by ensuring that vital journeys are quicker and more reliable, reducing uncertainty and costs to businesses. Investment would help unlock much needed housing and jobs growth including investment into the nationally important energy sector sited off the eastern energy coast. Dualling would help level-up and tackle deprivation felt in communities by building back better following the disproportionate impacts of Covid-19 on tourism and hospitality in the region. Moreover, dualling would make the road safer and reduce impacts on communities through which the unimproved stretches pass.</p> <p>Bringing forward improvement schemes will also enable much-needed measures to enhance travel choice through multi-modal solutions (such as active travel and public transport) to ensure that building back better addresses the range of challenges faced.</p>

7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention confirm how many adults have had their respite cancelled in the last six months?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>All respite services for people with learning disabilities have now reopened as a result of the success of the wider vaccination programme, as you will be aware they are provided by a number of different organisations. Adult Social Services has asked learning disability respite providers to collate information about cancelled stays but the results are not in yet.</p> <p>For older people and people with physical disabilities, when we paused planned respite as a result of lockdown originally from April 2020, we cancelled all planned bookings. This affected around 9 clients. All clients were contacted directly by NCC to explain the situation and ensure there was no risk of carer breakdown/safeguarding issues and suitable provision would have been arranged should these needs have been identified. Planned respite was reinstated from late May 2021 on a phased and limited approach, with the dedicated planned respite beds made fully available from July 21st 2021. As the planned respite offer has only recently been made fully available, we would expect the number of cancelled bookings to be very low (or nil).</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Maxine Webb How many adults have not had their respite or day care reinstated since the easing of lockdown restrictions on 19th July 2021?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>All residential respite services for people with Learning Difficulties have now reopened. There is nobody unable to attend because day care services are closed, but there are 383 less people using the service and there are several reasons why the figure is lower. There are people who are choosing not to attend because they are clinically extremely vulnerable and many people have chosen to have their needs met in other ways through direct payments. Transport is currently also a limiting factor because of the risk of infection.</p> <p>For older people and people with physical disabilities we know of nine people who have been affected by their day centres not re-opening. These people are being supported to ensure their needs continue to be met. The dedicated planned respite beds were made fully available for older people and people with physical disabilities from July 21 2021, with 11 beds that could be accessed for this purpose. These can be booked to support any planned respite required.</p>
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Alison Birmingham Can the Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care, Public Health and Prevention confirm what information and guidance has been produced for people who employ</p>

	<p>Personal Assistants to help them understand their rights as employers when considering testing regimes, PPE and vaccination statuses for their employees?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>As you would expect, regular communications have continued to be issued to all adults and parents/carers of individuals receiving a direct payment (DP) in Norfolk. Currently twelve separate communications (letter, email and telephone call) have been shared since April 2020. They were issued directly to all adults and parents/carer of individuals, shared on NCC Direct Payments Facebook page and are available on the NCC website - Direct Payment: Coronavirus updates and advice - Norfolk County Council.</p> <p>The communications have included FAQs, weblinks to NHS England and Gov.uk guidance, and contact details for the local Direct Payments Support Service. Information and guidance provided has been across a range of topics, including:</p> <p>Legal employment law changes for employers, including rates of pay, contracts, holiday Accessing Covid-19 tests, including information on how to access test kits and when to test Accessing Flu injections Co-ordinated support with NCC Covid-19 response team to book vaccination appointments for all DP personal assistants PA's sick pay and paid leave Guidance around shielding and self-isolating How to access PPE for PAs/carers – with a dedicated email mailbox to request delivery of PPE Letters for PAs to evidence that they are key workers to support priority access to shops and fuel</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention advised Council on 27th September that he thought “there might be around a few hundred people who haven't had their vaccinations in time” in response to my question about the vaccination deadline and the impact on social care staffing levels. As a lead commissioner of social care in Norfolk I assume data on known issues is collected to prepare contingency plans to mitigate risks. Can he therefore confirm how many social care staff in Norfolk have missed the vaccination deadline?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>Data is collected from care providers through the National Capacity Tracker, this provides us with a daily view of the vaccination progress across Norfolk care homes. The latest position is that 96% of staff have received at least one vaccination and 90% are fully vaccinated. This is across a workforce of 11,000 staff in care homes in Norfolk giving the figure that 450 staff remain to have their</p>

	<p>first vaccination, however this will include people who are medically exempt. We want people who work in the sector to be vaccinated and clearly are continuing to work with providers and health colleagues to support as many people as possible to receive the vaccination. Vaccination rates continue to increase day by day, however, we know that some people will choose to leave the care home sector when the deadline is reached on 11th November 2021. (The government has issued a temporary self-certification process for medical exemptions, which will be in place until 12 weeks after the launch of the NHS COVID Pass system).</p> <p>Supplementary Question from Cllr Terry Jermy What is the anticipated impact this will have on care provision and the mitigating actions that are being taken?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention As you are aware care homes are private businesses, there are 342 registered in Norfolk. 102 homes have 100% of their workforce fully vaccinated. A further 168 care homes have between 90-99% of staff fully vaccinated. For many homes this amounts to one or two people and we know that some will be under 18 or have exemptions. We are currently working with the remaining homes that are under 90% to ensure that any operational impact is understood. Many are confident that remaining staff will meet the deadline for vaccination and care providers are confirming that business continuity plans are in place. However, alongside current staff shortages this is likely to mean that some homes will limit new admissions.</p> <p>Norfolk County Council is encouraging wider measures to support the overall care sector including the launch of the new staff recruitment campaign.</p>
7.5	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones At the Norfolk and Waveney CCG's AGM on 28th September 2021, chief nurse Cath Byford said that the CCG is creating "a pooled budget with the adult social care team at Norfolk County Council and a commitment across the whole system to a minimal reliance on independent hospital provision for people with learning disabilities and autistic people". Will the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention tell me how many people are currently in private hospitals?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>I understand that there are a total of 14 hospital placements for people funded by the NHS through the Norfolk and Waveney CCG. 3 of these individuals are on extended leave from their placement (so are living in the community, not in the hospital). 7 of these 14 are non-NHS hospital placements.</p> <p>There are a further 17 people in very specialist hospital placements, where the placement is funded and coordinated by NHS England. Of these, 6 people are in non-NHS hospital placements</p>

7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett</p> <p>The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review of Adult Social Care Complaints 2020-2021, released on 29th September 2021, shows that 68% of complaints against Norfolk County Council to the Ombudsman in the last year were upheld. It also shows Norfolk County Council had the joint 9th highest number of complaints and enquiries submitted to the Ombudsman about Adult Social Care out of the 350 authorities listed. How will the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention ensure learning from this is enacted so that Norfolk residents can see tangible improvements to services?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The Norfolk figure of Adult Social Services complaints to the Ombudsman is 68%, against the national average of 72%. As you would expect the year was an extremely testing one given the pandemic and I would like to give credit to the staff who work in the sector for their hard work and commitment. Complaints are treated as a critical part of Adult Social Service's improvement and learning. We invited the Ombudsman to Norfolk in 2019 to talk to us and for the last two years we have had dedicated work to improve how we respond to complaints, and learn from them so that people's experience of our services is improved. We monitor all complaints for themes and encourage teams to take a restorative approach. The complaints service meets regularly with senior managers and directors from ASSD to ensure the valuable insight and learning provided by complaints is used to inform and support service improvement. Learning from complaints is also shared with all staff in the department through training and guidance.</p> <p>The Ombudsman has confirmed that in 100% of the cases considered by his office during the period considered in the review, he was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented his recommendations and made the required service improvements.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Sands</p> <p>On 24th September 2021, local press reported that bus services were being cut or reduced due to a shortage of bus drivers. A resident in my Division has contacted me, who applied to renew their licence but advised there is a backlog of renewals for Bus and HGV licences dating back to June 2021. Until this driver receives their renewed licence they are unable to drive a bus, depriving Norfolk of at least one bus driver and certainly affecting others.</p> <p>Would the Leader join me in writing to the Secretary of State concerned asking for renewals of licences (Bus and HGV) to be rapidly expedited?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</p> <p>As publicised in both the national and local press, the industry is in a challenging situation and any measures to help increase and fast-track the numbers of HGV and bus drivers is to be welcomed. The Government has recently announced further measures to this effect, which I warmly welcome, so writing to the Secretary of State at this time is not required.</p>

	<p>Supplementary Question from Cllr Mike Sands Since the 7th September First Bus has dropped between 10 and 12 buses a day from the greater Norwich area preventing people from getting to work, college and medical appointments. In the new national bus strategy, the Government has instructed local authorities to play a greater role in bus provision through a legally binding contract called an "Enhanced Partnership". What action will the local authority take after the 1st April if a similar situation occurs?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport I am aware that First have had to reduce frequencies on some bus routes due to driver shortages, but they have maintained a level of service in all areas so that people can still travel. After the 1st April, when we have an Enhanced Partnership, we will have more of a say as to where services should potentially be reduced in this type of situation, but we would not be able to stop operators reducing service frequencies if they cannot comply with health and safety requirements and driver's hours regulations.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Steve Morphew Will the cabinet member join me in urging First Bus to reinstate the 21/22 route in Norwich to go through the Fiddlewood Estate in my division?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport As part of the future Enhanced Partnership with all bus operators, we will be reviewing all bus service provision, looking at what alternatives are available for people and taking into account the fact that we need to keep services commercially sustainable if they are to continue. At the moment, passenger revenue is still not up to pre-Covid levels and so operators are having to make difficult decisions to ensure services remain at least in part commercially sustainable.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp The Imperial College Report showed an increase in health risks, congenital heart defects and reproductive issues for children living near incinerators. Regulation of incinerator waste fails. In 2017, ash from MVV's Plymouth Incinerator blew up a ship and injured the Chief Engineer. Norfolk County Council is responsible for Public Health. The risks are clear. What further facts does the Administration need, to rethink its decision to vote against my Motion on 27 September asking NCC to tell Govt not to allow a 625,000- tonne capacity incinerator on the Norfolk border, upwind of King's Lynn, Clenchwarton and the Fens?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste The decision on whether to build a large plant such as an incinerator is subject to a detailed application process that specifies who should be consulted. At the appropriate stage, this includes the Local Authority. Should specialist technical public health evidence be required as part of a Norfolk County Council response, this will be sought from an appropriate national expert in the new UK Health Security Agency (previously Public Health England).</p> <p>Second Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp Three young adults with Learning Disabilities sadly died after neglect, distress and</p>

abuse in privately-run Cawston Park Hospital. The Winterborne Report said that people with Learning Disabilities should have been moved out of residential mental Hospitals by 2014. Does the Cabinet Member agree that Norfolk County Council should set targets to help all adults with Learning Disabilities live in the community, like everyone else, and introduce new structures, as a matter of urgency, with Member Oversight, to monitor well-being and health for all residents remaining in private Hospital settings?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention

Thank you for your question.

Norfolk County Council is supporting the NHS to achieve the nationally set target to reduce the number of people in specialist hospitals. There are currently 14 people with hospital placements funded by the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, against a national target of 13. Whilst this is above the national figure, 3 of the individuals are on extended long term leave from hospital and are living in the community. The hospital placement is counted as it is being kept available, should they need to return before their formal discharge from hospital is confirmed.

NHS and NCC partners work together to plan each individual's discharge. I am very pleased that earlier this year, Cabinet agreed to invest millions of pounds of capital to develop new supported living homes in a radical change of policy. We are working with registered social landlords, district councils and developers to build these new homes over the next three years. It is worth noting that this will include homes designed specifically to meet the needs of those who have needed a period of mental health assessment and treatment in hospital, to support timely discharge.

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee oversee the performance of NHS services, but the main responsibility is discharged through the shared Learning Disability and Autism Programme Board.