

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Date: **Wednesday 10 July 2024**
Time: **10am**
Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich**

Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile phones.

Membership:

Cllr Vic Thomson (Chair)
Cllr Martin Wilby (Vice Chair)

Cllr David Bills
Cllr Claire Bowes
Cllr Graham Carpenter
Cllr Jim Moriarty
Cllr Rob Colwell
Cllr William Richmond

Cllr Catherine Rowett
Cllr Chrissie Rumsby
Cllr Robert Savage
Cllr Barry Stone
Cllr Tony White

**For further details and general enquiries about this Agenda please contact the
Committee Officer, Nicola Ledain:
email committees@norfolk.gov.uk**

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Advice for members of the public:

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

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

A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2 Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 May 2024.

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3 Members to Declare any Interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Thursday 4 July 2024**. For guidance on submitting a public question please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-a-question-to-a-committee>

6 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Thursday 4 July 2024**.

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Group Meetings:

Conservative	9:15am
Labour	9:00am
Liberal Democrats	9:00am

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Date Agenda Published: Tuesday 2 July 2024



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Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 15 May 2024
10.00am, held at County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Vic Thomson - Chair
Cllr Martin Wilby – Vice Chair

Cllr David Bills
Cllr Graham Carpenter
Cllr Rob Colwell
Cllr Philip Duigan
Cllr Jim Moriarty
Cllr William Richmond

Cllr Catherine Rowett
Cllr Chrissie Rumsby
Cllr Robert Savage
Cllr Barry Stone
Cllr Tony White

Also Present:

Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Deputy Leader of Norfolk County Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Jane James	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Innovation
Cllr Graham Plant	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Also Present:

Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation
Naomi Chamberlain	Senior Strategic Planner, Growth and Investment
Paul Harker	Place Planning Manager, Children’s Services
Simon Hughes	Director of Property, Corporate Property, Infrastructure
Tom Humphries	Strategy Manager – Adult Education Budget, Growth and Investment
Nicola Ledain	Committee Officer, Democratic Services
Niki Park	Senior Passenger Transport Manager, Infrastructure
Ruth Royle	Programme Manager, Strategy and Transformation
Sarah Rhoden	Director of Community Information and Learning, Communities and Environment
Chris Starkie	Director of Growth and Investment, Strategy and Transformation

1. Apologies and substitutions

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Bowes substituted by Cllr Philip Duigan.

2. Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Cllr David Bills declared an ‘other’ interest as he was on the Adult Learning Steering Group.

4. Items of Urgent Business

4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

5.1 There were no public questions.

6. Local Member Issues / Questions

6.1 There were no member issues or questions.

7. Norfolk’s Devolution – Norfolk Assurance Framework

7.1 The Committee received the annexed report (7) from the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation which provided the Committee with a draft copy of the Local Assurance Framework. All areas in England were required by Government with devolution deals to produce, submit and publish a Local Assurance Framework, which would set out how all devolved and awarded funding and powers, and specifically the Investment Fund, would be administered.

7.2 In response to a question about the potential watering down of democracy by adding additional stakeholders who were non-elected to the Leaders Board, Officers explained that the new Norfolk Leadership Board would be formed from the existing Public Sector Leaders Board that has all district council leaders and the leader of the council as members and then have a broader membership. The Investment Board upholds democracy as it includes representatives from all District Councils and the leader of Norfolk County Council. The Business Board (a requirement of Devolution and LEP integration) and the Employment and Skills Board would also include democratically elected members from local councils. The structure would ensure that there will be democratically elected members included at every level. These boards are advisory and decision making would sit within the scheme of delegation of Norfolk County Council e.g. the Leader and Cabinet and consistent with the Policy Framework. All decision making remains subject to Norfolk County Council scrutiny protocols including select and other committees.

7.3 Having expressed concern regarding the transparency of the process, the Committee were informed that the Members Engagement Working Group had been an excellent disseminator of information and had been extremely useful in ensuring that members were fully briefed and understanding of the process. In getting the message across externally to Norfolk residents, the Deputy Leader explained that engagement sessions around the county would take place. However, these couldn’t be arranged until the final decision was taken by Full Council in July 2024.

7.4 The Deputy Leader explained that the investment fund was part of the level 3 devolution deal and would involve £600 million. He explained that the first £10 million pounds would be available after the decision was made by Full Council to change the constitution in July 2024 and proceed with the Directly Elected Leader model. He reported that they had also been negotiating with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for additionality for devolution.

The design of the Investment Fund would be considered at the meeting of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee in July.

- 7.5 In responding to a question regarding the diversity of those included on the Business Board, Officers reassured the Committee that there would be geographical, sector and size of business representation on that Board to reflect the businesses that were based in Norfolk. It was also noted that there were several industry and sector groups who sat underneath the Business Board. Members were also informed that one of these sector groups was hosting a conference in July and Officers would send out an invite to all Members. In addition, as the Economic Strategy was developed, a diagram explaining the structure of the various business groups would be shared.
- 7.6 Members questioned what the term and the associated implications of an “Unincorporated Partnership” meant. Officers would provide a written response.
- 7.7 Referring to the point in the report at page 57 regarding education providers representatives and conflict of interests, Officers explained that the primary function of the Employment and Skills Board was to review the commissioning and performance of Adult Skills funding. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for those who may benefit from that funding to discuss it and make recommendations relating to it. The Business board would be making recommendations and advising and if there were to be a case where a business on the board would or could benefit from the activity, then appropriate governance would be in place for that interest to be declared as outlined in the Local Assurance Framework and in line with NCCs existing rules around conflicts of interest.
- 7.8 The Committee were reassured that small businesses would be represented on the Business Board.
- 7.9 As part of the discussion, the Committee recommended to Cabinet that student representatives should be involved on the Education Board and union and worker representatives be involved on the Business Board.
- 7.10 Members questioned if there would be an opportunity for a Level 4 Deal. The Deputy Leader explained that conversations had been held regarding what a Level 4 deal could involve. DLUHC would want to be assured that the Level 3 Deal was a success and was working effectively. The Executive Director for Strategy and Transformation confirmed that Government has set out series of options after a Level 3 deal that can be chosen from. Other areas in the Country already had experience in these areas. There may also be an opportunity for Norfolk to be a ‘trailblazer’ in areas important to Norfolk.. This would be a decision to be held once the Directly Elected Leader was in place. The General Election due to be held this year, would also mean that the options would be reviewed when the new government sets out its approach but all main parties were supportive of extending devolution in some form. At the appropriate time, this would be considered by the Committee.
- 7.11 Having offered thoughts and feedback on the current draft and proposed next steps as outlined in the report, the Committee recognised the work carried out by all of Norfolk’s councils to develop a collaborative model of stakeholder governance to oversee the development of investment proposals for Norfolk. The following recommendation would be made to Cabinet.

- For student representatives to be involved on the Education Board and union and worker representatives be involved on the Business Board.

8. Norfolk's Devolution – Brownfield Fund Housing Pipeline

- 8.1 The Committee received the annexed report (8) from the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation which reported that a key benefit of the Devolution Level 3 deal was access to approximately £7m of capital funding from the Brownfield Housing Fund, in 2024/25 which would help to ease the viability issues that brownfield projects faced, alongside supporting wider interventions aimed at economic development.
- 8.2 The Committee heard that there was national brownfield fund which had different criteria and a higher threshold. NCC had been able to make the application process tailored to the Norfolk market. Having more housing stock was key and having new housing of any type would help alleviate some pressure.
- 8.4 In referring to page 84, Members asked what evidence of market failure was. Officers explained that the normal test of market failure would be if the site was not suitable for developments and did not meet accepted triggers such as profitability. In detailed assessment stage, figures were interrogated to ensure that the viability argument was upheld.
- 8.5 There were risk with brownfield sites, which was why the Government had set up this scheme. There was still some expectation that the developer would take some risk, and the funding could be used to ensure that the site was developed and ensuring that the relevant surveys had taken place. If a site needed more investment, then it was expected that this responsibility would fall to the developer.
- 8.6 Members asked, with reference to page 85, if there was any attachment or condition that could be placed upon the homes to ensure that there were for the benefit of the residents of Norfolk. Officers explained that this could be possible with social housing due to the criteria that individuals would have to meet to be eligible for those homes, however in homes for the open market, there was no known legal obligation that could be used.
- 8.7 The Committee sought reassurance that there would be a fairly equal spread of housing across the County covering all districts. Officers confirmed that this was generally happening,
- 8.8 Members noted that point 5.1 on page 86 could need updating to reflect what was contained within the Local Assurance Framework. This would be actioned.
- 8.9 There was concern expressed that there was a lot of deliver in a short amount of time and the risk associated with this. There was also concern that the houses could become second homes and would not be used by the residents of Norfolk.
- 8.10 Having offered thoughts and feedback on activity to date and the proposed next steps as summarised in the report, the Committee recognised the collaborative work carried out by all of Norfolk's councils to develop the first draft pipeline of projects to benefit from Brownfield funding.

9. Norfolk's Devolution – Strategic Skills Plan and Readiness Conditions for the Adult Education Budget (now known as Adult Skills Funding)

- 9.1 The Committee received the annexed report (9) from the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation which informed the Committee that as part of the level 3 Devolution deal, devolution of the Adult Skills Budget (formerly known as the Adult Education Budget) would be made to Norfolk County Council. This would enable education provision to be aligned to meet the needs of Norfolk. Adult Skills funding was an important component of the Norfolk deal, it included £12.85m of devolved funding per annum to fund statutory learning for residents aged 19+, as well as work with industry and education providers to commission training locally.
- 9.2 With regards to the Strategic Skills Plan, Members questioned if it included quality of life outcomes which in turn would improve the economy rather than vice versa, such as diversity and inclusion, measures of health and wellbeing, culture and quality of life. Officers explained that some of these points are indicated in the strategic skills plan, however, the plan was designed to be a high level strategic plan from which the implementation plan would be formed. It would be co-designed and co-developed by taking decisions locally using the District Councils skills forums and the localised priorities to develop implementation for Adult Skills funding. It would be a shared collaborative design using the relationships with FE colleges and other establishments.
- 9.3 A Directly Elected Leader had imposed a precept in other areas of the Country because he had the power to do so. It was explained to the committee that there was a power for them to do this because it was a new authority, and they needed the precept to fund the infrastructure of a new organisation. The DEL of NCC would not need that power due to the organisation currently existing.
- 9.4 Some adult learners from Norfolk learn elsewhere in the country due to certain education provision not being available locally. The devolved arrangement would allow provision to be reviewed and adapted according to learner and employer demand. This potentially allows the development of this provision in partnership with providers in Norfolk.
- 9.5 Strategic skills plan requirement for the specific tranche of funding, but it was being developed in collaboration with the wider Economic Strategy which would include a few data sets. The strategic skills plan is a requirement of Department for Education's readiness conditions. Norfolk must meet the timescale for submission to government in order to access the funding. The Committee would be kept informed of the progress and status of Adult Education in the future.
- 9.6 Having offered thoughts and feedback on the proposal and associated information in the report, and having reviewed the NCC Adult Skills readiness condition status, the Committee supported the collaborative and evidenced based approach undertaken across Norfolk to build and develop our Strategic Skills Plan to date.

10. Planning Obligations Standards 2024

- 10.1 The Committee received the annexed report (10) from the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation which informed the Committee that Norfolk County Council was a statutory consultee on housing and other commercial planning applications, which were determined by District Councils, as local planning

authorities. The County Council as a statutory consultee could seek to secure necessary infrastructure and services needed to directly mitigate the impact of any proposed new development, through planning obligations. Planning obligations provided a clear and effective mechanism for securing developer funding towards infrastructure needed to support and mitigate the impact of new residential development. The Planning Obligation Standards focused on developer funding towards County Council infrastructure such as education, library, green infrastructure, and fire service provision (fire hydrants secured through planning condition) required as a consequence of new residential development. These obligations are only sought for housing development of 20 dwellings or over.

- 10.2 Further to point 3.1 on page 186, Officers explained that a viability assessment was carried out by the developer based on the projected sale of the site. The District Council would review the amount that had been requested by NCC and the District Council as the planning authority would take an approach to decide how much of that request was agreed. There were opportunities through a viability clause and an open assessment of the finances of the site which would state that if the site became more viable more funding could be sought.
- 10.3 In response to a question from the Committee regarding infrastructure for a community in the immediate vicinity of the development being agreed at planning stage, Officers explained that when development applications were received, the requests were reviewed to assess what a reasonable request was and endeavoured to agree it in each case. It was important for local members to be involved at the planning stage so conditions could be placed upon the development then.
- 10.4 If the reduction of payments by the developer was occurring, Officers agreed that there was no reason why the Local Member could not be made aware. It was suggested that parish council were normally keen for the monies to be spent and by engaging with the parish councils, it would help ensure that money was spent on infrastructure in the community.
- 10.5 Having reviewed and commented on the amended 2024 Planning Obligations Standards prior to consideration by Cabinet, the Committee NOTED the report.

11. Forward Work Programme

- 11.1 The Committee received the annexed report (11) by the Interim Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, which set out the Forward Work Programme to enable the Committee to review and shape.
- 11.2 Members requested that a report regarding apprenticeships could be considered by the Committee.
- 11.3 The Select Committee **agreed** the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix A.

The meeting closed at 12.14pm

Vic Thomson, Chair



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Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 7

Report Title: Strategic and Financial Planning 2025-26

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Harvey Bullen, Director of Strategic Finance

Executive Summary

The appended report, which was considered by Cabinet in May 2024, marks the beginning of the Council's budget setting process for 2025-26. As in previous years, Cabinet is inviting Select Committee input into the 2025-26 budget process, in respect of the approach to the development of saving proposals. This Select Committee report appends the Cabinet report in order to provide the latest information about the context for 2025-26 Budget setting which is intended to support Select Committee discussion and to enable them to provide input to future meetings of Cabinet to inform budget decisions.

This report therefore forms an important part of the process of developing the 2025-26 Budget, representing a key opportunity for the Select Committee to provide its views on priorities and the approach to preparing budget proposals for the services within its remit.

Recommendations / Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy position as reported to Cabinet in May 2024 (Appendix 1), noting in particular the following elements as set out in the appended report, which form the context for 2025-26 budget setting:
 - a. the budget gap for 2025-26 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
 - b. The Departmental saving targets.
 - c. The overall timetable and approach to developing the 2025-26 Budget.

2. Agree that the Committee will provide input to the 2025-26 Budget process in July (this meeting) and in November, with the latter (November) report providing an opportunity to comment on the detailed savings proposals being taken to public consultation.
3. Consider the key issues for 2025-26 budget setting as they pertain to the services within the Select Committee's remit (as set out in this paper, the appended Cabinet report, and the 2024-25 Budget Book), and in particular to endorse:
 - a. The overall service strategies as set out within the 2024-25 Budget Book.
 - b. The budget setting principles set out in Section 3 of the appended Cabinet report, which will provide the broad framework for savings development for services within the Select Committee's remit.
4. Consider whether there are any specific areas of activity that the Select Committee would recommend exploring for savings development, in order to provide input to the 2025-26 budget process and inform the saving proposals put forward to Cabinet later in the year.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. At the Cabinet meeting held on the 8 May 2024, members received the appended paper: Strategic and Financial Planning 2025-26 (Appendix 1). The minutes and associated papers for this meeting, including the summary of decisions notice can be found [here](#).
- 1.2. As part of setting the 2024-25 Budget, the Council's three Select Committees received reports on the approach to developing budget proposals during the year. Cabinet has agreed to continue this approach in relation to developing the 2025-26 Budget and this report therefore represents the first opportunity for Select Committees to provide input to 2025-26 budget setting at a formative stage. A further report is intended to be brought to the November Select Committee cycle to enable comments on substantive proposals once they have been developed and published for public consultation.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. The report to May 2024 Cabinet reproduced as Appendix 1 provides an overview of the financial planning context for the County Council, including:
 - The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-29, including details of assumptions about pressures and challenges within the financial model.
 - The financial context for budget setting including uncertainty in the medium term financial envelope within which local authorities will operate, particularly in the context of the General Election in 2024.

- The wider financial and organisational context underpinning the process of developing the 2025-26 budget.
- An overview of the proposed budget setting process and the proposed savings targets, broken down by department.

2.2. The Select Committee's views are sought in relation to the services within its remit on key issues for 2025-26 budget setting and the broad areas proposed for savings development, in order to help shape budget and saving proposal development for 2025-26, assist in the identification of key pressures and priorities for the 2025-26 Budget, and (ultimately) to inform the budget proposals to be considered by Cabinet later in the year.

2.3. The financial approach and key strategies for Directorates delivering services which fall broadly within the remit of this Committee have been set out within the County Council's [2024-25 Budget Book](#).

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1. Select Committee input will support in shaping budget proposals and thereby contribute to the 2025-26 budget setting process. Individual recommendations from Select Committees will help to inform budget proposals and will therefore ultimately impact on Departmental budgets and service delivery for 2025-26. Details of specific impacts will be identified and reported in later stages of the budget process. Further impacts are also set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1. As set out in the appended report.

4.2. The Council is legally required to set a balanced budget annually. The appended Cabinet report outlines the wider financial and organisational context underpinning the 2025-26 budget setting process.

4.3. Select Committees have a specific role in policy development and therefore are invited to comment and advise Cabinet on budget options within their remit as in previous years.

5. Alternative Options

5.1. As set out in the appended report, a range of options remain open at this stage. The purpose of this report is to provide Select Committees with an opportunity to engage with the budget process and inform the development of specific options for the 2025-26 Budget.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. Immediate financial implications are highlighted in the appended report. Any implications arising from the Select Committee's comments will be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet as part of 2025-26 budget setting as appropriate.

7. Resource Implications

7.1. **Staff:** There are no direct implications arising from this report although existing saving plans will include activities linked to staffing budgets. In addition there is a potential that further staffing implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed. These implications will be identified and reported as they arise later in the budget planning process.

7.2. **Property:** There are no direct property implications arising from this report although existing saving plans will include activities linked to property budgets and assumptions around capital receipts to be achieved. In addition there is a potential that further property implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed and these implications will be identified and reported as they arise later in the budget planning process.

7.3. **IT:** There are no direct IT implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to IMT budgets. In addition there is a potential that further IT implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed and these implications will be identified and reported as they arise later in the budget planning process.

8. Other Implications

8.1. **Legal Implications:** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.2. **Human Rights Implications:** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.4. **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.5. **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.6. **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

8.7. **Any Other Implications:** As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1. As set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy position as reported to Cabinet in May 2024 (Appendix 1), noting in particular the following elements as set out in the appended report, which form the context for 2025-26 budget setting:
 - a. the budget gap for 2025-26 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
 - b. The Departmental saving targets.
 - c. The overall timetable and approach to developing the 2025-26 Budget.
2. Agree that the Committee will provide input to the 2025-26 Budget process in July (this meeting) and in November, with the latter (November) report providing an opportunity to comment on the detailed savings proposals being taken to public consultation.
3. Consider the key issues for 2025-26 budget setting as they pertain to the services within the Select Committee's remit (as set out in this paper, the appended Cabinet report, and the 2024-25 Budget Book), and in particular to endorse:
 - a. The overall service strategies as set out within the 2024-25 Budget Book.
 - b. The budget setting principles set out in Section 3 of the appended Cabinet report, which will provide the broad framework for savings development for services within the Select Committee's remit.
4. Consider whether there are any specific areas of activity that the Select Committee would recommend exploring for savings development, in order to provide input to the 2025-26 budget process and inform the saving proposals put forward to Cabinet later in the year.

11. Background Papers

11.1. As set out in the appended Cabinet paper, plus:

[Norfolk County Council Constitution](#), Part 7 – Overview and scrutiny bodies, Section 3, paragraph 3.9 – Membership and Areas of Responsibility of Select Committees (pages 120-122).

[Norfolk County Council Budget Book 2024-28](#)

Officer Contact

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

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Cabinet

Item No: **TBC**

Decision making report title: Strategic and Financial Planning 2025-26

Date of meeting: 8 May 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Harvey Bullen, Director of Strategic Finance

Is this a key decision? Yes

If this is a key decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 5 March 2024

Introduction from Cabinet Member

This report marks the formal start of the Council's annual budget setting process for 2025-26. The 2024-25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed by the Council in February 2024 provides a sound foundation upon which to develop the 2025-26 Budget, but it is nevertheless essential for the Council to have a robust plan in place to enable the preparation of a balanced and sustainable budget. It is the Budget, through the allocation and prioritisation of resources, which provides the framework that enables the achievement of the organisation's key ambitions alongside the delivery of vital services. It is the intention of Cabinet to work with Departments to ensure that savings and pressures linked to demand and demography, are sufficiently robust, so as to ensure that any rise in Council tax is kept to a minimum.

With an upcoming general election, there is very significant uncertainty about funding levels for 2025-26 onwards. One such area of uncertainty is the second homes premium, which may provide some welcome additional funding to support the County Council budget. Alongside this, the Council will seek to earmark an element of the additional funding for use in the area where it has been generated. Further details will be developed when there is greater certainty about the likely income from this source, later in the budget process. In relation to wider funding expectations, the Government's Policy Statement published shortly before the 2024-25 Finance Settlement provided no detail of future year allocations. In this context, and in particular recognising the wider pressures both on demand and within the economy, we must continue to safeguard the delivery of the essential local services which are used and relied on by so many of the County's residents, businesses and visitors.

This report therefore sets out the framework for how the Council will approach budget setting for 2025-26. The proposed approach to budget setting will be informed by the key objectives set out in the Better Together, for Norfolk strategy and as such the

Budget represents one of the key building blocks contributing to the delivery of the Council's strategy and direction over the next few years.

Executive Summary

The Council has a robust and well-established process for annual budget setting, including the development of savings proposals, and the scrutiny and challenge of all elements of the budget. This report sets out proposals for how this can be further refined with a greater emphasis on balancing the financial position over the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period, whilst maintaining the focus on delivering a prudent and transparent approach to budgeting for 2025-26. The proposed approach incorporates the usual required key elements such as public consultation, Scrutiny, and engagement with Select Committees. This report proposes the Budget planning cycle for 2025-26 to start immediately.

As part of 2025-26 Budget setting, a thorough review of identified future cost pressures will also be required. It is particularly important to recognise that recent Budgets have included exceptional levels of inflationary growth pressure, which will not be sustainable in future years, but which reflected the wider operating and economic environment. There may be opportunities to draw back on some of these 2024-25 pressures and this will need to be kept under review as budget monitoring for the year progresses. In addition, the 2024-25 position was supported by one-off measures including use of reserves, which represent a challenge to be addressed in future years. As has been previously identified, the ongoing reliance on reserves does not represent a sustainable long-term approach.

As in previous years, the wider budget position remains the subject of high levels of uncertainty, and despite the publication of the [DLUHC Policy Statement](#) there is no indication of 2025-26 funding levels. In this context, this report sets out details of a proposed budget planning process for 2025-26 but recognises that as always there may be a need for some flexibility. The report accordingly provides a summary of key areas of wider risk and uncertainty for Cabinet to consider.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended:

- 1. To consider the overall budget gap of £135.908m included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) set by Full Council in February 2024, and agree:**
 - a. the gap of £44.722m to be closed for 2025-26; and**
 - b. the extension of the MTFS by a further year (to 2028-29), adding a further £52.744m to the gap and resulting in additional pressure assumptions to be addressed and leading to an overall gap for planning purposes of £188.652m over the next four years. (Section 2).**

- 2. To review the key budget risks and uncertainties as set out in this report. (Section 10).**
- 3. To consider the principles of the proposed approach to budget setting for 2025-26, 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, including the proposed consultation process for 2025-26.**
 - b. that there should be a detailed review of cost pressures and growth already provided within the Budget 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), and that these will be kept under review throughout the budget process.**
- 4. To approve the initial budget virements for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 1, reflecting budget transfers for whole services between departments as a result of the Employment Committee of 18 March 2024, while noting the virements do not change the overall Council Budget.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1.** In recent years the significant and sustained reductions experienced in Central Government funding to Local Government have lessened, with more generous funding settlements being provided since 2021-22. However, much of the new funding was initially for adult social care reforms and was accompanied by an increasing expectation that local authorities will raise resources locally (through council tax). Alongside this, there continues to be a significant gap between funding and service pressures driven by a complex mix of factors including demographic changes, unfunded burdens such as the National Living Wage, the needs of the people who draw upon social care services becoming increasingly complex, and by the wider economy including (more recently) the abnormally high levels of inflation.
- 1.2.** Children's services, in both social care and education remain under very significant stress, and the 2024-25 Local Government Finance Settlement encouraged councils to invest in areas that help place children's social care services on a sustainable financial footing. Other Council services also remain subject to significant financial stress from sustained inflation pressures which have a widespread impact across service delivery and commissioned services. These in their turn have a knock on effect by increasing the pressure placed on discretionary and preventative services both in relation to the need for these to stem and reduce demand, and because these are often the areas called upon to make budgetary savings.
- 1.3.** The Council's February 2024 MTFS identified that the Council, in common with other upper tier local authorities, needs to address a material budget shortfall

in 2025-26. Simultaneously, as set out in this report, there remains particularly acute uncertainty about the level of funding for 2025-26 and the potential for additional pressures to emerge during the budget setting process. Although the Council's track record of delivering a balanced budget, coupled with a robust budget planning approach, provides a solid basis for development, it is prudent to begin comprehensive planning for 2025-26 now.

- 1.4. As has been the case in recent years, it is anticipated that the Council will not receive any further detailed information about funding allocations for 2025-26 until autumn 2024 at the earliest (and probably December 2024). This is even more the case this year, as almost all of the Government's planned reform of local government funding has been delayed until at least 2026-27. With the expected General Election in 2024 it is extremely unlikely that the 2025-26 Settlement will provide any sort of multi-year allocation which would support the Council to develop its financial strategy with greater planning certainty. As a result, the overall level of uncertainty means that budget setting for 2025-26, and the wider financial environment for local government, is set to remain highly challenging.
- 1.5. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the Government's [2024 Spring Budget](#) on 6 March 2024, but this did not include further significant policy announcements in terms of local government funding, which would impact on the budget position.
- 1.6. Therefore, as in previous years, this report represents the start of the Council's process for setting the 2025-26 Budget and developing the associated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The report sets out the context and a proposed approach to budget setting including:
 - A summary of the Budget and MTFS approved by Full Council in February 2024, including the savings already planned for future years.
 - An overview of the significant remaining uncertainties facing local government finances.
 - The MTFS position for 2025-26 onwards as agreed in February 2024, extended for a further year to support 2025-26 Budget setting.
 - A proposed timetable for 2025-26 Budget setting including the recommended approach to public consultation.
 - Proposed savings targets by Department, representing the minimum target to be sought in order to enable Member choice about the ultimate budget decisions to be made in February 2025.
- 1.7. Ultimately this report is intended to support the Council in preparing the 2025-26 Budget and identifying savings which will assist in delivering a balanced budget for the year.

2. Budget context and Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 2.1. On 20 February 2024, the County Council approved the 2024-25 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2027-28. Based on currently

available information, the **MTFS set out a budget gap of £135.908m over the period 2025-26 to 2027-28** based on an assumption that the funding allocations set out in the 2024-25 final Local Government Finance Settlement¹ would be broadly “rolled over” for 2025-26 and beyond.

- 2.2. The Final Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25 itself only set out funding allocations for one year. The continued failure to publish full medium term funding forecasts remains disappointing and impacts on the Council’s ability to plan over the longer term. The further significant delay to long awaited funding reforms (until at least 2026-27), alongside the absence of any detail at this stage about the likely terms of reference for this funding review, only serves to add further uncertainty to the Council’s financial planning and associated forecasts.
- 2.3. Announcements in the Final Settlement provided additional funding of £9.539m compared to the previously announced provisional allocations for 2024-25. As a result the 2024-25 Settlement enabled the Council to prepare a balanced 2024-25 Budget, but was not sufficient to support a balanced position over the life of the MTFS. The Council therefore continues to expect to need to draw on its earmarked reserves over the period covered by the MTFS. This is not however a sustainable position in the longer term. Current planning does not include any draw on the Council’s general balances, which are planned to be maintained at the minimum level of at least 5% of the net revenue budget. The use of reserves is also in part a reflection of the various severe cost pressures and challenges in achieving planned savings, which the Council faces across almost all service areas. It is important to recognise that as a result, the Council is not in a position to be able to remove or reverse any of the saving proposals agreed as part of the 2024-25 budget, including those savings which are due for implementation during 2025-26.
- 2.4. The table below sets out the high level MTFS position as agreed in February 2024, which has been updated to reflect the addition of a further financial year (for 2028-29) to the planning period in order to maintain the Council’s usual four year MTFS horizon.
- 2.5. As previously stated, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) agreed in February 2024 set out a gap of £135.908m for the period including **a gap of £44.722m for the first year, 2025-26**. Extending the MTFS for an additional year, 2028-29, based on the same broad assumptions, adds a further £52.744m to the gap to be addressed, resulting in **a total revised gap of £188.652m for the MTFS**. The forecast gap for 2025-26 remains unchanged.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2024-to-2025>

Table 1: Extended MTFS 2024-25 to 2028-29

	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m
Growth Pressures					
Economic and inflationary	34.670	24.044	24.360	24.902	25.502
Legislative requirements	38.017	7.850	6.500	6.500	6.500
Demand and demographic	39.732	37.608	37.110	38.230	38.161
Policy decisions	9.614	-5.000	3.825	0.005	0.005
Subtotal pressures	122.033	64.502	71.795	69.637	70.168
Identified savings	-41.532	-12.059	-8.989	-7.923	0.000
Funding changes	-46.460	10.066	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council tax changes	-34.041	-17.787	-16.420	-16.915	-17.423
Forecast Gap (Surplus)/Deficit	0.000	44.722	46.386	44.800	52.744

2.6. The gap in 2025-26 is substantially being driven by the elements set out in the table below. Further details of MTFS assumptions are also provided below.

Table 2: Commentary on 2025-26 MTFS pressure assumptions

	2025-26 £m	Detail
Economic and inflationary pressures	24.044	Pay assumed at 3% for 2025-26 equates to £10m, price inflation includes £8.3m Adult Social Care, £3.7m Children's Services, £3.6m CES.
Legislative requirements	7.850	£5.0m relates to Adult Social Care and £3.0m Children's Services pay and price market pressures (including National Living Wage).
Demand and demographic pressures	37.608	£6.1m relates to Adults demographic growth. £3.5m Children's Services demographic growth. £2.0m relates to waste tonnages. £25.5m held centrally as provision for anticipated service growth.
Council policy decisions	-5.000	Reversals of one-off growth provided in 2024-25.
Net total pressures	64.502	
Funding changes	10.066	Significant uncertainty exists around Government funding within the Settlement. Assumption that additional funding provided from the Final Settlement for 2024-25 is one-off.
Savings	-12.059	Existing savings built in for 2025-26.
Total	62.510	Pressures, saving and funding changes

2.7. A summary of budget growth and other changes currently incorporated in 2024-25 planning are shown in the table below by Department. (Revised net budgets following the departmental changes from the 18 March Employment Committee can be seen in [Appendix 1](#)).

Table 3: 2025-26 MTFs net budget by Department

	Adult Social Services £m	Children's Services £m	Community and Environmental Services £m	Strategy and Transformation £m	Chief Executive's Directorate £m	Finance £m	Total £m
Base Budget 2024-25	281.967	238.592	203.268	30.184	4.384	-230.646	527.748
Growth							
Economic / Inflationary	10.694	6.923	4.365	1.143	0.127	0.792	24.044
Legislative Requirements	5.000	3.000	0.050	-0.200	0.000	0.000	7.850
Demand / Demographic	6.100	3.500	2.508	0.000	0.000	25.500	37.608
NCC Policy	-2.000	-3.110	-0.600	-1.219	0.118	1.811	-5.000
Total Growth	19.794	10.313	6.323	-0.276	0.245	28.103	64.502
Savings	-7.400	-6.113	0.543	2.201	0.290	-1.580	-12.059
Funding changes	0.000	8.706	0.000	0.200	0.000	1.161	10.066
Base Budget 2025-26	294.360	251.497	210.134	32.310	4.919	-202.962	590.258

Funded by: Council Tax	-545.535
Collection Fund Surplus	0.000
Total	-545.535
Budget Gap	44.722

2.8. The key assumptions underpinning the forecast gap in the current MTFS position include:

- Planned savings of £70.503m being delivered over the MTFS period:

Table 4: Savings in MTFS by Department

	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2024-28 £m
Adult Social Services	-14.252	-7.400	-4.900	-2.600	-29.152
Children's Services	-9.775	-6.113	-7.449	-5.703	-29.040
Community and Environmental Services	-9.665	0.543	-0.240	0.400	-8.962
Strategy and Transformation	0.460	2.201	0.040	-0.020	2.681
Chief Executive's Directorate	-0.330	0.290	0.000	0.000	-0.040
Finance	-7.970	-1.580	3.560	0.000	-5.990
Savings total	-41.532	-12.059	-8.989	-7.923	-70.503

- Government funding will be broadly flat in 2025-26 (i.e. essentially a rollover of 2024-25 funding levels) with the additional funding provided at the Final Settlement currently assumed to be one-off. This assumption includes Settlement Funding (RSG, business rates), Rural Services Delivery Grant, Social Care Grant(s), Better Care Fund / improved Better Care Fund, Public Health Grant, and Services Grant.
- Cost pressures for 2025-26 including:
 - 3% for pay inflation in 2025-26 and each year thereafter.
 - Price inflation in line with contractual rates or CPI forecasts where appropriate totalling £15.7m in 2025-26. It should be noted that **the MTFS assumes a material reduction in inflationary pressures compared to the level provided for in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Budgets.**
 - Demographic growth pressures for Adults, Childrens, Waste totalling £12.1m in 2025-26, plus a contingency **assumption of £25.5m for further pressures.** If identified pressures exceed this level, there will be a need to find equivalent additional savings to achieve a balanced Budget position for 2025-26. Equally however, if any of this provision is not required, it will enable the level of savings sought to be reduced.
- Increases in council tax over the MTFS period, including **an assumed 2.99% increase in 2025-26 for planning purposes** as agreed by Full Council in February 2024 and shown in the following table. It should be noted that **every 1% change in council tax assumptions increases or decreases the budget gap by approximately £5.3m in 2025-26.**

Table 5: MTFS council tax assumptions

2.9. The council tax assumptions shown are those agreed by Full Council in February 2024.

	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m
Council tax increase	-10.541	-10.965	-11.295	-11.635
Council tax collection fund	3.295	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council tax base	-5.245	-5.455	-5.620	-5.789
Council tax ASC precept	-5.297	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	-17.788	-16.420	-16.914	-17.423

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Band D %	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%
ASC Precept % ²	1.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Tax base % change assumption	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%

Second Homes Premium

2.10. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 allows billing authorities to charge an additional premium of 100 per cent on a property which is substantially furnished and where there is no resident (i.e., second homes, referred to in the Act as 'dwellings occupied periodically').

2.11. The billing authority will exercise their own judgment as to whether to apply a premium and at what level (up to 100 per cent). Most of the District councils in Norfolk have already decided to apply the second homes premium from 2025-26. The premium will provide councils with the flexibility to access additional revenue. Under council tax regulations, income generated from the premium would be shared between those bodies which charge council tax, in line with the proportional split of total council tax. The opportunity to charge a second homes council tax premium therefore has the potential to generate significant additional income for all organisations in Norfolk which charge council tax.

2.12. Additional council tax raised from the second homes premium in 2025-26 could make a material difference to the Council's financial position for 2025-26 onwards. However, until District decisions about implementation and exemptions, and (most importantly) the impact on Districts forecast tax base for the year are known, there is a high degree of uncertainty about the actual level of additional income that the premium would generate. The premium is ultimately intended to deliver behaviour change, and it is unclear to what extent this will be achieved, and over what timeframe.

² Decisions about the Precept offer are made annually by Government and there is currently no indication on levels for 2025-26 onwards.

2.13. It is also unclear at this stage what assumptions Government may make within the 2025-26 settlement in terms of the additional income they expect councils to generate. It is possible that Government may incorporate these estimates within the settlement model and therefore it would be prudent for County to be cautious about the ability to rely on this income at this stage. Accordingly, the County Council has currently made no assumptions about additional income from second homes in the 2025-26 Budget planning / MTFS.

2.14. Taking these assumptions into account, the forecast net budget (before new savings) within the approved MTFS is shown below.

Table 6: MTFS Net Budget by Department

	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m
Adult Social Services	281.967	294.360	311.305	331.350	353.638
Children's Services	238.592	251.497	255.582	261.536	273.373
Community and Environmental Services	203.268	210.134	216.546	223.622	230.417
Strategy and Transformation	30.184	32.310	33.087	34.232	35.431
Chief Executive's Directorate	4.384	4.919	5.177	5.320	5.468
Finance	-230.646	-202.962	-168.634	-141.283	-113.382
Total Net Budget	527.748	590.258	653.064	714.778	784.945
Council Tax	-527.748	-545.535	-561.955	-578.870	-596.293
Budget Gap (cumulative)	0.000	44.722	91.108	135.908	188.651

3. Proposals

3.1. The following principles for 2025-26 budget setting are proposed:

- **Two rounds of Budget Challenge** (initial proposals in late June / early July and detailed proposals in September).
- **Allocation of the £44.722m saving target** on analysis of a “controllable spend” approach (see section 3.5) consistent with previous years.
- **Budget planning to cover the period 2025-26 to 2028-29** (extending the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by one year).
- To closely scrutinise any requests for additions to the Capital Programme for 2025-26 requiring additional borrowing to consider the value for money of proposals and assess their impact on the affordability of the revenue budget and MTFS, ensuring that borrowing levels are maintained within appropriate prudent limits and the revenue budget remains robust.

- Select Committees to have a role as part of the budget-setting process, considering areas for savings in July 2024 and commenting on detailed proposals in November 2024.
- Final decisions about the 2025-26 Budget to be taken in February 2025 in line with the budget setting timetable as set out below.

3.2. It is proposed that the approach to budget development should include:

- A review of all current pressures with a view to reducing the level required, which will include a process to challenge, understand, and approve all growth within 2025-26 Budget planning;
- A requirement that a business case is submitted for requests to access the £25.5m growth provision held corporately and that this will be subject to a prioritisation process as part of Budget Challenge;
- A review of all earmarked revenue reserves with a view to releasing funding where possible (noting that this would provide a one-off gain which would impact on the future year gap);
- A review of the Council's commercial opportunities, including scope to achieve increased income;
- A review to consider the scope to extend existing saving proposals;
- Identification of new savings against the minimum target of £45m to enable Member choice;
- Consideration of opportunities for greater integration between performance reporting, business planning, and budget development; and
- Consideration of the impact and budget requirements in relation to progress towards the [County Deal](#).

3.3. It should be noted that the changes during the budget setting process may result in the saving targets currently allocated to Services being revised (and potentially materially increased) in the event that further pressures or income changes arise. Options to address any shortfall in savings to close the 2025-26 Budget gap will ultimately include:

- Government providing additional funding;
- Corporate / centrally identified savings opportunities;
- The removal or mitigation of currently identified budget pressures; and
- Service departments identifying further savings.

3.4. The Budget agreed in February 2024 included a high level timetable for the 2025-26 budget process. The detailed timescales for internal budget planning activity will be confirmed following approval of the proposed approach by May Cabinet. The Budget process will also be informed through the year by any Government Budget announcements, Spending Reviews or other fiscal events, and Local Government Settlement, as well as any progress on reforms such as the Funding Review. The specific timing for these is currently unknown.

Table 7: Proposed Budget setting timetable 2025-26

2025-26 Proposed	Time frame
Cabinet review of the financial planning position for 2025-26 – including formal allocation of targets	8 May 2024
Scrutiny Committee	TBC May 2024
Select Committee input to development of 2025-26 Budget – strategy	TBC 2024
Review of budget pressures and development of budget strategy and detailed savings proposals 2025-29 incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Challenge 1 (TBC June / July) – context / strategy / approach / outline proposals Budget Challenge 2 (September) – detail and final proposals 	June to September 2024
Cabinet approve final proposals for public consultation	7 October 2024
Scrutiny Committee	TBC October 2024
Public consultation on 2025-26 Budget proposals, council tax and adult social care precept	Late October to mid December 2024
Select Committee input to development of 2025-26 Budget – comments on specific proposals	TBC November 2024
<i>Government Autumn Statement</i>	<i>TBC October / November 2024</i>
<i>Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced including provisional council tax and precept arrangements</i>	<i>TBC December 2024</i>
Cabinet considers outcomes of service and financial planning, EQIA and consultation feedback and agrees revenue budget and capital programme recommendations to County Council	27 January 2025
Confirmation of District Council tax base and Business Rate forecasts	31 January 2025
<i>Final Local Government Finance Settlement</i>	<i>TBC January / February 2025</i>
Scrutiny Committee 2025-26 Budget scrutiny	TBC February 2025
County Council agrees Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-26 to 2028-29, revenue budget, capital programme and level of council tax for 2025-26	TBC February 2025

3.5. In respect of the allocation of 2025-26 savings, it is proposed to:

1. **Seek to deliver efficiency savings via a target of 3% applied to support services.** This approach recognises that work has been undertaken to design a corporate centre function with the right capability and capacity to support the wider organisation. It would be inconsistent with the overall rationale if this newly established function were to be diminished through the application of an arbitrary budget target. However it is also recognised that it is appropriate to continue to expect these

services to seek to deliver continuous improvement and value for money. The application of a 3% target recognises the challenge for the corporate centre to be more efficient in this context.

2. **Allocation of the remaining savings requirement across the front line departments**, based on applying the approach adopted in previous years. This is based on exclusion of “non controllable” spend, and ringfenced budgets, such as Schools, and capital financing items and then allocating a target based on the overall proportion of the controllable budget.
3. Existing departmental budget savings from previous budget rounds have been deducted from the savings requirement to produce the **new savings target** for each department. This seeks to address forecast future year budget gaps, with the aspiration to achieve a balanced position over the whole MTFS while ensuring any savings a department proposes for future years are recognised in that future year’s target setting rather than being “lost”; any additional pressures which arise are applied in the same ratio; and any one-off savings come back in the future year targets for that department.

3.6. This renders the following saving targets, representing the minimum savings level required to enable Member choice within the budget setting process for 2025-26:

Table 8: Allocation of Saving Target by Department

	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m	Total MTFS saving target £m
Adult Social Care	19.500	22.750	21.750	24.250	88.250
Children's Services	8.500	7.250	7.250	13.000	36.000
Communities and Environment	2.750	2.000	1.750	1.750	8.250
Infrastructure	9.250	9.500	9.000	8.500	36.250
Fire and Rescue	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	6.000
Strategy and Transformation	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	6.000
Chief Executive's Directorate	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	1.000
Finance	1.500	1.750	1.750	2.000	7.000
Total	44.750	46.500	44.750	52.750	188.750

3.7. The allocation of savings targets has used the new departmental structure from the Employment Committee of 18 March 2024. Future reporting of savings delivery and departmental budget breakdowns will be based on the new structure.

3.8. The saving targets in Table 8 reflect the savings currently forecast to be required to deliver a balanced budget over the whole MTFs period. It should be noted that to the extent budget gaps remain for future years following the conclusion of the 2025-26 budget process, these will be reallocated as new targets for services in future year budget rounds and individual departmental targets could therefore be adjusted at that point.

3.9. As previously highlighted, the Council is not in a position to be able to remove or reverse any of the saving proposals agreed as part of the 2024-25 budget, including those savings which are due for implementation during 2025-26. The total savings requirement including both the existing savings and new savings target will need to be delivered to close the 2025-26 budget gap. If a department is not in a position to deliver existing savings, replacement savings of the same amount will need to be included by that department in the 2025-26 budget.

Table 9: Existing Savings, New Savings Target and Total Savings Requirement by Department

	2025-26 existing savings³ £m	2025-26 new savings target £m	2025-26 total savings requirement £m
Adult Social Care	8.000	19.500	27.500
Children's Services	6.113	8.500	14.613
Communities and Environment	-0.687	2.750	2.063
Infrastructure	0.087	9.250	9.337
Fire and Rescue	0.200	1.500	1.700
Strategy and Transformation	-2.201	1.500	-0.701
Chief Executive's Directorate	-0.290	0.250	-0.040
Finance	0.837	1.500	2.337
Total	12.059	44.750	56.809

³ Negative values represent the reversal of one-off saving proposals, including use of reserves, from prior years.

Table 10: Total Savings Requirement to be delivered over MTFS (including new targets and previously identified proposals)

	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m	2027-28 £m	2028-29 £m	Total MTFS savings requirement £m
Adult Social Care	27.500	27.650	24.350	24.250	103.750
Children's Services	14.613	14.699	12.953	13.000	55.264
Communities and Environment	2.063	2.020	1.750	1.750	7.584
Infrastructure	9.337	9.720	8.600	8.500	36.158
Fire and Rescue	1.700	1.500	1.500	1.500	6.200
Strategy and Transformation	-0.701	1.460	1.520	1.500	3.779
Chief Executive's Directorate	-0.040	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.710
Finance	2.337	1.990	1.750	2.000	8.077
Total	56.809	59.289	52.673	52.750	221.522

4. Impact of the Proposal

4.1. This paper sets out an outline timetable and approach to the Council's budget planning process for 2025-26, while recognising that significant risks and uncertainties remain. The proposals in this report are intended to:

- set the context for service financial planning for the year to come;
- provide a robust approach to tackling the budget gap forecast for the whole MTFS period;
- assist the Council in managing the continuing significant uncertainty around local authority funding including funding reform while providing sufficient flexibility to respond to any changes required; and
- contribute to the Council setting a balanced budget for 2025-26.

5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

5.1. In the context of continuing significant financial pressures and delays to Government plans for funding reform, it remains critical that the Council has a robust approach to budget setting and the identification of saving proposals. After more than a decade of savings delivery, the ability to continue to identify achievable savings at the scale required is becoming increasingly challenged. The preparation of a balanced budget for 2025-26 is key to ensuring that the necessary resources are available to continue to progress with the implementation of the Council's key strategic ambitions, as well as the delivery of crucial day to day services.

- 5.2. It therefore remains essential to continue to engage with Government, MPs and other stakeholders to campaign for adequate and sustainable funding for Norfolk to enable the delivery of vital services to residents, businesses and visitors. Although funding reform plans have been delayed, it is still important that Government focuses on this issue and provides guidance on the direction of travel for reforms, financial planning assumptions, and indicative funding allocations for the medium term, as soon as possible.
- 5.3. The size of the budget gap forecast for 2025-26 is such that there is a risk that the Council will be obliged to consider reductions in service levels. As a result it is important that the process of identifying, and consulting on, savings proposals is undertaken as soon as possible and in particular that a full suite of proposals is brought forward for Cabinet to consider in October. This will provide adequate time for consultation and engagement work around saving proposals, which should, in turn, support effective mobilisation, implementation and delivery of any proposals that are ultimately agreed to provide a full year saving for 2025-26.
- 5.4. The Council's planning within the MTF5 forecast is based on the position agreed in February 2024 and it is important to note that this will be kept under review throughout the 2025-26 Budget setting process, particularly in the event that further information about funding becomes available. It nevertheless remains prudent to establish a process to begin planning for savings at the level required to close the underlying gap identified in February 2024.
- 5.5. The proposals in the report are intended to reflect a proportionate response to the challenges and uncertainties present in the 2025-26 planning process and will ultimately support the Council to develop a robust budget for the year.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1. This report sets out a framework for developing detailed saving proposals for 2025-26 and at this stage no proposals have been agreed, meaning that a range of alternative options remain open.
- 6.2. In addition, there are a number of areas where Cabinet could choose to consider different parameters for the budget setting process, such as:
- Adopting an alternative allocation of targets between services, or retaining a target corporately.
 - Considering an alternative timetable within the time constraints required to develop proposals, undertake public consultation, and meet statutory deadlines for the setting of council tax.
 - Changing assumptions within the MTF5 (including the level of council tax assumed for planning purposes) and therefore varying the level of savings sought. **Every 1% change in the level of council tax (or ASC precept)**

would equate to approximately +/- £5.3m of savings to be identified as part of the 2025-26 Budget.

6.3. The planning context for the Council will be updated if further information becomes available. Final decisions about the overall shape of the 2025-26 Budget, savings, and council tax will not be made until February 2025.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. Financial implications are discussed in detail throughout this report, which sets out the proposed indicative savings targets which will need to be found by each department to contribute to closing the 2025-26 and future year budget gap, subject to formal approval by Full Council in February 2025. The proposals in the report will require services to identify further significant savings to be delivered against current budget levels. The experience of budget setting in recent years has demonstrated that the scope to achieve savings at the level required is becoming increasingly challenging in the context of service delivery expectations, and existing saving programmes. It should also be noted that there is an increased level of risk following actions required (including use of reserves) to deliver a balanced budget in 2023-24, as there is reduced flexibility within the overall finances as a result. Therefore close monitoring and tight financial control will be required in 2024-25 to mitigate any risk of increasing the budget gap, which would have a knock on impact for the 2025-26 budget. As previously highlighted, there remains a risk that the Council will be obliged to consider reductions in service levels, and it is therefore crucial that proposals to deliver the full £44.750m savings target are identified in full for consideration by Cabinet in October.

7.2. The Council is legally required to set a balanced Budget annually and should plan to achieve this using a prudent set of assumptions. However, Cabinet could choose to vary the allocation of indicative targets between directorates, or to establish an alternative approach to identifying savings. Taking into account the savings already planned for 2024-25 and future years, the scale of the budget gap and savings required are such that if the Council is required to continue to identify and deliver savings at this level there remains a risk that this could threaten the Council's ability to continue to fully deliver its statutory responsibilities. As such the Government's response and decisions about Council funding in 2025-26 will be hugely significant. Any changes in Government funding could have a material impact on both the level of savings to be identified, and the Council's wider budget process. Government has hitherto failed to deliver the level of funding needed in recognition of the importance and costs of providing social care, and to adequately fund local authorities to provide these and other vital services. In spite of improvements in recent settlements, fundamentally there remains an urgent need for a larger quantum of funding to be provided to local government to deliver a sustainable operating environment for future years.

7.3. Work to deliver additional Government funding could therefore have an impact on the overall budget gap to be addressed. Equally, in the event that future funding allocations or reform sees resources shifted away from shire counties, the Council's forecast gap for 2025-26 or future years could increase. At this point, Government has not confirmed details of the proposed approach or timescales for consultation on funding reform, but they are not anticipated until 2026-27 at the earliest. Many key assumptions about 2025-26 funding remain to be confirmed and should be considered a key area of risk.

7.4. As a result of the above, the budget setting process and savings targets will be kept under review as budget planning progresses. In the event that additional budget pressures for 2025-26 emerge through budget planning, there may be a requirement to revisit the indicative saving targets.

8. Resource Implications

8.1. **Staff:** There are no direct implications arising from this report although there is a potential that staffing implications may be linked to specific saving proposals developed. These will be identified as they arise later in the budget planning process.

8.2. **Property:** There are no direct property implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to property budgets and assumptions around capital receipts to be achieved.

8.3. **IT:** There are no direct IT implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to IMT budgets. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver savings through activity related to digital and IT initiatives.

9. Other Implications

9.1. **Legal Implications:** This report sets out a process that will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2025-26 in line with statutory requirements, including those relating to setting council tax, and undertaking public consultation.

9.2. **Human Rights implications:** No specific human rights implications have been identified.

9.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** Any saving proposals with an impact on service delivery will require public consultation, and an Equality Impact Assessment of all proposals will need to be completed as part of budget-setting in due course. The results of public consultation and the findings of all EqIAs will be presented to Cabinet in January 2025 in order to inform budget recommendations to County Council.

9.4. No specific EqIA has been undertaken in respect of this report, although the EqIA in relation to the 2024-25 Budget can be found as part of the [budget papers considered in February 2024](#).

9.5. **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** None identified.

9.6. **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** None identified.

9.7. **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report although existing 2024-25 budget plans include funding for activities which may have an impact on the environmental sustainability of the County Council through the delivery of the Environmental Policy. These issues were considered in more detail within the February budget report to Full Council. Further details are set out in the [Climate Strategy](#). Ultimately sustainability issues and any associated financial implications in relation to either new 2025-26 proposals, or activities developed during 2024-25, will need to be fully considered once such initiatives are finalised, and incorporated as part of budget setting in February 2025.

9.8. **Any other implications:** Significant issues, risks, assumptions and implications have been set out throughout the report.

10. Risk Implications/Assessment

10.1. Significant risks have been identified throughout this report. Risks in respect of the MTFS were also set out within the February 2024 report to Full Council.

10.2. A number of significant uncertainties remain which could have an impact on the overall scale of the budget gap to be addressed in 2025-26, linked to ongoing uncertainty around local government (and wider public sector finances) including:

- further “cost of living” pressures and the wider economic impacts, including impact on demand for services;
- implications of higher interest rates for borrowing costs across both the revenue and capital budgets;
- implications of increases in the National Living Wage;
- the progress of funding reforms (previously the Fair Funding Review) now likely to be developed for implementation in 2026-27 at the earliest;
- Government decisions about the council tax referendum limit or further ASC precept flexibilities in 2025-26 and beyond;
- the need for a long-term financial settlement for local government;
- delivery of other reforms to local government funding including further details of the approach to Adult Social Care reforms to implement the cap on care costs, and changes to other funding streams;
- progress on delivery of the Safety Valve programme and implementation of Local First Inclusion within Children’s Services;

- progress of various elements of Government policy including levelling up, delivery of the County Deal.

10.3. The Council's Corporate Risk Register provides a full description of corporate risks, including corporate level financial risks, mitigating actions and the progress made in managing the level of risk. A majority of risks, if not treated, could have significant financial consequences such as failing to generate income or to realise savings. These corporate risks include:

- RM001 – Infrastructure funding requirements
- RM006 – Service delivery – The potential risk of failure to deliver our services within the resources available for the period 2023-24 to the end of 2024-25.
- RM022b – Replacement EU Funding for Economic Growth
- RM031 – NCC Funded Children's Services Overspend due to demand pressure
- RM035 – Adverse impact of significant and abnormal levels of inflationary pressure on revenue and capital budgets
- RM039 – Financial, Staffing & Market Stability impacts due to implementation of Social Care Reform (now October 2025)
- RM042 – Increasing Challenges to Maintaining Financial Resilience
- RM043 - High Needs Block Deficit cannot be resolved

Further details of all corporate risks, including those outlined above, can be found in Appendix C of the [April 2024 Risk Management report to Cabinet](#) (item 15). There is close oversight of the Council's expenditure with monthly financial reports to Cabinet. Any emerging risks arising will continue to be identified and treated as necessary.

11. Select Committee comments

11.1. Select Committees provided commentary and input to the 2024-25 Budget process during budget development, and this was reported to Cabinet at various stages of the process. No specific input has been sought from Select Committees in respect of this report, however Select Committees are expected to again have the opportunity to comment when they consider the implications of 2025-26 budget setting for the service areas within their remit when they meet during the year as set out in the proposed timetable.

12. Recommendations

12.1. Cabinet is recommended:

1. To consider the overall budget gap of £135.908m included in the **Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)** set by Full Council in February 2024, and agree:

- a. the gap of £44.722m to be closed for 2025-26; and
 - b. the extension of the MTFS by a further year (to 2028-29), adding a further £52.744m to the gap and resulting in additional pressure assumptions to be addressed and leading to an overall gap for planning purposes of £188.652m over the next four years. (Section 2).
2. To review the key budget risks and uncertainties as set out in this report. (Section 10).
3. To consider the principles of the proposed approach to budget setting for 2025-26, 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, including the proposed consultation process for 2025-26.
 - b. that there should be a detailed review of cost pressures and growth already provided within the Budget (including 2024-25 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), and that these will be kept under review throughout the budget process.
4. To approve the initial budget virements for 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 1, reflecting budget transfers for whole services between departments as a result of the Employment Committee of 18 March 2024, while noting the virements do not change the overall Council Budget.

13. Background Papers

- 13.1. Background papers relevant to this report include:

[Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2024-25 to 2027-28, County Council 20/02/2024, agenda item 5](#)

[Better Together, for Norfolk](#)

[Corporate Delivery Plan](#) and [Corporate Delivery Plan – Annual Report 2022-2023, Cabinet 10/05/2023, agenda item 11](#)

[Risk Management, Cabinet 08/04/2024, agenda item 15](#)

[Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy](#)

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Appendix 1 – 2024-25 Budget reconciliation

The following tables provide a summary of the adjustments between the Net Budget position presented to County Council in February 2024, and the Net Budget position arising from the Employment Committee of 18 March 2024 which will form the basis for 2024-25 monitoring in future reporting to Cabinet. These adjustments **do not change the overall County Council Budget for 2024-25**.

	Adult Social Services £m	Children's Services £m	CES £m	Communities and Environment £m	Infrastructure £m	Fire and Rescue £m	Strategy and Transformation £m	Chief Executive's Directorate £m	Finance £m	Total £m
Net Budget 2024-25 as per Full Council February 2024	281.967	238.592	203.268	-	-	-	30.184	4.384	-230.646	527.748
Adjustments										
Communities and Environment			-20.896	20.896						0.000
Infrastructure			-145.047		145.047					0.000
Fire			-36.017			36.017				0.000
Procurement			-1.308						1.308	0.000
Total 2024-25 c/f below	281.967	238.592	-	20.896	145.047	36.017	30.184	4.384	-229.339	527.748

Net Budget	Adult Social Services £m	Children's Services £m	Communities and Environment £m	Infrastructure £m	Fire and Rescue £m	Strategy and Transformation £m	Chief Executive's Directorate £m	Finance £m	Total £m
2024-25 (adjusted)	281.967	238.592	20.896	145.047	36.017	30.184	4.384	-229.339	527.748
2025-26	294.360	251.497	22.207	149.839	36.590	32.310	4.919	-201.464	590.258
2026-27	311.305	255.582	23.170	154.245	37.583	33.087	5.177	-167.086	653.064
2027-28	331.350	261.536	24.043	159.375	38.605	34.232	5.320	-139.684	714.778

The above table represents the “do nothing” scenario in relation to the MTFS position approved by County Council in February 2024. In other words, it shows the impact of forecast cost pressures for the period to 2027-28, reconciled to the new departmental structure approved by Employment Committee. In practice, additional savings will need to be developed through the 2025-26 Budget process and incorporated into the above MTFS to deliver a balanced budget position.

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No:8

Report Title: Norfolk's Devolution - Investment Fund Design

Date of Meeting: 11 July 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Economic Growth (Cllr Fabian Eagle)

**Responsible Director: Paul Cracknell Executive Director Strategy and Transformation
Chris Starkie Director of Growth and Investment**

Executive Summary

On 8 December 2022, Norfolk County Council ('the Council') signed an 'in-principle' Level 3 devolution County Deal for Norfolk which, if agreed, will provide Norfolk with new powers, devolved funding and additional investment to help us boost our economy through jobs, training and development, improve our transport network and support our environment.

As part of this deal, Norfolk County Council would receive a £20m Investment Fund annually for 30 years. The purpose of this funding is to drive economic growth across the county, providing an opportunity for generational change.

Norfolk County Council has liaised with districts, education providers and business representatives to develop a design for the investment fund. The intention is to create a fund where successful project applications will align with the emerging Norfolk Economic Strategy, co-developed with stakeholders from across Norfolk, to target the funds where they can best support economic growth.

There has also been discussion with central government to ensure that the design reflects the type of approach that has been used successfully elsewhere in the country, though it has been shaped to meet Norfolk demographics. For example, this includes our large SME business base of 99.7% and the picture of high employment, lower skills that exists for Norfolk.

The interplay of the timing of the General Election on 04.07.24 with our internal governance processes for this select committee and Cabinet deadlines, means that Norfolk County Council must balance preparation for a decision to proceed with the

devolution deal, whilst recognising that any deal may be subject to new government direction. This paper is presented for consideration in this context.

Recommendations / Action Required [delete as appropriate]

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Recognise the work carried out to include all of Norfolk's councils to develop a possible design of the Investment Fund.
2. Offer thoughts and feedback on the current draft and proposed next steps outlined in this report, including the recommendations for priority spending from the Norfolk Commissioning Fund, subject to the Full Council vote on 23.07.24.
3. Make any recommendations to Cabinet.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. County Deals are part of the Government's agenda "to spread opportunity equally across the UK" through greater devolution of powers and funding (as set out in the [2022 Levelling Up White Paper](#))
- 1.2. Devolution deals offer a significant opportunity to unlock long-term funding and gain greater freedom to decide how best to support businesses to grow, meet local needs and create new opportunities for the people who live and work in Norfolk.
- 1.3. On 8 December 2022, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced that the Government was "minded to" enter into a County Deal for Norfolk, under which the County would benefit from £600m of new Government investment over the next 30 years and an additional £12.9m during the current Spending Review period to fund local priorities to produce growth. In addition, the Deal will also devolve a number of powers, as well as provide the Council with an additional £1.632m capacity funding over 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support implementation.
- 1.4. On 12 December 2023, the Council resolved that the Deal should be accepted and agreed that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate. Council also agreed that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council Meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date.
- 1.5. The Government and Norfolk County Council both recognise that devolution is a journey, not a one-off event. This agreement would be the first step in a process of further devolution and will pave the way for future conversations as part of an ongoing dialogue with Government.

- 1.6. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the proposed design of the Investment Fund, developed with feedback from local partners such as district councils, education providers and business.
- 1.7. The Committee is reminded that as this is a Level 3 deal, Norfolk County Council would be required to change its governance model to that of a directly elected leader. Elements of the deal such as the Investment Fund, the Brownfield Housing Fund and the Integrated Transport Settlement are only available at Level 3.

Investment Fund Purpose

- 1.8. Investment funds are long-term grants agreed by government. Norfolk's Investment Fund is £600m over 30 years, consisting of 40% capital and 60% revenue. There are significant benefits attached to the investment fund, including:
 - 1.9. Local control over how economic policy is implemented and the flexibility to prioritise what is right for the county.
 - 1.10. Direct investment to address the needs and meet the demands of Norfolk's businesses and people – enabling us to be agile and responsive.
 - 1.11. Long term funding is available without the need for costly and resource intensive bidding to Government. In addition, it does not preclude Norfolk's local authorities from accessing other funds that are currently available or will become available in the future.
 - 1.12. The ability to leverage in tens of millions of pounds of other funding streams from sources such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Sport England or the National Infrastructure Bank. For example, central government outlines in the 'Greater Manchester Combined Authority Trailblazer Deeper Devolution Deal' paper how they are supporting the authority to leverage greater private investment to help deliver retrofit and energy efficiency measures. [\[Title\] \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
 - 1.13. Investment outcomes are direct and highly visible for residents and businesses, contributing to better outcomes and offering pride of place.
 - 1.14. The Investment Fund enables stakeholders across all sectors to work together to shape investment projects, helping to move Norfolk forward in partnership.
 - 1.15. The Investment Fund is ringfenced for the purpose of economic growth and, with a level 3 devolution agreement, will be subject to 5-year independent gateway review to assess the impact investment funds have made in the local area on economic growth and trigger the release of the next 5-year tranche of funding.

1.16. In line with the ethos and policy of devolution, Norfolk will have the autonomy to shape the Investment Fund in order to address Norfolk's Investment priorities for economic growth. This provides all of Norfolk stakeholders, including local business, district councils and other relevant partners, a real opportunity to shape Norfolk's future and provide a shift change in employment, sustainable growth, productivity, and skills.

2. Proposal

2.1 It is proposed that the fund should be split into five headline funds. Full details of these can be found in the Investment Fund Prospectus (appendix 1). This is an overview of the fund design:

- **Norfolk Enabling Fund** to develop a pipeline through business case and feasibility support and providing additional resource.
- **Norfolk Powering Places Fund** for place-specific interventions that address barriers to growth and prosperity.
- **Growing Norfolk Business Fund** to provide targeted financial support to the county's businesses.
- **Norfolk Skills Action Fund** to address the specific skills challenges restricting growth in Norfolk.
- **Norfolk Commissioning Fund** for Norfolk County Council to commission interventions to deliver targeted, outcomes driven county wide projects.

2.2 There are two priority allocations from the Norfolk Commissioning Fund that the Select Committee is invited to consider. It is planned that these will be recommended to Cabinet, subject to the Full Council vote to proceed with a change of governance on 23.07.24. These are detailed below.

2.3 It is recommended that the Norfolk Energy Plan receives a priority allocation when the fund launches. The Energy Plan has support from all councils and was part of the original Devolution ask. It is a key document for Norfolk and would form part of the evidence base for strategic projects and investment decisions going forward.

2.4 It is recommended that a Members' Growth Fund should be created and receives a priority allocation when the fund launches. It would enable real grassroots engagement for elected members to positively impact activities in their divisions. These investments that will be visible to the people of Norfolk, positively impacting, day-to-day lives.

2.5 All decision making will be subject to our constitution and in line with the devolved decision making laid out in the Local Assurance Framework draft reviewed by this select committee and approved by cabinet. A diagram showing

the relationship between the advisory boards and the NCC system of governance is shown below.

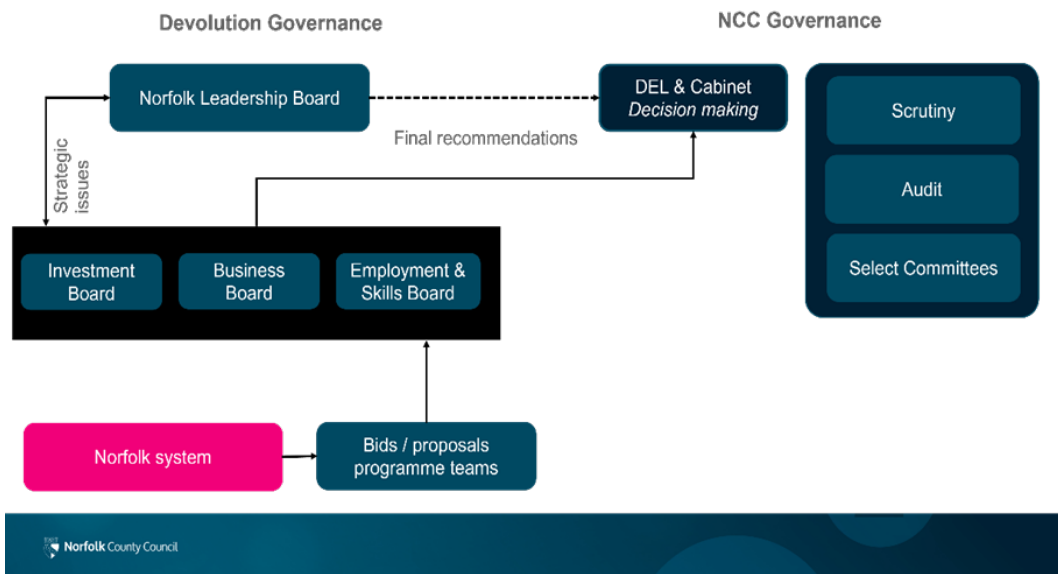


Figure 1: Interaction of Boards and NCC system of governance

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal will enable the people and businesses of Norfolk, that have helped set the focus through the emerging Norfolk Economic Strategy, start to realise the benefits of the fund. The impact will be long term, as for the first time, funding continuity will change investment focus to developing better projects that will deliver economic growth.
- 3.2 Implementation of the fund will lever in and recycle significant funds for Norfolk by using a mixture of grants, loans and equity as detailed in appendix 1. The quality and reach of Norfolk bids to the fund and most importantly, to other funds will be amplified by having a mix of products relevant to each fund. This will positively impact the economy of Norfolk.
- 3.3 Devolution means that the design of the fund can be shaped locally to focus on local priorities. Decisions taken around funding will be made in Norfolk, for Norfolk. Overall, the Investment Fund design maximises the impact of devolved funds as a long-term lever to achieve better outcomes for Norfolk residents by providing targeted funding to increase skills levels, support business growth and improve places for people over a generation.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 A review of how other devolved areas set up and focused their funds was conducted through desk-based research. There was also discussion with other areas already in receipt of devolved funding. This was useful to establish key

learning like the need for pipeline development resource and governance streamlining.

- 4.2 The Norfolk Economic Strategy evidence base has been utilised to shape the fund towards addressing the specific needs of Norfolk. This consists of both quantitative data and qualitative input. There were 14 workshops held across districts to shape the Norfolk Economic Strategy, enabling significant input from a range of stakeholders from the private, public and third sector. Feedback received here has shaped fund design.
- 4.3 The evidence and information shared by stakeholders from across the county at these workshops has fundamentally shaped NCC's understanding of how the investment fund could best be targeted to support growth in Norfolk by the identification of strategic economic priorities. These priorities will form the basis for applications to each fund and potential applicants must show how their projects/programmes align with these priorities. There will be a manual to support applicants available when the fund is launched.
- 4.3 There has been comprehensive engagement with Districts whereby the design of the fund and its focus has been discussed. These meetings have led to revisions in the fund to better meet the needs of district colleagues.. These conversations have also been the gateway to constructive pipeline development.
- 4.4 There has been national engagement in the form of a discussion with the Head of Investment funds at DLUHC, the person responsible for leading on devolved funds in all devolution deal areas. Positive comment was received on the approach and focus of the emerging design.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The fund could be designed in other ways. The combinations of options and approaches from an in-house investment fund with multiple financial instruments are too numerous to list but the process allows a bespoke design that balances risk and the need to offset inflation through an element of re-cycling of funds. The Norfolk Investment Fund design achieves this balance.
- 5.2 The whole fund could be put in the hands of a contracted fund manager that could focus on equity investments, for example. This approach would not allow a balanced use of the three key financial instruments and would limit NCC control. We also have the experience of managing large programmes which substantially reduces the attractiveness of this option.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 As part of the Devolution offer to Norfolk, the Norfolk Investment Fund has no financial implications for Norfolk County Council. This is new money, which we will allocate after appropriate assessment of business cases. Grants will be paid in arrears. All awards will be made and recorded in line with subsidy control regulations.
- 6.2 In addition, investigations have revealed the annual allocations for Devolution Investment Funds are paid on 23rd May annually. This means that given the period between applications, appraisals, decisions, contracting, spend and claim, there should be no cash flow implications to NCC.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** The design of the Norfolk Investment Fund includes a 5% programme management top slice which sets aside up to £1m per annum which will cover staffing of fund-related activity. The areas of work this will cover include project facilitation, appraisal, contracting, claims and monitoring.
- 7.2 **Specialist expertise:** There will be a minimal need to access internal expertise such as finance and legal teams, though there will be engagement with these services as part of the delivery of the activity in future.
- 7.3 **Property:** N/A
- 7.4 **IT:** N/A

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** NPLaw are engaged to support the Subsidy Control regulation alignment of the fund. They are also engaged to support the legal compliance of the contracting process and administration.
- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** N/A
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):**
A comprehensive range of evidence was gathered and analysed, to enable the Council to develop a sound equality impact assessment about the likely impacts of the Deal on people with protected characteristics. This involved reviewing data about people and services that might be affected, contextual information and commissioned research about local areas and populations.

The equality impact assessment conducted as part of the public consultation on the County Deal, identified that the Deal has the potential to significantly

enhance access for disabled and older people in Norfolk - and equality of opportunity for people with other protected characteristics. This will continue to be relevant to all aspects of the work to implement the County Deal and to inform implementation plans.

The full equality impact assessment is included in the Cabinet papers for 5 June 2023, see section 13 below.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): Though there is no requirement for a DPIA for the fund design itself. One is being developed for the administration of the funding for when the programme goes live which is currently planned for September.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): N/A

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): The funds have a cross-cutting theme of net zero so it is expected that the use of the Investment fund will have a positive impact on sustainability for Norfolk.

8.7 Any Other Implications: N/A

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 Norfolk County Council will ensure that risks to the delivery of its priorities are appropriately managed in accordance with the Council's Risk Management Framework in order to fulfil the Financial Regulations, as set out in the Council's Constitution, the Policy and Procedures will comply with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (Part 2, Internal Control 3(c)) and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

9.2 The programme will adhere to the NCC Risk Management Policy which sets out the definition of risk, the roles and responsibilities within risk management, the approach taken to risk management within Norfolk County Council, the monitoring and audit of the Policy, and its review.

9.3 Investment fund will be released in five-yearly tranches and will only be released subject to satisfactory gateway reviews.

9.4 Equity investment risk will be managed by contracting with a specialist provider. Equity investment is a part of the Norfolk Investment fund design but a suitable arrangement needs to be in place before this financial instrument becomes active.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Recognise the work carried out to include all of Norfolk's councils to develop a possible design of the Investment Fund.
2. Offer thoughts and feedback on the current draft and proposed next steps outlined in this report, including the recommendations for priority spending from the Norfolk Commissioning Fund, subject to the Full Council vote on 23.07.24.
3. Make any recommendations to Cabinet.

11. Appendices

11.1 The Norfolk Investment Fund Prospectus

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 [2022 Levelling Up White Paper](#)
- 12.2 [Norfolk Devolution Deal](#)
- 12.3 [Cabinet Agenda 5 June 2023](#) – A County Deal for Norfolk – Public Consultation and Equality Impact Assessment
- 12.4 [Full Council Agenda 12 December 2023](#) Consideration of a County Deal for Norfolk
- 12.5 [Infrastructure & Development Select Committee agenda 15 May 2024](#)
- 12.5 [Infrastructure and Development Select Committee Minutes 15 May 2024](#)

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Appendix 1

Draft Investment Fund Prospectus



Norfolk Investment Fund Prospectus (DRAFT)

2024-2030

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Foreword

The Norfolk Investment Fund is a key pillar of Norfolk's devolution deal.

It provides a real opportunity to deliver long term economic growth in Norfolk with an allocation of £20 million per year, guaranteed for 30 years.

For the first time, Norfolk will have long term funding to deliver our priorities, rather than national aims.

It will provide the opportunity to invest in new infrastructure to help our businesses grow and to attract new investment into the county.

It will enable us to develop new training facilities to help our residents secure high-quality jobs.

The fund presents exciting opportunities for Norfolk to unlock other funding from the private and public sector, amplifying the impact of the fund.

The Norfolk Investment Fund links to the emerging Norfolk Economic Strategy which has been developed through wide stakeholder engagement with both the private and public sector.

This strategy aims to capitalize on Norfolk's world leading expertise in food, energy and financial services with an overarching ambition of growing Norfolk's economy to help residents secure better jobs.

The Norfolk Investment Fund, control of the Adult Education Budget, funding to build hundreds of new homes, greater control over transport funding and a higher national profile is a powerful package of new funding and powers which will transform Norfolk's economy and improve the lives of our residents.

Introduction

Devolution

Devolution enables us to invest in areas such as better transport, skills, job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the specific needs of local people. As part of this process, from May 2025, Norfolk will have a directly elected leader, voted for by the public, enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by the Government.

Spending powers transferred to Norfolk as part of **our initial devolution deal** are:

- £20 million investment fund, annually for 30 years, to grow the economy
- £7 million for brownfield development
- £12 million annually for adult education
- £5.9 million for housing, regeneration and development.

Norfolk Investment Fund

The fund is £600 million over a 30-year period. There will be a review every five years of how we have used the funding which acts as a gateway to receiving further investment funding.

The fund can be used for capital projects such as infrastructure, equipment or buildings that support economic activity and revenue projects that support businesses, skills providers or other organisations that play a role in the economy. Examples of eligible activity are included in this prospectus. The Norfolk Investment Fund priorities identified are synchronised to appropriate priorities from the Norfolk Economic Strategy.

The fund model sets out 5 headline funds. The Norfolk Enabling Fund and the Norfolk Powering Places Fund require that bids are led by or endorsed by an appropriate director within a local city, district, borough or county authority. The fund is open to proposals from a range of organisations including local authorities, businesses, business/sector network organisations, further and higher education providers and voluntary and community sector organisations with projects that demonstrate they support economic growth. Eligibility criteria for each of the headline funds are included in this prospectus and a full programme manual outlining detailed criteria will be available when the Norfolk Investment Fund is launched.

Introduction

Purpose and principles

Purpose

- The fund is explicitly for developing the right conditions and environment for economic development to flourish through regenerating local areas, helping grow businesses, enabling people to get the skills they need, and improving infrastructure in Norfolk.
- Norfolk Investment Fund priorities have been developed in line with the Norfolk Economic Strategy which has been prepared in close consultation with a broad base of stakeholders and district partners. Applicants to the Norfolk Investment Fund should refer to this document while developing projects that will help us address Norfolk's economic aims.
- The fund has the journey toward Net Zero as a cross-cutting theme. All projects should deliver against decarbonisation within this overall theme. Projects may want to align to the strategic priorities outlined in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership [Norfolk Climate Change - Norfolk Climate Change Partnership](#) or Norfolk Climate Strategy [Climate strategy - Norfolk County Council](#).
- Projects which include elements of Social Return on Investment within their delivery are encouraged. Please see 'Resources' at the end of this document for more information.

Principles

- The fund is not able to support statutory functions/core services.
- As a devolved fund, the Norfolk Investment Fund has set priorities that address local challenges and opportunities – this is a step change from centralised government funding rounds.
- Long-term Strategic Growth: The Norfolk Investment Fund offers £20 million annually for 30 years, enabling Norfolk to plan and execute long-term economic strategies rather than relying on short-term, nationally-focused funding. This shift allows for a more tailored approach to meet Norfolk's specific needs.
- Leveraging Additional Funds: Beyond the annual allocation, the Norfolk Investment Fund is looking to attract additional funds, amplifying its impact and creating exciting opportunities for further development in Norfolk.

- The Norfolk Investment Fund will focus on high quality proposals, aiming to deliver the best interventions for the county.
- Inflation Consideration: While the annual allocations are not linked to inflation, the Norfolk Investment Fund incorporates strategies to mitigate this through loan and equity investments, ensuring the fund's growth and sustainability.
- Projects will be appraised in a way which is consistent with the Green Book "five case" model and at the same time is proportionate to the funding ask in terms of processes required.
- Upon launch, the fund will remain open to applications on an on-going basis. Projects can bid into the fund when they are ready, instead of being constrained by funding windows which distort programmes.
- Streamlined process: facilitation and project development support will be available to ensure high quality bids.

Introduction

Headline funds

Headline Funds

The overarching Norfolk Investment Fund is organised into a number of headline funds which have been developed to target key areas. This will support sustainable, long-term economic growth.

- Norfolk Enabling Fund to develop a pipeline of projects through business case and feasibility support and providing additional resource.
- Norfolk Powering Places Fund for place-specific interventions that will target opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.
- Growing Norfolk Business Fund to provide financial support to the county's businesses.
- Norfolk Skills Action Fund to address specific skills challenges that will unlock growth opportunities for Norfolk.
- Norfolk Commissioning Fund that will enable the county council to commission interventions to deliver targeted, outcomes-driven projects. This will ensure key strategic priorities outlined in the agreed Economic Strategy, that have countywide benefit, are financed when not covered by other funding sources.

Governance

Norfolk County Council's decision-making is governed by its constitution. This is a document that sets out how we operate, our procedures and how we make decisions. You can find a link to it here. [Norfolk County Council Constitution - Norfolk County Council](#)

Before funds are awarded they will be subject to internal scrutiny where our funding team check that we have followed correct processes, the business case is robust and we are making good recommendations for how we spend public money. We are also accountable to central government who will conduct gateway reviews, approximately every five-years. They undertake a series of checks across a range of areas to make sure we are using our funding appropriately. The Norfolk Investment Fund will have independent audit scrutiny.

However, we are most accountable to the people and organisations of Norfolk, which is why we work closely with partners across Norfolk to help us make the right decisions about how to use the Norfolk Investment Fund.

Introduction

Decision-making

Decision-making

Norfolk Investment Fund decision making will be in line with Norfolk County Council's constitutional rules.

To shape our decision-making, we have a range of local stakeholders involved in making recommendations on how we should spend the Norfolk Investment Fund. We have three boards that give us different viewpoints. They are:

Investment Board - This is made up of all the district council leaders, our leader and another Norfolk County Council cabinet member.

Business Board - Business representatives are a key element of this board, recruited from local industry leaders to help us shape thinking around business growth activities and funding.

Employment and Skills Board - Local stakeholders from across Norfolk who work in organisations supporting people into employment or helping them develop skills. We also have organisations who represent business on this board as we need to make sure that we are investing funds to help build skills that are needed by industry.

Transparent funding decision dates and application submission points will be set out when the Norfolk Investment Fund is launched.

Norfolk Enabling Fund

Introduction

The Norfolk Enabling Fund will bring together three key strands: providing skilled resource to deliver excellent bids, supporting district partners and other organisations with producing high-quality feasibility studies and support to create exemplary business cases. This fund helps us to make sure we get good quality, evidence based, deliverable projects across all of the other funds. It is a fund to help Norfolk get better interventions and ultimately more funding to deliver.

Priorities

- Projects bidding into the Norfolk Enabling Fund should align to at least one of the priorities listed under the other headline funds within the prospectus.



Operations & Maintenance Campus, Great Yarmouth (Credit Great Yarmouth Borough Council)

Norfolk Enabling Fund

Headlines and key criteria

Headlines

- Fund launch Autumn 2024.

Key criteria

- Projects bidding into the Norfolk Enabling Fund must be led or endorsed by an appropriate director within a local city, district, borough or county authority.
- Feasibility submissions to the Norfolk Enabling Fund must be for projects that could be funded from the Norfolk Investment Fund.
- Projects bidding into the Norfolk Enabling Fund should align to at least one of the priorities identified in the Norfolk Economic Strategy. Applicants should refer to this document while developing projects.
- The fund has the journey toward Net Zero as a cross-cutting theme. All projects should deliver against this overall objective. Projects may want to align to the strategic priorities outlined in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership or Norfolk Climate Strategy and provide a benchmark to measure the projects impact.
- For business case support, while we would ordinarily expect projects to demonstrate a Benefit/Cost Ratio greater than 2, Social Return on Investment can also be calculated as part of the overall value assessment. Social Value UK sets out a clear framework for measuring, managing and accounting for social value or social impact which should be used by applicants.
- Applicants may form multi-partner bids.
- Awards will not fund 'business as usual' activities.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the capacity and ability to deliver to a high quality within proposed timescales.

Please see programme manual for the full criteria.

Norfolk Enabling Fund Products

Feasibility studies

- Maximum intervention rate: Up to 100%. Expectation that most bids will include an element of match funding.
- Minimum Grant: £50,000.
- Maximum Grant: £250,000.
- Expectation as a fund of last resort – applicants must demonstrate exploration of other avenues.
- Feasibility studies must focus on finding a solution to an evidenced problem.
- 100% revenue

Example activity

- A feasibility study into utilities required for a given development site.
- Exploring two or three sites for a potential incubator and options for different scale and programmes.
- Feasibility study that looks at best use of commercial land to deliver economic outcomes

Business case specialist support

- Maximum intervention rate: Up to 100%. Expectation that most bids will include an element of match funding which can be in kind.
- Minimum Grant: £20,000.
- Maximum Grant: £100,000.
- Only for projects that have been successful at expression of interest stage for the Norfolk Powering Places Fund or the Skills Action Fund.
- Only for projects looking to secure in excess of £500,000 that are bidding into other headline funds.
- Only technical/specialist business case support allowed (not including statutory functions).
- Applicants will be required to demonstrate a need to access the fund.

Example activity

A benefit cost ratio report, cost plan, or survey that is necessary to complete a business case submission to Norfolk Powering Places Fund and Norfolk Skills Action Fund

Norfolk Enabling Fund

How to apply

Applicants should contact the Norfolk Investment Fund facilitation team to undergo an initial screening.

For **Feasibility Studies** bidding into the fund, applicants will be required to fill out the following application form:

Investment Fund Business Case (Level 1)

Between £50,000 - £249,999.99

Applicants other than local authorities should provide written evidence of endorsement by an appropriate director within a local city, district, borough or county authority. Templates are available on request.

Norfolk Powering Places Fund

Introduction

Norfolk is made up of distinctive places that face different challenges and a fund is needed with the flexibility to address this challenge. The Norfolk Powering Places Fund will deliver place-specific interventions that respond to granular local need and opportunity. Projects are invited that provide economic benefit to rural, coastal and urban areas.

Priorities

- Ensure businesses in all places across Norfolk can succeed, prioritising growth in strategic sites and areas.
- Ensuring the enabling infrastructure is in place to support growth across Norfolk.
- Support all places across Norfolk to provide a high quality of life.
- Strengthen communities, support resident wellbeing and increase pride of place.
- Promote Norfolk as a place to live, work, visit and invest.
- Protect and enhance Norfolk's environment, heritage and cultural assets.
- Sustainable development, decarbonisation and climate change adaptation.



Broadland Food Innovation Centre (Credit - Broadland & South Norfolk Council)

Norfolk Powering Places Fund

Headlines and key criteria

Fund Headlines

- Fund launch Autumn 2024.

Key criteria

Please see programme manual for the full criteria.

- Projects bidding into the Norfolk Powering Places Fund must be led or endorsed by an appropriate director within a local city, district, borough or county authority.
- Projects must align to the stated priorities of the Norfolk Powering Places Fund.
- Norfolk Investment Fund priorities have been developed in line with the Norfolk Economic Strategy. Applicants should refer to this document while developing projects.
- The fund has the journey toward Net Zero as a cross-cutting theme. All projects should deliver against this overall objective. Projects may want to align to the strategic priorities outlined in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership or Norfolk Climate Strategy and provide a benchmark to measure the projects impact.
- While we would expect projects to demonstrate a benefit/cost ratio greater than 2, Social Return on Investment can also be calculated as part of the overall value assessment. Social Value UK sets out a clear framework for measuring, managing and accounting for social value or social impact which should be used by applicants.
- Applicants may form multi-partner bids.
- Awards will not fund 'business as usual' activities.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the capacity and ability to deliver to a high quality within proposed timescales.
- Required planning permissions must be in place and evidenced prior to application.

Norfolk Powering Places Fund Products

Grant Funding

- Maximum intervention rate: 50%
- Minimum grant: £100,000
- Maximum grant award per annum: £3,000,000
- Public, private and other sources of match funding will be expected.
- Indicative split: 80% capital 20% revenue

Loans

- Loans between £100,000 and £2,000,000 are available on a case-by-case basis. Interest rates will be assessed in each circumstance.
- Loans could be accessed to enable infrastructure works that unlock development land or for projects like incubator space whereby sustainable income generation can service loan re-payments.
- Applicants should discuss options for their project with the facilitation team.
- All proposals will require business case submissions.

Example activity

- Expansion at a business incubator site to enable bigger rental options to accommodate businesses that grow.
- Projects can boost connectivity such as broadband.
- Targeted public realm enhancements that improve quality of place and will drive economic activity.
- Investment in key economically significant cultural, environmental or heritage asset.
- Infrastructure with wrap-around support in rural areas that facilitate.

Norfolk Powering Places Fund

How to apply

Applicants should contact the Norfolk Investment Fund facilitation team to undergo an initial screening. If projects are eligible, applicants will then be required to fill out an expression of interest form.

Successful expression of interest applications will then be invited to submit a business case for appraisal. There are four forms available, proportionate to the scale of project, in the following bands:

- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 1)**
Below £249,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 2)**
Between £250,000 - £499,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 3)**
£500,000 - £1,999,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 4)**
Over £2,000,000

Applicants other than local authorities should provide written evidence of endorsement by an appropriate director within a local city, district, borough or county authority. Templates are available on request.

Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund

Introduction

This fund is open to SMEs to support business growth and improve productivity and profitability in their business. The fund will invest in Norfolk's business base, generating local wealth and prosperity.

Priorities

- Grow, strengthen and future-proof our business base, targeting needs of SMEs.
- Support businesses in high-value clusters to grow, innovate and generate more local value.
- Support businesses to provide quality jobs, wages and conditions.
- Sustainable development, decarbonisation and climate change adaptation.



Hethel Engineering Centre (Credit - Broadland & South Norfolk Council)

Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund

Headlines and key criteria

Fund Headlines

- Fund launch Autumn 2024.

Key criteria

Please see programme manual for criteria in full.

- The Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund is open to small to medium-sized enterprises, as defined by the UK Government.
- Enterprises can include businesses or social enterprises.
- Projects must be aligned primarily to economic development.
- Projects must align to the stated priorities of the Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund. Norfolk Investment Fund priorities have been developed in line with the Norfolk Economic Strategy. Applicants should refer to this document while developing projects.
- The fund has the journey toward Net Zero as a cross-cutting theme. All projects should deliver against this overall objective. Projects may want to align to the strategic priorities outlined in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership or Norfolk Climate Strategy and provide a benchmark to measure the projects impact.
- While we would ordinarily expect projects to demonstrate a benefit/cost ratio greater than 2, Social Return on Investment can also be calculated as part of the overall value assessment. Social Value UK sets out a clear framework for measuring, managing and accounting for social value or social impact which should be used by applicants.
- Applicants may form multi-partner bids.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the capacity and ability to deliver to a high quality within proposed timescales.
- Required planning permissions must be in place prior to application.

Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund Products

Grant Funding

- Maximum intervention rate: 20%
- Minimum grant: £50,000
- Maximum grant: £500,000
- Public or private or other sources of match funding will be expected.
- 100% capital

Loans and Equity

- Loans to support business growth are available on a case-by-case basis. Interest rates will be assessed in each circumstance. Minimum loan size £250,000.
- Equity investments between £50,000 and upwards are available on a case by case basis. Equity investments will be managed by a fund manager on behalf of Norfolk County Council. Equity proposals will undergo a strict due diligence process.
- Applicants should discuss options for their project with the facilitation team.
- All proposals will require business case submissions.

Example activity

- New equipment that will enable a business to take advantage of the opportunities posed by AI.
- Collaborative bid across a number of businesses which require additional infrastructure capacity at an existing business park.
- Refurbishment and extension to a businesses premises that will facilitate expansion.

Growing Norfolk Businesses Fund

How to apply

Applicants to the Growing Norfolk Business Fund should contact New Anglia Growth Hub to undergo an initial screening. If projects are eligible, applicants then must submit a business case for appraisal. There are two forms available, proportionate to the scale of project, in the following bands:

- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 1)**
Between £50,000 - £249,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 2)**
Between £250,000 - £500,000



New Anglia Growth Hub event (Credit New Anglia Growth Hub)

Norfolk Skills Action Fund

Introduction

Norfolk Skills Action Fund will address the specific skills challenges restricting growth in Norfolk. The fund will work alongside other funding streams including the Adult Education Budget that has also been transferred through Devolution. The fund is open to capital investment projects in skills infrastructure, revenue funding projects to support new provision, and projects that address barriers to skills and employment.

Priorities

- Inspire life-long learning and workforce training.
- Build the talent and supply of appropriately skilled new entrants to the workforce.
- Equip and future-proof the Norfolk workforce to take full advantage of digital and emerging green technologies and innovation.
- Supporting collaboration, efficiency and skills system leadership.
- Sustainable development, decarbonisation and climate change adaptation.



Students outside the Digi-Tech Factory at City College Norwich (Credit - City College Norwich)

Norfolk Skills Action Fund Headlines and key criteria

Fund Headlines

- Fund launch Autumn 2024.

Key criteria

- Project applicants must meet the following criteria:
 - Where applicable to provision, have an Ofsted rating of 'Good' or above.
 - Holding or with agreement to work towards the Matrix standard accreditation.
 - Be registered on the UK Register of Learning Providers (UKRLP) and hold a UK Provider Reference Number (UKPRN)
- Pre-16 education and 16-18 provision delivered within schools is ineligible activity.
- Projects must be aligned primarily to economic development.
- Interventions must align to the stated priorities of the Skills Action Fund. Norfolk Investment Fund priorities have been developed in line with the Norfolk Economic Strategy. Applicants should refer to this document whilst developing projects.
- Projects must demonstrate strategic alignment to Local Skills Plans.
- The fund has the journey toward Net Zero as a cross-cutting theme. All projects should deliver against this overall objective. Projects may want to align to the strategic priorities outlined in the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership or Norfolk Climate Strategy and provide a benchmark to measure the projects impact.
- Whilst we would ordinarily expect projects to demonstrate a benefit/cost ratio greater than 2, Social Return on Investment can also be calculated as part of the overall value assessment. Social Value UK sets out a clear framework for measuring, managing and accounting for social value or social impact which should be used by applicants.
- Applicants may form multi-partner bids.
- Awards will not fund 'business as usual' activities.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the capacity and ability to deliver to a high quality within proposed timescales.
- Required planning permissions must be in place prior to application.

Please see programme manual for criteria in full.



Norfolk Skills Action Fund Products

Grant Funding

- Maximum intervention rate: 80%
- Minimum grant: £250,000
- Maximum grant (revenue): £500,000
- Maximum grant (capital): £3,000,000
- Public or private or other sources of match funding will be expected.
- Indicative split: 80% capital 20% revenue

Example activity

- Capital investment in new Green Skills training provision and Agritech/ Agriculture Skills provision.
- Pump-priming new course set up to meet identified skills challenges.
- Prospective co-investment with the Private Sector e.g. Lotus, Aviva.
- Meeting Norfolk learner and employer demand in Health & Social Care, Leisure & Tourism & Construction provision.
- Innovative methods to increase learner access and work readiness from disadvantaged and rural communities.
- Collaboration with providers to address tutor shortages and industry partnerships.
- Projects of collaboration with employers, supporting methods to release employees into upskill and reskilling opportunities.

Norfolk Skills Action Fund

How to apply

Applicants should contact the Norfolk Investment Fund facilitation team to undergo an initial screening. If projects are eligible, applicants will then be required to fill out an Expression of Interest Form.

Successful expression of interests will then be invited to submit a business case for appraisal. There are four forms available, proportionate to the scale of project, in the following bands:

- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 1)**
Below £249,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 2)**
Between £250,000 - £499,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 3)**
£500,000 - £1,999,999.99
- **Investment Fund Business Case (Level 4)**
Over £2,000,000

Applicants other than local authorities should provide written evidence of endorsement by the leadership team of a local education establishment. Templates are available on request.



An apprentice at the Energy Skills Centre at East Coast College in Lowestoft (Credit - Andrew Hendry)

Norfolk Commissioning Fund

Introduction and headlines

Introduction

The Norfolk Commissioning Fund will commission targeted, outcomes driven projects and programmes that provide economic benefit across the county. The purpose of this fund is to enable Norfolk County Council to finance priority growth projects not covered by other funding sources.

Headlines

- Commissioning where there is a gap in provision, funding, or delivery of the Norfolk Economic Strategy.
- Fund launch Autumn 2024
- Up to 100% Award
- Grants between £250,000 and £3,000,000
- Projects will be commissioned by Norfolk County Council and will align to at least one of the priorities identified in the Norfolk Economic Strategy.
- Projects must be aligned primarily to economic development.
- Rationale for commissioning will be developed by the appropriate NCC team in Growth and Investment.
- Business cases will be developed for approval by cabinet on a case-by-case basis.
- Where appropriate, these will also be considered by the Investment Board, Employment and Skills Board and Business Board.

Further Information

Contacts and Resources

Contact a Facilitator

Please send all enquiries to nif@norfolk.gov.uk.

Bid-writing training

Norfolk County Council runs training to support successful bid-writing. Please contact funding@norfolk.gov.uk for more information.

Match funding

Norfolk County Council may be able to advise applicants on other sources of match funding. Please discuss with facilitation team if you would like to speak with the external funding team about your project.

Other funding options

Norfolk County Council is considering a suite of other funding options and solutions that will be announced in due course. Please speak with the facilitation team to understand development of this resource.

Subsidy Control

All funding awarded to projects will need to comply with UK Government subsidy control legislation. Updates will be publicised on the Norfolk Investment Fund page of the Devolution website.

Social Return on Investment

Social Value UK sets out a clear framework for measuring, managing and accounting for social value or social impact. Please see The Guide to SROI for more information which can be accessed at this [link](#).

Resources

A dedicated webpage is in development.

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 9

Report Title: Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP)
2023/24

Date of Meeting: 10th July 2024

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

Responsible Director: Chris Starkie (Director, Growth and Investment)

Executive Summary

The NSIDP is a shared plan that contains Norfolk's high level strategic infrastructure priorities for the next 10 years, pulling together information on key projects needed to support planned development and deliver economic growth in Norfolk. It is a living document that provides a clear message of Norfolk's strategic infrastructure needs to Government and its agencies. It also serves as a valuable tool for making future investment decisions, in anticipation of the agreed Devolution Deal and associated Norfolk Investment Fund as well as other funding streams.

The NSIDP is focussed on strategic transport, utility, regeneration, and sustainability projects; there are other infrastructure schemes and projects important across the county but not included in this strategic plan. Most notably, NSIDP has been recognised as a case study for best practice in supporting housing and infrastructure needs by the Town and Country Planning Association.

The NSIDP is reviewed and updated annually as projects are progressed through to delivery and new schemes come forward. Projects are placed in one of two groups, those grouped in Local Authority control and those to be delivered by external organisations. The projects in the NSIDP will accelerate the progress of sites that will deliver a significant number of homes and jobs, examples include:

- Road infrastructure at Attleborough and Long Stratton to deliver 5,800 homes;
- Weavers Way providing walking and cycling infrastructure to support the Broadland Growth Triangle's planned 13,500 homes
- East Norwich Regeneration scheme which could deliver up to 4,000 homes and 100,000 square metre of employment

A key change in this year's plan is its presentation format. A new digital version of the plan has been produced alongside a traditional copy. The digital version presents project information in a vivid and accessible format and provides an enhanced reader experience. See [Draft Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023/24 \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

The production of the 2023-24 NSIDP started in May with officers from the County and District Councils working jointly to update progress on existing projects and consider any additional emerging projects. The NSIDP has been reviewed by officer groups: Norfolk Strategic Planning Group, Norfolk Growth Delivery Group, Norfolk Strategic Growth Group (consisting of Chief Executives from all the District Councils). It has also been endorsed by Norfolk Leaders in May 2024 and it is planned the final version of the NSIDP will be considered by Cabinet in August.

Recommendations / Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. To review and comment on Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023/24 set out in Appendix A, prior to consideration by Cabinet.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The first Norfolk Infrastructure Plan (NIP) was produced a summary of the infrastructure needed across the county and identify infrastructure constraints. The NIP was designed to be a management tool with the aim of ensuring delivery of key interventions over the plan periods of the Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans. Since 2012 a refresh of the NIP has been carried out annually, taking account of developments in understanding, new project information and the review of local authority plans meaning longer term projects and priorities could change accordingly. Since 2017 the NIP has become the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) with a greater focus on delivery.
- 1.2 The Plan also serves as a valuable tool for making future investment decisions, in anticipation of proposed County Deal and Norfolk Economic Strategy.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The 2022 NSIDP can be found at: [Strategic planning and infrastructure - Norfolk County Council](#) and sets out Norfolk's high level strategic infrastructure

priorities for the next 10 years and has an accompanying online map [Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan \(arcgis.com\)](#) presenting all the projects in the NSIDP as one vision for Norfolk. This will be updated once the final 2023/24 NSIDP has been adopted.

2.2 There are many other smaller infrastructure schemes and projects important across the county. Not every project has been included in the NSIDP as the NSIDP only includes the most strategic projects, which make the largest contribution to housing and jobs targets; and on which the county council and other partners are actively working with a recognised route towards accelerated delivery. To maintain the purpose of the NSIDP there is a rigorous selection process and projects must meet the following criterion to be included:

- Delivering significant housing and jobs growth
- Identified in existing plans/programmes
- Have a committed route to delivery
- There is a significant Local Authority control or interest

The list of projects has been compiled in conjunction with stakeholders including internal county council departments, district councils, utility companies and government agencies. The list of prioritised projects included in the NSIDP has been reviewed and agreed by the appropriate officer groups: Norfolk Strategic Planning Group, Norfolk Growth Delivery Group, Norfolk Strategic Growth Group (consisting of Chief Executives from all the District Councils).

2.3 The production of the 2023-24 NSIDP started in May 2023 where officers from the County and District Councils worked together to update the progress of existing projects and consider whether there are any additional emerging projects that meet the criteria. Emerging projects were discussed and their inclusion in the NSIDP were collectively agreed by officers from Norfolk Strategic Planning Group and Growth Delivery Group in September. It was agreed that the following projects to be added:

- Hethel Infrastructure to open up employment land
- North Walsham Western Link Road Lyngate/Folgate Industrial Estate Access
- Hunstanton Coastal Defences
- Hethel Substation (2nd Phase of Hethel Energy Provision)
- North Quay and the Conge Gateway Regeneration Project

The projects are focussed on transport, utilities, regeneration, and sustainability and align with County Council's priority for improved infrastructure, the ambition of the emerging Norfolk Economic Strategy and the District Council Local Plans. Some projects are further forward than others, so they have robust investment

requirements and implementation timelines; others are in the early stages of design and are less well known. In some cases, the funding sources are clear, for example where Section 106 (S106) or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected from developers will provide a significant contribution. Additional details on costs and sources of funding, such as contributions from utility companies like Anglian Water will be added as projects are firmed up.

- 2.4 There is also an “up and coming” section for those projects which are likely to fit the criteria for the NSIDP but where enough information is not known for projects to be fully included in the plan at this time. This assists in the creation of a pipeline of projects for future inclusion. There are currently eleven projects listed, such as Great Yarmouth North Quay Regeneration and Trowse Rail Bridge. The full details of these projects are on last page of the plan.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The NSIDP is focussed on delivery with projects grouped by those in Local Authority control and those which are being delivered by external organisations. For those projects in Local Authority control significantly more information has been provided including a detailed breakdown of each project stage and the work underway to progress delivery.
- 3.2 Norfolk County Council remains on-track with the work on priority schemes at Long Stratton and West Winch to meet Government’s timetable for the Major Road Network funding stream. Funding commitment from Government for the next stage of work on Long Stratton Bypass and West Winch Housing Access Road has been secured. The work to develop a preferred option at A47/A17 Pullover Junction has been successfully completed; this will now be considered by the County Council’s Members. Norfolk County Council, along with its partners, will continue to align development of projects’ key milestones to match opportunities for their progression.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 None.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 None.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications of the NSIDP. Individual projects will have their own budgets. Staff support is managed through existing resources.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff: The NSIDP is managed with existing resources.

7.2 Property: None.

7.3 IT: The NSIDP is managed with existing resources.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications: None.

8.2 Human Rights Implications: None.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included): Each individual project will be subject to EqIA, as appropriate.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): Each individual project will be subject to DPIA, as appropriate

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): None.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): The NSIDP helps deliver the infrastructure required for sustainable development and each project will be subject to its own SEA as appropriate.

8.7 Any Other Implications: None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 None.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. To review and comment on Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023/24 set out in Appendix A, prior to consideration by Cabinet

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 The draft PDF version of the 2023/24 NSIDP is attached as an appendix to this paper, and the draft digital version can be found at: [Draft Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023/24 \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)
- 11.2 The 2022 NSIDP can be found at: [Strategic planning and infrastructure - Norfolk County Council](#)

Officer Contact

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

Officer name: Ninan Xu
Telephone no.: 01603 223626
Email: ninan.xu@norfolk.gov.uk



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

Draft Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2023-24

2023-24

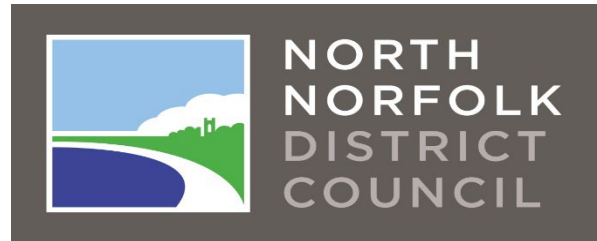


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Introduction

Norfolk County Council (NCC) and its partners are determined to unlock Norfolk's full potential. To make this happen we are working together to ensure existing and planned infrastructure links people to jobs, homes to local amenities and business to customers. Work is already underway to achieve our social, economic, and environmental aspirations for today whilst making Norfolk future fit for the challenges of tomorrow.

The Norfolk strategic infrastructure delivery plan (NSIDP) pulls together information on the key infrastructure needed to deliver economic growth in Norfolk. It is a working document that will be reviewed on an annual basis as information becomes available and projects progress through to delivery. The Plan will help NCC and partners to co-ordinate implementation, prioritise activity and respond to any funding opportunities. An online map showing all of the projects and key information can be found on the [Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Plan Map](#).

The Town and County Planning Association published (June 2018) a report: Building for the Future: The Role of County Councils in Meeting Housing Need. This report identified Norfolk County Council as a case study of best practice particularly highlighting the successes of the Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework in future planning and collaboration.

The NSIDP sets out the Norfolk-wide **high-level strategic infrastructure priorities** for the next 10 years. This list has been compiled in collaboration with stakeholders including internal county council departments, district councils, utility companies and government agencies. These projects align with the County Council's priority for improved infrastructure, the ambitions of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy (NSES), Local Industrial Strategy and the Restart Plan, District Council Local Plans, the County Council's vision and strategy, Children's Services Local Growth and Investment Plan, the emerging Norfolk Economic Strategy and the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. It also serves as a valuable tool for making future investment decisions, for the agreed [Devolution Deal](#) and [Norfolk Investment Framework](#), along with other external funding opportunities.

There are many other important infrastructure schemes and projects across the county. Not every project can be included in the NSIDP. For example, sitting alongside the NSIDP, there are numerous more detailed work streams generating projects in areas such as sustainability, renewable energy, and green economy. The details of some of these projects can be found in proposed works supporting the County Council's Environmental Policy and Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework amongst others. All these works form part of a comprehensive range of infrastructure schemes that will support an inclusive and sustainable economy.

The NSIDP includes the **most strategic projects** that the county council, alongside

partners, are actively working to progress and which have a recognised route towards delivery. Infrastructure projects in this delivery plan are appropriately in sync with the Governments Build Back Better plan for growth, which takes a transformational approach to tackling long term problems to deliver growth which will generate jobs across the UK. All of the projects will deliver the physical infrastructure that is essential to deliver the ambition of achieving people's priorities, levelling up the UK and supporting the transition to net zero.

The projects included in the NSIDP are now categorised into those where Local Authorities lead the project and those where an external organisation is leading and delivering the project. This still allows us to identify all the strategic infrastructure projects in Norfolk but also direct resources, identify funding sources and target lobbying in the most effective way as different projects will have different routes through to delivery.

Some projects are further forward than others, so they have robust investment figures and implementation timelines; others are in the early stages of design and have less information. In some cases, the funding sources are clear, e.g. where Section 106 (S106) funds or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collected from developers will provide a significant contribution. Additional details on costs and sources of funding, such as contributions from utility companies like Anglian Water will be added as projects are firmed up.

As each iteration of the NSIDP reflects the progress of these projects, this plan is also an effective tool for all stakeholder authorities to share best practices through joint officer network groups on ways to accelerate the development of these priority schemes.

Executive Summary

The production of the 2023 NSIDP started in May 2023 when officers from the County and District Councils worked together to update the progress of existing projects and considered whether there were any additional emerging projects that meet the criteria. Emerging projects were discussed and their inclusion in the NSIDP was collectively agreed by officers from Norfolk Strategic Planning Group and Growth Delivery Group in September. It was agreed that the following projects to be added:

- Hethel Infrastructure to open up employment land
- North Walsham Western Link Road Lyngate/Folgate Industrial Estate Access
- Hunstanton Coastal Defences
- Hethel Substation (2nd Phase of Hethel Energy Provision)
- North Quay and the Conge Gateway Regeneration Project

There is also an “up and coming” section for those projects which are likely to fit the criteria for the NSIDP but where not enough information is known for projects to be fully included in the plan at this time. This assists in the creation of a pipeline of projects for future inclusion. These include projects such as Future Breckland Regeneration Programme.

For projects led by external organisations, one new project has been added by Anglian Water:

- Nutrient Mitigation Schemes

There are some notable achievements obtained from last year. The following projects have been added to the funded list:

- Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and University Campus
- Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision (Feasibility study phase)
- Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017 onwards (Epoch 2)

The following projects, all lead by external organisations (UKPN), have been requested to be taken off from the plan:

- Sprowston Primary and Peachman Way Primary Substations
- Attleborough Primary Substation
- Cringleford Primary Substation

Norfolk County Council and its partners are using NSIDP to help accelerate infrastructure delivery to support growth. Norfolk County Council remain on-track with the work on priority schemes at Long Stratton and West Winch to meet Government's timetable for the Major Road Network funding stream. Funding commitment from Government for the next stage of work on Long Stratton Bypass and West Winch Housing Access Road has been secured. The work to develop a preferred option at A47/A17 Pullover Junction has been successfully completed; this will now be considered by the County Council's Members. Norfolk County Council, along with its partners, will continue to align development of projects' key milestones to match opportunities for their progression.

The NSIDP supports Government's ambitions of decarbonisation and clean growth, as set out in the National Infrastructure Strategy and Government's Net Zero Strategy. The presence of a number of sustainability projects and utility projects such as Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision are testament to this commitment. Much of the emphasis of the NSIDP is around the transport infrastructure needed to support the planned growth across the county. The emerging strategies and plans, including the Local Transport Plan, now seek to embed an approach towards net zero. Transport is the biggest emissions impact sector in the county, and the road improvements envisaged will take account of a de minimis approach to environmental impact. They will therefore, seek to mitigate any impact and leave an improved legacy going forward, fully in keeping with ambitions to ensure that biodiversity 'net gain' will be at the heart of any construction project.

Strategic Context

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are large scale developments which are determined by Government under the Planning Act 2008; these fall under the categories of Transport, Energy, Water, Waste and Waste Water.

Norfolk County Council (NCC) is a statutory consultee as host authority in respect of several NSIPs and therefore has an important role to play in the various planning stages which such projects go through.

The following projects are currently in planning or have been consented to in Norfolk. Offshore projects:

Hornsea Three (consented and under construction)

Hornsea Three is an offshore wind farm being delivered by Orsted that could power over two million UK homes. Up to 231 offshore wind turbines will be located approximately 121km off the Norfolk coast, and will generate 2.4 GW of electricity. The power will make landfall at Weybourne and make grid connection at Norwich Main.

Norfolk Vanguard (consented and under construction)

The Norfolk Vanguard wind farm will be delivered by Vattenfall, and will be located approximately 47km from the Norfolk coast. It is expected to provide enough electricity to power 1.95 million UK homes per year. Carbon saving estimates are at 3 million tonnes saved. Landfall will be in Happisburgh, and will make the grid connection at Necton.

Norfolk Boreas(consented)

A sister project to the Norfolk Vanguard, it will also be delivered by Vattenfall. It will provide enough electricity to power around 2 million UK homes. Construction is due to begin in 2023. As with the Vanguard, landfall will be in Happisburgh, and the national grid connection will be made at Necton.

Extension to Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon wind farms (awaiting decision)

There will be a significant expansion of the existing Dudgeon and Sheringham wind farms. The project will result in an additional 719 MW total, without the need for a booster station. Landfall for both will take place either in Weybourne or Bacton, and both will connect to the Norwich Main substation.

Onshore projects

Blofield to North Burlingham dualling scheme (consented)

An upgrade to the A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham, a dual carriageway of 2.6km to ease congestion.

A47/A11 Thickthorn junction improvement (consented)

Improving the junction with the addition of two new link roads to help ease congestion.

A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling scheme (consented)

Upgrading the A47 between North Tuddenham to Easton, completing the dual carriageway between Norwich and Dereham.

Third River Crossing – Great Yarmouth (consented)

This project is currently under construction and expected to be completed in Spring 2024.

The Medworth project – Waste to energy (awaiting decision)

A new power plant to generate electricity and steam at Algores Way, Wisbech. The proposed waste to energy plant will divert over half a million tonnes of non-recyclable waste from landfill. It is expected to generate over 50 MW of energy, enough to power 74,000 homes. The grid connection will be established at the Walpole substation.

Norwich to Tilbury (Formerly East Anglia Green)

National Grid have undertaken two non-statutory public consultations on their preferred route corridor for the East Anglia Green (EAG) Project. The Project (EAG) proposes to reinforce the high voltage (400 kv) electricity transmission network (that is a proposed new power line 400kv) from Norwich Main substation (Norfolk) to Bramford substation (Suffolk); onto Tilbury substation (Essex). It also involves a new connection substation in Essex relating to a new offshore wind project needing connection to the grid.

Grimsby to Walpole

This project was launched in June 2023, and is at an early stage in the planning process. Most of the proposed development lies outside Norfolk, however, it is understood that there will be significant upgrades needed to the existing Walpole Substation. The timetable for this project is uncertain, but it is likely that there will be a non-statutory consultation in early 2024.

East Green Links 3 and 4

These two offshore HVDC cable routes will bring power in from Scotland and will involve a single DCO application where they make landfall in Lincs; and grid connection at Walpole. The timetable for this project is uncertain, but it is likely that there will be a non-statutory consultation in early 2024.

Fens Reservoir Project

While the proposed Reservoir is sited in Cambridgeshire (North of Chatteris), there is likely to be supporting water transfer infrastructure in Norfolk including new pipelines; and a new service reservoir. A second round Non-Statutory consultation expected in Spring 2024.

[Find out more about NSIPs on Norfolk County Council's website.](#)

Explore Norfolk's NSIPs on the interactive map below.

The Devolution Deal

Devolution offers a significant opportunity to unlock long-term funding and gain greater freedom to decide how best to support businesses to grow, meet local needs and create new opportunities for the people who live and work in Norfolk.

On 12 December 2023, Full Council agreed to proceed with a timescale for devolution that aligned the Directly Elected Leader election with wider Norfolk County Council elections to support electorate decision making and to manage costs. This is now planned for May 2025 with the associated date of 23 July 2024, to make the necessary constitutional changes.

The Investment Fund, available through a Level 3 deal, will bring an additional £600m over 30 years.

It will allow Norfolk to invest in areas such as better transport, skills, job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the specific needs of local people, and will ensure that the County is not disadvantaged as other areas acquire their own devolution deals. The Deal for Norfolk includes:

- Control of a new investment fund of £20m per year for 30 years (40% capital and 60% revenue), to drive growth and take forward priorities over the long term. The revenue secured gives the investment fund a strong multiplier effect, allowing the opportunity to leverage additional private funding.
- Almost £7m capital funding for the building of new homes on brownfield land in 2024/25 helping to ease the viability issues that brownfield projects face, alongside supporting wider interventions aimed at economic development. For future spending reviews, Norfolk would be treated the same as other devolved areas.
- £5.9m of capital funding, received in this Spending Review period, which has supported the further development of the Operations & Maintenance Campus in Great Yarmouth, the Nar Ouse Business Park in King's Lynn, and the East Norwich Regeneration Project.
- An integrated transport settlement c.£40m starting in 2024/25, which will provide greater control in how these budgets are directed locally to better meet our needs and priorities, and £500,000 in revenue funding over two years to accelerate the review of Transport plans and implement quantifiable carbon reductions. Government will work with Norfolk to agree an integrated multi-year transport settlement at the next Spending Review, at which point opportunities for expanding the integrated transport settlement offer will also be explored.
- A commitment to explore a local partnership with Great British Railways so that the County Council can help to shape and improve local rail services. The Council will plan and deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from 2025/26 engaging district, borough and city authorities on delivery, and building on projects and initiatives funded in the first two years of the programme

Norfolk Economic Strategy

The Norfolk Economic Strategy will act as a policy for the council, but also serve as a policy for a wide range of partners including districts, education institutes and the private sector. Government will expect bids for funding to reference the strategy.

The purpose is to provide an up-to-date economic growth strategy, for Norfolk, for the next 5 years, building on the Norfolk & Suffolk Economic strategy

The strategy will be an overarching document for Norfolk, to encompass thematic, place based and sector strategies to help grow our local economy and support the people who live and work here.

It is timely for a refresh and update of the evidence base. Government require Norfolk to have an economic strategy as part of the LEP Integration, and there are opportunities associated with the devolution and long-term funding. Devolution is all about the places in Norfolk and the new strategy is committed to recognising place-based needs and the interconnection between places.

The Economic strategy development is led by Growth & Investment, supported by Strategy & Policy and Intelligence & Analytics (NODA) and independent experts MetroDynamics.

Aims and objectives of the economic strategy include:

- Articulating an economic vision for Norfolk
- Accelerating business growth and levels of productivity
- Support business cluster growth in our key sectors and attract investment into Norfolk
- Target skills provision to upskill and prepare for future workforce needs
- Target investment where infrastructure is needed, to unlock growth
- Support place based priorities and meet local needs
- Support UK and Norfolk targets for net zero including industrial decarbonisation

The Norfolk Economic Strategy will be aligned to the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan, specifically in highlighting Norfolk's infrastructure priorities for growth and alignment with local plans.

Decarbonisation and Norfolk Climate Action Plan

Decarbonisation and clean growth are at the heart of the Government's strategy in growing the economy and delivering infrastructure whilst also cutting greenhouse gas emissions, most notably Carbon Dioxide. The [National Infrastructure Strategy](#) sets out plans to transform infrastructure and achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and [the Government's Net Zero Strategy](#) provides a long term plan to end the UK's domestic contribution to man-made climate change. The NSIDP supports these ambitions.

Norfolk County Council commissioned an ["Investment Framework"](#) for the County in response to a number of factors including the Government's Levelling Up White Paper; the desire to create a step change in the economic profile of the County; and the move away from EU funding to a new national financial framework. The framework contains a set of high level investment priorities, in which protecting Norfolk's economic and natural assets from climate change is identified as a key priority.

Building on the new commitments to net zero in the Climate Change Act, each of the districts are taking their own approach to supporting the government's efforts.

Collectively, most are adopting more challenging targets than government, both in addressing their own operations, and within their wider areas. NCC too has adopted stringent carbon targets both on its own estate and for the county as a whole by 2030. Clearly it cannot do this on its own, but partnership working with all its stakeholders will be crucial to moving towards it. Infrastructure in all its forms will need to be harnessed to achieving these goals.

Officers were asked to discuss with partners the possibility of creating a broader, county-wide Climate Action Plan for Norfolk. This would be a public facing document, outlining a shared ambition from Norfolk's eight local authorities to contribute efforts to tackling climate change and facilitate progress on a collective goal to achieve net zero county wide.

The Climate Action Plan would set out a series of strategic priorities; measurable emission reduction targets; and subsequent actions across several key thematic areas. These thematic areas include:

- organisational decarbonisation;
- Buildings and planning;
- Transport;
- Industry, Energy and the green economy;
- land-use and the natural environment;
- Waste, resources, and the circular economy;
- Climate resilience
- Community engagement.

Across the thematic areas identified there would be areas where we can reduce duplication of effort by developing and implementing plans that can be adopted by multiple authorities; areas where joint plans would be more appropriate; and areas where each local authority will need its own unique approach, with little overlap between the authorities concerned.

Collaborative engagement on net zero and sustainability efforts across Norfolk's local authorities can bring significant value to the county. On the downside, collectively engaging on sustainability can drive the reduction in costs and mitigate long-term risks such as those posed by extreme weather events. On the upside, net zero engagement can facilitate economic growth, creating new lines of business in the renewables sector and developing skills in green industries. In the long-term this will help develop Norfolk's reputation as a "green county" with a green economy, supporting investment, the Norfolk higher education sector, and tourism. Together, Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils are promoted as the UK's Clean Growth Region and are collaborating to identify innovative ways to develop clean growth through the New Anglia LEPs Clean Growth Taskforce. Its work is focused on five areas; leadership and collaboration, building the workforce of the future, providing transition support for businesses, decarbonising transport, and evidence and impact. The Taskforce is working with the [Skills Advisory Panel](#) to shape the Decarbonisation Academy proposal and wider clean growth skills agenda, as well as developing an Alternative Fuel Strategy.

Each local authority will be working towards its individual organisational decarbonisation. Although the public sector accounts for only 2% of Norfolk's overall

territorial emissions, it is important that each council seeks to baseline and report on carbon reduction efforts across its estates to show Norfolk's residents that their local government is committed to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

The organisational emissions will vary slightly across each authority but will, at a minimum, include emissions arising from a council's estates, vehicle fleet, and business travel. Each individual authority will have its own net zero organisational target; for Norfolk County Council this is to reach net zero by 2030. Whilst the responsibility for this thematic area will lie with each individual authority, the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership can be utilised as a vehicle to promote and share best practice to facilitate councils' net zero delivery.

Authorities may also wish to tackle their supply chain carbon emissions which are likely to significantly outweigh the emissions that come from their own buildings and vehicles.

Much of the emphasis of the NSIDP is around the transport infrastructure needed to support the planned growth across the county. The emerging strategies and plans, including the Local Transport Plan, now seek to embed an approach towards net zero. Transport is the biggest emissions impact sector in the county, and the road improvements envisaged will take account of a de minimis approach to environmental impact. They will therefore, seek to mitigate any impact and, leave an improved legacy going forward, fully in keeping with ambitions to ensure that biodiversity 'net gain' will be at the heart of any construction project.

Reducing the impact of transport, as the government states in its 'Decarbonising Transport Plan', is predicated on the transition to electric vehicles (EVs). 91% of transport emissions is from road transport and Norfolk has above the national average in transport emissions. Road transport is key to the movement of people and goods. Therefore, efforts will be targeted to support existing and future transport infrastructure needs so that it can embrace the necessary electric vehicle infrastructure to facilitate the transition to a zero-emissions transport fleet. In parallel with this we will bolster the work towards expanding the quality greenways within Norfolk. These are crucial to support the active travel endeavours currently planned across the county. Currently a pilot project is underway with Norwich City Council, UK Power Networks and the County Council to investigate the installation of on- street electric vehicle charging points. The aim of this work, in conjunction with the District Councils, and the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership, is to develop more wide-ranging EV charge point projects in locations which may have limited market appeal in the first instance.

Key to supporting residential and commercial growth will be to ensure that developments meet the net zero challenge. Therefore, we will seek to explore opportunities that provide energy solutions with the development and energy communities both within and without the regulatory framework that we all operate in.

In addition, there are many other transport measures that aimed at promoting sustainable travelling methods in the County that will positively contribute to decarbonisation and clean growth agenda.

Energy

The County Council has collaborated with the Energy Systems Catapult (ESC) and Eastern New Energy (ENE) to produce a Norfolk Local Energy Asset Representation (LEAR). The LEAR is the data foundation for developing the most appropriate pathway to net zero and is a useful visualisation and mapping tool. The outputs from the LEAR provide a robust data evidence base that can guide the County Council and partners towards which deciding clean energy opportunities are the most effective for our area and aid decision making, prioritise resources, and support project and investment decisions.

The LEAR provides a representation of the local energy system in Norfolk covering an area of well over 5,000 km² and a population of around 915,000 people. In order for the model to represent an area as large as Norfolk, the region had to be split into three sub-regional areas: 'Central and West Norfolk', 'Norwich & South Norfolk' and 'Norfolk Coastal'.

The Norfolk LEAR is the first step towards developing a net zero pathway and can be taken forward in a number of ways. Now completed there is an opportunity to take the LEAR data foundation and develop a Norfolk Energy Plan. The Norfolk Energy Plan provides a clear actionable pathway of what the transition to achieve net zero carbon emissions is likely to require in terms of infrastructure and investment in a particular locality over time. The delivery of a sustainable energy plan is a priority for the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership with Local Authorities setting ambitious environmental and climate targets.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

LCWIPs create a cycling and walking network which enables and encourages increased uptake of active travel. They identify and prioritise cycling and walking network improvements which can be implemented in the short, medium and long term. Improvements aim to make the network coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive; they look to support the aims of Government's Gear Change vision which is to make half of all journeys in towns and cities walked or cycled by 2030.

Norfolk County Council has completed and adopted three LCWIPs to date covering the urban areas of Greater Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth. These were developed alongside district partners and the published documents have been shared with the Department for Transport and Active Travel England. Specifically, the completed LCWIPs have been used by Active Travel England to assess and score Norfolk County Council's capability which is already being used when making decisions on active travel funding allocations. The LCWIPs are already proving to be very important and a useful resources when applying for Government funding and are supporting district schemes such as the Active and Clean Connectivity Programme below. Norfolk County Council is working actively with Districts to seek funding streams to deliver the implementation plan of the LCWIP.

Norfolk is now developing a county-wide LCWIP which builds upon and extends the work done in Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth to create a walking and cycling network across the whole county. The Countywide LCWIP is due to be complete in 2024 and will be an important resource to support Norfolk County Council and district partners in securing funding for and delivering active travel infrastructure.

Active and Clean Connectivity Programme, King's Lynn

The Active and Clean Connectivity Programme is a series of infrastructure improvements supported by active travel plans and a behaviour change campaign to encourage people to use healthier, more active, or more environmentally friendly forms of transport in line with current Government policy. The project focusses on King's Lynn and is formed of three key elements which help deliver on the Borough Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency and the King's Lynn LCWIP, whilst responding to local transport and health demands.

The three key elements of the programme are:

- A range of Active Travel improvements in and around the town drawn from the LCWIP including an improved pedestrian and cycle crossing of Tennyson Road adjacent to the railway level crossing
- Two Active Travel Hubs – one out of town on the Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone, and one in the town centre next to the Baker Lane car park. The hub at the Enterprise Zone will feature 50 car parking spaces, 6 electric car charging points, secure cycle parking, e-cycle/scooter charging points and lockers. It will provide an ideal location to promote sustainable travel on bus, bike and foot to and from the town centre. The town centre hub will also provide secure storage, lockers and e-cycle charging points
- Development of active travel plans to assist local businesses in encouraging their employees to choose more active or environmentally friendly ways to travel to and from workplaces

The work is funded from the King's Lynn Town Deal and the schemes and measures are programmed to be delivered by the end of 2024/25.

An element of this project originally was to make changes to the town's one way system to make it safer for cyclists and improve access for public transport. This element is now included in the STARS project which has been allocated £24.1m of funding of the Government's Levelling Up Fund and for which an outline business case is in preparation working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

There is potential for similar active travel hubs, LCWIP and active travel plan schemes to be rolled out in other parts of the county to support more sustainable travel. The Countywide LCWIP and delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) will support the identification and delivery of measures to support this and integrate sustainable transport modes.

Cycle and E-scooter hire schemes

The above plans and interventions support and are supported by cycle and e-scooter hire schemes. These schemes make active travel more accessible, promote a modal shift away from the private car and can be a key element of multi-modal journeys. They support movement across Norfolk's transport network by providing access to key attractors and transport interchanges such as train and bus stations.

Norfolk County Council has partnered with Beryl Bikes and launched a cycle hire

scheme in Norwich in 2020. The scheme has been highly successful and was extended to Wymondham in 2022. Ginger e-scooter hire scheme has been launched in Great Yarmouth and has also been successful.

These schemes can be built upon and extended further around the county; plans such as the Norfolk LCWIP pave the way to delivering this.

Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

There is also considerable work being progressed in improving and promoting public transport in the county. In March 2021 the government announced a new National Bus Strategy called Bus Back Better. As part of this, and to receive any funding, Local Transport Authorities had to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan, which we published in Oct 2021.

In April 2022 Norfolk was one of just 31 LTAs to receive indicative funding for their plan. In addition, Norfolk received one of the highest indicative allocations of £49.55m over 3 years. To receive confirmation of this funding, Norfolk County Council had to outline the exact deliverables from the Bus Service Improvement Plan to the DfT for this 3-year period

The BSIP sets out proposals to improve the 4 key priorities to improve bus services, which are bus priority, reduced and simpler fares, increased service frequencies, new or expanded routes and improved waiting areas and interchanges.

We have already delivered several aspects of the BSIP:

- There is now a county-wide multi-operator day ticket available, to use on all buses with all operators in Norfolk;
- We have agreed a customer charter with all bus operators;
- We have launched several marketing campaigns to encourage people to use the bus and get passenger numbers back up to pre-covid levels and more, including one specifically targeted to concessionary passholders;
- We have signed up to a single travel brand for the county for all sustainable travel options – buses, walking, cycling – called Travel Norfolk and have developed and launched a Travel Norfolk website and journey planner;
- A new Travel Hub at North Walsham has been opened
- We have introduced 31 new or enhanced bus services, for example evening and Sunday services, increased frequencies on key routes
- 4 'gold' bus stops have been introduced – these have new shelters, real-time information and improved seating – and many more are in the design phase
- Fares have been reduced in the King's Lynn and Thetford town areas, and there is now 25% off all monthly, weekly and group fares

84 bus stops have been updated to be accessible to those with disabilities.

In addition many more things are planned for the remaining 15 months of the funding period – bus priority measures will be introduced across the county, more gold stops will be implemented, 4 new Travel Hubs will be built, and there will be further service enhancements.

Water Resources

Norfolk and the East Anglian region are facing increasing pressures regarding water supply. Demand projections are rising from 2,135 megalitres (million litres) per day (Ml/d) to 2,441 Ml/d by 2050. Whereas water availability is projected to decrease from 2,300 Ml/d to 1,800 Ml/d, this reduction in availability due to climate change and the need to increase drought resilience, and environmental constraints reducing water abstraction availability.

To help to tackle the water resources issues in Norfolk. Are the Water Resources Regional Plan (a non-statutory plan) and the Anglian Water Water Resources Management Plan 24 (a statutory plan), these two plans set out the required infrastructure in the East to meet the increasing demands to 2050.

The Norfolk Water Strategy Programme has launched the business case for a Water Fund in Norfolk, for a £30 million portfolio of nature-based solutions that offer a holistic approach to managing Norfolk's water resources. The plan prioritises action along the Wensum, Yare, Bure and Ant rivers.

Health

The infrastructure across Norfolk and Waveney will play a key part in the transformation and integration of our health and care services, and through collaborative working the ICB will capitalise on this opportunity to redesign and create an estate suited to the needs of our Integrated Care System (ICS).

The ICS Estate Strategy establishes the route to resolving existing challenges, respond to national and local priorities, and understand utilise opportunities to improve patient care.

The key strategic objectives as set in the estate strategy are:

- **Improving access** - ensuring that the right services are delivered in the right place, matching demand and capacity, delivering multi-disciplinary working in 'Places' and 'PCNs'.
- **Improving quality and condition** - providing safe, flexible, modern, and fit-for-purpose estate and supporting services for our patients, visitors, and staff
- **Improving sustainability** - implementing interventions to decarbonise our estate and reduce carbon emissions arising from our buildings, infrastructure, and services.
- **Improving efficiency** - providing a right sized estate and supporting services that deliver value for money and long-term financial sustainability.

One of the biggest challenges the ICB face is the growing demand being placed upon its infrastructure. The population across Norfolk and Waveney is growing (it is projected to grow by over 10% in the next 20 years), with migration into Norfolk and Waveney exceeding those moving out of the area, in addition, births are expected to exceed deaths.

Investment in health and care infrastructure is essential to cope with the proposed scale of growth identified in local plans.

However, NHS capital continues to be constrained and funding for new and/or

extending existing infrastructure is difficult to secure, so it is important that the ICB consider all available funding mechanisms. As well as NHS capital the ICB will continue to request and utilise developer contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (S106) agreements, collaborate through the One Public Estate partnership and work with Third Party Developers.

Acute services and infrastructure

Our acute hospitals, along with our wider health and care services and infrastructure, are under unsustainable pressure due to rising demand related to the demographic shift, forecast activity growth and resultant gaps in capacity to meet the demand for acute services. There are two new hospital programmes to be delivered in Norfolk by 2030, these include the replacement of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn and the James Paget Hospital in Great Yarmouth.

Ambulance services and infrastructure

The East of England Ambulance Trust (EEAST) is the urgent and emergency responder, providing paramedic support and conveyances to emergency departments on each day of the year through six counties which make up the East of England, including Norfolk and Waveney.

The Trust is embarking on a major modernisation programme that will impact their estate, fleet, logistics and working environment. This will respond to the asset challenges we face and develop a plan aligned to strategic drivers e.g. Net Zero Carbon, Carter efficiencies, workforce sustainability.

Primary and community services and infrastructure

Improving integration through One Public Estate (OPE)

One Public Estate is an established national programme delivered in partnership by the Office of Government Property (OGP) and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver ambitious, property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners.

We will continue to work with One Public Estate and local planning authorities and ensure the impacts on health and care services are measured and managed as our population and the requirement for our services continue to grow and to ensure investment is prioritised to support areas of growth where there are inadequate existing facilities.. Financial contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Agreements (S106) will continue to be sought and aligned to our Capital Investment Pipeline to ensure infrastructure and capacity grows in line with demand.

The Planning in Health Protocol

Norfolk County Council worked with NHS organisations and Norfolk Local Planning Authorities to ensure that health considerations are adequately accounted for in plan making and in planning applications and their subsequent developments. As such an engagement tool titled "The Planning in Health Protocol" has been produced to ensure collaborative working. In this context, the term "health considerations" includes planning for health service provision (e.g. the provision of enough healthcare facilities to meet population needs) as well as ensuring that health promotion is considered in the design and provision of developments (e.g. the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, or maintenance of good air quality).

The Protocol is used by Norfolk and East Suffolk Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System (ICS) Strategic Estates Group

(who will liaise with relevant health and social care partners to ensure where possible, health infrastructure is suitable for its needs and the population that it serves), and the Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils' Public Health teams. Parts of the Protocol, the 'Health Planning Checklist', can also support the LPAs in any discussions they have with developers.

The protocol work is overseen by the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum and stems from the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework agreement 18. The agreement endorses the protocol and states that *“Norfolk authorities agree to consider matters relating to healthy environments and encouraging physical activity, and fully integrate these into a potential Norfolk-wide design guide and local design codes (which will inform local plans and neighbourhood plans), drawing on key guidance such as Building for a Healthier Life and Active Design. Thus, the primary focus is on local plans requiring new development to be designed to promote healthy and active lifestyles. The protocol also covers health care infrastructure as it “Seeks for health professionals and town planners to work together to secure new healthcare facilities required as a result of development. To assist with such negotiations modelling data has been used to give an indication of future healthcare requirements for Norfolk”.*

In addition, the Integrated Care System (ICS) Estates Strategy (July 2022) has been produced by the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (Norwich, North Norfolk and South Norfolk) and the NHS Foundation Trusts (Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Norfolk Community Health and Care and the Norfolk and Suffolk Trusts). The strategy identifies the need for new and expanded health care facilities to serve growth, along with a range of potential funding sources to provide for growth requirements, including loans, disposals and partnerships.

Key Growth Locations

Figures 1 and 2 indicate that Norfolk's key growth locations are clustered at points along the main transport arteries. Therefore, these growth corridors and the locations identified in the NSES and District Local Plans provide the spatial context for this plan.

The Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework 2020 suggests Norfolk authorities will need to collectively plan for at least approx. 4,100 per annum homes to 2036.

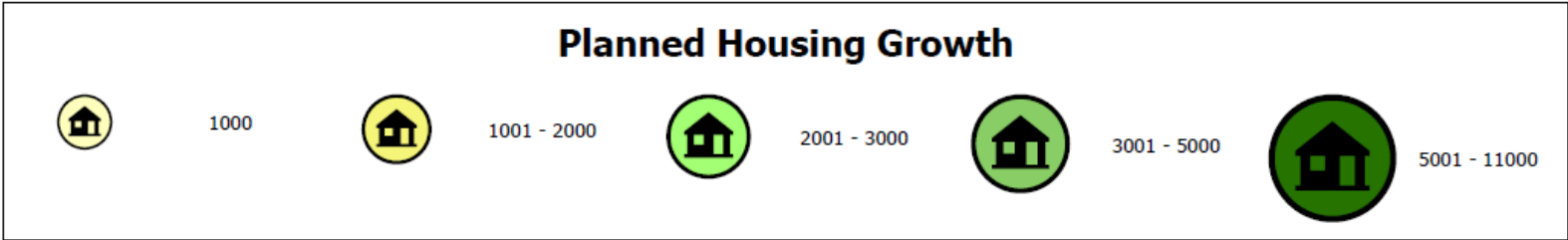
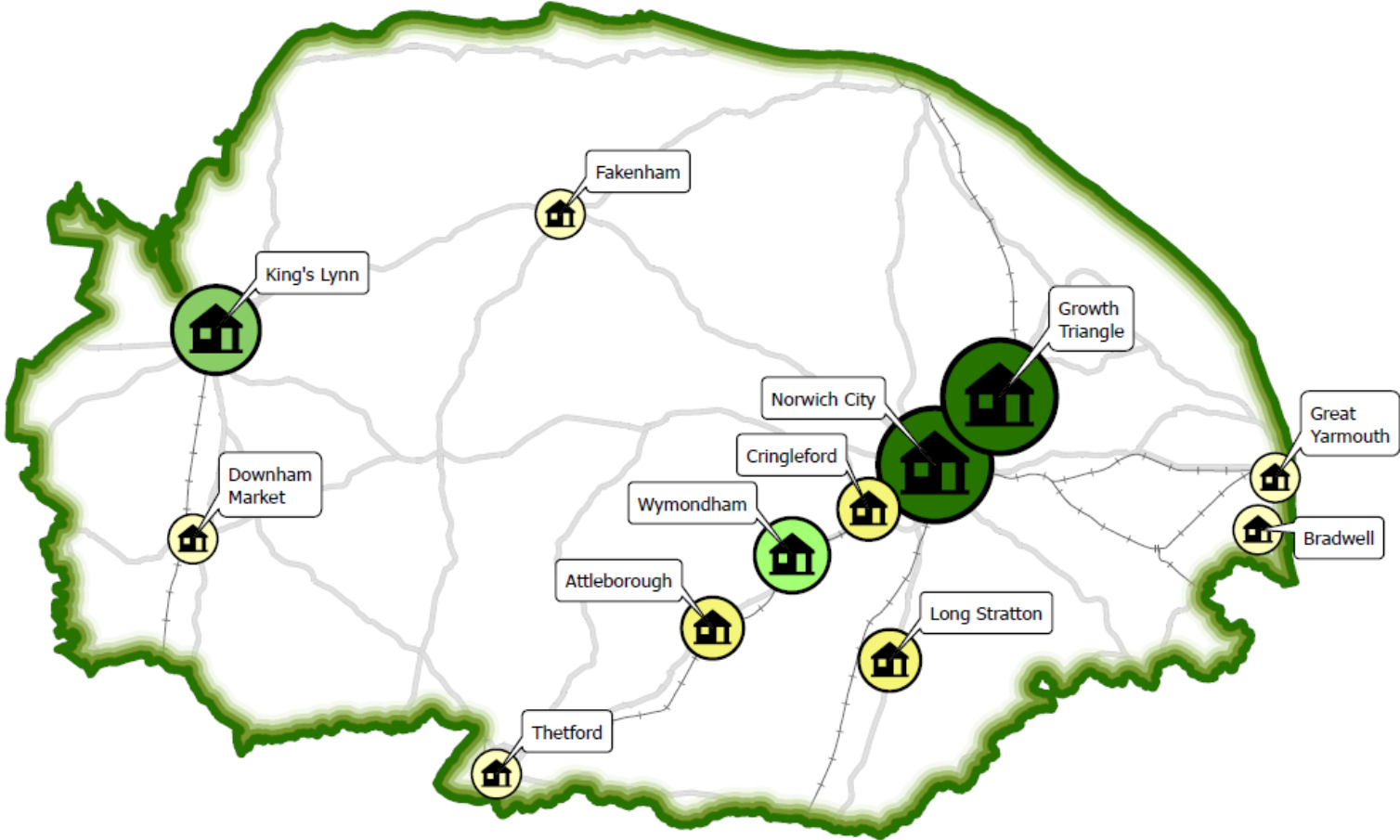
Figure 1 outlines the key strategic housing sites that will deliver the majority of this growth, with growth focussed around key urban areas that have existing infrastructure and services that have the capacity to support high levels of growth. It also identifies all the places in our area that are expected to grow by at least 1,000 homes over the relevant local plan period. In addition to the major urban areas of Norwich, King's Lynn, and Great Yarmouth there are groupings of towns along the A11 as well as key individual market towns that can make a significant contribution to growth. Downham Market, Fakenham, Long Stratton, Bradwell and Great Yarmouth have growth sites between 1001 to 1500 homes. Thetford, Attleborough, Wymondham and Thetford have growth sites between 1501 to 5000 homes.

Figure 2 identifies the major employment sites and opportunities in Norfolk crossing a range of sectors and locations. As with housing growth it shows the majority of employment sites are aligned with the urban centres and access to the trunk road network. The job growth locations have a diverse mix of high impact sector activity, but the smaller locations have mainly advanced manufacturing and agri-tech, with more life sciences in the southwest which is closer to Cambridge.

There are concentrations of employment locations serving high impact sectors in:

- **Greater Norwich** – Life sciences, digital cluster, finance, and insurance
- **Great Yarmouth** – Offshore energy
- **Attleborough, Thetford and A11 Corridor**
- **King's Lynn and Downham Market** – Advanced engineering
- **Fakenham** – Agri-tech and food processing

Figure 1 Key Housing Growth Sites



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Figure 2 Key Employment Sites

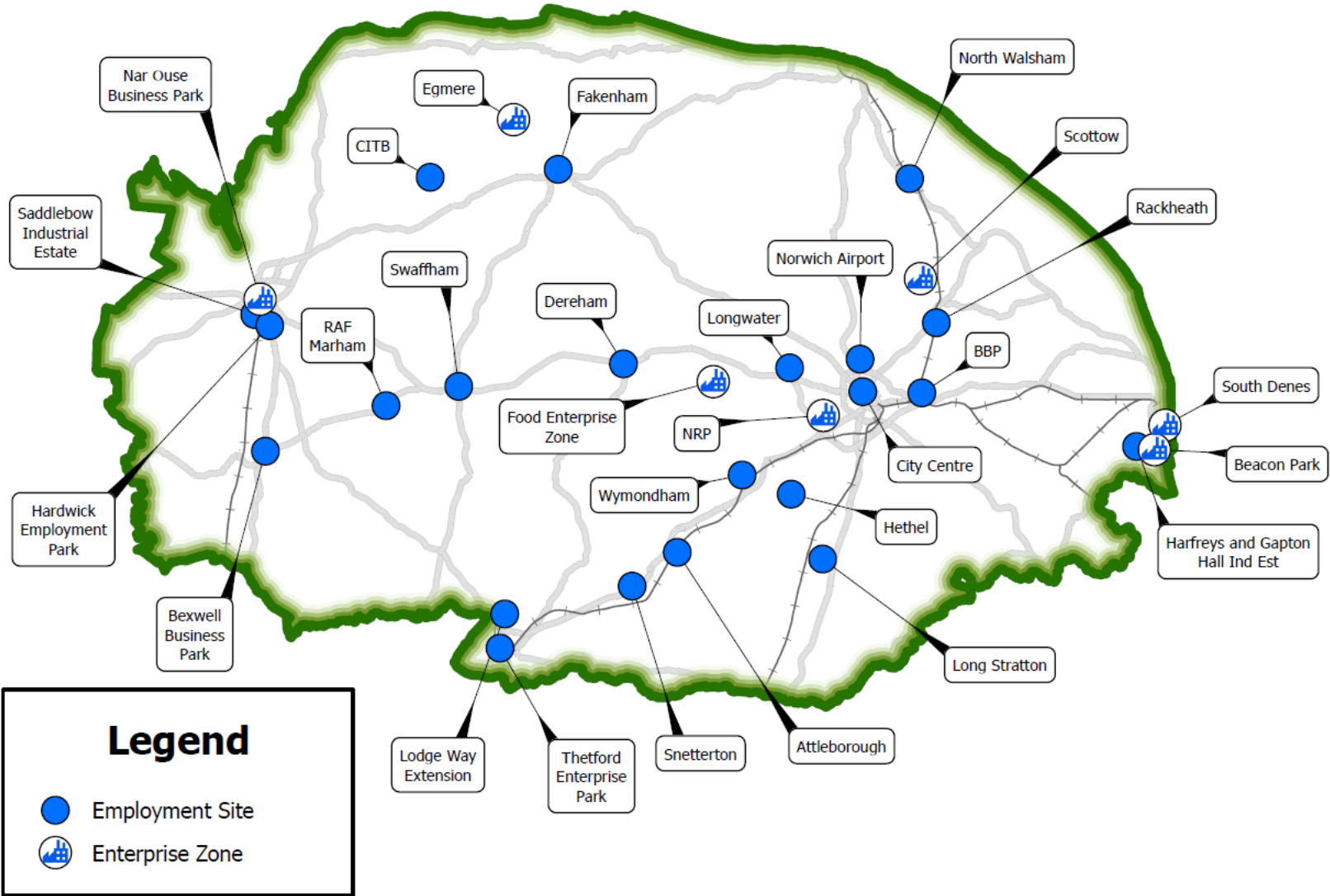
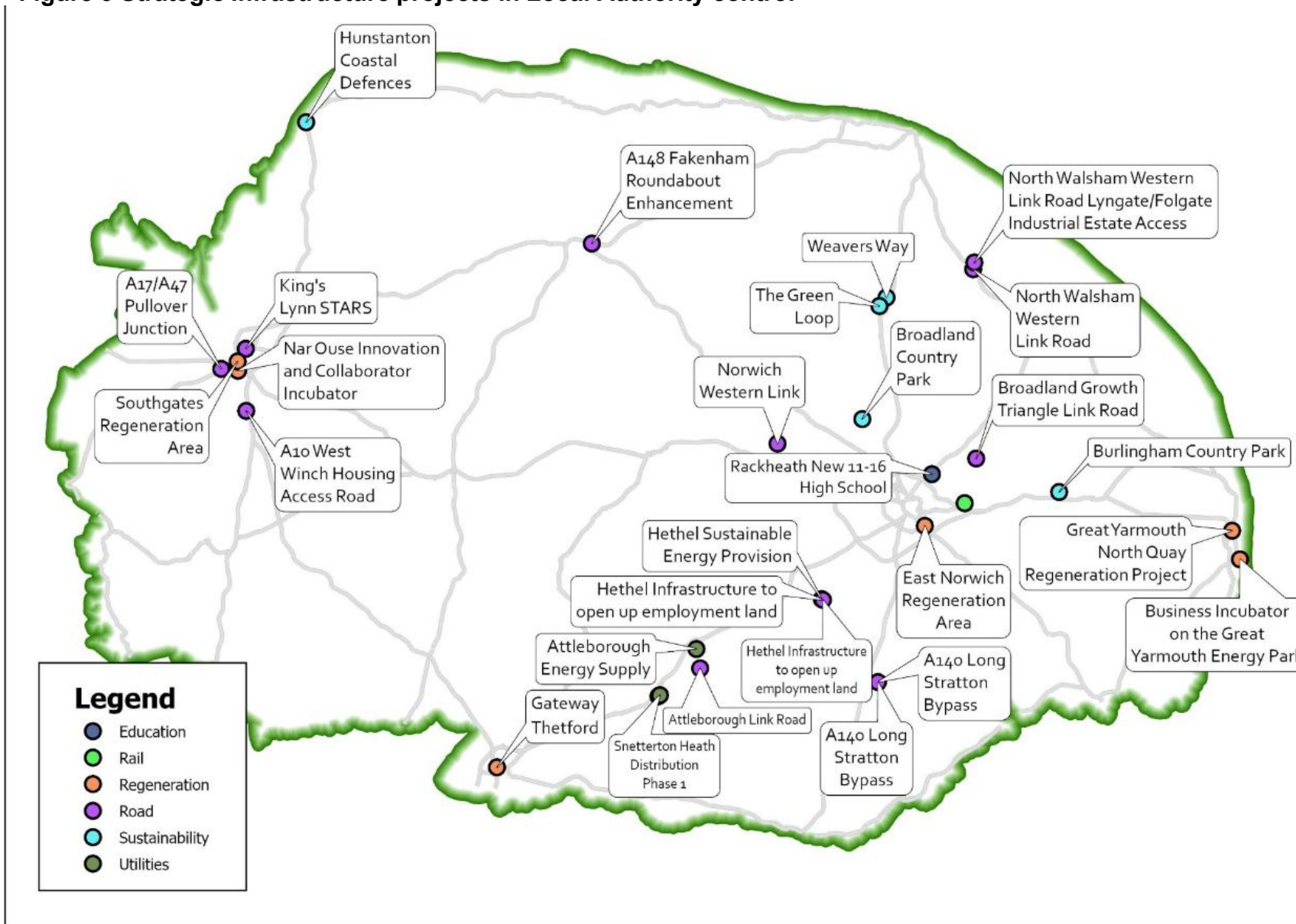


Figure 3 shows all of the projects in Local Authority control that require further development, it does not show projects that are funded. These projects are in alignment with housing growth, jobs growth and the NSES key places, creating better places to live and work for people in Norfolk. The transport projects support major housing and employment sites, improving connectivity and reducing journey times for people and businesses. Utility projects are concentrated around urban areas and the towns along the A11, ensuring the developments at Thetford, Attleborough and Snetterton are built out as planned, and capacity for water supply and disposal is increased in Norwich and King's Lynn to accommodate growth. Utilities including digital coverage are now as essential for homes and businesses as being able to turn a tap on and should be seen in the same way with this plan identifying a range of projects that need to be progressed to deliver the planned growth in the NSES key locations. For the county to grow sustainably, green infrastructure projects will mitigate the impact of growth to the northeast of Norwich whilst flood defences and coastal erosion projects will be vital in protecting both existing and future homes and businesses. The projects do not work in isolation, and they deliver more than one outcome. The transport projects are focussed on unlocking housing and job sites. These cannot move forward without essential utilities being in place, while green infrastructure projects create innovative solutions that can alleviate environmental constraints.

Figure 3 Strategic Infrastructure projects in Local Authority control



Funding Opportunities

The funding required to pay for the strategic infrastructure projects to support delivery of growth is a key element of the individual Local Infrastructure Plans. Opportunities for funding include:

- Growing Places Fund
- City Deals
- Business Rates Pool (BRP)
- Growing Business Fund
- Enterprise Zone accelerator fund
- Enterprise Zone business rates retention challenge fund
- Local Investment Fund (LIF)
- Local Major Transport Schemes
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (New Anglia LEP)
- Homes England
- Housing Infrastructure Fund
- Private Investment
- National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF)
- Developer funding (S106 and CIL)
- Transforming Cities Fund
- Government Major Road Network
- Access for All
- Future High Streets Fund
- Sovereign Wealth
- Industrial Strategy related funding
- Norfolk Strategic Fund
- Community Renewal Fund
- Capability Fund
- The Levelling Up Fund
- Capacity Building Fund
- Towns Fund Deal
- Shared Prosperity Fund
- Greater Norwich Infrastructure Investment Fund

In December 2013, Broadland District, Norwich City, Norfolk County and South Norfolk councils together with the New Anglia LEP, signed a City Deal with central government of which a core theme supports infrastructure delivery within the Greater Norwich area. Under the direction of the Greater Norwich Growth Board, the partners work to accelerate this delivery, funding infrastructure projects through the pooling of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions into one joint Infrastructure Investment Fund, and harnessing CIL supported borrowing through their City Deal agreement.

The infrastructure priorities identified in the NSIDP will assist the delivery of the NSES and District Council Local Plan growth ambitions. For example, the NSIDP is aligned with the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP), which contains a summary of what infrastructure is required to support the growth within Greater Norwich. The GNIP feeds into Greater Norwich Growth Board's decision making to allocate funding to projects from their Infrastructure Investment Fund.

Housing Infrastructure Fund

Norfolk has been successful in getting several schemes into the Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The funds allocated in Norfolk are:

Marginal viability fund (single and lower tier authorities)

Scheme	Funding agreed	Works proposed	Homes unlocked
Anglia Square, Norwich	£15m	Decontamination, archaeology, demolition, drainage, roads and parking, water, electricals, and gas	1,100
Cringleford, South Norfolk	£7.8m	Infrastructure (Homes England's Accelerated Construction Fund.)	350
Total Funding Agreed	£29.75	Total Homes Unlocked	6,580

An unsuccessful bid for £57m for the Broadland Growth Triangle was also submitted to the HIF process. This bid related to the strategic development sites at Beeston Park and North Rackheath. Since the outcome of the Growth Triangle bid was announced Taylor Wimpey have secured a position to develop the North Rackheath site and have submitted an outline planning application for the site. A sale has also been agreed for the Beeston Park site, with an incoming investor and developer expected to take the site forward. NCC and Broadland District Council will continue to provide support for the delivery of these sites, including seeking other funding opportunities if necessary.

Transforming Cities Fund

The County Council was successful in securing £38.4m through Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF). The application was based around the vision of investing in clean transport, creating a healthy environment, increasing social mobility, and boosting productivity through enhanced access to employment and learning.

NCC have prioritised corridors and schemes that will maximise benefits and value for money and are deliverable within the challenging timescales of the funding programme. We have also tried to deliver the best possible balance between bus, walking and cycling schemes, which will be supplemented by a co-ordinated and sustained behaviour change programme that will be locally funded and delivered.

Schemes delivered over the period 2020-2023 include the following:

- Improvements to walking, cycling provision and public realm in Tombland;
- A contraflow lane to provide cyclists and bus passengers with a more direct and improved access to the rail station and city centre along Thorpe Road;
- A new bus lane along Cromer Road and Aylsham Road, which has reduced bus journeys and improved the reliability of buses along this busy corridor;
- Improved bus stop infrastructure, pedestrian and public realm facilities through the busy heart of the city centre in St Stephens Street;
- Widened pavements and an improved cycle and pedestrian environment along King Street improving the connection between cultural institutions, substantial new residential development and the city centre;
- Improved access to Norwich rail station;

- Improvements to cycle and pedestrian facilities along the Marriotts Way and at the Grapes Hill junction in Norwich, as well as new pedestrian and cycle crossings of the Outer Ring Road at Mile Cross and on Newmarket Road;
- Bus priority at traffic signals and along key radial public transport routes into the city; and
- Provision of new and transformative wayfinding infrastructure.

Schemes currently being constructed include works at the Heartsease five ways roundabout to address a poor accident record for those walking and cycling at works along Dereham Road to improve walking and cycling networks and bus service performance.

Plans are currently being developed for a new transport link for those walking, cycling and catching the bus between the International Aviation Academy / Airport Industrial Estate and Norwich International Airport. We are also looking at improving access to Wymondham rail station and the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, as well as enhancing the walking and cycling networks in Norwich city centre in the Duke Street / St Andrews Street area. The extension of the Thickthorn Park & Ride site is being reviewed to see if there are other options to consider to support the Park & Ride service.

These vital infrastructure improvements that will improve travel times for bus passengers have given First Eastern Counties the confidence to invest a further £18m in its fleet and local services.

Other Non- Public Funding Opportunities

Schemes are increasingly exploring a broader range of opportunities which include a mixture of both public and private finance options to accelerate the pace of each project development.

Infrastructure Funding Statement

Amended CIL Regulations came into force on 1 September 2019, which introduced the requirement for all Local Authorities to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) where they either charge CIL or collect planning obligations contributions through S106 agreements. Local Authorities are required to set out clearly in their IFSs how much monies they have collected through CIL and planning obligations contributions; and where these monies have and will be spent.

The County Council continues to work with all the Local Authorities across Norfolk to ensure a joined-up approach to infrastructure delivery through developer funding.

This builds on existing arrangements relating to the preparation of Local Authority Infrastructure Delivery Plans.

Funded Projects to October

The following projects have successfully been funded since 2013

Completed:

- Broadland Northway (Norwich Northern Distributor Road (incl Postwick) –£205m
- Norwich Pedalways - £14m
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 2) - £3.5m
- Great Yarmouth Beacon Park Link (A47/143 Link) - £6.8m
- A11 dualling Barton Mills to Thetford - £105m
- Great Yarmouth Right Turn at the rail station - £400,000
- Great Yarmouth Rail Station to the Market Place improvement - £2m
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 1) - £2.5m
- Thetford Enterprise Park Roundabout - £1.5m
- Bacton Walcott Sandscaping - £19.3m
- A140 Hempnall Roundabout - £4m
- A11/Outer Ring Road Daniels Road junction improvement - £2m
- King's Lynn Lynnsport Link Road - £3.5m
- Great Yarmouth congestion relief projects - £3.3m
- Attleborough Town Centre Improvements - £4.5m
- Norwich (Growth Deal projects in Norwich City Centre and on the A11 corridor to Wymondham) - £11.2m
- Norwich (various projects through the Transforming Cities Fund programme) - £23.6m
- Active Travel Fund - £5.6m
- Wroxham road to Salhouse road section of the Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road
- Marriott's Way and Bure Valley Path sections of the Green Loop - £1.4m
- North Walsham, Honing and Stalham resurfacing section of the Weavers Way - £650,000
- Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017 onwards (Epoch 2)
- Great Yarmouth sustainable transport package (Part 2) - £3.5m
- Snetterton Heath Energy Supply Phase I – New primary substation and 6MVA transformer commencing Jan 2022 – £3.6m (Prior to Snetterton Heath Distribution Phase 1)
- Great Yarmouth Covered Market
- Great Yarmouth Harfreys Roundabout
- Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing - £120m
- Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017(Epoch 2) - £42.9m

Under construction or part-completed:

- Thetford Water Supply – £9.8m
- Thetford Sewerage Scheme - £2m
- Easton, Hethersett and Cringleford sewerage upgrade - £11m
- Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) - £12m
- Internet of Things Innovation Network - £735,000
- Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus
- Wymondham Water Supply Connections
- Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and University Campus
- Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision (Feasibility study phase)

Planned, not yet started:

- A47 improvements £200-300m (incl Thickthorn (Norwich) and Great Yarmouth junction improvements, and dualling Blofield to North Burlingham and Easton to North Tuddenham), A47 Wisbech Junctions(Broadend Road)
- Increased Surface Water Capacity North Lynn
- Great Yarmouth Winter Garden
- Great Yarmouth Public Realms Improvements

Digital Connectivity

When Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) implemented its first fibre enabled cabinet during summer 2013 there were two infrastructure providers that deployed fibre infrastructure capable of delivering Superfast broadband (24Mbps+); BT Openreach and Virgin Media. Commercial investment from these two companies provided access to Superfast broadband for 42% of Norfolk properties.

To date, BBfN has seen access to Superfast broadband delivered to over 200,000 premises in Norfolk, increasing coverage from 42% in summer 2013, to over 97% of Norfolk properties during summer 2023. These figures are taken from the independent organisation Think Broadband data.

As well as continued investment from Openreach and Virgin Media, numerous new broadband infrastructure providers have also started to implement in Norfolk.

The third phase of the BBfN Programme started in 2019, a further £13 million is now being invested in Norfolk, but this time will deploy Ultrafast Fibre to the Premises broadband for circa 8,200 Norfolk properties that do not have access to Superfast broadband. As a result, by Early 2024, Superfast broadband coverage across Norfolk is expected to increase to over 97.5%. Provisions within the BBfN contract provide rebates from BT if take-up of services using BBfN funded infrastructure are higher than expected. This has already provided over £5 million Better Broadband for Norfolk funding, helping to reach 97% Superfast coverage. An expected further £11 million will contribute towards the third BBfN rollout, along with a £2 million grant from DEFRA which will provide access to Full Fibre for some of Norfolk's significant rural businesses. Overall, this will allow the county to move towards its aim of achieving 100% coverage. As of Summer 2023 Ultrafast (Gigabit capable) broadband coverage has reached over 56% across Norfolk, and increase from 10% since the same time last year.

UK Digital Strategy

In July 2018 the Government published The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review that set clear, ambitious targets for the availability of full fibre and 5G networks.

The aim is to see 15 million premises connected to full fibre by 2025, with coverage across all parts of the country by 2033 and that the majority of the population will have 5G coverage by 2027. The review addressed key questions about the evolution of the UK's digital infrastructure such as the convergence between fixed and mobile technologies, and the transition from copper to full fibre (gigabit-capable) networks.

As a result of The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review, the Chancellor announced in 2019 a £5 billion commitment to fund gigabit capable broadband for the 20% of UK premises that would be unlikely to receive commercial access to gigabit capable broadband. In March 2021 the first live phase (Phase 1b) of Project Gigabit was launched. Norfolk has been included in the first wave, which will deliver gigabit-capable connections across Norfolk to premises that are unlikely to benefit from commercial investment.

The £114 million Norfolk Project Gigabit contract was awarded to Cityfibre and signed in June 2023. It will provide gigabit capable broadband to around 66,000 premises across Norfolk. The build of the 66,000 premises will be split into six drawdown phases with drawdown one currently being planned. This planning is expected to be completed at the end of 2023 with the first builds expected to commence early in 2024. At this point planning for drawdown two will start.

A further additional large number of premises across all of Norfolk are now being considered for inclusion, including premises in the North and West of Norfolk. These will be reviewed over the next 6 months for inclusion.

This is in addition to the roll-out of broadband by commercial providers, which is seeing significant investment in deployment of gigabit broadband across Norfolk. The country is also on track for one of the fastest roll-outs in Europe, with a government target for at least 85% gigabit capable coverage across the UK by the end of 2025.

The Project Gigabit programme targets properties that would otherwise have been left behind in broadband companies' roll-out plans, prioritising those that currently have the slowest connections.

Local Full Fibre Programme

Working with partners, NCC secured circa. £8 million in 2019 via the Government's Local Full Fibre Network programme and a further £2m in 2020 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The LFFN programme completed successfully in March 2022, delivering gigabit capable broadband to 394 rural public buildings, including schools, council offices, fire stations, libraries and village halls. A further circa. 2,200 nearby homes are also able to benefit from full fibre broadband.

In addition, a further 2,500 homes to date have benefitted from commercial operators exploiting the infrastructure installed under LFFN, by installing full fibre broadband deeper into poorly served communities

Fixed Wireless Access (FWA)

Working with the New Anglia LEP, using residual funding from the LFFN project, we are investigating alternate methods of providing fast WiFi to the public in very hard to reach rural locations. This work, utilising Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellites is already underway, The solution has been installed to one rural village hall, with others being connected in the near future.

Scheme for rural properties with speeds of less than 100Mbps

The RGC programme launched an updated voucher scheme in December 2022 for properties that are not subject to any other subsidy scheme such as Project Gigabit.

The scheme will be accessible through broadband service providers who have registered to provide connections through the scheme.

The voucher scheme is currently closed in Norfolk and is likely to remain so until the project gigabit premises list is finalised. When it re-launches the scheme will include an increase to the standard maximum voucher values for residents and businesses from £1,500 and £3,500 respectively to £4,500 for both audiences.

A second scheme is still available. The broadband Universal Service Obligation (USO) offers subsidies of up to £3,400 for properties that have less than 10 Mbps download speeds. Further information is available at Ofcom - Broadband Universal Service Obligation

Planning Regime reforms

Planning Regime reforms will support the mobile industry in the rapid rollout of 4G technology, to help reach more people, more quickly.

The Electronic Communications Code

The Electronic Communications Code regulates the telecommunications sector, reforms will put digital communications infrastructure on a similar regime to utilities like electricity and water. The aim is to ensure new technologies like 5G can be rolled out more quickly and benefit more people.

Mobile connections

There are four main mobile network operators (MNOs) in the UK; EE, O2, Three and Vodafone. Coverage is increasing both nationally and locally over 2G/4G and now 5G. Coverage improvements have been relatively slow in rural parts of Norfolk reflecting the less attractive business cases for investment in areas as there are fewer residents.

NCC has engaged regularly with the MNOs for a number of years to ensure that they understand where the coverage gaps exist and to take various actions to try and make it as easy and cost effective for them to make network improvements across the county.

2G and 4G (voice & data) coverage is gradually improving and 5G is now available in the most dense urban parts of the County and some dispersed locations where masts have been more recently upgraded. However, there remain significant gaps in coverage from all four MNOs.

Shared Rural Network

The Shared Rural Network (SRN) is a £1Bn joint investment between DSIT/BDUK and the four mobile network operators to first address partial “not spots” and then total “not spots”. The procurement launched in November 2021 the work was due for completion by the end of 2025 enabling combined coverage of 95% across the UK (though Ofcom stated coverage levels are generally considered optimistic at best).

It was hoped that the SRN would facilitate a material improvement in coverage across the county, but there is limited evidence in Norfolk of that having happened to date or indeed expectation as things stand in the future. Ofcom as the regulator publishes coverage figures which appear highly optimistic compared to drive studies undertaken by NCC and the lived experiences of Norfolk residents.

- We have undertaken the following activities to improve coverage:
- Commissioned two drive studies (since 2018) to ensure mobile network operators know where real life coverage gaps exist.
- Lobbied MNOs to help facilitate improvements.
- Developed standardised agreements to enable MNOs to install their equipment on our sites and buildings.
- Worked with highways and our PFI provider to develop a licence agreement for mobile operators to mount mobile equipment on our street lighting (this is challenging and ongoing).
- Loaded our property location data into an accessible database for MNOs to directly access.
- Developed plans to use refuse vehicles and fire appliances to map mobile coverage as they travel around the County.

Norfolk & Suffolk Innovation Network

A Long Range Wide Area Network has been created across Norfolk and Suffolk to accelerate Internet of Things innovation across the region.

Working closely with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Norfolk & Suffolk County

Councils are nearing completion of installing the largest free-to-use public long-range radio network in the UK.

The network is already in use and serves businesses, private individuals, and the public sector. They can use Internet of Things sensors on the network to sense, monitor, manage and report. Coverage can be viewed on the TTN Mapper site.

Local Industrial Strategy

The Local Industrial Strategy under Information and Communications Technology and Digital Creative wants to develop the economic case for a Smart Emerging Technology Institute and testbed (SETI) – a unique advanced high-speed optical and wireless network (including 5G) which interlinks Internet of Things testbeds to support large-scale experiments and data transfer. This project has now been funded.

Education

The School Sufficiency Plan outlines how the Local Authority meets its statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places for Norfolk children aged 4-16. It sets out the strategic direction of pupil place supply for those areas of the County where demographic changes will impact pupil numbers over the next 5-10 years. The Plan is a response to the District Local Plan frameworks and is presented as the basis for discussion, planning and decision-making for the County Council and its partners across the increasingly diverse educational landscape. The Plan links to the County Council's schools' forward capital programme which was reported and approved at the NCC Cabinet in January 2022 and will be refreshed in January 2024.

Major growth areas which will require multi-school solutions are:

- Thetford Urban Extension - 5,000 new dwellings;
- North Norwich Growth Triangle (Sprowston/Old Catton/Rackheath) - 13,000+ new dwellings;
- Attleborough Urban Extension - 4,000 new dwellings; and
- West Winch/North Runcton - 4,000 new dwellings.

Thetford

Primary School places within Thetford are provided by eight schools, a mix of infant, junior and all-through primary, six of these are academies and two community schools. A total of 360 places are available in each year group across the primary phase. Numbers of places in catchment suggest a decline against overall capacity, and broadly most of the preference is directed to the town schools, with a small number moving outside of the town.

Children's Services are working with the land promoters on the Thetford Strategic Urban Extension (SUE) for three new primary schools each of 420 places has been secured. In early 2018 the first reserved matters application for phase 1a of the development was permitted and commenced on site in 2019. There are now three developers on site that have delivered 231 homes of a total 1,058 for this overall phase. This phase includes the site for the first new primary school, negotiation are continuing regarding the transfer of the site to link with the requirements of the agreed S106.

In the longer term the three new 420 place primary schools for Thetford will meet the need in the current local plan to 2026 and beyond. The timescales for these schools depend on the progress rate of new housing in Thetford.

Secondary school places will be monitored at Thetford Academy, as additional land has already been provided at the school to allow for future expansion. S106 contributions have been secured although not yet collected.

North East Norwich Growth Triangle

There is a significant number of homes expected to come forward across the area known as the North East Norwich Growth Triangle. Three key areas of development are scheduled to come forward which include Beeston Park and Rackheath.

Phase 1 (733 dwellings) of the Beeston Park outline application for 3,500 homes is progressing with a strategic infrastructure reserved matters application for roads and drainage submitted. A sale of the Beeston Park site has been agreed with the incoming investor/developer intending to bring forward or facilitate the development of the site.

A contract has been agreed with Taylor Wimpey on the majority of the large allocation for up to 4,000 homes at Rackheath. An outline planning application for the development of the site has now been submitted. Some smaller developments to the south west of Rackheath potentially totalling around 800 dwellings are taking shape and will impact on local school provision. The large development south of Salhouse Road for circa. 1,200 dwellings are on site as is the first phase of the development planned east of Broadland Business Park totalling approximately 1,150 dwellings.

Housing in this area will establish the need for several new primary phase schools and a new high school. Children's Services Officers continue to work with existing schools to ensure minimal impact on their pupil numbers. There is a long-term plan for the area and sites have been secured for new schools within the Local Plan. In the shorter-term admissions into reception each year will be monitored.

As well as two new schools at Beeston Park, further school sites have been secured for new schools on Salhouse Road, North/South of Smee Lane School and the major growth area of Rackheath has proposed two new primary school sites and a secondary school, along with some Early Years provision to meet need of the new community.

Attleborough

The town of Attleborough is served by two all-through primary schools, namely Attleborough Primary School and Rosecroft Primary School and one secondary school Attleborough Academy. The two primary schools offer five forms of entry between them. The town is surrounded by villages with local schools. Some children in Attleborough catchment do choose a nearby village school as opposed to their local primary school in the Town.

Breckland District Council granted planning permission to provide up to 4,000 dwellings on land to the south of Attleborough; construction of new link road between Buckenham Road and London Road, pedestrian footbridge across the railway line to connect with Leys Lane, provision of two, 2 Form Entry primary schools; Local centre including shops and other uses including a petrol filling station, Community Uses, two further neighbourhood centres, sports pitches, public open space and amenity greenspace with sustainable drainage systems and associated infrastructure.

Homes England continued to lead the delivery on this large scale development, time taken in delivering the road infrastructure needed to unlock the project has slowed overall progress. Its expected the first phase of delivery will recommence very soon, and this will lead to delivery of the main road infrastructure and 300 homes, as well as the first new primary school. In the short term pupil numbers will be closely monitored to ensure any new school is opened on time and when the demand for places is evident so as not to impact negatively on existing provision locally.

Children Services continues to assess the impact on the secondary provision, as pressure continues to grow. A project for expansion of the secondary school is at masterplan stage and could progress to planning shortly.

West Winch Growth Area (King's Lynn and West Norfolk)

Up to 4,000 dwellings are proposed in West Winch and North Runcton to be delivered in 2 phases, with 1,600 up to 2026 and a further 2,400 post 2026. West Winch village is served by

one primary school of 210 places. The size of this school is adequate for the current numbers of primary age children living in the area. A desktop exercise indicates that the school site could allow expansion of this school to 2 forms of entry and the school is aware of these plans North Runcton does not have its own school but the nearest school for children to attend is in Middleton.

Middleton Primary (academy) is on a small site and there is limited scope for expansion.

Hopkins Homes Ltd have submitted an outline planning application for 1,100 homes and an important part of the development is the road infrastructure which is being led by NCC.

In short term, the response is to monitor the progress of housing commencement and annual admissions to ensure sufficient places for the area.

In the longer term, the response is to expand West Winch Primary School, with one new Primary phase school in the northern phase of development and one new primary post 2026 on the Southern part of the housing development. Pressure for places is being seen within the secondary system in this area and plans are in place to expand Kings Lynn Academy with all schools in the area having being consulted.

In addition to these major growth areas which require multi-school solutions the School Sufficiency Plan also sets out development locations where one new school is expected and areas with implications for existing schools. The Plan highlights the impact of both areas of growth and decline largely affected by the demographic decline that is being experienced across Norfolk as well as across the country.

Offshore Transmission Network

The UK Government launched the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) in 2020 to improve the delivery of transmission connections for offshore wind. The Review has been led by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). In July (2022) National Grid (Electricity System Operator) published as part of the OTNR exercise their Holistic Network Design (HND); and BEIS announced four Pathfinder Projects.

The Holistic Network Design is the first of a kind strategic network design. It sets out the needs case for the network infrastructure to connect 18 offshore wind projects to the transmission network. If delivered, these projects will provide the on and offshore network infrastructure to deliver our ambition for 50GW of offshore wind by 2030.

Details of how the HND will be followed up are set out in the open letter from the UK Government, Ofgem, National Grid Electricity System Operator and Transmission Operators which can be found on the OTNR website.

For already well-advanced projects connecting ahead of 2030, projects have the option to develop voluntary projects. These projects will provide important learnings for future projects, inform the detailed design of the regulatory framework and will maximise the benefits for consumers, communities, and the environment. BEIS (July 2022) have announced four Pathfinder Projects, with the two below in Norfolk:

Equinor - Integrated Transmission System for the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extensions

Orsted - Project Boudica - 200MW battery co-located as part of a grid connection.

In addition, five projects in East Anglia (National Grid Electricity Transmission (Sea Link), National Grid Ventures (EuroLink and Nautilus), (North Falls and Five Estuaries), have published a statement (July 2022) confirming their commitment to exploring coordinated network designs as part of the OTNR's Early Opportunities workstream, with a view to identifying future Pathfinder projects. [More information on pathfinders can be found on the website.](#)

In addition to the above the Government is providing grants to enable the development of coordinated options for offshore transmission as part of its Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS). The scheme will complement other relevant arrangements being made as part of the above OTNR; and will provide funding activities to support coordination of early opportunities projects that can be applied to later workstreams of the OTNR. Further guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offshore-coordination-support-scheme>

Infrastructure projects in Local Authority Control

The County Council in collaboration with partners is seeking to progress a number of key infrastructure initiatives for the next 10 years as listed below.

All of the projects in this list are judged on four criteria:

- Delivering significant housing and jobs growth
- Identified in existing plans/programmes
- Have a committed route to delivery
- Significant Local Authority control or interest.

TBC = To be confirmed

Road Projects

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road	Part Delivered	£38m	Various parts delivered) Others are shovel ready, some elements are still at feasibility stage.	Developer finance, CIL, HIF
Attleborough Link Road	TBC	£18m	Feasibility/ development work underway on preferred option	Developer funding, Homes England loan, HIF
A10 West Winch Housing Access Road	2025	£85m	OBC submitted in September 2023 and planning application in December 2023	DfT Major Road Network Funding, developer funding,
A140 Long Stratton Bypass	2024	£46.9m	Feasibility/ development work underway on preferred option	Developer funding, CIL supported borrowing, DfT Major Road Network Funding
A148 Fakenham Roundabout Enhancement	2025	£3.5m	Feasibility/ development work underway on preferred option	NPIF
Norwich Western Link	Construction Phase: 2026	£274m	Feasibility/ development work underway on preferred option	DfT, Large Local Major transport scheme funding

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
A17/A47 Pullover Junction	2025	£33.7m	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options (A Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been prepared but not yet submitted due the poor VfM figure)	DfT, NCC
King's Lynn STARS	2025	£27m	Feasibility/Scheme development and OBC preparation underway	Levelling Up Fund (LUF), NCC, BCKLWN
North Walsham Western Link Road	TBC	TBC	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	Developer funding
Hethel Infrastructure to open up Employment Land	2025	£9.9m	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	CIL, SNC, NCC
North Walsham Western Link Road Lyngate/Folgate Industrial Estate Access	TBC	TBC	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	Developer Funding

Rail Projects

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Broadland Business Park Rail Station	Late 2020s	£6.5m	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	Rail Industry

Utilities Projects

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Attleborough Energy Supply	TBC	£22m	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	BRP, Private Sector

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Snetterton Heath Mains Sewer Connection	TBC	£3.8m	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options.	Private Sector, Public Sector, Anglian Water
Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision	2024 for grid connection	£5.9m	Feasibility complete, Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option for delivery phase	CRF, Private sector investment
Snetterton Heath Distribution Phase 1	TBC	£1.5m	Feasibility/development work on preferred option complete. Detailed design commenced.	Developer Finance

Sustainability Projects

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Weavers Way	2019	£3.1m	Project is shovel ready	RDPE, HLF
The Green Loop	2019/20	£5.8m	Project is shovel ready	DfT, Sustrans, Lottery, Developer contributions, CIL
Broadland Country Park	2020/21	£2m	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	Broadland District Council, CIL, BRP
Burlingham Country Park	2021	TBC	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	BRP, NCC, Developer contribution
Hunstanton Coastal Defences	2024	£17m	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc

Education Project

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
Rackheath New 11-16 High School	2025/26 – dependent on development progress	£40m	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	NCC, BRP, CIL

Regeneration Projects

Project Name	Estimated Start Date	Estimated Cost	Scheme Development	Potential Funding Source
East Norwich Regeneration Area	Underway since 2021, currently moving towards implementation	This stage of work will be underpinned by contributions from partners as part of agreed resource package	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options	Norwich City Council, Homes England, Developer Contribution, Norfolk County Council, CIL
Nar Ouse Innovation and Collaborator Incubator	TBC	£17m	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	BRP, Levelling Up, BCKLWN (Land)
Southgates Regeneration Area	2022 – for master planning	£10m	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	BRP, Levelling Up, Brownfield Land Release Fund BCKLWN.
Gateway Thetford	TBC	£95.5m	TBC	Levelling Up Fund, Access For All, DfT etc.
Business Incubator on The Great Yarmouth Energy Park	2022	£21.4m	Shovel ready	Supports Local energy sector supply chain
North Quay and the Conge Gateway Regeneration in Great Yarmouth	2024	TBC	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option	Supports 280 homes, commercial and retail developments

Road Projects

Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road

The project will provide a road linking the strategic employment areas of Broadland Business Park and Norwich Airport through the development sites within the northern suburbs of Norwich. It will significantly increase the accessibility of employment sites in the Broadland Growth Triangle area and support the development of approximately 55 hectares of employment land in this vicinity. The sections of the link road yet to be delivered are outlined below.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Airport Industrial Estate to St Faiths Road	TBC dependant on final design solution	Developer on site and delivering estate road link with mini roundabout on Repton Avenue, with land dedicated to allow for later stage upgrading of road.	developer finance	Development Link Road under construction
St Faiths Road to North Walsham Road and North Walsham Road to Wroxham Road	Circa. £10M, inc. additional feasibility and scheme development	A detailed application has been submitted for part of the link between St Faiths Road and Norwich RFU. NCC and BDC are working with the developer to achieve a planning approval. BDC are separately working with the RFU to achieve delivery of final link to North Walsham Road.		Scheme is under consideration
Wroxham Road to Salhouse Road	n/a	n/a	Developer finance	Delivered

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Salhouse Road to Plumstead Road	Circa £3m	<p>Reserved matters application submitted for link between Salhouse Road and triangle land.</p> <p>Scheme for signalised junction on Salhouse Road now delivered. Construction of development scheme adjacent to Salhouse Road junction, including start of link road begun.</p> <p>Eastern junction at Plumstead road has secured permission and is expected to start in 2023/2024.</p>	CIL, developer, finance	Project is shovel ready
Plumstead Road to Broadland Business Park	TBC dependant on final design solution.	<p>BDC and NCC are in ongoing negotiations with developer about form and alignment of the link road.</p> <p>Key constraint is Middle Road bridge.</p>	Developer finance, CIL	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option

Attleborough Link Road

A key transport priority for Attleborough, required for the planned strategic growth (4,000 dwellings) known as the Attleborough Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), is a link road between the B1077 near Bunns Bank to London Road to the south of the town. The link road will distribute new and existing traffic away from the town centre and enable traffic management measures to be implemented within the town centre such as HGV restrictions. Delivery of the link road is a planning requirement of the scheme and will be phased so that up to 1,200 homes can be built before the link road is required to be opened in full. The Attleborough SUE is allocated and has planning permission. Discussions are ongoing with development interests and key partners in order to bring forward the full completion of the road before the requirements of the planning obligations are triggered. Homes England have now acquired the first phase of the SUE. A draft Strategic Outline Business Case for the road has been completed to assist with any future funding bids for delivery.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Design; Detailed design, Statutory procedures and powers; Construction preparation	TBC	Two years from commencement of design	local authority, developer finance Required for 4,000 new houses and 1,500 new jobs. Strategic scheme identified in the NSIDP. Funding would be for detailed technical work designed to progress strategic schemes towards readiness for implementation.	Completion of this stage would take the scheme from planning to detailed design
Construction phase	£18m	TBC	developer finance, Homes England loan, Required for 4,000 new houses and 1,500 new jobs. Strategic scheme identified in the NSIDP. Funding would be for construction.	Completion of this stage will take the project detailed design to delivery

A10 West Winch Housing Access Road

The A10 West Winch Housing Access Road (WWHAR) is required to facilitate planned housing growth in the West Winch Growth Area and provide a strategic improvement to the A10 to enhance resilience on the Major Road Network (MRN). It will enable distribution of trips from the new development and alleviate congestion on the A10 through West Winch and provide an alternative route around the village for strategic long distance traffic. The principle of this new route is set out in the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted West Winch Growth Area Framework Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The scheme includes improvements at the Hardwick junction, dualling of a short length of the A47 and housing access road that links the A10 with the A47. The WWHAR is supported by Transport East as a priority for MRN funding. The Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was approved by DfT in July 2022 and an Outline Business Case (OBC) and planning application were submitted in September and December 2023 respectively. It will be necessary to ensure the scheme incorporates appropriate bus priority and Active Travel, (walking and cycling measures) to encourage sustainable transport within and around the growth area and a Sustainable Transport Strategy document was submitted alongside the OBC.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Scheme development work to OBC and planning application	£3.05m as at July 2023 (source December 2023 Cabinet report)	August 2022 – September 2023	DfT are contributing £698k towards the cost with the remainder from BRP, NCC and BCKLWN	Feasibility/ development work on preferred option
Full Business Case (FBC) and detailed design and procurement to start of works	TBC	March 2024 – April 2025	DfT are likely to contribute two thirds of the cost of the detailed design and FBC costs with the remainder from BRP, NCC and BCKLWN. Funding for construction is anticipated from the DfT MRN fund with the local contribution from developers. Homes England support in the form of loans or grants has been agreed in principle.	Project will be shovel ready when statutory approvals and a procurement contract are in place

A140 Long Stratton Bypass

Long Stratton is located approximately 10 miles south of Norwich on the A140 Norwich to Ipswich road. There is planned growth in Long Stratton of at least 1,800 dwellings in the period 2008-2026 to deliver a bypass but this growth is also highly dependent on the provision of water supply, sewerage, and improved electricity supply. The need for a bypass has long been a priority and is considered to be a prerequisite to provide for the needs of the proposed growth. South Norfolk District Council has adopted an Area Action Plan for Long Stratton. A revised planning application submitted by the developer has been granted by the Local Planning Authority (SNC) in March 2023 subject to achieving the necessary Section 106 Agreement and Planning Conditions

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
An economic viability study for the Long Stratton bypass. This will be carried out by an expert consultant to provide an estimated cost of the bypass; estimated funding gap; direct and indirect economic benefits of the bypass; and added benefits of early delivery of the bypass	£200,000 (funded)	Dec 2017 to July 2018	Funded from: Pooled Business Rates: £100,000, SNC: £15,000, HCA: £35,000, NCC: £50,000	Will take scheme from feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options, to feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Development Phase: Detailed design; Statutory procedures and powers; Land acquisition; Tender process and construction preparation	Circa £6m	Two and a half years	BRP, Local Authorities, Government Major Road Network, Qualifications for BRP, Previous S278 Developer income: Required for 1,800 new houses and to overcome traffic problems on A140. Strategic scheme identified in the NSIDP. Funding would be for detailed technical work designed to progress strategic schemes towards readiness for implementation.	Completion of this stage will take it from feasibility/development work underway on preferred option, to project is shovel ready
Construction Phase	Circa £40m including development phase costs,	Eighteen months (Spring 2024 to Autumn 2025)	Government Major Road Network, Local Authorities, £10m CIL supported borrowing, Developer Contribution ((which is being forward funded by a loan of an additional	Will allow scheme to be moved into construction phase, from work already

fees, risk,
utilities and
other items

£4.5m CIL supported borrowing)

completed through
development phases.

Fakenham A148 Roundabout Enhancement

A planning application has been permitted for 950 residential dwellings adjacent to and south of the A148 between Water Moor Lane and the Morrisons roundabout to the east. Access to the new residential development is proposed via a new roundabout on the A148 (at the Water Moor Lane junction) with a link road through to the existing roundabout serving Morrisons. There are longer term aspirations to take forward housing allocations adjacent to and beyond the A148 at this location. As the Highway Authority NCC indicated that a roundabout would be required to be built at the current A148/B1105 junction as a condition of the planning permission if residential development to the west of Water Moor Lane is progressed.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Development of planning application including time for statutory consultation of 13 weeks	TBC	18 Months – To develop planning application and supporting documentation including environmental assessment, ecological and arboriculture surveys.	NPIF Required to support the delivery of one of North Norfolk's largest Local Plan allocations of 950 dwellings	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Acquisition of land	TBC	6 months	NPIF	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Utilities diversion	TBC	9 months – to deliver and implement any required utility diversions	NPIF	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Construction phase	Estimated £3.5m	5 months	NPIF	Project is shovel ready

Norwich Western Link

This Norwich Western Link provides a dual carriageway connection between the Broadland Northway at Taverham and the A47 west of Norwich and has been identified as one of the County Council's priority road infrastructure schemes. The Outline Business Case was approved by Government in October 2023.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Development phase: Outline Business Case submitted; Design and Build Contractor appointed, Statutory procedures and powers; Design for Construction preparation	£60m	(2021 – 2025) Statutory process (development and delivery) and detailed design/ construction prep	BRP, DfT large local major transport scheme, local authorities	Will take scheme from feasibility/development work underway on preferred option, to project is shovel ready
Construction phase	Indicative £274m including development phase costs, fees, risk, and other items	Three years (2026 to 2029) Timescale to be reviewed following the Outline Business Case funding decision	BRP, DfT large local major transport scheme, local authorities Funding would be for construction	Will allow scheme to be moved into construction phase, from work already completed through development phases.

A17/A47 Pullover Junction, King's Lynn

The A17/A47 Pullover Junction improvement is required to reduce congestion and delay in the King's Lynn area and to support the planned growth set out in the adopted Local Plan. This includes the significant allocation of 4,000 new homes in the West Winch Growth Area. The roundabout is a known pinch point on the A47 trunk road at its junction with the A17. The A47 is a high priority route for the local authorities and stakeholders which is borne out by the existence of the A47 Alliance group which supports and lobbies for dualling the whole length of the route due to its economic importance for the region.

A Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been prepared but not yet submitted to DfT due the poor VfM figure as a result of using the new government traffic forecasts. Further limited work is being carried to review the scope of the scheme to improve the VfM figure. A Sustainable Transport report has been prepared that scopes out Active Travel and public transport opportunities. This will guide the development of complementary Active Travel and bus priority measures that will be brought forward as part of the scheme. This junction has been identified as a priority scheme by Transport East and features on DfT programme of Major Road Network schemes for implementation in the current programme period.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Scheme development work to Strategic Outline Case (SOC)	£0.35m	March 2022 – July 2023	BRP/National Highways	Feasibility work has determined a preferred option.
Scheme development work to Outline Business Case (OBC)	tbd	June 2024 – June 2025	DfT Major Road network, NCC, National Highways	Feasibility/development work on preferred option Preparation of an OBC
Full Business Case (FBC) and detailed design and procurement to start of works	TBD	July 2025 – June 2026	DfT Major Road network, NCC, National Highways	Project will be shovel ready when statutory approvals and a procurement contract are in place

King's Lynn Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme (STARS)

The King's Lynn Sustainable Transport and Regeneration Scheme (STARS) is a visionary Bus and Active Travel project to transform a key gateway into the town and reconfigure the outdated gyratory road system. Working in partnership the Borough Council, the scheme will facilitate an adopted masterplan to regenerate and transform the area around the historic 15th century South Gate and encourage a switch to sustainable transport by the reallocation of road space from general traffic. The route under the gate will be used for Active Travel modes rather than for general traffic. The scheme reduces the dominance of traffic by reconfiguring the Southgates roundabout into a junction that has bus priority and better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. It will also improve the gyratory system, including transforming the public realm on Railway Road, by introducing measures that will assist buses, pedestrians and cyclists which will give rise to benefits in road safety and air quality. All of these measures lie on the key corridor into the town from the West Winch strategic growth area.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Scheme development work to submit a bid to the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). Equivalent to Strategic Outline Case (SOC) in terms of DfT approval	£70k	LUF bid submission August 2022	Back funded by DfT	Feasibility design for the STARS scheme and the preparation of an LUF bid government - Completed
Scheme development work to Outline Business Case (OBC)	£1.3m	August 2022 – spring 2024	Levelling Up Fund (LUF)/NCC (90%/10%)	Feasibility/development work on preferred options
Full Business Case (FBC) TBD and detailed design and procurement to start of works		spring 2024 – spring 2026	Levelling Up Fund (LUF)/NCC (90%/10%)	Project will be shovel ready when statutory approvals and a procurement contract are in place

North Walsham Western Link

A North Walsham Western Link Road is required to facilitate the mixed-use growth allocation identified in the North Norfolk Local Plan to the west of the town. The North Walsham West development will provide approximately 1,800 new homes and 7ha of employment land. Initial high-level traffic impact assessments of the growth concluded that the impact of the additional trips from the development would cause an adverse impact on the highway network, therefore in order to support the planned growth a Western Link Road is required to mitigate traffic impacts.

The allocated growth and delivery of a Western Link Road should help safeguard jobs, promote economic growth and building homes to address current housing shortages, improve the resilience of local areas to support themselves, mitigate existing routing problems for HGVs and increase accessibility by more sustainable modes and active travel.

The extent of the Link Road is from Bradfield Road railway bridge to the B1150 North Walsham Road totalling approximately 2.7km. A northern extension to the Link Road would extend from the Bradfield Road railway bridge to Cornish Way industrial area and a southern extension would extend from the B1150 North Walsham Road to the A149 south.

Work to date has shown that:

- A Western Link Road with extensions should mitigate the additional trips from development
- The Bradfield Road railway bridge is a significant physical constraint and will require further investigation
- Further investigation into the offsite traffic impacts of the development is required, notably the B1150 at Coltishall

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme development
Feasibility phase	TBC – spend to date around £120,000	TBC	Funding from BRP, NNDC and NCC have already been utilised on the feasibility work. It is likely that the next stage of feasibility will be funded by the site promoter	Feasibility work on the proposed link road and offsite traffic impacts from growth. Awaiting next stage of local plan development to identify further work priorities. Draft TA scoping and modelling methodology receive from the site promoters
Development phase	~ £2m - £5m (2020 high-level estimates dependent on options chosen to	TBC	TBC – developer funded/NCC/NNDC	Detailed design and development of the link road preferred option. This stage will take the project from feasibility work to feasibility, development and design work

	take forward and excluding risk and optimism bias)			on a preferred option.
Construction phase	~ £8m - £22m (2020 high-level estimates dependent on options chosen to take forward and excluding risk and optimism bias)	TBC	TBC – developer funded/NCC/NNDC	Completion of this stage will take the project from feasibility and development work on the preferred option to project is shovel ready.

North Walsham Western Link Road Lyngate/Folgate Industrial Estate Access

The North Walsham Western Link Road is required to provide a new connection over railway line in order to link the proposed allocation, NW62/A and the Western Link Road to an industrial estate to the north of the proposed allocation. Initial feasibility work on this particular project found the provision of a bridge over the railway line to be unviable for the developer to provide by themselves without additional sources of funding. Feasibility work is ongoing to identify a suitable alternative that both parties are content with or to identify potential sources of funding. Improved/direct access to the industrial estate will contribute to significant highway improvements around the town and facilitate economic growth on the existing employment site and assist in the delivery of a further 2.4 ha of employment land through emerging allocation NW52

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility Phase	TBC – work on development brief has identified previous plans for a bridge over the railway line is likely to be unviable without additional sources of funding.	TBC – NNDC are engaged with site developers. Local Plan has been submitted to PINs with public examination expect to take place in 2023.	developer funded/NCC /NNDC	Work is ongoing to identify an alternative solution, cost and design such a solution to providing access to the industrial estate.
Development Phase	TBC – cost is dependent on the solution identified.	TBC – NNDC are engaged with site developers. Local Plan has been submitted to PINs with public examination to take place in 2023. Intent to submit planning application in line with adoption of the Local Plan.	developer funded/NCC /NNDC	Preferred option is identified within the Development Brief, intent to submit brief to NNDC in 2023.
Construction Phase	TBC	TBC	Developer funded/NCC/NNDC	TBC

Hethel Infrastructure to Open Up Employment Land

Infrastructure investment to deliver a 3-arm Roundabout on the C186 (Wymondham Road) to the west of the current Hethel Engineering Centre in conjunction with a footway and cycleway alongside the sections of new road. The roundabout will provide new access-limbs serving existing and stalled allocated employment land and a realignment of the southern end of Potash Lane. This could lead to investment in opening -up the 20 ha (gross) employment land is expected to generate up to 2,000 people as production of the electric vehicles progresses.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility phase	£9.9m	Circa 13 month starting April 2025	Pooled Cil – secured SNC – secured NCC -secured Other TBC	Feasibility/ development work underway on preferred option

Rail Project

Broadland Business Park Rail Station

Currently services operate every hour between Norwich and Sheringham. New rolling stock has been delivered across the whole of the franchise. Partners continue to press for services every half hour (rather than hourly). Broadland Business Park is a strategic employment site located adjacent to the rail line just east of Norwich. Initial feasibility work establishing the benefits of adding a new station at this location is complete. The next stage for the project is still being considered.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility GRIP 2 and option selection GRIP 3	£140k	Dec 17 (completed)	Funded through BRP and BDC Qualifications for BRP and or Growth Deal funding	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options – stage complete
Further work to develop single option	Not known. Likely to be Circa £250,000	2024/25 1 year	Local authorities, Network Rail	To take scheme from feasibility work on scheme has begun, to identify options to feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Development phase: Preliminary Design; Statutory procedures and powers; construction preparation	Circa £2m	2025-2028 3-5 years	Growth Deal, local authorities, Network Rail	To take scheme from feasibility/development work underway on preferred option, to project is shovel ready
Construction phase	Circa £20m	Circa 2030 1 year	Growth Deal, local authorities, Network Rail	Strategic scheme identified in the NSIDP. Funding would be for construction

Utility Projects

Attleborough Energy Supply

Attleborough Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) is allocated, and has outline planning permission, for 4,000 dwellings and 10 hectares of commercial land.

A feasibility study has been undertaken which considers options of delivering power to the SUE.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Delivery of power infrastructure sufficient to meet the short to medium-term power needs of Attleborough SUE	TBC	TBC	BRP, Private Sector	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Delivery of power infrastructure sufficient to meet the long-term power needs of Attleborough SUE	Current estimate £22m	TBC	BRP, Private Sector	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option

Hethel Sustainable Energy Provision

A key Community Renewal Funded project within South Norfolk is the Hethel Local Energy Solutions Project which will develop an Energy site wide solution, underpinned by net zero ambitions. First phase of the project which is the feasibility study has been completed, the scheme has now moved to developing ways to upgrade the grid connection.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility	c£600,000	Dec 21 – Dec 22	CRF	Complete
Hethel upgrade grid connection (from 3.6MVA to 5.6/7.6 MVA)	circa £5.2-£5.9m	Starting 2024	Private sector investment	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option

Snetterton Heath Mains Sewer Connection

A lack of access to mains sewerage at Snetterton currently represents a barrier to growth faced by this location. Currently because no mains disposal is available at Snetterton Heath, all flows are treated via private solutions. Initial feasibility work has been completed to consider the necessary works required and likely cost of delivering a mains solution for all the growth likely to occur at the location. The cost of delivering is estimated currently at approx. £3.8m on the basis that two pumping stations will be required, and the nearest existing sewer is in Attleborough. A mains sewer solution would represent a safer, cleaner, and more sustainable solution than the alternative.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Detailed design	Approx. £350k	Likely to take approximately 6 months to finalise. Start date unknown at present.	Private Sector, Public Sector, Anglian Water.	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Construction phase	£3.8m	Dependent upon the completion of the details design work.	Private Sector, Public Sector, Anglian Water.	Project is shovel ready

Snetterton Heath Distribution Phase 1

The construction of a new primary substation (PSS), equipped with an initial 6MVA transformer, has recently been completed at Snetterton.

The design of the substation has been future proofed in order that it can accommodate up to two further 6MVA/15MVA transformers. The cost of delivering a second 6MVA transformer is estimated currently at approx. £1.5m while the cost of providing a 15MVA transformer is currently estimated at £1.8m (based upon 2020 estimates of cost). Upgrading the capacity of the new Snetterton PSS will necessitate reasonably extensive off-site network reinforcement. However, due to the recent changes in legislation this cost now falls to Distribution Network Operators (DNOs).

The cost of delivering an 11kv distribution ring is estimated currently at £1.5m.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
11kv distribution network Phase 1.	£1.5m	12 months. Start date tbc.	Developer finance	Feasibility/development work on preferred option complete. Detailed design commenced.

Sustainability Projects

Weavers Way

This project will create new walking and cycling infrastructure in rural Norfolk. Weaver's Way begins in Cromer, following a public rights of way network to the market town of Aylsham. Here it picks up the route of a disused railway line, following its course through the Norfolk countryside to the edge of the Broads National Park at Stalham. It then meanders through the famous wetlands and waterways before re-joining the coast at Great Yarmouth. This project will focus principally on revitalising the disused railway line between Aylsham and Stalham. Route improvements will include new surfacing to ensure year-round accessibility for walkers (including access impaired users) and cyclists, increased safety, and accessibility at road crossings through installation of new gates and improved signage and connectivity to amenities and other routes throughout.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility – Being delivered as one of the three 'Recycling the Railways' focused studies.	£45,000	January 2019-Complete	NCC capital – secured	Stage completed
Stage 1 delivery – surface and signage	£1,062,343	January 2020-Complete	RDPE – bid successful	Stage 1 completed. Phase 2 works required.
Stage 2 delivery – associated industrial heritage buildings brought back into use as visitor facilities	c. £2,000,000	March 2023	HLF, New Anglia LEP	Building no longer available. Feasibility works in progress

The Green Loop

A 46-mile circular route for walking / cycling and disabled use. Encompassing the Marriott's Way, Bure Valley Path and Broadland Way. Broadland Way is partially built through the Broadland Northway and connects with the Broadland Growth Triangle. Marriott's Way and Bure Valley Path exist and are used currently for walking and cycling but require upgrading in some areas to make them more accessible for disabled users, both routes are biodiversity corridors. Broadland Way has been part built by the Broadland Northway and will link to the east end of the Green Pedal way. The Green Loop will also connect to the Three Rivers Way Cycle route and to Weaver's Way. DfT, Norfolk County Council and Broad's Authority funded Three Rivers Way Cycle route and to Weaver's Way.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Feasibility	£45,000	Broadland Way initial feasibility Delivered May 2018 Bure Valley Path and Marriott's Way upgrades have been delivered.	NCC Capital funding – secured	Initial feasibility study complete
Phased delivery of Broadland Way and upgrades to Marriott's Way and the Bure Valley Path	£5.7m	Staged – various completion dates dependent on funding source	S106, CIL, DfT, Interreg Experience-secured	Bure Valley Path and Marriotts Way sections upgraded. Additional phase two works required.

Broadland Country Park

Broadland Country Park (previously named the North West Woodlands Country Park) project created country park facility including a large area of woodland, heathland, and fenland in the Greater Norwich area. The project involves the delivery of a series of walking, cycling and trim trail routes, habitat restoration and enhancement schemes, public engagement events, car parking and visitor facilities as well as a possible woodland play area. The project helps to manoeuvre the Greater Norwich area into a strong position in which to deliver sustainable, well planned communities by enabling a mitigation strategy that alleviates the impact of growth on, and therefore safeguards for generations to come, the internationally designated sites nearby. Ideally located adjacent to the Broadland Northway, the Thorpe Marriott Greenway cycle and pedestrian route, and the purple and yellow bus routes Broadland Country Park is ideally located to intercept visits to the internationally designated sites and to attract visits from across the Greater Norwich area.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Stage 1 – Site acquisition	£715,000	October 2019 Complete	CIL, BRP	Stage 1 complete.
Stage 2 - Scheme development: Design, feasibility, and infrastructure delivery plan	£72,000	Ongoing	BDC, CIL, BRP	Development work still ongoing. 3 x family cycling events in summer 2023, also held night safari's, dragonfly walks, and family events in February and May half terms.
Stage 3 - Preparation and submission of planning application	£138,000	May 2024 Awaiting scheme development		Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option.

Stage 4. Capital delivery phase	Circa £1,067,100	December 2025 Awaiting full scheme development	BDC, CIL, BRP	Some elements complete; surfacing of 1.4km circular all user route, waymarking, seating and family cycle trails. Continued to improve seating areas, increase number of benches around the park and added additional waymarking.
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Burlingham Country Park

NCC has owned land at Burlingham for 100 years and has been discussing the best use of this site for several years the site is currently tenanted by two county farms and a small community woodland well-used by local dog walkers and families.

The Burlingham Estate is one of the largest areas of land owned by NCC at over 12.5 km². The site was originally purchased 100 years ago as part of an NCC strategy to re-settle returning servicemen into agricultural businesses.

This project will take an innovative approach to the way new community recreational spaces are conceived and designed. It is no longer enough to just provide open space for people, green space must be multifunctional and deliver on many levels; access for all regardless of ability, the space must improve health and wellbeing, mitigate for climate change and biodiversity loss, be easily accessible by public transport, benefit the economy of the local area as well as alleviating recreational pressure on nearby designated areas and finally provide a legacy that can also be valued by future generations.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Stage 1- Design Feasibility and Master-planning	£60,000	July 20-March 24	BRP – Funded	Initial design feasibility study complete. Action plan and Advocacy and Engagement plan to be further refined.
Stage 2- Phased delivery of infrastructure identified through the master planning work	TBC	September 24 onwards	CIL, BRP, NCC, Developer Funding	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options

Hunstanton Coastal Defences

Overview:

The 1.5km of Hunstanton coastal defences provide protection over 229 residential properties in Hunstanton alongside a number of commercial and retail premises and holiday park caravans. They also provide protection to low lying land to the south in Heacham (176 properties) and Snettisham (220 properties) as a breach at Hunstanton could allow water to inundate these areas as well.

Management approach (HCMP):

The Hunstanton Coastal Management Plan (HCMP) completed in 2018 outlines management approaches required to maintain and sustain the standard of protection the coastal defences provide over the next 100-years. This includes cycles of re-facing the seawall, re-surfacing the promenade and raising the height of the rear-wave wall (including installing new floodgates).

Current situation:

In December 2022, we undertook an T98 inspection of all of our coastal defences. This was last undertaken in 2018 and was intended to update they current condition and residual life of the assets.

The outcomes of this inspection identified for defence Sections D and E of the coastal defences require significant investment needed within 5-years to improve their residual life and maintain the standard of protection provided. Defence Sections F and G require significant investment within 2-5 years to improve their residual life and maintain the standard of protection provided.

'Do nothing' consequences:

Failure of these defences during a tidal surge event would result in rapid flooding of properties, commercial and retail premises and holiday caravan parks in Hunstanton and adjacent low-lying land to the south in Heacham and Snettisham.

The HCMP identified a 'do minimum' approach to management of the coastal defences (e.g. patch repairs and H&S works) could result in losses of over £6 million compared to benefits of £500,000 over the next 100-years. This is compared to losses of £8k and benefits of £6.6 million under a 'maintain' approach (scheduled capital refurbishment) and losses of £300 and benefits of £6.7 million under a 'sustain approach' (raising the height of defences) over the next 100-years.

Proposed works:

We are currently developing a programme of works over the next 2-5 years to address issues identified, prioritised based on the current condition of defences.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Geotechnical investigations	£200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tender ~ summer 2023 • Contractor selection ~ autumn 2023 • Natural England assent & MMO license application ~ winter 2023-24 • Works begin ~ spring 2024 	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc...	Tender / scope of works underway

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report of outcomes ~ summer 2024 		
Seawall refacing	Section D £20,815 Section E £759,136 Section F £96,729 Section G £1,632,143	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping & design ~ autumn 2024 to winter 2024-25 • Tender, contractor selection, Natural England assent & MMO license application will be required • Works begin ~ estimated 2025-26 	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc...	Identified in HCMP Awaiting outcomes of geotechnical investigations
Foundation remedials	Will be considered following geotechnical investigations which will provide cost estimates	Requirements and timeframes will be informed following geotechnical investigations Marine license, Natural England assent and detailed designs will be required	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc...	
Promenade resurfacing	Section A £1,473,000.00 Section B £567,000.00 Section C £1,014,000.00 Section D £36,000.00 Section E £1,293,000.00 Section F £168,000.00 Section G £2,781,000.00	HCMP anticipated resurfacing to be required from 2048 for Sections A, B and C and from 2030 for Sections D, E, F and G. It should be noted condition grades are deteriorating and therefore works may need to be brought forward.	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc...	Identified in HCMP
Raising height of rear wave wall (inc. new floodgates)	Section B £1,116,000.00 Section C £1,338,000.00 Section D £135,000.00 Section E £1,554,000.00	Timelines for raising height will be informed by climate change projections of sea level rise. HCMP anticipated this could be required from 2048 for Sections A, B and C and from 2030 for Sections D, E, F and G.	BCKLWN, CIL, others tbc...	Identified in HCMP

Section F
£237,000.00
Section G
£2,154,000.00

Education Project

Rackheath New 11-16 High School

NCC has made a commitment for a new Secondary phase school in the Broadland Growth Triangle area and to date the only site available to us is within the Rackheath Strategic Development. However, another potential site is being considered in the Local Plan consultation. Some work on site assessment has taken place but all options for additional secondary school places need to be considered.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Scoping & option assessment & design feasibility	£100k	Rackheath Strategic Development is moving forward, and discussions are ongoing with the planning team. NCC Children's Services require more certainty on this site before making a firm commitment. In the meantime, other options are still being considered.	NCC Basic Need Qualification for BRP Required to support 13,500 planned homes in Broadland Growth Triangle. In principle agreement exists for BRP funding to support scheme development.	Completion of this stage will take it from feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options.
Planning	£400k	April 2024 to March 2025, subject to a suitable site being secured and development progress in Broadland Growth Triangle.	NCC Basic Need	Completion of this stage will take it to the project being shovel ready.
Construction Phase	£40M	April 2026 to March 2027, subject to a suitable site being secured with access and services provided	NCC funding, Basic Need, CIL, DfE Free School programme.	Delivery phase takes scheme beyond the project being shovel ready.

Regeneration Projects

East Norwich Regeneration Area

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
<p>Stages 1 and 2: Consultants Avison Young were commissioned in early 2021 to produce a masterplan to guide the comprehensive development of the Deal Ground, May Gurney, Utilities and Carrow Works sites in East Norwich, with a view to leveraging in significant public sector investment for the infrastructure needed to ensure delivery. The masterplan commission commenced in March 2021 and was completed in May 2022. The key Stage 1 output (Nov 21) was a high-level concept masterplan based on extensive consultation and engagement, providing a clear understanding of infrastructure needs, and providing an initial high-level assessment of the impact of this on deliverability and viability of the scheme. The outcome of the Stage 2 process (completed in May 22) refined the Stage 1 masterplan with outputs including an updated masterplan, draft supplementary planning document, infrastructure delivery plan, cost report and delivery report, including refined strategic viability assessment of the masterplan. Stage 2 resulted in a revised housing figure for the whole site of in the region of 3,630 units (of which approx. 3,360 are in the GNLP allocation) and at least 4,100 jobs. [See information under Stage 4 below for an update to housing capacity.] The masterplan and draft SPD identify the specific infrastructure requirements</p>	<p>£675k (stages 1 and 2)</p>	<p>Masterplan development (stages 1 and 2) is complete. The Stage 3 Homes England funded Delivery Study is now complete (June 2023) and will provide the basis for future funding business cases.</p> <p>Any future funding opportunities will be greatly supported by the site allocation in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (currently at examination stage) once confirmed, as this will increase the certainty of delivery.</p>	<p>Masterplan funding was provided by: Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Towns Deal, Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, Norfolk Strategic Fund, and the landowners of the key sites.</p> <p>Stage 3 funding was provided by Homes England.</p> <p>Future delivery: led by developer/landowners, with contributions from partners, including potentially the local authorities, Homes England, developer and private sector finance and CIL.</p>	<p>Masterplan stages 1 and 2 are complete.</p>

<p>(including bridges, roads, cycle and footway infrastructure, a new school, and marinas) required for the development. The masterplan and SPD focus on the sustainable regeneration of the sites and an enhanced environment through, for example, ensuring delivery of sustainable connections and prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists with excellent public transport, encouraging the highest levels of environmental sustainability in building design and construction, delivering biodiversity net gain across the development, encouraging low carbon energy solutions, and provision of climate change resilience where this can be designed in.</p>				
<p>Stage 3 delivery report: in October 2022 Homes England appointed consultants Avison Young to undertake a study focused on financial modelling, updating the masterplan viability assessment, assessment of delivery options, and development of a delivery strategy. The work is now complete and forms the basis of future activities to support delivery of the East Norwich sites including supporting funding bids for key infrastructure.</p>	<p>Stage 3 – Funded by Homes England</p>			<p>Stage 3 work was completed in 2023.</p> <p>Securing a low carbon energy solution for the East Norwich regeneration area, as a whole, and for individual sites is a key objective for delivering successful schemes within East Norwich, in addition to providing high quality, sustainable development, and as such will require strategic support.</p>

<p>Stage 4 (implementation):</p> <p>GNLP policy: A recently published letter (August 2023) from the planning inspectors to the GNLP team states that, in the light of the evidence presented at the examination, they consider that the capacity of the site for the plan period should be around 3,000 dwellings. This is in the context of an amendment to the housing trajectory for delivery and represents a marginal reduction from the 3,362 housing units as requested by the partnership during the examination process (as noted above). The GNLP policy for East Norwich will be confirmed through the Main Modifications consultation and adoption process, and the final policy will form the basis for the updated supplementary planning document (SPD).</p> <p>Updated SPD: A draft SPD was produced by the Avison Young / Allies and Morrison consultant team in May 2022, with the intention that it would be updated once the GNLP policy position was clarified. Following publication of the Main Modifications, the draft SPD will be updated with input from key partners including relevant local authorities and stakeholders. This will be a refresh rather than a fundamental re-write, focusing on factual, contextual and technical updates for all chapters, with a particular emphasis on connectivity and transport, heritage, energy and landscape/ecology issues.</p> <p>The SPD will be a joint document with relevant planning authorities including South Norfolk Council and the Broads Authority. It is anticipated that the revised SPD will be subject to statutory</p>	<p>Stage 4 work will be underpinned by contributions from partners in the form of an agreed resource package. This in turn will enable development of business cases and funding applications to bring forward delivery of the sites.</p>			
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consultation in early 2023 with adoption to follow that of the GNLP.

Future workstreams will include technical studies which in turn will inform business case development and funding bid preparation.

Nar Ouse Innovation and Collaboration Incubator

The development of an Innovation and Collaboration Incubator (ICI) falls within the NALEP ‘Space to Innovate Enterprise Zone’ located in the Nar Ouse Business Park, within King’s Lynn on land owned by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk adjacent the existing and successful King’s Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC).

The King’s Lynn Town Investment Plan (2021) sets out the challenges and opportunities for King’s Lynn and an agreed set of priorities around enterprise, skills, regeneration and connectivity. The strategy sets out the interventions needed to support higher skill levels, improved economic growth and business productivity. Regionally, the New Anglia LEP has set out in the Strategic Economic Strategy growth potential in the region in Agri-tech and offshore energy which King’s Lynn may have the ability to support business growth in related supply chains around these sectors.

Further to the detailed analysis and evidence identified in the Town Investment Plan, a detailed feasibility by consultancy SQW and Oxford Innovation was commissioned by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk in 2021 to test the demand, feasibility, cost and operational model for the new facility. As a result, the ICI project looks to deliver circa 38,000 sq.ft of lettable incubator space for SMEs and will be designed to assist high growth businesses within target sectors which could potentially include ICT, technology, advanced manufacturing and engineering sectors.

The project has been developed to RIBA Stage 2 with an estimated cost of circa £17m (subject to extent of fit out). The project is led by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Market testing, detailed design & Planning	£300,000	Market testing, RIBA Stage 3 & 4 – timeframe to complete 10 months starting 11/2023.	BRP, Levelling Up, devolution	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Construction	£17m (based on RIBA Stage 1 cost plan)	Construction 04/2025		

Southgates Regeneration Area

The 'Southgates' area is a strategic regeneration area for King's Lynn identified in the Town Investment Plan, a key site for the Heritage Action Zone programme (2017-2022) and a transport priority identified in the King's Lynn Transport Strategy. It is the key gateway into the town and represents an opportunity for transformational change to the way people arrive, travel around and live in the area. This is the right time to take on such a task. Changing patterns of living and working, the urgent need to tackle the climate crisis, and the Government's ambition to 'Level Up' the United Kingdom create a clear mandate for interventions which deliver active travel, heritage and sustainability improvements, strengthen the identity of the town, and offer benefits for residents and visitors alike.

Over the last 15 years, the Council has progressed with strategic land acquisitions in the area to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment of the site and complement the existing regeneration well under way on the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area to the south. The site areas contain a combination of vacant, derelict or properties in poor condition around the Southgate roundabout, the under-utilised Southgate Park and hoardings site to the east. The most significant feature of the area is the South Gate Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and its striking central location as the key southern access into King's Lynn is paramount.

A holistic masterplan for the area was adopted by the Borough Council in 2023. The scheme is led by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk in partnership with Norfolk County Council. Norfolk County Council was successful in securing £24.1m from the Levelling Up Fund round 2 for STARS to deliver the highway, active travel and public realm aspects of the scheme and active travel improvements on the town centre one-way gyratory system.

Further funding will be required through the Brownfield Land Release Fund and Homes England to support the development of the brownfield sites to address the abnormal constraints in order to deliver the site comprehensively. This will be led by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, potentially in partnership with housing associations.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Brownfield sites: site preparation, planning, remediation to release development sites	£10m	Planning 08/2024 Site preparation/remediation 04/2025	BRP, Brownfield Land Release Fund, Devolution	Site investigations/feasibility /development work underway on preferred option

Gateway Thetford

This key regeneration initiative for Thetford aims to develop the immediate surrounds of the station to accommodate flexible commercial space that stimulates growth within the Town and, in doing so, provides for an upgraded railway station.

There is good strategic fit in that the project aligns with broader policies including the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, Breckland Council's Corporate Plan and Breckland Council's Local Plan, national and regional industrial strategies, as well as priority investment areas identified as part of Government's recent regeneration funding pots (i.e. Future High Street Fund, Stronger Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund).

Initial feasibility work is close to completion currently.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Further feasibility work	TBC	TBC	Levelling Up Fund, Access For All, DfT etc.	Feasibility work on scheme has begun to identify options
Detailed design/development work	£13.5m	TBC	Levelling Up Fund, Access For All, DfT etc.	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Construction phase	£82m	TBC	Levelling Up Fund, Access For All, DfT etc.	Project is shovel ready

North Quay and the Conge Gateway Regeneration in Great Yarmouth

North Quay is an important waterfront development site located between the rail station and the historic market place and will become a new vibrant destination for Great Yarmouth. Linking this area to Great Yarmouth's market place is The Conge, a residential development which will significantly enhance a prominent gateway route into the town centre. The inter-connected sites feature strongly in the Town Investment Plan.

North Quay is a 10 acre (4 hectare) riverside gateway development opportunity in the heart of Great Yarmouth, allocated for wholesale regeneration in the adopted Local Plan for a variety of commercial and residential uses. Having succeeded in securing £20 million Levelling Up Funding, there is significant momentum building to deliver this North Quay development opportunity site close to the historic town centre which is currently undergoing significant transformation with a new covered market, public realm and a new Learning Hub/University Campus. Land acquisition / assembly and the delivery of key infrastructure improvements e.g. Vauxhall Bridge are underway to unlock this development site with a development partner being sought to deliver the comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

The inter-connected Conge residential development site is allocated in the Local Plan, has been granted outline planning consent with the southern section of the site being levelled in early 2024 and a developer partner secured. Further funding will be required, potentially through the Brownfield Land Release Fund, to support the development of the northern side of The Conge.

The completion of the whole North Quay and The Conge brownfield site developments is dependent upon securing the gap funding to address the viability gap to complete comprehensive redevelopment.

Project Name: North Quay and The Conge Gateway Regeneration				
Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Tick system
Developer Partner tender for North Quay	Levelling Up Funding	Six months from April 2024	Levelling Up Funding & Local Authority	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Land Assembly	TBC	In progress with time limited Levelling Up Funding	Levelling Up Funding, Future High Street Funding, developer finance, Local Authority & Brownfield Land Release Fund (TBC)	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option
Development of The Conge (northern site)	TBC	Northern site dependent upon bridging viability funding gap.	Future High Street Funding, developer finance, Local Authority & Brownfield Land Release Fund (TBC)	Feasibility/development work underway on preferred option

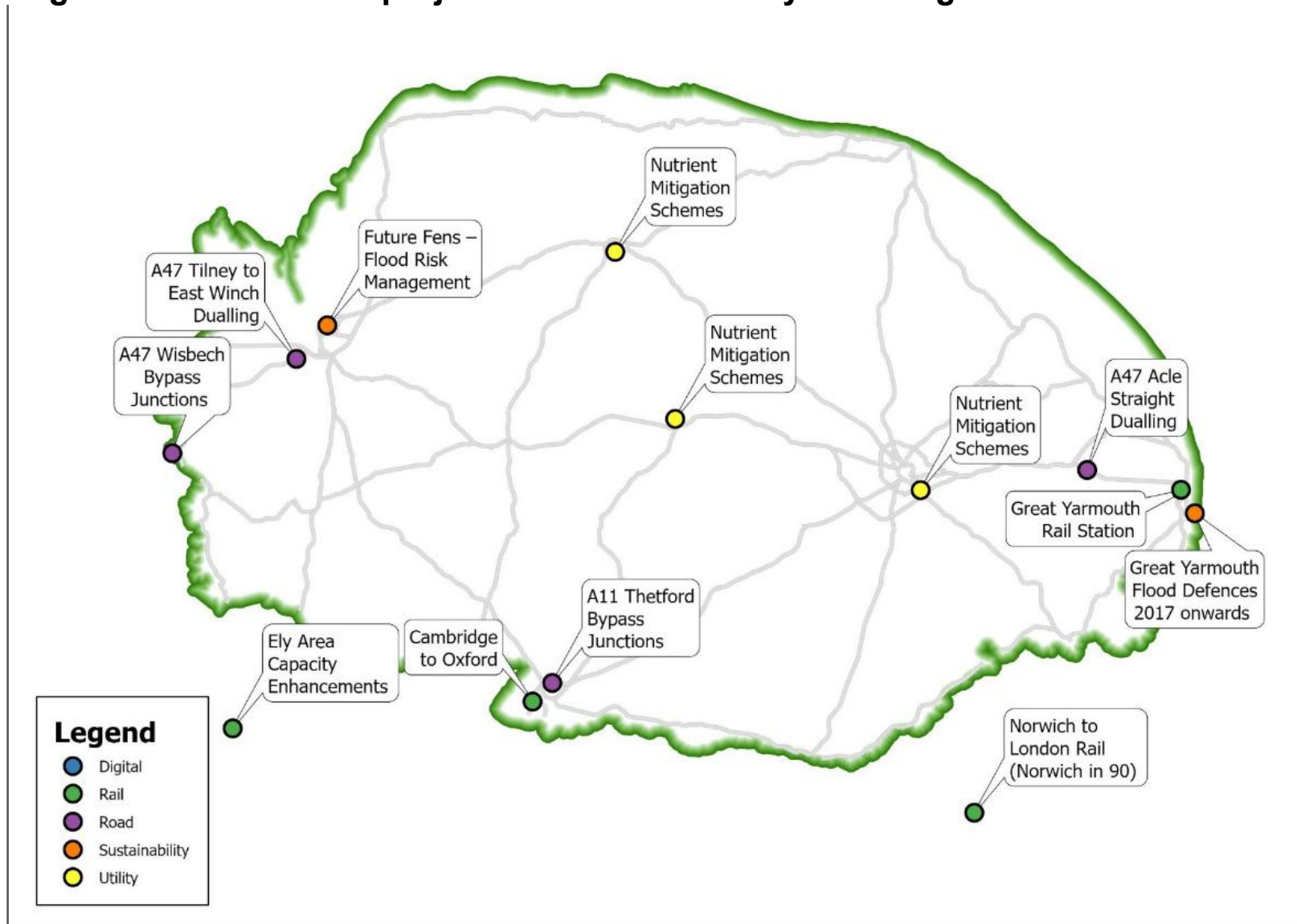
Business Incubator on the Great Yarmouth Energy Park

The business incubator will sit within the established Energy Park on the South Denes peninsula and provide a new enterprise centre, providing business incubation. The facility will focus on developing and supporting the local energy sector supply chain, providing a range of co-located physical and virtual space on relatively flexible terms with a mixture of facilities – virtual tenancies, hotdesks, dedicated suites, shared facilities that enable collaboration and innovation, meeting rooms and messy/maker/lab spaces and follow-on space integrating wraparound enterprise support. Phase 1 of the scheme has reached RIBA stage 3 with Planning consent.

Description of stage	Estimated cost to deliver the stage	Indicative timeframe to deliver stage and start date	Potential funding source	Scheme Development
Site selected in South Denes site cleared and architects plans advanced to RIBA stage 3 with planning consent	Phase 1 - £3.95m (unfunded) £21.4 million (total project cost – 3 phases)	Contractor appointed – TBC Site start – TBC Completion – TBC	Town Deal GYBC NCC Norfolk BRP Devolution	Shovel ready

Infrastructure projects to be delivered by other organisations

Figure 4 Infrastructure projects to be delivered by other organisations



Road Projects

A11 Thetford Bypass Junctions

Evidence has shown that even without the proposed growth at Thetford, the junctions on the A11 are forecast to operate over their theoretical capacity by 2026, with the Mundford Road (A134) junction experiencing the worst congestion. The issues are exacerbated by the proposed growth of Thetford. As a result, junctions on the A11 bypass around Thetford will need to be upgraded.

A Masterplan for the growth has been developed and improvements will be made to appropriate standards agreed with National Highways, to be implemented at certain trigger points dependent on the numbers of houses. It is likely that the agreed scope of work will comprise traffic signals on the roundabouts and speed limits on the A11. Because of the strategic function of the A11, which is the major trunk road connection between Norwich, Cambridge, and London, both Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council consider that this is not an optimum solution and will continue to work with partners – principally National Highways – to bring forward measures that do not diminish the strategic status of the route. Ultimately, this might require grade-separation of junctions.

Infrastructure	A11 Thetford Bypass Junctions
Location	Breckland
Delivers	5,000 homes and 5,000 jobs
Lead authority	National Highways, NCC, Landowners, Breckland District Council
Estimated start date	2025-2030
Estimated cost	TBC
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	NPIF, National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025-2030), Major Road Network Funding
Benefits	Improves congestion, required for growth
Link to other Information	Thetford Area Action Plan Thetford Market Town Transport Network Improvement Strategy
Status	Improvements, likely to be signalisation of the junctions and a speed limit on the A11, will be phased with the delivery of the housing growth. None yet are programmed. Partners are considering whether an alternative option could be delivered that would mitigate impacts from development as well as protecting the strategic function of the A11. More extensive improvements would be delivered as part of a future National Highways programme, but are not yet committed.

A47 Wisbech Bypass Junctions

There are significant congestion issues on the A47 Wisbech Bypass especially at the pinch point junctions of the B198 east (Lynn Road), B198 west (Cromwell Road) and A1101 Elm High Road. There are also safety concerns at the A47/Broad End Road junction which requires a new junction by developers to deliver housing in Wisbech. As the A47 is the responsibility of National Highways, major improvements such as dualling would need to be brought forward as part of National Highways' trunk road programme post-2025, although minor improvements to the junctions and local roads could come forward through development within the town or be funded by the local authority, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA).

The Wisbech Access Strategy identifies a package of individual transport schemes which collectively improve the transport network across Wisbech. The CPCA has provided funding to deliver the first phase of short-term projects, including improvements to junctions at A47/ Elm High Road roundabout, and A47/Broad End Road. Medium and long term projects forming part of the Wisbech Access Strategy include upgrades to the A47/Cromwell Road roundabout and relocation of A47/Elm High Road roundabout.

Dualling of the A47 Wisbech Bypass, which would need to be taken forward by National Highways in a trunk road programme, is not currently programmed.

Infrastructure	A47 Wisbech Bypass Junctions
Location	King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Fenland
Delivers	960 homes and 10,000sqm office space (up to 2026)
Lead authority	CPCA, Developers, National Highways
Estimated start date	TBC (in short term programme)
Estimated cost	£1.1m Elm High Road £3.4m Broad End Road
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	NPIF, developer funding, National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025-2030), CPCA Business Board Growth Deal Funding
Benefits	Improved junctions on the A47 will overcome concerns regarding road safety and connect growth areas to the trunk road network.
Link to other information	Wisbech Access Strategy
Status	The CPCA has developed a Wisbech Access Strategy. Via the Local Growth Fund, the Business Board have funded a £9.9 million package of improvements to the road system around Wisbech. A Full Business Case is being prepared, due to be completed in late 2022.

A47 Tilney to East Winch Dualling

The long-term objective of Norfolk County Council and other partners is for complete dualling of the A47 along the full length of the trunk road from the A1 at Peterborough to Lowestoft. However, it is recognised that this might need to be achieved through a phased approach to improvements. The A47 Alliance, an organisation bringing together local authorities and other representative groups along the length of the road, agreed that A47 Tilney to East Winch and Acle Straight dualling, below, are two of its priorities.

A number of schemes are committed for construction on the A47 between 2020 and 2025.

Infrastructure	A47 Tilney to East Winch dualling
Location	King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Delivers	More reliable journeys on the A47 trunk road and improved safety. Dualling Tilney to East Winch would prevent up to 31 fatal and 205 serious casualties over the life of the scheme (60yrs). Supports strategic site allocations in West Winch and North Runcton, adjacent to A47, which provide for 4,000 homes and 1ha employment land, while employment land is identified at Hardwick (27 ha) and Saddlebow (23ha).
Lead authority	National Highways
Estimated start date	2025-30
Estimated cost	£203m
Unfunded cost	£203m
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025- 2030)
Benefits	Improves connectivity, reliability and safety
Link to other information	A47 Alliance Website
Status	Tilney to East Winch is a current priority of the A47 Alliance.

A47 Acle Straight Dualling

As well as Tilney to East Winch, dualling the Acle Straight is a priority.

Infrastructure	A47 Acle Straight dualling
Location	Broadland, Great Yarmouth
Delivers	The Enterprise Zone covering large parts of Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft will help bring forward 9,000 direct and 4,500 indirect jobs, and 4,000 homes across the area. Furthermore, approximately 14,000 new homes are planned across Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. The plans for 37,000 new homes and the creation of 27,000 jobs in the Greater Norwich area will further increase demand along the A47 between Greater Norwich and between the Enterprise Zone. Dualling the Acle Straight will also deliver a 10-minute journey time saving and would prevent an anticipated 13 fatal and 87 serious casualties over the life of the scheme (60yrs).
Lead authority	National Highways
Estimated start date	2025-30
Estimated cost	£144m
Unfunded cost	£144m
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	National Highways Roads Investment Strategy 3 (2025- 2030)
Benefits	Improve accessibility and journey times between Norwich and Great Yarmouth and improve the safety record of the road
Link to other information	A47 Alliance Website
Status	The Acle Straight is a current priority of the A47 Alliance.

Rail Projects

Norwich to London Rail (Norwich in 90)

Pre-pandemic, this line saw major improvements with complete replacement of the rolling stock and the introduction of some 90 minute journeys (two each way every day). A service frequency of every 20 minutes was also part of the franchise commitment although this has not been implemented. Like all rail services, passenger levels have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Post-pandemic, the numbers and types of journeys made by rail is likely to have changed, and this needs to be factored in to long-term planning of services and other improvements. The Great Eastern Main Line Task Force, formed to define how the ambition for a faster, more reliable, better quality service with more capacity could be delivered to serve the needs of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, continues to make the case for improvements. Currently, a decision on an improvement at Haughley Junction (just south of Stowmarket) is awaited.

Infrastructure	Norwich to London Rail (Norwich in 90)
Location	Norwich to London
Delivers	Improvements could generate up to £9.3bn in economic benefits and create 32,600 jobs. The financial benefit of journey time savings is estimated to be £6m annually.
Lead authority	Greater Anglia, Network Rail, Local Authorities
Estimated start date	2024-2029
Estimated cost	TBC
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Benefits	London to Colchester in 40 minutes, Ipswich in 60 minutes and Norwich in 90 minutes at least hourly off-peak.
Link to other information	New Anglia Great Eastern Rail Campaign Website
Status	Awaiting government decision on Haughley Junction.

Great Yarmouth Rail Station

Existing rail services currently operate between Norwich and Great Yarmouth every hour, with 30 minutes services at peak times. The rolling stock has been completely replaced, addressing train quality issues. However, a significant improvement is required at Great Yarmouth rail station to improve the arrival experience at this key public transport gateway to the town. Schemes implemented by the local authorities have improved the station forecourt and the onward link to the town centre and marketplace using New Anglia LEP Growth Deal money. There is a long-standing ambition for improvements to the rail station itself, including out of hours access to the platforms. Some Great Yarmouth Town Deal funding, with Community Rail match funding has been allocated for minor improvements to the station including a changing places unit.

Infrastructure	Great Yarmouth Rail Station
Location	Great Yarmouth
Delivers	Improvements to Great Yarmouth Rail Station
Lead authority	Network Rail, Greater Anglia, Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Estimated start date	2024-29
Estimated cost	TBC
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Benefits	Facilitate jobs growth and encourage inward investment into the energy coast. Help meet objectives as set out in Policy CS17 of Great Yarmouth Core Strategy, and Local Transport Plan policies
Link to other information	N/A
Status	Potential for inclusion in Network Rail spending programme 2024-2029

Ely Area Capacity Enhancements

A large number of rail services pass through Ely: passenger services from King’s Lynn to Cambridge, Norwich to Cambridge, Norwich to Peterborough and Ipswich to Peterborough; and freight services from Felixstowe. Major rail infrastructure improvements are required to accommodate all services committed within franchise agreements and for further frequency improvements in the future. Local authorities are working with local enterprise partnerships, government and Network Rail to bring forward the improvements for delivery. Network Rail has completed an Outline Business Case using funding from the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, and Strategic Freight Network, and more recently funding from DfT. A decision is awaited from government regarding approval and funding for the next steps.

Infrastructure	Ely Area Capacity Enhancements
Location	East Cambridgeshire
Delivers	£120m wider economic benefits, and 1,000 homes and 1,000 jobs.
Lead authority	Network Rail
Estimated start date	Mid 2020s
Estimated cost	£500m
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	Network Rail: Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline
Benefits	Supports better connectivity on the Cambridge Norwich, Peterborough Norwich, and King’s Lynn Cambridge corridors.
Link to other information	New Anglia website
Status	Currently waiting for government decision on progression.

East West Rail (Cambridge to Oxford)

The complete East West Rail scheme comprises a strategic rail route that will link Ipswich and Norwich to Cambridge, Bedford, Milton Keynes, Bicester, and Oxford, allowing connections to Swindon, the Thames Valley, south west England and south Wales providing a connection across the important Oxford to Cambridge “high tech arc.” The route will potentially allow freight trains to connect the ports of Felixstowe and Harwich with the Great Eastern, East Coast, Midland, West Coast and Great Western main lines without the need to travel on congested tracks around North London.

Government has set up a Special Delivery Vehicle for the project and this is currently taking forward design and development work on a new line from Cambridge to Bedford. Delivery of this could be completed in the mid-2020s. Work on the section to connect people between Oxford and Milton Keynes via Bicester and Winslow is well underway, and the first train will run in the next few years.

East West Rail is supported by NCC and is focussed on making sure that the benefits of this substantial investment come to Norfolk by ensuring that services extend at least as far as Norwich (on existing lines).

Infrastructure	East West Rail (Cambridge to Oxford)
Location	Cambridge to Oxford
Delivers	Establishes a railway connecting East Anglia with central, southern, and western England.
Lead authority	East West Rail Company. Working with local authorities along the route, DfT and Network Rail
Estimated start date	Late 2020s
Estimated cost	TBC
Unfunded cost	TBC
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	Government via special purpose delivery vehicle
Benefits	Connects Norfolk to major economies in Oxford and Cambridge.
Link to other information	East West Rail website
Status	Phase 1 Oxford to Bicester complete Phase 2 Upgrading and reconstructing sections between Bicester and Bletchley, Aylesbury and Claydon and Bletchley to Bedford by the end of 2024 Phase 3 Bedford to Cambridge expected to be built by the late-2020s. Work is ongoing on extending services to Norwich and Ipswich (on existing tracks) following completion of Phase 3.

Utility Project

Nutrient Mitigation Schemes

Anglian Water has secured approval from Ofwat to deliver three accelerated infrastructure schemes for nutrient removal for Whitlingham Trowse, Fakenham and Dereham water recycling centres (WRCs). Works to accelerate the removal of nutrients to technically achievable limits (TAL) in advance of 2030 will help applications for residential development, currently on hold due to nutrient neutrality requirements, to progress within these WRC catchments as less nutrient mitigation will be required from developments.

Infrastructure	Accelerated nutrient removal programme	Accelerated nutrient removal programme	Accelerated nutrient removal programme
Location	Whitlingham Trowse WRC	Fakenham WRC	Dereham WRC
Delivers	Nutrient removal to TAL by 31.3.27	Nutrient removal to TAL by 31.3.25	Nutrient removal to TAL by 31.3.25
Lead authority	Anglian Water	Anglian Water	Anglian Water
Estimated start date	TBC	TBC	TBC
Estimated cost	Total estimated costs £10.31M for all three schemes		
Unfunded cost	TBC	TBC	TBC
CIL contribution	No	No	No
Funding opportunities	-	-	-
Benefits	Minimises the nutrient mitigation required to be provided by residential developments to enable housing growth to come forward		
Link to other information	https://www.ofwat.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/A1-accelerated-process-all-schemes-final-decisions.pdf		
Status	Baseline requirement	Baseline requirement	Baseline requirement

Sustainability Projects

Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2017 onwards (Epoch 3)

There are approximately 12km of flood defences in Great Yarmouth that help reduce the risk of tidal flooding to over 5000 dwellings and 1000 businesses from the River Yare. However, the steel piled quays supporting our flood defence walls are badly corroded and need replacing. Failure of these defences during a surge tide event would result in rapid flooding of properties in the lower lying land adjoining the river. The Environment Agency have developed a 5-epoch project over the next 40 years to address this issue, prioritised based on the condition of the defences. Seeking funding for Epoch 3 is a challenging task and is being worked on by the Environment Agency.

Infrastructure	Great Yarmouth Flood Defences 2019 onwards Epoch 2 (2016 – 2021), Epoch 3 (2021 – 2026), Epoch 4 (2026 – 2046), Epoch 5 (2046 – 2061)
Location	Great Yarmouth
Delivers	In 2023 the Environment Agency completed the delivery of the Epoch 2 (2016 –2021) works to refurbish and improve approximately 4km of flood defences and the supporting quayside. A Limpet Dam was used to enable patching of the corroded pile sections and installation of cathodic protection to stop future accelerated low water corrosion. It is anticipated that adopting this approach will allow a further 30 years of life to be gained from the assets for an estimated 30% of the cost of replacement and manage the flood risk to around 2000 homes and 700 businesses. In future Epochs, it may be necessary to replace some sheet piles, depending on their condition. The partners are working together to identify a sustainable income stream to ensure the vital investment for the next phase of work and continued maintenance. All opportunities and beneficiaries should be explored.
Lead authority	Environment Agency (lead technical partner) working in partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, NCC, Peel Ports, Broads Authority, and the Tidal Defence Business Partnership (representing local businesses).
Estimated start date	Epoch 2 construction work began in October 2019 and completed in spring 2023.
Estimated cost	Epoch 2 had a construction cost of £42.9 million with an additional £6.2 million required to maintain the Epoch 2 defences over the next 30 years. Epoch 3 has an estimated construction cost of £64 million, significantly higher than originally estimated due to inflation and results of further investigations into the walls.

Unfunded cost	Epoch 3 is at an early stage. Based on current cost estimates there is likely to be a requirement for an additional £40 Million of partnership funding, in addition to the Flood Defence Grant in Aid, Local Levy & Other Government Department (OGD) funding that has already been made available to the project.
CIL contribution	No
Funding opportunities	Partners of the project, growth and regeneration investment, developer contributions, renewable energy sector, critical infrastructure providers, businesses, and quayside owners and operators.
Benefits	The flood defences support the economic growth and development of Great Yarmouth with the potential to support 34,000 jobs and £1.5 billion to the economy over the lifetime of the Epochs. Enabling 50ha of prime location undeveloped land and opportunity to enable appropriate resilient development, in line with local development strategies and supporting policies.
Link to other information	Great Yarmouth Tidal Defence Project
Status	<p>The Epoch 2 construction works to 40 walls across the town were completed in spring 2023. £18m Partnership funding was secured to gain approval to spend £27m FDGiA (capital and revenue).</p> <p>Epoch 3 is at an early stage of business case development. The Strategic Outline Business Case has been approved, and surveys of the flood walls and quayside are being undertaken to better understand their condition. This will inform the developing Outline Business Case</p>

Future Fens (Fens2100+) – Flood Risk Management

The Great Ouse Fens are approximately 370,000 hectares of rural lowland, much of this is below mean sea level. 66,000 hectares of this area are within Norfolk. The Fens are high grade agricultural land and currently have a high standard of flood risk management provided by a complex system of watercourses and key water management assets in Norfolk, including the Denver Sluices, King Lynn tidal defences, South Level Barrier bank, and major pumping stations.

New housing development proposed for Downham Market, Wisbech and Kings Lynn, as well as new transport infrastructure crossing the Fens will put additional pressure on the Fens flood risk infrastructure.

Infrastructure	Fens2100+
Location	Area around Southery, Denver, Upwell, Outwell, Kings Lynn
Delivers	<p>The Great Ouse Fens considered in the project covers 2,184km² of Cambridgeshire and Norfolk adjacent to the lower reach of the Great Ouse catchment from Earith to The Wash. The area includes around 130,878 residential properties, 13,068 non-residential properties and 184,895 hectares of agricultural land.</p> <p>Fens 2100+ is a single “landscape-wide” programme covering landscape from Cambridge to the Humber which builds on the previous “Future Fens – Flood Risk Management Project” which focused on the Great Ouse Fens.</p> <p>This programme is a partnership project between the Environment Agency and Internal drainage boards and is responsible for developing a strategic case for investment in flood risk management across the Fens landscape setting out the flood risk management investment choices that will be required to ensure we have a vibrant and flourishing landscape which is also adapting to the challenge of climate change.</p> <p>Importantly it will also directly drive delivery of flood risk management across this landscape by producing investment which will confirm the immediate (2027-2033) asset (and other) investment requirements across each catchment and these will form the basis of the next FCRM capital programme.</p> <p>To support these outcomes, Fens2100+ will also provide an overview current FCRM operational situation, current and future flood risk and the costs and benefits of the assets which currently manage this landscape.</p> <p>The investments that Fens2100+ directs could deliver</p>

	£58.3bn worth of benefits to approximately 400,000 people who live in areas at risk from flooding from main rivers and the sea, as well as 370,000ha of agricultural land and around 500km of road and rail infrastructure.
Lead authority	Environment Agency
Estimated start date	Ongoing project. Implementation phase from ~2026/27 onwards
Estimated cost	Fens2100+ IS A £10m programme of work funded through FCERM Grant in Aid funding. Predicted future capital investment need in flood risk management across the whole of the Fens landscape over the next 100 years is upwards of £4.5m..
Unfunded cost	None
CIL contribution	Possibly
Funding opportunities	Central Government (Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid); Local Government (Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy), Internal Drainage Boards, and other funding sources from beneficiaries.
Benefits	<p>With the support of this drainage system, the Fens and Lowlands have become a major arable agricultural region in Britain for grains and vegetables and the area accounts for 50% of the Grade 1 agricultural land in England, producing 37% of all vegetables and 24% of all potatoes grown in the country, as well as 17% of its sugar beet and 38% of its bulbs and flowers.</p> <p>These drainage systems also provide flood protection to many Fenland and Lowland settlements and properties, and to the infrastructure that serves those communities. Approximately 400,000 people live in areas at risk from flooding from main rivers and the sea, of these people, 6% live in areas considered to be at high risk.</p>
Link to other information	Great Ouse Tidal River Baseline Report 2017
Status	The Environment Agency published a baseline study which sets out the benefits delivered by the current flood risk management assets in the Great Ouse Fens and the difference between the funding that is required and the GiA funding that is available to sustain these assets over the next 100 years. Fens2100+ is now expanding this across the whole of the fens landscape. Existing cost estimations are based on initial understanding of the core, tidal river area of the Fens; needs for the Fens will be significantly in excess of these currently known figures.

Up and Coming Projects

There is a list of up-and-coming projects, to assist in the creation of a pipeline of schemes so we are aware of the major infrastructure likely to come forward in the future and as more information on these new projects becomes available they can be considered for inclusion in future versions of the NSIDP. This section is for those projects which fit the criteria for the NSIDP but where enough information is not known for projects to be fully included in the plan at this time. These projects are:

- Trowse Rail Bridge
- Thetford A134 to A11 connection
- Longwater additional access
- A149 King's Lynn Bypass
- A10 Setchey (south of West Winch)
- A140 north of Long Stratton
- Great Yarmouth Outer Harbour Southern Terminal
- Great Yarmouth Town Centre Improvements
- Active Travel in Breckland
- Future Breckland Regeneration Programme

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 11

Report Title: Community Strategy

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

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

Responsible Director: Sarah Rhoden (Director of Community, Information and Learning)

Executive Summary

Communities are the heart of everything that we do. We work hard to deliver services direct to communities from within their local area. This includes through our network of libraries across the county, local delivery of adult learning classes (now delivered through over 100 locations), our museums, the local environment and many other areas providing opportunities to connect, learn, be creative, be physically active and enjoy your local area.

The development of a Community Strategy is a new area of work. It gives us the opportunity to be clear about the important part that the county council can play in supporting resilient communities.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review and comment on the approach to developing a new Community Strategy, as set out in this paper.**
- 2. Note that a final draft Strategy will be brought to the Committee for review later this year, prior to consideration by Cabinet.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The Council's vision – Better, Together for Norfolk – highlights out the importance of strong, engaged and inclusive communities. These can be described as resilient communities.

- 1.2 Norfolk needs resilient communities because it is a large and diverse county with many rural and coastal areas that face various social, economic and environmental challenges. Resilient communities are those that can adapt to changing circumstances, support each other and make the most of their assets and resources. Resilient communities can help people keep healthy and well by promoting social connections, physical activity, learning opportunities and civic engagement. Resilient communities can also cope better in emergencies by having strong networks, local leadership, contingency plans and mutual aid. By building resilience at the community level, we can reduce the demand for public services, improve the quality of life for residents and create a more sustainable future for Norfolk
- 1.2 The Council carries out a broad range of community focussed activities, with universal activities being delivered through the Communities and Environment Department, which was formed in April this year. This new Department provides an opportunity to consolidate and articulate the approach to community support through a Community Strategy.
- 1.3 There is no intention to replace or supersede any of the existing thematic strategies the County Council has in place (for example the Promoting Independence or Flourishing in Norfolk strategies). There is an opportunity to develop a strategy that complements this existing strategic suite whilst also providing focus to community activity, focussing primarily on the universal community services provided by the Communities and Environment Department, including:-
- Active Norfolk
 - Adult Learning
 - Arts
 - Customer and community services
 - Environment
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion
 - Libraries
 - Museums
 - Norfolk Record Office
 - Resilience

2. Proposal

- 3.1 It is proposed to develop a new Community Strategy for Norfolk County Council, building on the emerging outcomes set out below.

3.2 Process

- 3.2.1 The work to develop the new Strategy, and associated documents, will be led by Community, Information and Learning, within the Communities and Environment Department. The development of the strategy will be twin-tracked with the development of the new Library Strategy as many of the stakeholders and data being drawn from will be relevant for both.

3.2.2 There will be four main phases of activity:-

1. Outline scoping

This early phase will consider the format, purpose and emerging outcomes for the strategy. We are currently in this phase and the emerging outcomes and framework are set out in this report for Members to consider.

2. Data and information review and analysis

A review of the community focussed data we currently hold, including local population data, benchmarking and comparison data with other authorities and any community insight data.

In addition, a review of community activity across the County Council will be carried out during the development of the strategy, so that outcomes from that work can be factored into the new strategy or any associated delivery plan. The aim of this review is to:-

- understand the full picture of community activity carried out and commissioned by NCC
- understand the resource associated with this activity and the impact/benefits
- ensure resources are organised efficiently, are targeted appropriately and that there is no duplication of effort
- enable us to understand the key partnerships and community organisations that we work with and commission
- ensure that the routes for partners and key stakeholders to engage with us are straightforward

3. Stakeholder engagement

In this phase, we will be reaching out to stakeholders to share the emerging outcomes and the county council's response to these. This will include engaging with VCSE partners and stakeholders as well as groups representing communities.

4. Drafting the strategy and plan

Bringing together all of the information and learning into a single picture. We may revisit those who have contributed in earlier phases to discuss our conclusions. We will also engage with key stakeholders to ensure that they have a further opportunity to engage in the process.

5. Approval and implementation

The final proposed Strategy will be brought to this Committee for review and comment prior to consideration by Cabinet. We anticipate being in a position

to do this at the November meeting, alongside the new draft Library Strategy.

Following approval, we will communicate the strategy both internally and externally.

3.3 Emerging outcomes and framework

3.3.1 Very early work has focussed on considering the determinants of resilient communities. This has led to the drafting of initial outcomes to form a key element of the Strategy, which will be further refined and tested during further work. These emerging outcomes are:-

1. Communities feel socially connected and participate in local activities
2. Communities feel connected to the culture, heritage and natural environment
3. Communities can access resources, places and spaces to make things happen
4. Communities understand and support each other to get on well together

3.3.2 Aligned to these outcomes, some very early work to consider what role the County Council can play in supporting these outcomes are set out in an emerging framework called CHOICES, where each letter stands for a different aspect of our approach. The emerging CHOICES framework is set out in Appendix A.

3.3.2 The key lines of enquiry that we will be exploring to develop the Strategy include:-

- How relevant are the outcomes
- What role can NCC play in delivering against these outcomes
- How can we work with others who can contribute to delivery of these outcomes
- Are we using our organising our resources effectively

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 The development of a new Strategy provides an opportunity to set out our long-term vision for communities as well as the council's contribution to achieving the vision.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 The County Council does not currently have a Community Strategy which sets out a common purpose for community services. The creation of the new Communities and Environment department provides an opportunity to

develop a vision that brings together the services across the department. It also provides an opportunity to articulate to key stakeholders, including potential funders and communities themselves, where we are directing our resources, and why.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 We could decide not to develop a new Strategy, in which case the benefits and opportunities it provides will not be realised.
- 5.2 There is scope to refine the approach to developing the Strategy, as set out in this report, and the Committee may wish to comment on the proposed process.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the development of the new Strategy and it will be delivered from existing resources.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** The development of the new Strategy will be carried out within existing resources.
- 7.2 **Property:** None.
- 7.3 **IT:** None.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** There is a need to demonstrate that we are meeting our statutory and other legislative duties, and existing Strategic documents that will support the delivery of the Community Strategy (for example the Library Strategy) will continue to demonstrate how we are meeting these. The Community Strategy will not replace existing key strategy documents.
- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** This will be considered as part of the development of the new Strategy.
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** This will be completed as part of the development of the Strategy.
- 8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** None.
- 8.5 **Health and Safety implications:** None.
- 8.6 **Sustainability implications:** None.

8.7 Any Other Implications: There are no other implications to bring to Members attention.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The development of a new Strategy provides an opportunity to set out a common purpose for community services.

10. Action required

The Select Committee is asked to:

- 1. Review and comment on the approach to developing a new Community Strategy, as set out in this paper.**
- 2. Note that a final draft Strategy will be brought to the Committee for review later this year, prior to consideration by Cabinet.**

11. Background Papers

11.1 None.

Officer Contact

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

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

Developing a new Community Strategy – Emerging CHOICES framework

Collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- making our important collections available and accessible to everyone
Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- protecting, conserving and enhancing Norfolk's natural and physical assets
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• for communities to take part, have their say and get involved in their communities
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• working with partners and key stakeholders to enable communities to access the information, advice and support they want and need
Celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• taking opportunities to highlight and celebrate what it is that makes Norfolk a great place to live, work and visit
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• providing opportunities to learn, develop and be creative
Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maintaining accessible community spaces in the natural environment and in physical buildings

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 12

Report Title: Library Strategy 2025 and beyond

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

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

Responsible Director: Sarah Rhoden (Director of Community, Information and Learning)

Executive Summary

Our Library and Information Service provides a key role at the heart of communities. We often receive feedback about how important the service is to people. It provides opportunities for reading, learning, connecting with others, creativity, support, and much more.

Since the current Library Strategy was approved in 2020, a lot has changed. This was before Covid lockdown and subsequent restrictions and before the economic impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We have also invested in the development new multi-user hubs in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, placing the libraries in prime town centre locations along with partners, creating stronger and more joined up offers for communities. Work to improve other libraries is also underway.

This is a good opportunity for us to reflect on needs moving forward, and develop a Strategy that helps us to meet those needs.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. **Review and comment on the approach to developing a new Library Strategy, as set out in this paper.**
2. **Note that a final draft Strategy will be brought to the Committee for review later this year, prior to consideration by Cabinet.**

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 Norfolk Library and Information Service plays a key role in and for Norfolk's communities. The service currently operates across 47 branch libraries placed in the heart of communities, with 5 mobile library vans reaching out to communities further away from these branch locations with regular visits, alongside a digital offer.

1.2 The service offers gives free access for all to:-

- Books and other resources including Heritage collections
- eBooks, eAudio, eNewspapers and Magazines and online subscriptions
- Community spaces
- Wi Fi, PC access and printing
- A wide range of activities
- Trusted information and signposting, including advice for small and start-up businesses through our 7 British Library Business and Intellectual Property Centres (BIPCs) based at the Millennium Library and 6 branch libraries

1.3 Information about library achievements in the last year is attached at Appendix A.

1.3 Since the last Library Strategy was agreed by Members in March 2020, there have been some significant changes. These include:-

- Increased literacy needs and social isolation since Covid 19
- The way that some people access the service in a post-Covid 2019 context
- The development of two new multi-user hubs in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn
- Anecdotal evidence from library staff that people asking for support have more complex needs

1.2 It is now time to reflect on our achievements and the current context of service delivery to help us to develop a new vision and objectives for the service moving forward.

2. The National picture

2.1 The Government's last adopted Strategy, Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England, expired in 2021.

2.2 Baroness Sanderson was commissioned by Government to carry out an independent review of public libraries to support the development of a new government public libraries strategy. The key findings of the review were published in January 2024, and the Government's response to the findings were published later that month.

2.3 In his response to the findings, the Government's Minister for Arts and Heritage, Lord Parkinson, set out a commitment to take forward the following recommendations from the report:-

1. The establishment of a national data hub to better evidence the role libraries play in our society
2. A national branding campaign to raise awareness of our libraries
3. The closer involvement of the British Library
4. An expanded library membership
5. A stronger volunteer network
6. The creation of a Libraries' Minister and a more joined-up approach within government
7. The establishment of a Libraries Laureate
8. A change to the timing of Libraries Week to better involve politicians nationally

2.4 Work to develop a new national strategy is underway and it is anticipated that this new strategy will be published later this year.

3. Proposal

3.1 It is proposed to develop the following refreshed set of documents over the covering months for Members to consider:-

- Library Strategy – a long term document setting out the vision and strategic objectives for the service
- Delivery plan – setting out the key actions planned in the coming year to deliver the vision and objectives
- Library Stock Management Policy – this existing policy is due for review and this will be carried out alongside the development of the new Strategy

3.2 Process

3.2.1 The work to develop the new Strategy, and associated documents, will be led by the Library Service. There will be four main phases of activity:-

1. Outline scoping

This early phase will consider the format, purpose and emerging priorities for the strategy. We are currently in this phase and emerging priorities are set out below for Members to consider.

2. Data and information review and analysis

A desk-top review of the range of broad range of data we currently hold, including data about current service volumes and demand, local population data, benchmarking and comparison data with other library authorities (for example CIPFA returns) and customer/resident feedback. For the last point, we already have some rich information from ad hoc feedback, previous

consultations and recent engagement activities as part of the development of the new multi-user hubs and Millennium Library refurbishment..

3. Stakeholder engagement

In this phase, we will be reaching out to stakeholders to understand user experience and aspirations. This will include engaging with staff, Norfolk Residents Panel, key partners and representative groups, for example parents' groups and those representing harder-to-reach communities.

4. Drafting the strategy and plan

Bringing together all of the information and learning into a single picture. We may revisit those who have contributed in earlier phases to discuss our conclusions. We will also engage with key stakeholders to ensure that they have a further opportunity to engage in the process, including staff and key funding groups.

5. Approval and implementation

Final proposed documents – the Strategy, Plan and Stock Management Policy – will be brought to this Committee for review and comment prior to consideration by Cabinet. We anticipate being in a position to do this at the November meeting.

Following approval, we will communicate the strategy both internally and externally. The Plan, and progress against actions in the plan, will be brought to this Committee annually. We also envisage establishing a new officer group to oversee delivery of the Plan, including relevant representatives from across NCC.

3.3 Themes and key lines of enquiry

3.3.1 The key themes of the strategy will be

- Jobs and Business
- Reading and Literacy
- Information and Digital
- Health and wellbeing
- Culture, creativity and Heritage
- Efficiency

3.3.2 The key lines of enquiry that we will be exploring include:-

- How has the way customers want to access the service changed since the last Strategy was developed
- Is the service modern and sustainable
- How do we support the delivery of objectives in other key NCC strategies, for example FLOURISH and Promoting Independence

- How can we encourage and support more communities to access the services that libraries provide and increase use
- Are we using our resources effectively, including considering whether we can increase opportunities to access to our special and heritage collections
- How successful are we at making libraries attractive and welcoming spaces
- How can the multi-user hubs (as well as sharing space with key partners more generally) help to strengthen the overall library offer for communities

4. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The development of a new Strategy provides an opportunity to ensure that the service is fit for the future.

5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 The Council's existing Strategy expires in March 2025 and therefore there is a need to develop a new Strategy moving forward.

- 4.2 The development of a plan to sit alongside the Strategy will help bring to life the work that is being done to deliver the vision and objectives.

6. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Library Strategy is the way in which the Council demonstrates that it is meeting the statutory duties. We could extend the existing Strategy for a longer period. However, that would make it difficult for us to demonstrate to communities, key stakeholders and potential funders that we have a modern and relevant service that meets local need.

- 5.2 There is scope to refine the approach to developing the Strategy, as set out in this report, and the Committee may wish to comment on the proposed process.

7. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with the development of the new Strategy and associated documents and it will be delivered from existing resources.

8. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** The development of the new Strategy, Plan and Materials Stock Policy will be carried out within existing resources.

- 7.2 **Property:** None.

7.3 IT: None.

9. Other Implications

8.1 **Legal Implications:** Library authorities have a statutory duty under the Public And Museums Act 1964 to provide a comprehensive and efficient library services for all those who live, work or study in the area. In providing this service, we must:-

- encourage both adults and children to make full use of the library service
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area

There is no definition or prescribed national standard setting out what a comprehensive and efficient service comprises of, and in practice it will differ from area to area. We need to consider local needs when making decisions on how to manage the delivery the service, as well as taking available resources into account.

The Library Strategy and Plan will demonstrate how we are meeting our statutory duties.

8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** This will be considered as part of the development of the new Strategy and associated documents.

8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** This will be completed as part of the development of the Strategy and associated documents.

8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** None.

8.5 **Health and Safety implications:** None.

8.6 **Sustainability implications:** None.

8.7 **Any Other Implications:** There are no other implications to bring to Members attention.

10. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The development of a new Strategy provides an opportunity to reflect our achievements and ensure the service is fit for the future.

11. Action required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. **Review and comment on the approach to developing a new Library Strategy, as set out in this paper.**

2. **Note that a final draft Strategy will be brought to the Committee for review later this year, prior to consideration by Cabinet.**

12. Background Papers

- 11.1 Norfolk Library 5 year Strategy 2020-2025 - [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](#) – see page 221

[An independent review of English public libraries - report and government reponse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Officer Contact

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Norfolk Libraries

Facts and Figures 23/24

2,278,553

visits to Norfolk Libraries

4,791,731

item loans

1,000

laptop loans



31,594

new members



825

DigiFest attendees

Over **1,000** mobile library stops



Over

11,000

children signed up to the Summer Reading Challenge

Hosted over **60** online Reading Friends book talks

Household
Support Fund

35,000 Hot drinks

4,500 Blankets

4,000 Hot water bottles

1,700 Draught excluders

Supported over

30 adults to learn to read



9,272,581

Facebook post views

183,000

Open Library sessions

235,000

customers logged into computers

Ran The Big American Read
and The Big Indie Read
to promote new and diverse authors



Norfolk
County Council

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 12

Report Title: Norfolk Rail Prospectus Review

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

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

Responsible Director: Chris Starkie (Director of Growth and Investment)

Executive Summary

The Norfolk Rail Prospectus aims to establish a clear vision for rail in Norfolk and will set out what we feel is required to make sure that rail can serve the needs and expectations of passengers, and to ensure that it continues to support Norfolk's economy and helps deliver the housing and jobs growth. A revised prospectus will set out our priorities for stations and lines, as well as for large cross country infrastructure projects such as Ely improvements and East West Rail.

It is important to ensure that people's views are reflected in the Prospectus, therefore, public consultation is planned for the beginning of September. The consultation will include survey questions on each chapter and at least one open question. There has already been engagement with the Norfolk Rail Group and their comments are included in the current draft. The Norfolk Rail Group includes members, rail operators, district officers, user groups and special interest group representatives.

Select Committee is asked to note the consultation and to agree any recommendations for inclusion into the draft Norfolk Rail Prospectus for consultation. Sign off of the final draft for consultation and the questions will be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport. It is proposed to start the consultation in early September, incorporate any comments from the consultation, and then report to Select Committee in January followed by Cabinet in March 2025. Cabinet will be asked to adopt the final Prospectus.

Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Note the proposed consultation on the draft Norfolk Rail Prospectus and make any comments the committee wish to be considered for inclusion into the draft Prospectus for consultation.

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 The original Norfolk Rail Prospectus was adopted in 2013, with a review started in 2018 that was delayed due to the Williams Rail Review, established in September 2018, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.2 Although the most recent work on the review was not taken through to formal adoption by the county council because of the significant shake-ups affecting the industry, there have been a number of developments, changes and achievements that make it timely to complete the work:

- There has been sufficient time to see recovery from Covid-19 pandemic and rail passenger numbers have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels. There is now much more certainty regarding likely future patterns of rail usage
- NCC Local Transport Plan 4, 2022, has been adopted and included a number of policies and actions relating to rail
- Transport East's State of Rail Report has been produced
- Rail Environment Policy Statement, 2021, sets a clear direction for the rail industry on environmental sustainability and to outline policy priorities for the Sustainable Rail Strategy
- Rail Industry Air Quality Strategic Framework, 2020, Rail Safety and Standards Board Air quality monitoring network study will monitor 105 stations from 2021 including Cambridge, Ely, Ipswich, Norwich, and Stansted Airport stations
- The franchise agreement with Greater Anglia was ended in September 2021 and replaced by an operating contract under which the company will continue to operate trains until September 2026.

2. Proposal and updates

2.1 Some of the key issues covered in the draft prospectus include:

- Ambition for service improvements on the key lines (King's Lynn-Cambridge-London; Norwich to London and Norwich to Cambridge)
- Reopening of lines and new stations
- Priorities for new infrastructure (including new track capacity at Ely and on the Norwich to London route)
- Freight
- Decarbonisation of the rail network
- Encouraging mode share to reduce dependency on private cars
- Accessibility improvements to rail stations.

2.4 Comments from Select Committee will be considered by the Cabinet Member for incorporation where appropriate into the final draft of the revised Norfolk Rail Prospectus for consultation in the autumn.

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 The Norfolk Rail Prospectus provides a strategic document that outlines NCC support for rail projects and aligns with other organisations such as Transport East's priorities and aspirations. The proposal will help to shape Norfolk Rail Prospectus and comments from Select Committee will help shape the final version of Norfolk Rail Prospectus.

3.2 Development of the rail network is likely to have significant longer-term impacts on shaping the future development of the county including on its residents and economy, including across a range of social, environmental and economic indicators.

3.2. Following the consultation there will be further reports on the recommended final prospectus to Select Committee and to Cabinet asking that the refreshed prospectus be adopted. Committee Members are encouraged to respond to the consultation, and to encourage others to do so, in the autumn.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1 The Devolution agreement will allow NCC to build a working relationship with Great British railways, when they are established. This will enable us to have a dialogue with government over priorities for rail, including infrastructure schemes and improvements. This will build on the positive relationship we already have with local rail operators. It is therefore vital that we have a clear and up to date document that outlines our priorities and aligns them to NCC policies and strategies including the Local Transport Plan and Better Together for Norfolk.

5. Alternative Options

5.1 As the Norfolk Rail Prospectus is 10 years old it is felt that not reviewing the current Prospectus would leave us with a document that is out of date and doesn't reflect NCC's priorities for rail.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There will be some minimal small costs for engagement activities and publicising the consultation, approximately £200 This will be met from existing Growth and Investment budgets.

6.2 The cost of producing a new Rail Prospectus only requires staff time. As this is not a policy document there are no associated implementation plan with actions

that will require funding. Any costs that result from the Prospectus or consultation, such as feasibility studies into new stations, will be funded from existing budgets.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff: None

7.2 Property: None.

7.3 IT: None.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

Information collected in the consultation will be confined to data that will help the council to analyse the responses (how the person responding uses the transport network, their age and gender, etc...). It will not be possible to identify individuals from the requested information. This will not constitute personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act.

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

None.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

An EqIA has been produced for the Norfolk Rail Prospectus consultation and is available on request.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

A DPIA has been produced for the Norfolk Rail Prospectus consultation and is available on request.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

None directly arising.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

None.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

None.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

None.

10. Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Note the proposed consultation on the draft Norfolk Rail Prospectus and make any comments the committee wish to be considered for inclusion into the draft Prospectus for consultation.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 [Norfolk Rail Prospectus 2013](#)

Officer Contact

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Norfolk Rail Prospectus

2024



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Executive Summary

Rail is vitally important to the county of Norfolk. Rail provides links for business and leisure trips to London, Cambridge, Peterborough and other major centres. Rail also serves important commuting links, especially into Norwich from Sheringham, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. Before 2020 there had been a steady rise in passenger numbers over the previous five years. Although passenger numbers are increasing again from a drop during the Covid-19 pandemic some stations are recovering quicker than others.

The population of Norfolk is forecast to grow and there is a large amount of housing and jobs growth planned in the county. People are becoming increasingly mobile, travelling further for leisure trips or into work, we expect rail usage to increase even further. This will increase the need for further investment into rail to ensure that it can rise to the challenge.

Norfolk County Council works closely with the rail industry, stakeholders and rail users. The Council understands the existing issues and the pressures likely to surface in the future but it is important to add to our understanding with new data and research to also drive funding. This prospectus sets out what we consider is required to make sure that rail can serve the needs and expectations of passengers, and to ensure that it continues to support Norfolk's economy and helps deliver the housing and jobs growth planned.

Since the last prospectus there is now more focus on sustainability to meet the needs of the future. There has therefore been more interest in multi-modal journeys and making it easier to walk and cycle to and from stations. Also, station design and accessibility standards should include thought for modes of wheeling such as larger electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters. More work needs to be done to make active and sustainable forms of transport more attractive, particularly for the more rural stations.

Great British Railways (GBR), currently the Great British Railways Transition Team, was first proposed in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail and will be looking at national passenger operating contracts, fairer fares and a modal shift target for rail freight, and development of a long-term strategy for rail in Britain. The Rail Reform Bill, not due to come before Parliament in the current session, should therefore provide more certainty in due course. However, there is no clear date for GBR so there is scope to update the Norfolk Rail Prospectus if required when the Rail Reform Bill is passed.

King's Speech briefing note, Nov 2023

"the draft Rail Reform Bill sets a bold vision for future rail customers – of punctual and reliable services, simpler tickets and a modern and innovative railway that meets the needs of the nation."



Introduction

The purpose of this Rail Prospectus is to set out Norfolk County Council's requirements from rail to serve the needs of the county. We will use it in our dealings with government, train companies, Network Rail and other stakeholders to get the best for the people and businesses of Norfolk. Although Norfolk County Council (NCC) does not operate the railways we are key partners and consultees and continue to work closely with providers.

The Norfolk Rail Prospectus establishes a clear vision for rail in Norfolk and will set out what we feel is required to make sure that rail can serve the needs and expectations of passengers, and to ensure that it continues to support Norfolk's economy and helps deliver the housing and jobs growth planned. This revised prospectus sets out our priorities for stations and lines, and also our support in large cross country infrastructure projects such as Ely improvements and East West Rail where these will have direct benefits for the county.

There are three train operators in Norfolk, Greater Anglia, East Midlands Railway and Great Northern. According to the Rail User Survey, train operator results December 2022- August 2023, 87% were overall satisfied and 88% being satisfied with punctuality and reliability on Greater Anglia. 91% were overall satisfied with Great Northern services, with 83% satisfied with punctuality and reliability. East Midlands had 82% overall satisfaction and the same figure for punctuality and reliability.

A recent review of the Rail Prospectus was undertaken in 2020, but not taken through to formal adoption by the county council because of the significant ongoing shake-ups affecting the industry, as well as Covid-19 bringing uncertainty for public transport. Since 2020 there have been a number of developments, changes and achievements that make it timely to complete the work:

- There has been sufficient time to see recovery from Covid-19 pandemic and rail passenger numbers have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels. There is now much more certainty regarding likely future patterns of rail usage
- NCC [Local Transport Plan 4](#), 2022, has been adopted and included a number of policies and actions relating to rail
- [Transport East State of Rail Report](#), 2023 has been produced
- [Rail Environment Policy Statement](#), 2021, sets a clear direction for the rail industry on environmental sustainability and to outline policy priorities for the Sustainable Rail Strategy
- Rail Industry [Air Quality Strategic Framework](#), 2020 (updated 2022), Rail Safety and Standards Board Air quality monitoring network study will monitor 105 stations from 2021 including Cambridge, Ely, Ipswich, Norwich, and Stansted Airport stations
- The franchise agreement with Greater Anglia was ended in September 2021 and replaced by an operating contract under which the company will continue to

operate trains until September 2026. East Midlands franchise was renewed in 2019 and Thameslink (Great Northern) in 2014.

Despite many changes in the last four years some things remain as before, and it will be valuable for a revised prospectus to set out the council's ambitions for further change. Compared to other parts of the country journey times from other major places to Norfolk are still lengthy and the availability of rail is poor, with many places in Norfolk some distance from a rail station. There is also a limited number of destinations available by train from the county. As a result, Norfolk still has substantially lower numbers of residents commuting by rail compared to the rest of the UK.

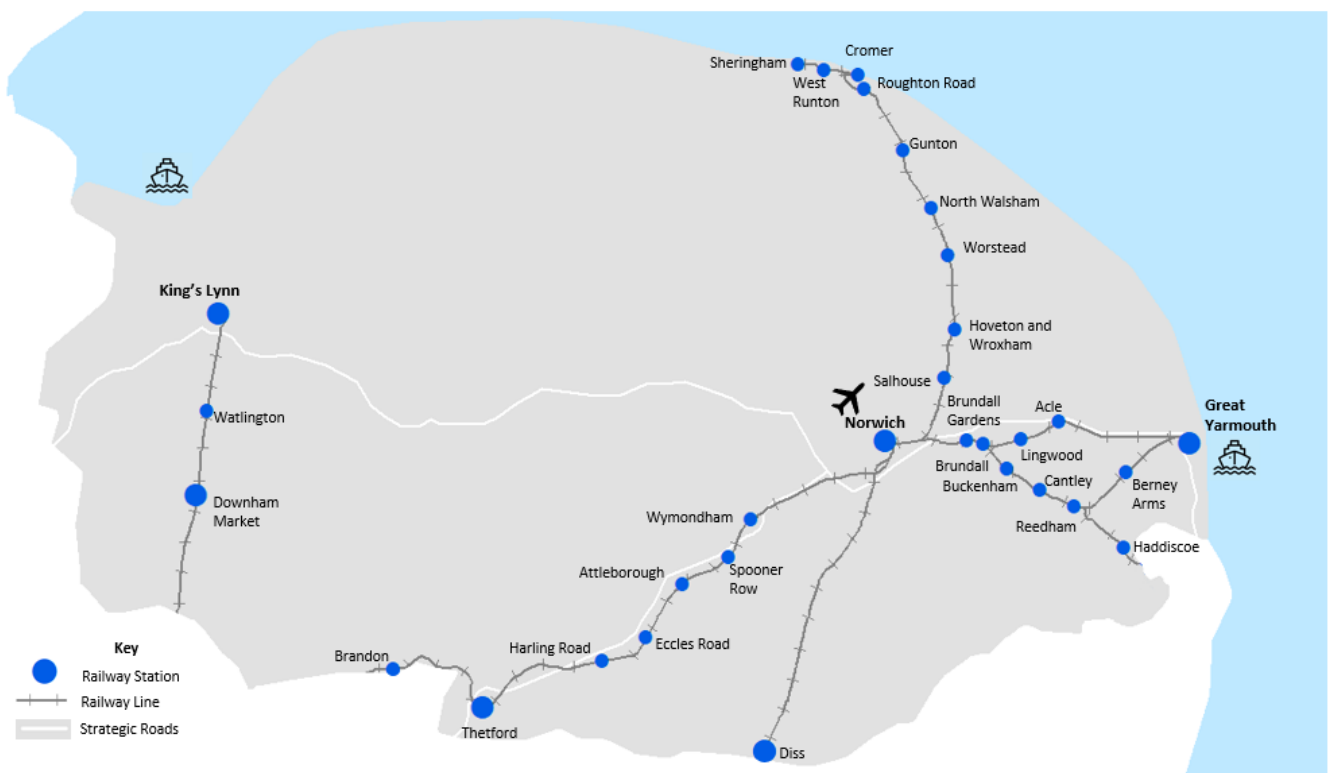


Figure 1: Norfolk Rail Stations and Routes

Norfolk has 31 mainline stations. The most used station in Norfolk in 2022-23 was Norwich, with the least used being Buckenham in Broadland, which serves the surrounding area and RSPB reserve. The map below shows the large swathes of Norfolk are not served by rail.

Heritage railways serve Dereham to Wymondham and Sheringham to Holt. A route is also proposed by Norfolk Orbital Railway to link from Sheringham to Dereham via Holt and Fakenham and onto Wymondham. A full list of the stations can be found in Appendix 1.

Achievements

Since the previous Norfolk Rail Prospectus there have been many achievements:

- ✓ Started Norwich to London in 90 minutes rail services
- ✓ Complete replacement of all rolling stock in the Greater Anglia franchise have been delivered, transforming many rail journeys in Norfolk. The new high-tech Stadler trains have even been crowned the most reliable in Britain for three years in a row
- ✓ A new 80 metre platform has been installed at Sheringham Rail Station to accommodate the new Greater Anglia trains in 2019
- ✓ Extension of Norwich-Cambridge service to Stansted Airport.
- ✓ Improvement of walking and cycling connections between the rail station and marketplace in Great Yarmouth
- ✓ Rail sidings at Vauxhall have been brought back into use by Eastern Rail Services who supply rolling stock to mainline companies including Network Rail, Caledonian Sleepers, Rail Ops Group, LSL, CAF UK. This achieves a commitment in the previous Rail Prospectus, Great Yarmouth Transport Strategy, and Local Transport Plan for Norfolk
- ✓ Network Rail has spent £68m to replace Victorian signalling equipment with a computer-based system between Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft
- ✓ Community Rail (Wherry line) worked with bus operators to put on a service to Great Yarmouth town centre and neighbouring holiday camps over the summer 2023, working towards the previous priority for better integration between the station and onward travel to town centres
- ✓ Completion of the Network Rail funded King's Lynn Service Enhancement Project, allowing longer trains to now serve King's Lynn
- ✓ Improvements at Salhouse Station – New waiting shelters, seating and lighting and refurbishment of existing unused railway building.

The average age of rolling stock for all franchised passenger train operators nationally, as of 31 March 2023, was 16.8 years ([ORR Rail infrastructure and assets report October 2023](#)). In the 2021-2022 period Greater Anglia had the largest annual decrease in average age due to the introduction of new Class 720 trains, falling by 5.4 years to 11.3 years. Greater Anglia was replaced by Merseyrail in the 2022-23 period for largest annual decrease in average age when they introduced their Class 777 trains.

The proportion of rolling stock by traction type and by train operator in Great Britain, as of 31 March 2023 were:

- Greater Anglia: 81% Electric, 19% Bi-mode or loco hauled
- Govia Thameslink Railway (Great Northern): 98% Electric, 2% Diesel

- East Midlands Railway: 22% Electric, 78% Diesel.

Despite the achievements that have been made there is scope to do more. Transport East State of the Rail Report gap analysis shows that there are still key gaps in electrification of the freight network, which would support the further decarbonisation of freight, and other benefits such as reduced operating costs, the ability to handle heavier trains and possible journey time savings.

There are also several priorities that have not been achieved since the previous Rail Prospectus. One of these is to provide step-free access at all stations but in the short term to:

- The Cambridge-bound platform at Wymondham in the short-term, since this platform cannot be reached other than by people able to use steps.
- In the short to medium term, provide step-free access to, and between, platforms at Diss and Thetford. Although Thetford is one of the largest, most well-used stations it is not possible for those with mobility issues to get between platforms without a very long detour outside the station.
- Improvements to the outside hours station entrance at Great Yarmouth, the night entrance to the station is poor with virtually no travel information displayed.

Chapter 1: Wider Context

There are plans to create 73,000 more homes, 57,000 more jobs and 5,300 new businesses by 2026 (Together for Norfolk, 2019–2025). Norfolk is home to an energy hub on the east coast, advanced engineering and manufacturing industries and a world-class food, life-science and agri-tech cluster, as well as a thriving tourist industry.

In 2021 25.4% of Norfolk residents worked from home, which is below the number nationally at the time. Of those not working from home 54% used a private car or van, followed by 8.4% who walked to work. Only 0.5% of people used the train to commute to work. In the 2011 census only 0.7% of Norfolk residents used the train to get to work, compared to 47.7% using a private car and 4.3% walking. Although the trends may still be valid, the 2021 census data was taken during a lockdown period of the Covid-19 pandemic so the numbers will reflect that, particularly the drop in rail usage and rise in walking, as use of public transport was discouraged.

The majority of people in Norfolk do not live close enough to a rail station to walk to it so longer journeys involving rail are usually multi-modal with another transport option other than walking (Norwich station being an exception).

Large employment sectors in Norfolk include health and retail. Other important sectors include manufacturing, agriculture, professional business services, financial and insurance, and a growing creative industries sector. Areas of engineering expertise are concentrated in Great Yarmouth and along the A11 corridor. The business and professional services sector is of significance in greater Norwich, as is the health and life sciences sector.

Norwich is the county city and home to the county council – as well as Norwich City and Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils – and is also one of the top 15 retail centres nationally. Norwich is also important to the tourism industry, along with the north Norfolk coast, the Broads and the east coast resort of Great Yarmouth.

The county's two largest seaports are at Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. Norfolk benefits from an international airport in Norwich. None of these are connected to the rail network, although both ports used to be. Norwich also now has direct train services to Stansted Airport via Cambridge.

Tourism is one of the most important economic contributors to our county, supporting more than 54,000 jobs and contributing about £2.8bn to the local economy. Norwich is also important to the tourism industry, along with the north Norfolk coast, the Broads and the east coast resorts of Great Yarmouth and just outside Norfolk in Lowestoft. Sustainable tourism in Norfolk is boosted by having rail routes through the Broads National Park and Norfolk and Suffolk coasts. Recent projects delivered by NCC include 'Experience', an EU funded project to encourage experiential tourism out of the traditional holiday season and encouraged use of sustainable transport.

There is a large amount of growth planned across the county. Many of the housing growth and major employment sites are located within the Norwich urban area, along

the A11 corridor (adjacent to the Norwich to Cambridge rail line), and within Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. There will also be housing growth at most of the larger stations on the Bittern Line to Sheringham. Much of the growth therefore is sited within towns with rail stations. National Rail are consulted on new development and we support operators being proactive in responding to public consultation.

Being a largely rural county connectivity in rural areas is vital to people's quality of life. Stations such as Watlington and Downham Market are often used instead of King's Lynn for those not wanting to go into King's Lynn. We also support improvements to stations in the Fenland area, which also serve Norfolk residents living near the border. Rural stations face their own issues that need to be addressed and more consideration is needed to address first and last mile, looking at the whole journey from door to door rather than rail in isolation.

[Future of Transport](#): supporting rural transport innovation (DfT, 2023), highlights some of the connectivity issues rural areas face and transport's role in tackling access to jobs, strength of local businesses and loneliness. New forms of mobility, such as demand responsive buses, shared cycle schemes, car clubs at rural rail stations, and mobility hubs can increase connectivity and tackle social issues. Connectivity with bus services is vitally important in making rail a viable choice in areas where people may not be able, or may not feel safe, to walk or cycle.

Berney Arms on the Wherry Line should be noted as an outlier, even in rural stations, as it is so rural it is only accessed by walking and cycling. Therefore, this station should be looked at in the context of its position in Halvergate Marshes and as a tourist stop.



Norwich Station

WELCOME TO NORWICH

TO SPONSOR
THIS SPACE

Noten

Chapter 2: Priorities

Our top priorities for rail connectivity include:

Short Term (0-5 years)

- ◆ Increased journey frequency including half hourly Norwich-Cambridge services, Norwich to London and King's Lynn to London, via Cambridge
- ◆ Investigate feasibility of a new stations at selected proposed locations, including Broadland Business Park, Norwich
- ◆ Ely Area Enhancements
- ◆ Regular Norwich to London in 90 minutes throughout the day
- ◆ Station accessibility improvements at Wymondham and Thetford stations
- ◆ Trowse area (Norwich) improvement

Medium Term (5-10 years)

- ◆ Faster journey times on all routes
- ◆ Earlier and later trains on all routes
- ◆ New passenger services between Cambridge and Oxford (East West Rail), continuing to Norwich

Long Term (10+ years)

- ◆ All stations fully accessible
- ◆ Dereham to Wymondham mainstream passenger line

Connectivity to London for financial and business sectors as well as tourism is important. The direct links to Cambridge are also important, especially for technology and innovation sectors. **Connectivity from Peterborough** enables people to make onward rail journeys to the north and west of the country.

International connectivity by air is important for businesses in sectors such as biotechnology and advanced automotive sectors. Connections might be available through Norwich Airport, although the major London airports will provide a greater range of direct connections. Connectivity to Heathrow airport from Norfolk has improved and now requires just one change at Liverpool Street onto the Elizabeth Line. Via Cambridge, you can also go to Gatwick directly on Thameslink with no need to change in London. The A11 corridor is a focus for engineering and agri-tech sectors and has access to Norwich Airport and Stansted via Cambridge. Rail connections to other major airports are more difficult, involving cross-London travel.

Commuting into the major centres is essential. This is particularly the case for Norwich, King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, and the rail-connected market towns in Norfolk, where rail services open the labour market. A strong bus offer between Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn complements rail travel although car offers rail travel's biggest competition. Although commuting by rail has reduced in Norfolk since Covid-19 this remains an important driver for rail users.

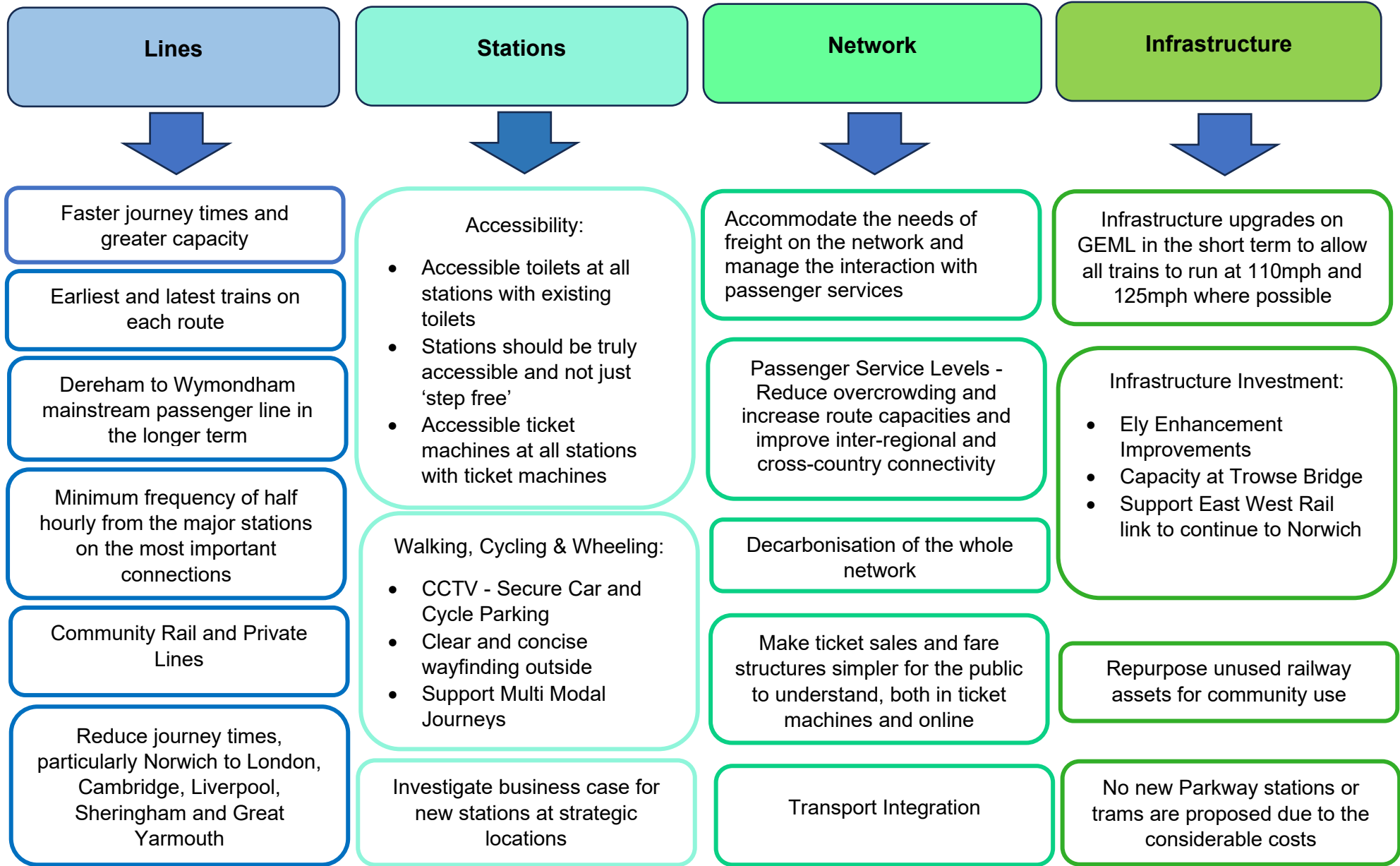
Rail links to North Norfolk from Norwich and Great Yarmouth open the tourism market to rail travellers and reduce congestion around the roads out of North Norfolk, such as Cromer. Current heritage railways such as North Norfolk Railway and Wells & Walsingham Light Railway contribute to tourism in North Norfolk and the Coast Hopper bus service provides a vital link for residents and tourists to locations not served by rail.

Although we have listed our priorities under certain themes, these are fluid and work together to provide a better service for the public. Investment in route infrastructure is necessary to deliver faster journey times, greater network resilience and additional services. A summary of station, network and infrastructure priorities along each line is shown in Chapter 3.

The interventions required to achieve many of the aspirations shown in the table below vary in scale and cost. Some priorities may also conflict with each other, for example new stations will slow journey times on that line. Therefore, although these are all priorities there will need to be a further level of prioritisation based on demand, safety and what will make the biggest difference to the largest number of people. We will also prioritise accessibility for those with disabilities who have difficulty accessing rail travel. Further feasibility studies will be undertaken, particularly on new stations, to determine their practicability.



Table 1: Key priorities



Chapter 3: Lines

There are some general priorities that apply to all lines and other priorities that are specific to that line. This chapter outlines each line, priorities for that line and the stations along it. The following line by line summaries also give an outline of the priorities for each station along each line. More information on some areas, such as infrastructure, can be found in the relevant chapters.

It is noted that the delivery of priorities for increased or faster services are dependent on existing services and junction capacity on the routes.

Highlight priorities include:

- ◆ Faster journey times and greater capacity
- ◆ Earliest and latest trains dependant on demand
- ◆ Minimum frequency of half hourly from the major stations on the most important connections: Norwich to London, Norwich to Cambridge and King's Lynn to London, via Cambridge

Journey times

- Faster journey times and better-quality travel experience
- Investment in route infrastructure necessary to deliver faster journey times and provide greater network resilience.

Punctuality and reliability

- Short-term reliability and punctuality to be higher than 93%, as measured by the industry's performance measures
- A move towards less disruptive and frequent engineering work, less reliance on bus replacement services, and more direct diverted services when engineering work does take place planned shutdowns are advertised in advance.

Community Rail

- Commitment to funding and other resources for Community Rail as part of train operator's franchise commitments
- We provisionally support investigation into a new Community Rail partnership on the Norwich – Cambridge line.

Norwich to London Liverpool Street line (Great Eastern Mainline)	
<i>Norwich> Diss> Stowmarket> Ipswich> Manningtree> Colchester> Chelmsford> Shenfield> Stratford> London Liverpool Street</i>	
The Norwich to London line, or Great Eastern Mainline (GEML), is the county council's top priority. It connects London to Norwich, the largest economy in the east of England. As such it is vitally important for business links, as well as leisure trips and commuting into Norwich (and elsewhere). The County Council has supported the <i>Norwich in 90</i> campaign, which seeks faster journey times. At the time of writing most off-peak services are timed at one hour and 47 minutes	
Operator	Greater Anglia
Operation	Services to London every 30 minutes (more at peak times)
Priorities	90-minute journey times rolled out to more services (at time of writing Services leaving Norwich at 8am and Liverpool Street at 5pm are planned to take under one hour and 40 minutes)
	Franchise commitment of 20-minute service frequency introduced
	Maintaining and improving inter-regional and cross-country connectivity
Journey times	90-minute journey times at least hourly. Two limited stop services per day each way already provide 92-minute services, but the county council supports these being at least every hour. Local authorities, Network Rail and the train operator have been working together and already completed some preliminary work to understand how journey times could be reduced.
Service frequency	The Transport East State of Rail Report identified a half hourly frequency is desirable to provide journey flexibility compared with car and to encourage modal shift. earliest and latest trains should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First arrivals into Norwich to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) • First arrivals in London to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) • Last departure from Norwich to be after 0000 (Monday to Saturday) and 2300 (Sunday) • Last departure from London to be after 0030 (Monday to Saturday) and 2330 (Sunday)
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in route infrastructure necessary to deliver faster journey times, greater network resilience and additional services. Network Rail have identified that potentially the following are required: • Bow Junction remodelling • Beaulieu Park (loops between Chelmsford and Witham) • Haughley Junction doubling • Loops south of Colchester & Shenfield • Colchester headway reduction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ipswich to Haughley three or four-track solution • Trowse Bridge, Norwich doubling of track <p>Further work is required to identify the precise nature, cost and timing of the interventions and to work up a business case to support their delivery.</p>
Stations	Norwich
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional platform at Norwich and Crossovers on approach to Norwich to allow for enhanced service frequencies into Norwich from Cambridge • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Increase covered cycle parking • Link cycle hire with other operations • Provide additional seating at the station • Retain ticket office • Improve connectivity between Norwich Station and Norwich Airport
	Diss
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required. • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Bus destinations to be shown on modern customer information screens • Retain ticket office • Plus Bus extended to Diss

King's Lynn to London King's Cross line	
<i>King's Lynn> Watlington> Downham Market> Ely> Cambridge North> Cambridge> London King's Cross</i>	
Operator	Govia Thameslink Railway (Great Northern)
Operation	Hourly services to London from King's Lynn (mostly half hourly at peak times)
Priorities	Half-hourly frequency, King's Cross-Cambridge-King's Lynn, throughout the day
	Infrastructure improvements at Ely to allow half hourly frequencies, and at station platforms and level crossings for longer trains
Journey times	Restoration of December 2017 journey times and further journey time reductions
Service frequency	Deliver half-hourly frequency King's Cross-Cambridge-King's Lynn throughout the day
	There is now an hourly gap in journey opportunities from King's Lynn arriving at King's Cross in the morning early shoulder peak. We are seeking the earliest reintroduction of this withdrawn journey opportunity.
	Reduce the hourly gap in northbound services between Cambridge and King's Lynn in the evening high peak at Cambridge. Cambridge is an important employment centre for Norfolk residents and we are seeking the early introduction of a service to fill this key gap in the timetable
Arrivals and departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First arrivals into King's Lynn to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) • First arrivals into Cambridge before 0700 (Monday – Saturday) 0800 (Sunday) • First arrivals in London to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) • Last departure from King's Lynn to be after 0000 (Monday to Saturday) and 2300 (Sunday) • Last departure from Cambridge to 0030 departures (Monday to Saturday) and 1130 (Sunday) • Last departure from London to be after 0030 (Monday to Saturday) and 2330 (Sunday) <p>Reinstatement of the recently withdrawn morning shoulder peak arrival at King's Cross and the introduction of an additional service between Cambridge and King's Lynn to fill the hourly gap during the Cambridge evening high peak</p>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ely Area Capacity Enhancements upgrade to allow 30- minute King's Lynn to Cambridge service • Adoption of a minimum two-track railway between King's Lynn and King's Cross, equipped to accommodate 12-car trains, as

	<p>a clear long-term strategic aim against which short-term plans can be fully assessed to ensure they do not conflict with this goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure improvements including platform extensions and station works, track/signalling works to achieve higher lines speeds, gauge clearance, and modifications to overhead line equipment • From 2020 Network Rail, funded by DfT, delivered infrastructure to accommodate 8-car trains to King's Lynn, with a longer-term aim of accommodating 12-car trains • Introduce intermediate signals between Littleport and Downham Market • reinstatement of the double track line throughout to King's Lynn • Infrastructure improvements to allow running of IEP (platform extensions and station works, track/signalling works to achieve higher lines speeds, gauge clearance, and modifications to overhead line equipment)
Stations	King's Lynn
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sidings at King's Lynn to accommodate longer trains • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Retain ticket office • Increase covered cycle parking • Provision of Wi-fi • Bus destinations to be shown on modern customer information screens
	Watlington
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase covered cycle parking
	Downham Market
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase car parking provision, although there is now a private car park adjacent to the station • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Retain ticket office • Increase covered cycle parking • Bus destinations to be shown on modern customer information screens • Potential exists on the western side of Downham Market station for a car parking extension. Railway land on the north-eastern side of the station could be accessed from surrounding development. • Plus Bus extended to Downham Market

Norwich to Cambridge line	
<i>Norwich> Wymondham> Spooner Row> Attleborough> Eccles Road> Harling Road> Thetford> Brandon> Ely> Cambridge</i>	
Operator	Greater Anglia
Operation	Norwich to Cambridge and to Stanstead up to 2 times per hour on weekdays
Priorities	Half-hourly frequency or at a minimum rescheduling the Norwich to Nottingham services on the half-hour to allow regular clock-face ½ hourly services with a change at Ely (on Nottingham services)
	Faster journey times: routine journey times between Norwich and Cambridge to be 70 minutes (currently the shortest length of the majority of journeys is 90 minutes)
Journey times	Reduce journey times between Norwich and Cambridge to 70 minutes in the short to medium term
Service frequency	Half-hourly frequency or maintain the scheduling of the Norwich to Nottingham services on the half-hour to allow regular ½ hourly services with a change at Ely
Arrivals and departures	First arrivals into Norwich to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) First arrivals in Cambridge to be before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) Last departure from Norwich to be after 0000 (Monday to Saturday) and 2300 (Sunday) Last departure from Cambridge to be after 0030 (Monday to Saturday) and 2330 (Sunday)
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubling of Trowse Lower Junction to/from the Ely line to allow 30-minute frequency services from Norwich to Cambridge • Ely upgrade to allow Norwich to Cambridge 30-minute frequency services • Increase frequency of Stansted to Norwich service • New East West Rail services between Cambridge and Oxford • New passenger services between Dereham and Wymondham • Electrification of Norwich to Cambridge • Feasibility of freight interchange at Snetterton
Stations	Wymondham
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required • Install car park lighting
	Spooner Row (<i>sparse service</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install car park lighting
	Attleborough
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to passenger waiting areas

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase covered cycle parking • Note: The Attleborough SUE planning permission has a requirement for a new pedestrian footbridge at Leys Lane to be delivered prior to the occupation of the 1200th dwelling. Infrastructure requirements are still be developed and to date no work has begun on the delivery of any housing
Eccles Road (<i>sparse service</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station • Desire for a walking/ cycling route between Eccles Road Station and Snetterton Heath
Harling Road (<i>sparse service</i>)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install car park lighting
Thetford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required • Retain ticket office • Improve station buildings and platforms • Increase car parking provision and provide car parking CCTV • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Increase covered cycle parking • Resurfacing of Station Lane
Brandon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required. • Provide car parking CCTV • Advocate for Greater Anglia to bring the station building back into use

Norwich to Nottingham/ Liverpool Lime Street line

Norwich > Wymondham > Attleborough > Eccles Road > Harling Road > Thetford > Brandon > Ely > Peterborough > Grantham > Nottingham > Sheffield > Manchester Piccadilly > Liverpool Lime Street

This service provides the main east-west link out of the county. Its connection at Peterborough allows travellers to connect to the East Coast Main Line, for onward travel to the north of England and Scotland. Beyond Peterborough it connects to cities including Nottingham, Sheffield and Manchester.

Passengers will often interchange onto other services, and, because it crosses so many other lines, its success largely depends on high standards of reliability and national planning of timetables and engineering possessions. Over time, changes to timetables on the East Coast Main Line have resulted in longer waits at Peterborough for services to the north, meaning that people might be more likely to either drive or use trains via London instead.

Operator	East Midlands Railway
Operation	Services every hour
Priorities	Better connections with East Coast Main Line services at Peterborough
	Improve journey times
	Good connections at Nottingham for onward services to the west
	Acceleration of rolling stock upgrades at the Norwich end of the EMR route
	Increase in number of carriages and reduction in trains running with fewer carriages than planned
Journey times	The journey time on this service is, unlike on most other services, one that does not compare well with car journeys. The AA Route Planner puts Norwich to Liverpool journeys at around 4¾ hours, compared to the 5½ hour train journey. The time taken for many journeys north is compromised by poor connections at Peterborough. Norwich to Nottingham is 2hrs 41 minutes (average week day).
	We would want to work with government and the rail industry to ensure that connections onto services to the north west, and via the East Coast Main Line, are as seamless as possible, and that overall end-to-end journey times are shortened. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce journey times to Liverpool
Service frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum frequency of half-hourly service to Nottingham in the longer-term • Good connections at Nottingham for onward services to the west • Better connections with East Coast Main Line services at Peterborough, Norwich and Ely to reduce waiting times

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First departure from Norwich to be before 0600 (Monday – Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday). • First departure from Liverpool to be before 0600 (Monday to Saturday) and 0800 (Sunday) • Last departure from Norwich to be after 1800 (every day) • Last departure from Liverpool to be after 1800 (every day)
Arrivals and departures	Earlier departures year-round on Sundays so that arrivals in Liverpool and Norwich are in the mornings
Infrastructure	Electrification of Norwich to Peterborough in the medium-term
Stations	Stations between Norwich and Ely are included under Norwich to Cambridge services

Norwich to Sheringham line (Bittern line)	
<i>Norwich> Salhouse> Hoveton and Wroxham> Worstead> North Walsham> Gunton> Roughton Road> Cromer> West Runton> Sheringham</i>	
The Norwich to Sheringham line is one of two Community Rail lines in the county. It connects Norwich to the north Norfolk coast, linking to the towns of Cromer, Sheringham, North Walsham and Wroxham / Hoveton. At Sheringham there is a connection to the privately-run North Norfolk Railway, which operates heritage – steam – services to Holt	
The line was formally designated as a community rail line by the Department for Transport on 28 September 2007. The formal designation means in theory that more flexible standards could be applied to allow more efficient operation of the line. For example, the specification of signalling or maintenance might be able to be reduced to take account of the lower volume of trains on the route.	
Operator	Greater Anglia
Operation	Services every hour
Key Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New station at Broadland Business Park, Norwich. Subject to feasibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer-term: increased frequency to half hourly, initially to North Walsham
Journey Times	Currently the journey from Norwich to Sheringham takes around one hour. This compares to just less than 45 minutes by car, according to the AA route planner. Shorter journey times would also help the reliability of the train services by providing longer turnaround times at each end of the route, building in some flex to the timetable.
	Our aspiration is to reduce the journey time by five minutes; to routine journey times between Norwich and Sheringham being 53 minutes.
Service Frequency	The county council is supporting half hourly frequencies across all routes. These provide both more capacity and a much better service for passengers.
	For half hourly frequencies to North Walsham, one additional train unit would be required. Two units would be required for half hourly frequencies to Sheringham.
Infrastructure	Study work (Timetabling Exercise, Mott MacDonald 2009) found that ½ hourly frequencies north of North Walsham would be difficult due to the single track. Either the prevailing line speed north of North Walsham would need to be improved or a limited quantity of track doubling would be required south of East Runton Junction. In addition, a short stretch of double track southwards along the line towards Roughton Road would be required.
	As well as this track infrastructure, we are aware of work required at stations. Our previous priority, of a new wider platform at

	<p>Sheringham, has recently been achieved. A study into a new station at Broadland Business Park, Norwich, was undertaken several years ago and found that the new station wasn't feasible at the time. However, we are committed to revisiting this post Covid-19.</p> <p>Limited track doubling south of Cromer Junction, and a short stretch of double track south towards Roughton Road to allow for a 30-minute service to Sheringham.</p>
Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salhouse - Install customer information screens • Install a ticket machine • Install station CCTV
	Hoveton and Wroxham
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelop station buildings • Better utilise current car park and look to provide further parking • Install car park CCTV • Better links to cycling and walking routes
	Worstead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install Station CCTV • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV
	North Walsham
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase car parking provision • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV • Revise passenger access between the platforms • Bus information to be shown on customer information screens • Plus Bus extended to North Walsham
	Gunton
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase car parking provision • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV
	Roughton Road
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station • Install Station CCTV
	Cromer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full access required into supermarket • Increase car parking provision • Bus destinations to be shown on modern customer information screens • Plus Bus extended to Cromer
	West Runton
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide some car parking • Install Station CCTV
	Sheringham
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase car parking provision • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV • Install Station CCTV

Norwich to Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft (Wherry lines)

Norwich> Brundall Gardens> Brundall> Lingwood> Acle> Great Yarmouth

Norwich> Brundall Gardens> Brundall> Buckenham> Cantley> Reedham> Berney Arms> Great Yarmouth

Norwich> Brundall Gardens> Brundall> Buckenham> Cantley> Reedham> Haddiscoe> Somerleyton> Lowestoft

Acle is the largest town on the route, although there are a number of stations towards Norwich that have commuting flows into the city.

The services operating on the line were formally designated community rail services by government on 1 February 2007. The Wherry Lines Partnership was set up by Norfolk County Council in July 2000.

Operator	Greater Anglia
Operation	Services to Great Yarmouth every hour (30 minutes at peak times) Services to Lowestoft every hour
Priorities	Good connections at Norwich
	Improvements to railway stations, priority Great Yarmouth station and surrounds
Journey times	<p>Our aspiration is to reduce the journey time by five minutes; to routine journey times between Norwich and Great Yarmouth/ Lowestoft to be 28 minutes. We would like to see the following year-round services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First arrivals into Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and before 0900 (Sunday) • Last departure from Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft after 2300 (Monday to Saturday) and after 2200 (Sunday).
Service frequency	<p>Work completed for us by Mott MacDonald in 2009 showed that in the am peak the Lowestoft to Norwich service would be at capacity by 2027.</p> <p>In order to provide journey flexibility compared with car and to encourage modal shift the Transport East State of Rail Report identified a half hourly frequency as desirable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A year-round minimum service level requirement of not less than hourly, including on Sundays • Maintain hourly services on Wherry Lines (and 30-minute peak time Great Yarmouth services). In the medium- term achieve, 30-minute peak time services, then 30-minute services on all lines. • 2 trains per hour on both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft branches

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of Stansted to Norwich service to Great Yarmouth in the long term
Arrivals and departures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First arrivals into Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft before 0700 (Monday to Saturday) and before 0900 (Sunday) • Last departure from Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft after 2300 (Monday to Saturday) and after 2200 (Sunday)
Infrastructure	Electrification, or alternative traction (e.g. battery or hydrogen units), in the long term
Stations	Great Yarmouth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase or at least maintain staffing levels • Retain ticket office • Increase station opening hours later into the evening • Station improvements, particularly improvements to entry after hours • Improve connectivity through to Great Yarmouth by bus and walking and cycling
	Acle
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise car parking arrangements • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required.
	Lingwood
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV
	Brundall
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required. • Norfolk County Council is currently finalising a feasibility study investigating the provision of a footway Station Road linking the village to the station. • Improved walking and cycling signage
	Brundall Gardens
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install a ticket machine • Install customer information screens • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required. • Install Station CCTV • Add seating into the waiting room • Improved walking and cycling signage
	Buckenham (<i>Weekend only service</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a sparse service and so no changes are proposed
	Cantley
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase car parking provision • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV • Improved walking and cycling signage
Reedham	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to station, and between platforms required. • Provide car park lighting and car park CCTV 	
Haddiscoe	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install Station CCTV • Install customer information screens 	

	<p>Berney Arms (<i>sparse service</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Since the previous review in 2020 new seating and signage have been installed, along with a solar powered real time departure sign.• Improved walking and cycling signage and wayfinding is encouraged
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Community Rail and Private Lines

We are committed to supporting Community Rail as part of train operators' franchise commitments. We would also support investigation into new Community Rail Partnerships that could operate in Norfolk in the future, such as Norwich to Cambridge.

Norfolk County Council has been successfully working with community rail partnership groups since 1996. Community Rail Partnerships can bring many benefits to rail operation including community involvement and ownership and can lead to reduced operating costs.

Community Rail Norfolk is a not-for-profit company and oversees the two community rail partnerships in the county, on the **Bittern and Wherry Lines**. The county council is on the board of Community Rail Norfolk – together with the train operating company – and will continue working to promote the partnerships. Community Rail Norfolk has one paid employee who is charged with overseeing the two rail partnerships and drawing in funding. Core funding is provided by the train company. The two partnerships continue to be proactive and its members from all parts of the local community help to promote and improve the local railways between Norwich and Sheringham, Cromer, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft.

There are a number of heritage and private lines that operate in Norfolk. We support their operation and will work with them where possible. Unfortunately, we cannot commit to resources into their operation or extension as there is not sufficient funding but would support applications for funding.

Mid-Norfolk Railway (between Wymondham and Dereham) private line

This is a private operation and as such is managed by Mid-Norfolk Railway Preservation Trust utilising their own funds, although the county council will endeavour to provide help where it can. Possibility of opening the Wymondham to Dereham section to National Rail passengers is covered below under Norfolk Orbital Railway.

The North Norfolk Railway 'Poppy Line' (Sheringham and Holt) private line

This is a private operation and as such is managed by an independent group utilising their own funds, and run almost entirely by volunteers, although the county council will endeavour to provide help where it can. The Poppy Line is a heritage steam railway and travels from Sheringham along the coast to Weybourne and through the heathland to Holt.

Wells and Walsingham Light Railway private line

This is a private operation and as such is managed by independent groups utilising their own funds, although the county council will endeavour to provide help where it can. This narrow gauge steam railway follows the course of the old Great Eastern line for four miles from Wells to Walsingham.

Bure Valley Railway (between Aylsham and Wroxham): private line

This is a private operation although the county council maintains the Bure Valley Path, which runs alongside it. Recent improvements have been made to the path, allowing greater access for walking and cycling along the route and placemaking

improvements including locally designed and made mile markers. There has also been new station signage at Aylsham, Hoveton, Buxton, and Coltishall funded by Norfolk County Council through the Experience Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (€16m ERDF) through the Interreg VA France (Channel) England Programme 2014-2020.

The Bramley Line (Wisbech-March) private line

This line operated by the Heritage Railway Trust and runs between the railway town of March and the Market town of Wisbech at the very edge of Cambridgeshire. Although not in Norfolk the Bramley Line stations could be the closest station for those in Norfolk close to the Cambridgeshire border.

New or re-opened lines

Proposals of which the county council is aware include:

Wymondham to Dereham: private line

Dereham is the fifth largest settlement in the county and the largest settlement not connected by the national rail network (the Mid Norfolk railway operates privately and owns the infrastructure from Wymondham to Dereham). The next largest settlement not connected by rail is Fakenham, one quarter of the size. Feasibility into opening this link to mainstream passenger services, as part of the national network, between Dereham and Norwich, via Wymondham could be considered. The county council is happy to explore feasibility of this line further if the opportunity arises and it is supported by the current private operators.

King's Lynn to Hunstanton: reconnecting the two towns

It is not currently seen as feasible to consider reopening due to the cost of reinstating the line and that it is compromised by development. In 2020 the county council commissioned a viability study into whether there is a business case for re-opening the line. The study concluded that the re-instatement of the original route in its entirety cannot be feasibly re-instated due to built development on the former route at the Hunstanton and King's Lynn ends of the route, heritage constraints at Wolferton (as the former Royal Station is now a listed building and occupied dwelling) and most significantly, the majority of the route falls within the Coastal Hazard zone which is at high risk of flooding from rivers and seas. It would also be likely that any proposal for a level crossing on the A149 would be rejected. However, there is still support for reopening the line to Hunstanton from Hunstanton Rail and Kings Lynn Civic Society and there was evidence that the line would be well used if opened. Therefore, Norfolk County Council support in principal if there is genuine opportunity for funding delivery.

Great Yarmouth Station to Great Yarmouth Port: reinstating

This is not seen as feasible due to, amongst other things, the cost of reinstating the line and an unproven business case. However, there is work being done by other organisations to allow some freight movement between the Port and the railway via road links to the recently reopened Vauxhall Sidings near Great Yarmouth.

Norfolk Orbital Railway (Wymondham-Dereham-Fakenham-Holt-Sheringham): reinstating

Existing private railways operate at either end of this line (to Dereham and Holt). The Melton Constable Trust is pursuing plans to complete the link, which would also allow heritage services from Mid-Norfolk Railway and North Norfolk Railway to reach Fakenham and Holt. This is seen as an independent initiative – as will any other similar initiatives – and as such will need to be pursued by independent groups utilising their own funds, although the county council will endeavour to provide help where it can.

Norfolk Greenways

Norfolk County Council has conducted a feasibility study looking to develop a greenway network across the county along disused railway lines and have delivered schemes on the Wevers Way and King's Lynn to Hunstanton routes. The aim is for them to extend across Norfolk and link into the Norfolk Trails network of promoted walking and cycling routes. However, much of the King's Lynn to Fakenham route is no longer connected due to private residences and businesses at the station ends with no through access. We will be continuing to look for opportunities to link the trails network to the old railways.

Chapter 4: Stations

Rail stations are the gatekeepers of rail patronage and create a first impression to travellers that can affect whether they choose to travel by rail again. Clear signage, a safe environment, being tidy and well maintained, and good access should all be a minimum requirement of all stations. Lack of staff and placemaking can be a barrier to using the railways both physically and psychologically. More detailed information on specific improvements to each station are included in the following chapter, alongside improvements and priorities for each line.

Priorities include:

- ◆ All stations – inside and out – to be maintained to a reasonable state of repair
- ◆ Ticket offices retained at the larger stations (currently Norwich, Thetford, Diss, Great Yarmouth, Downham Market and King's Lynn)
- ◆ Staff presence with ability to sell tickets at medium-sized stations
- ◆ Conveniently located bus / taxi pick-up and set-down facilities outside stations
- ◆ Direct and safe pedestrian and cycle routes to adjacent residential areas and businesses
- ◆ Rail stations sign-posted from convenient locations like town centres, and signs to facilities at the rail stations including national trails and cycle networks and other long-distance routes that are not national trails such as Wherryman's Way, Angle's Way and Weaver's Way
- ◆ Bring empty buildings back into re-use, especially for community benefit
- ◆ Railway station travel plans at all stations
- ◆ All stations to have facilities including CCTV and secure covered cycle parking
- ◆ Adequate, covered waiting facilities at all stations
- ◆ Improved connecting bus and rail services to create a 'virtual' branch line to market towns in the county not connected by rail
- ◆ Better integration between the station and onward travel to town centres
- ◆ Facilities such as lifts to be provided where there's a need to cross rail lines on a bridge
- ◆ Improved station access, information, station environment and facilities
- ◆ Park and Rail developed at key strategic locations where it would be an efficient and effective way to increase rail travel and encourage modal shift
- ◆ Adequate car parking facilities to cater for demand
- ◆ Expansion of PlusBus to all market towns in the county not served by rail.

Station numbers shown in the Office of Rail and Road's Estimates of station usage are released annually. A full list of the ORR figures for Norfolk Stations can be found in appendix 1 of this document. 2020-21 figures tend not to be used when comparing trends as Covid-19 saw an unprecedented drop in train patronage so does not provide a fair comparison. A full list of these figures is shown in Appendix 1. On the whole rail user numbers are recovering well from national lockdown, although 22 of Norfolk's stations saw numbers reduce in 2021-22 from 2019-20, with Harling Road showing the biggest percentage drop in use at 74%. However, at nine stations passenger numbers have surpassed pre-lockdown figures.

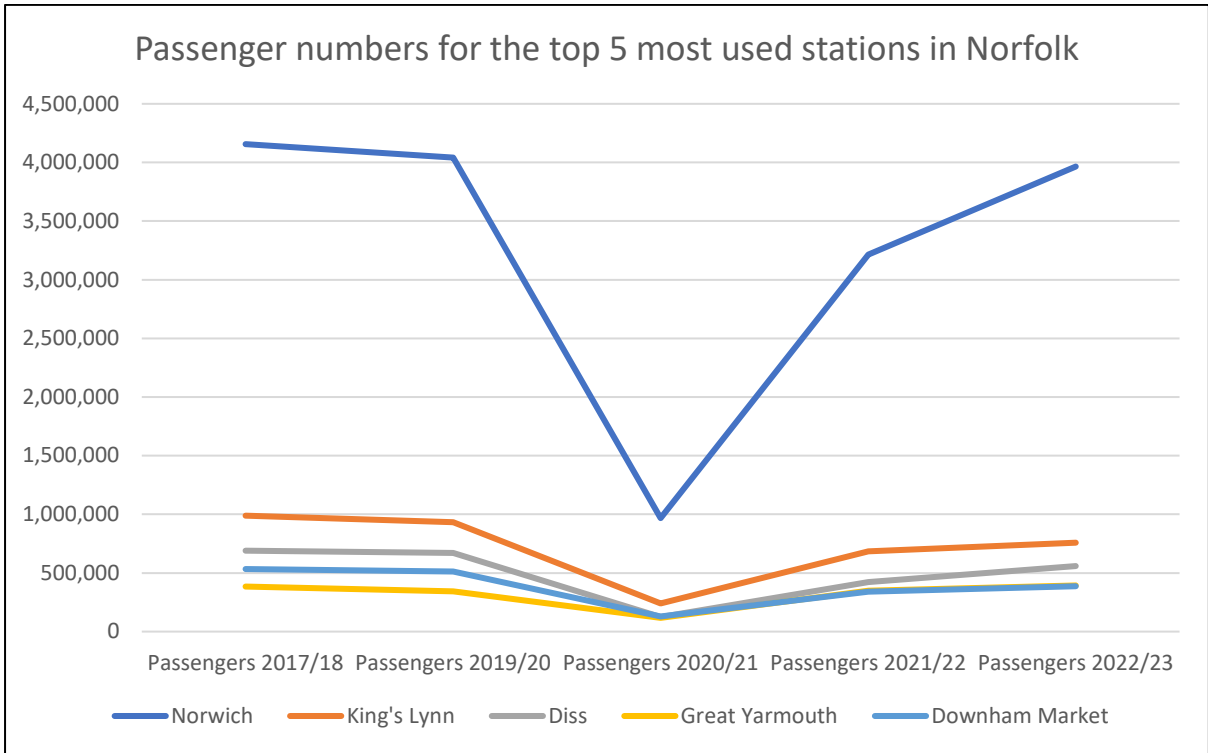


Figure 2: Passenger numbers for the five most used stations taken from the Office of Rail and Road's Estimates of station usage in and out.

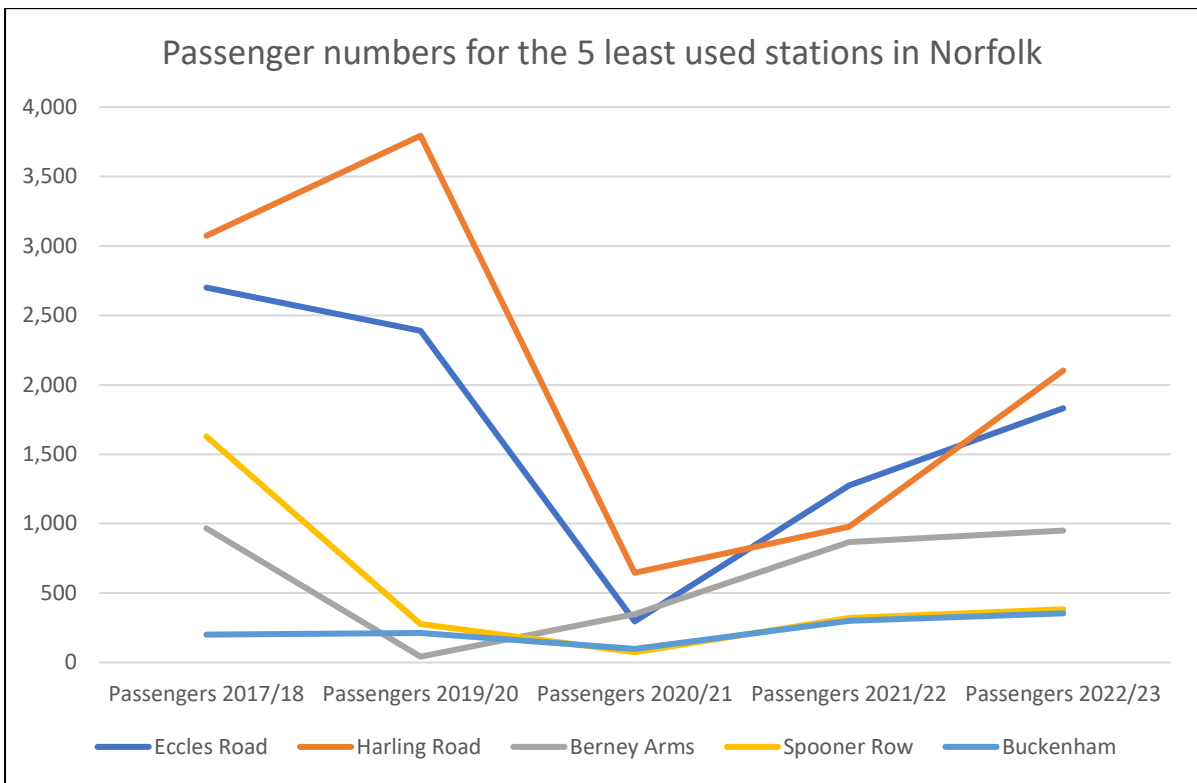


Figure 3: Passenger numbers for the five least used stations taken from the Office of Rail and Road's Estimates of station usage in and out.

Access to stations, trains and platforms

We believe that all stations should have fully accessible platforms. It is not acceptable for passengers with mobility difficulties to have to travel to alternative stations because they cannot access the platform – as is currently the case at Wymondham where there is no step-free access to the Cambridge-bound platform. At stations like Diss and Thetford existing footbridges between platforms need to be replaced with ones of a more acceptable quality and accessibility enhanced with passenger lifts to provide step-free access between platforms. We understand that this will take time to achieve but believe that the larger stations should be tackled in the short term.

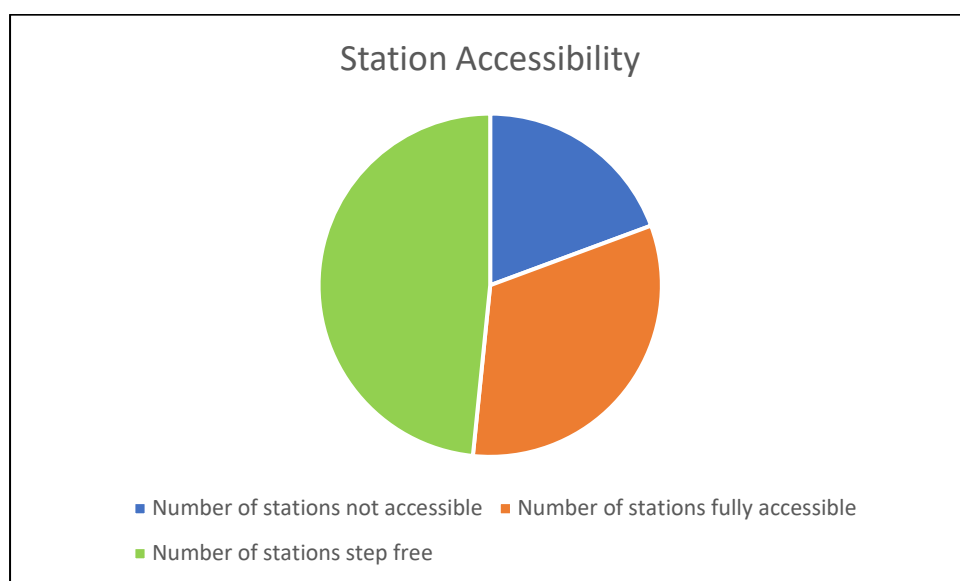


Figure 4: Norfolk stations' level of accessibility

There are currently eight stations in Norfolk without a ticket machine, either accessible or not. There is only one station in Norfolk that has a ticket machine but does not provide an accessible machine, and that is Roughton Road. However, this station does not have step free access and the only entrance to the station involves the use of a very steep flight of steps and then a ramped footpath to access the platform. Any customers with mobility impairments are advised to use Cromer station, which is under 1.5 miles away.

25 of the 31 stations in Norfolk are step free. However, only ten stations are truly accessible with no restrictions, long alternative routes or sharp inclines. The six stations which are not accessible at all are Acle, Brundall Gardens, Eccles Road, North Walsham, Roughton Road and Wymondham. Of all these stations we see North Walsham as a priority, after Wymondham, as it is in the top ten most used stations with numbers recovering at one of the quickest rates post Covid-19.

Although many stations don't have accessible toilets Thetford is a priority as it is the only station that does have toilets but not an accessible alternative. Watlington is the only station that doesn't have a wheelchair ramp, although the station is accessible.

Priorities for all stations:

- ◆ Accessible toilets at all stations with existing toilets
- ◆ Stations should be truly accessible and not just 'step free'
- ◆ Accessible ticket machines at all stations with ticket machines
- ◆ Car Park lighting at all stations the short term and CCTV at all stations in the longer term

Walking, Cycling & Wheeling

We support the provision of adequate, secure and sheltered facilities for cycle storage at stations. All stations provide some type of cycle storage, although this ranges from small bike stands to sheltered cycle storage. However, only five have cycle CCTV. It is important in encouraging modal share to sustainable and active transport that people feel safe cycling to, and leaving their bikes at, stations.

The issue of carrying bikes on trains however is a difficult one. Most trains currently have the provision for four bikes to be carried, although the guard may allow more on to the train for example if the train isn't full. If more space were to be given over to bikes it would mean fewer seats for passengers. Therefore, there are restrictions on full size bikes on busy routes at rush hour. There is the ability to book a bike space on Norwich and London Intercity services.

The new Greater Anglia trains have gone some way to increase bike provision to avoid disruption for passengers more work needs to be done by all operators in Norfolk. Operators should ensure cycling as part of passengers' journeys are encouraged without disrupting other passengers and taking seats from those that need them, leading to overcrowding. EMR do not currently accept bookings for bikes on peak services, when most people will be cycling as part of their commute. Lack of clarity or consistency in bike provision can lead to users choosing other, less healthy, travel choices. Consideration should be given in design to larger wheeled vehicles such as mobility scooters.

The addition of bike share schemes at Norwich Train Station and Thorpe Road in Norwich and Cemetery Lane at Wymondham Train Station have opened up opportunities for people who are able to use an alternative to the private car for onward journeys. Riverside/Norwich Train Station is the busiest Beryl Bay in the UK and since launch it has had a total of 121,735 journeys to and from the bay with all of those journeys averaging 2.81km in distance (data is up to April 25 2024). The Cemetery Lane bay in Wymondham was launched in 2023 but has started positively.

We support the roll out of bike share schemes at other stations where appropriate (areas of employment, leisure or education are within a cycling distance of the station).

Safety and Personal Security

Safety on the railways is very good, although some people can feel vulnerable and have perceptions that their personal safety and security are threatened. This can be especially the case at quieter stations with no staff presence. We would expect train companies to work to overcome any issues, either real or perceived, to make travelling more comfortable for rail users. This might be through a range of measures including staff at stations or on trains, increased presence on later/last trains in the evening, CCTV or lighting. A Transport Focus Survey, '[Looking to the future - transport users priorities](#)', released in February 2024 listed personal security on trains as 6th and personal security at stations as 8th in the top ten priorities for rail passengers.

Onward Travel

It is important that stations provide clear and accessible signage to help people choose the best way to access town/city centres and nearby attractions, whether by bus, walking, cycling, bike and scooter sharing scheme or car. We would encourage the use of wayfinding tactiles. Wayfinding includes information on nearby bike hire, e-bike and e-scooter hire or local taxis. New websites such as Travel Norfolk provide a way to route plan using different criteria such as the greenest, fastest or most active route. However, not everyone has smart phones so many people benefit from information at the station. As part of the Bus Service Improvement Plan Norfolk County Council has been able to add some real time bus screens to stations but these could be rolled out further.

We support and encourage bus and rail operators to work together on timetabling. Although most stations are well serviced by public transport there are issues with busses not stopping at train stations, this issue is currently being addressed at Great Yarmouth station with a new stop close by. At Downham Market, the bus from King's Lynn through the villages doesn't stop at the railway station, with the nearest stop a 10-15 minute walk. However, we understand that busses are run privately and extra stops slow down services.

We will investigate Park and Rail as an option at key strategic locations where it would be an efficient and effective way to increase rail travel and encourage modal shift.

New stations

There are several new stations which have been proposed by various groups or organisations. However, adding a new station can slow down services and stations are very costly so the business case has to be strong in demonstrating value for money, that it is strategically vital to current capacity, that it solves an existing transport issue or to support growth.

We have outlined our position below at locations where we know new stations have been proposed by rail interest or other groups. We support further work on stations and will evaluate each proposal on a case by case basis dependant on the results of feasibility work and a robust business case. Norfolk County Council are currently developing a set of criteria that proposed new stations must fit before resources are committed to exploring them. These include being close to existing or planned development and public support from both users of the railways and local residents.

Broadland Business Park, Norwich

- Work has investigated the business case for a new station at Broadland Business Park, in the east of Norwich on the Bittern Line. This is a medium-term aim and initial work on a business case suggested that there would be benefits to reopening. However, previous work was undertaken before the Covid-19 pandemic and more work would be needed to review if there is still a business case for this station.

Postwick, Norwich

- A new station at Postwick Park and Ride on the Wherry Line was previously included in plans subject to further investigation of its feasibility. This station would be sited adjacent to the existing Park and Ride terminal and could serve county residents with access to the nearby business parks on Yarmouth Road, east Norwich. Following initial discussions with the rail industry some time ago, this is not seen as feasible since passenger demand would be likely to be low, and there would be similar issues to those faced with a new station at Broadland Business Park, described above.

Rackheath

- A new station at Rackheath was originally proposed by the development industry in this substantial growth area to the north east of Norwich. However, although as Rackheath is a fast-growing village with more growth planned over the coming years, this is unlikely to be feasible as it would create longer journey times along the Bittern Line, potentially making it difficult to operate services given the infrastructure constraints through to Sheringham. Also, we would need to evaluate the location of any new station as it would need to be accessible from the development. Whilst the county council is sympathetic to this proposition, this would need further investigation, although it no longer looks like it would be likely to come forward as part of any development proposals in the area.

North Thetford

- A new station at Thetford, to the north of the town – within the sustainable urban extension of 5,000 new dwellings and associated employment development – has been proposed. Policies in the Thetford Area Action Plan safeguard the land that would be required. A second station close to the existing Thetford station is technically feasible, but the need for it is not clear. Therefore, it would be more beneficial to focus on improving the existing Thetford station, including a lift for access across the platforms.

King's Lynn

- At King's Lynn, the idea of a parkway station just south of the town has been mooted. Previous proposals were not seen as viable, but we have pledged to give consideration to these proposals in the work on a review of the King's Lynn Transport Strategy, which has just commenced (at the time of writing).

South West Norwich

- New stations have been suggested to the south west of Norwich either near Thickthorn or at Hethersett; the idea being that this could serve the UEA/Norwich Research Park/Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital cluster as well as residential development. It has been suggested that these could be parkway

stations, although no work has been done to see if there is demand for this. These proposals are not supported by Norfolk County Council. Any new station would be some considerable distance from the destination it is proposed to serve and would not offer any advantage over the existing stations at either Norwich or Wymondham. Improved walking, cycling and public transport links to Wymondham station and the wider corridor serving Hethersett and the cluster are currently being taken forward by the county council through local development commitments, engagement with partners such as Beryl and through our Transforming Cities Fund and Bus Service Improvement Plan programmes.

Fornsett St Mary or Long Stratton

- A new station has been suggested at Fornsett St Mary, near Long Stratton, on the London-Norwich line (Great Eastern Mainline). The council does not currently support this proposition, especially given the overriding priority of reducing journey times on the line. Railfuture East Anglia are strong advocates for a new station at Long Stratton to service planned growth, and as a valuable new railhead for South Norfolk. They feel that the station could be served by the additional third train per hour service committed under the most recent franchise without impacting existing services. The rail line is, at its closest point, approximately 2.5km (1½ miles) to the west of the village served by a comparatively low standard road network. The vast majority of the major growth in Long Stratton is to the east of the A140 and any new station would not be well-located to serve this.

Wisbech

- Although not in Norfolk we support the Wisbech Rail project, which aims to reopen the Wisbech to March rail line, which has been closed since 1968. At Wisbech, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has been progressing feasibility work on a rail link between March and Wisbech. A new station would not only open up the town to mainline rail services but could also help to accelerate the delivery of planned housing, much of which is in Norfolk. The line would run from March, on the Ely to Peterborough line, into Wisbech.

Chapter 5: Network

The main priorities are:

- ◆ Passenger Service Levels - Reduce overcrowding and increase route capacities and improve inter-regional and cross-country connectivity
- ◆ Make ticket sales and fare structures simpler for the public to understand, both in ticket machines and online
- ◆ All ticket machines should sell the full range of tickets available online and at ticket offices and be easy to use
- ◆ Integration of transport modes, making it easier to use active or public transport as part of the journey
- ◆ Accommodate and encourage greater use of rail for freight, without reducing the capacity for passenger services
- ◆ Decarbonisation of the network, through electrification.

Previous work has suggested that rail travellers expect essential facilities to be provided and maintained to a reasonable standard. That is, they expect good standards of reliability and punctuality; stations and rail carriages to be clean; staff to be available and helpful; and to be able to get to stations and onto trains even if they have a disability or heavy luggage. Across the network there is a demand to simplify and streamline the way we buy tickets.

Potential network constraint	Routes potentially affected
Platform occupation at Norwich Thorpe Station	All
Bottleneck at Norwich Station Throat	All
At-grade conflicts at Whitlingham Junction	Norwich – Sheringham, Norwich – Great Yarmouth Norwich – Lowestoft
Single Track Trowse Swing Bridge	Norwich – Cambridge
Conflicting movements at single lead Trowse Lower Junction	Norwich - Cambridge
Single line north of Hoveton & Wroxham Station	Norwich – Sheringham
Single line sections between Great Yarmouth and Brundall/Reedham	Norwich – Great Yarmouth

Table 2: Network Constraints identified in Improved Rail Services in Norfolk Timetabling Exercise conducted by Mott MacDonald for Norfolk County Council in 2007.

Passenger service levels

- Reduce overcrowding and increase route capacity
- Provide passengers with a greater choice in terms of a range of destinations, frequencies and times of travel
- Maintain and improve inter-regional and cross-country connectivity.

The new trains on the Greater Anglia franchise, which include additional seating capacity, and the longer train serving King's Lynn to London have helped alleviate some capacity issues. However, this is still a problem on some lines and rail operators review capacity figures to make decisions on whether a service requires additional cars.

Part of the solution, on some lines, will be to increase the frequency of services. We also see increases of frequency as being an important stimulus to the economies of the towns served. In the long-term we would like to see half hourly frequencies on all routes, but our shorter-term priorities are King's Lynn to Cambridge and Norwich to Cambridge.

Our final aspiration is to see services start earlier in the mornings and continue later in the evenings to fulfil market requirements. Our concern is at the end of the day where a number of services do not provide for returns following evening events.

Fare structures

- Make ticket sales and fare structures simpler for the public to understand, both in ticket machines and online
- Retain, as far as is practicable, face-to-face contact for ticket sales. Our preference would be for staff at stations, or other means of face-to-face ticket sales like the use of retail outlets
- Introduce smart integrated ticketing across rail and bus services
- PlusBus extended to Diss, North Walsham, Cromer and Downham Market (currently only available at Norwich King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth).
- **Integration:** There has been an upgrade of pedestrian routes between rail and bus stations at King's Lynn and the provision of clear real time information displays showing train departures at the bus station. Real time Hunstanton bus arrivals and departures are also shown on screens at the railway station. This could usefully be extended to include information about the Excel bus service (Norwich-King's Lynn-Peterborough) and the King's Lynn-Spalding bus services as well as other, non-trunk, bus routes.

Decarbonisation

In order to achieve targets and aspirations to cut emissions we must ensure all lines are electrified by 2040, including Norwich-Cambridge (Ely-Cambridge is already electrified); Norwich-Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft; Norwich-Peterborough; and Norwich-Sheringham.

All trains operated by Greater Anglia in the region are now bi-modal, contributing to the government commitment to phase out "diesel-only" trains. We support other forms of decarbonising technology as well as electrification such as battery or hydrogen units if studies show that lines are viable for alternative traction rather than overhead line. EMR currently have the largest number of diesel trains operating in Norfolk, making up 78% of their vehicles. Therefore, we would encourage an upgrade to a cleaner fuel type.

Hydrogen units could replace the diesel engines in the future. However, more work needs to be done on the development of hydrogen and research on cleaner fuels is progressing rapidly. Therefore, this is a long term aspiration that could be replaced by a newer technology by the time it sees fruition. The Norfolk Local Transport Plan 4 supports the aspirations of the British Energy Security Strategy, April 2022, to support a hydrogen economy and will continue to review hydrogen studies in the region.

Chapter 6: Freight

The county council supports the transfer of more freight from road to rail. The use of rail for freight is largely market-led, with private companies making decisions about whether to transport goods by rail based on factors like cost and convenience. The rail network itself is not generally a constraint to freight operations, although freight paths may be limited once out of the county, and dedicated freight facilities may be lacking at the places where companies require loading / unloading.

The county council will consider on a case-by-case basis what it can do to facilitate rail freight, whether this be putting its support behind proposals or engaging in feasibility studies.

Ports

There is currently no direct rail access to King's Lynn or Great Yarmouth ports meaning all freight is required to move by road to either a rail freight connection. Further work has been done to look at rail links with the region's major ports, notably the [Transport East Transport Strategy – Unlocking International Gateways](#), Nov 2021.

According to Network Rail a single freight train can replace up to a mile of lorries on a stretch of motorway and **each freight train removes 76 lorries from our roads**, which could result in around 1 billion fewer Heavy Good Vehicles (HGV) miles every year.

This report found that ports at King's Lynn, Lowestoft and Ipswich contribute £360 million to the economy every year and support 5,200 jobs nationally. King's Lynn Port has attracted substantial investment in part due to the increased volume through the port.

Although not in Norfolk Lowestoft Port, and any freight movements that could be introduced over that route, would have an impact in Norfolk as Lowestoft runs along the Wherry Line. In 2022 a company importing ballast used on rail tracks moved to the port, moving product to the rail sidings and then to rail freight wagons to be distributed across the network.

King's Lynn

Our analysis showed that potentially King's Lynn's manufacturing-based economy could benefit from better freight connections. Sites to the south of the town are served by disused rail links which, over time, could be brought into re-use to serve appropriate business needs. We continue to support the existing freight movements including glass sand from Middleton Towers.

Snetterton

A spur off the Norwich to Cambridge line was in previous use. This is in a good location to serve as a freight road-rail facility due to its convenient location close to the A11 and existing distribution / warehousing facilities in this area. Further feasibility into the need and potential of bringing this back into use is supported. The County Council wants to maintain the long term future of the rail head at Snetterton Heath.

Great Yarmouth

The County Council purchased the former rail freight site at the edge of Great Yarmouth near Vauxhall Holiday Camp with a view to securing its potential future use as a freight facility. Known as the Vauxhall Sidings, the previous Rail Prospectus committed to bringing the site back into use. This has now been achieved by Eastern Rail Services who supply rolling stock to several mainline companies, include a trackwork and locomotive hire business, provide film and TV props, charter and test trains.

Norwich Riverside terminals

We continue to support the existing freight movements including aggregates from Norwich Trowse and Norwich Riverside terminals.

North Walsham and Bacton

A report from British Pipeline Agency states that that the Bacton terminal supplies 20-25% of the UK natural gas requirements (2021). The gas condensates are transported from the terminal to North Walsham, adjacent to the train station. The freight is then moved from North Walsham to rail wagons and transported to the Harwich Refinery by rail.

Felixstowe Freight route electrification

Although not in the county, Norfolk County Council supports further development of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton freight route. This is vitally important to the region's economy and potentially enables freight on the Great Eastern Main Line to be rerouted. The ability for freight to be handled at Brandon in Suffolk, and on the independent Mid Norfolk Railway, is noted.

Chapter 7: Partnerships and Infrastructure

Norfolk County Council is engaged in several partnerships pushing for improvements along various routes. The nature of ownership and responsibility of the railways mean that large infrastructure projects are driven through partnership working. We support infrastructure improvements that enable greater speeds, more reliability of services, additional services particularly for freight, to unlock growth and to provide a better service for those with additional access needs.

There have been a number of achievements since the 2011 Rail Prospectus, including Network Rail's King's Lynn Service Enhancements project which was approved in February 2019. This project improved platform and stabling infrastructure to allow longer eight-car trains and relieve the sustained overcrowding. Watlington Rail Station car park has been expanded and a new station at Cambridge North opened in May 2017. The Great Yarmouth rail station forecourt has been improved and there is a new right turn out of the station, making it easier to access and serve by bus.

A key achievement achieved by successful partnership working across the region saw the replacement of the entire train fleet for Greater Anglia. These new trains bring better passenger comfort and convenience, improved accessibility, as well as contributing to significant reliability improvements. Also, a new 80 metre platform has been installed at Sheringham Rail Station to accommodate the new Greater Anglia trains in 2019.

As part of Devolution we will build close working relationship with Great British Railways, which will help us to hold operators to account for poor services as well as highlight infrastructure priorities.

Key partnerships for Norfolk infrastructure improvements include:

- Greater Anglia
- Great Northern (GTR)
- East Midlands Railways
- Network Rail
- Transport East
- Project partnerships including East West Rail Partnership and the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE) programme.
- Great British Railways are due to become a key partner.

Ely Area Enhancements

The Ely area is a major constraint on limiting train numbers on the Felixstowe to the Midlands freight line, as well as on the King's Lynn, Peterborough, Norwich and Ipswich passenger lines. Government has committed to progressing the Ely Area Enhancements project as part of their Network North announcements and we are working with various partners on this, not least to secure the early release of funding for its progression.

The Ely Area Task Force brings together MPs, local authorities, and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to push the case for significant investment and improvements at Ely.

Trowse Junction

Studies have been undertaken to investigate bottlenecks for rail services into Norwich from outside the county. Work has dovetailed with that of partners looking to open up a major regeneration opportunity in East Norwich. The track at Trowse swing bridge is currently single track, but studies have explored whether this is the limiting factor for rail services and whether it could be made double track. Doubling the track would improve speed and capacity of trains to Norwich. Findings to date indicate that the first constraint to rail services is the track layout to the county side of the bridge, and the county council supports infrastructure improvements in this area to unlock the bottleneck. We continue to support an additional track over the river, via a fixed bridge as this would remove further bottlenecks and potentially provide more resilience than the current opening bridge but recognise the constraints to this including navigational rights on the river.

East West Rail

Norfolk County Council is a member of the East West Rail Main Line Partnership which consists of local authorities and businesses and has been campaigning for East West Rail since 1995. The route will link Oxford, Milton Keynes, Cambridge, Norwich and Ipswich. The Partnership works closely with government, the East West Railway Company, Network Rail and others to ensure its full potential is realised. We also work with Transport East in ensuring the last connection to Norwich is included in plans.

Bridges

Network Rail are responsible for railway bridges over disused railway lines. However, many of these bridges are now over active travel routes maintained by NCC as part of the Trails Network. Therefore, we want to see better communication over any works proposed on these bridges and hope that a closer relationship with Great British Railways will facilitate better dialogue.

Downham Market and Littleport

There are no intermediate signals between Downham Market and Littleport and this imposes a severe restriction on the number of train movements possible: there can be only one train between these two places at once, so even another train moving in the same direction cannot enter the section until the first train has cleared the other end. Freight trains (mainly silica sand workings from Middleton Towers near King's Lynn to the North) take about 12 minutes to clear this section, passenger trains about nine minutes. Given that trains cannot cross on these single track sections, and that train timings are essentially determined by the running of other trains south of Cambridge, this lack of adequate infrastructure for current conditions has been a significant factor in the degradation of journey times between King's Lynn and King's Cross: many northbound trains are forced to be timetabled to sit and wait for some three minutes at a point north of Littleport station. We are therefore pressing for reinstatement of the double track line throughout to King's Lynn.

Chapter 8: Funding

Although local authorities do not have control over what rail projects are funded we do have a role in working with partners to ensure funding is spent in Norfolk and bids are made for the right projects. There is a need to be ready when new funds become available, such as the New Stations Fund, Restoring your Railway Fund and Access for All. No stations in Norfolk received funding through the Access for All Programme in Control Period 6. However, we continue to apply to this fund for projects in Norfolk with the priority being Wymondham Station. Each Control Period is a five year delivery plan for rail used by Network Rail to decide investment priorities. Control Period 6 is 2019–2024 so we will need to plan now for our priorities in the next control period (CP7 2024-2029).

Funding and delivery

Railways are essentially funded from fare-paying passengers and a subsidy from government, with government making funding decisions for infrastructure projects and the level of service provided on routes. Station Improvements are funded largely through the Rail Operator for that station, and the funds listed above such as Access for All or the New Stations Fund.

A major change introduced in 2019 has been the move from a five-year programme of committed improvement schemes to the RNEP (Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline) process, described earlier. This process has advantages in that it does not commit to delivery of schemes from the outset; rather there is a series of staged gateways where decisions are made about whether to proceed to the next stage. However, there is an increasing expectation that government looks to local stakeholders to provide funding at each and every stage. This is difficult as budgets have been reduced significantly in recent years, costs are considerable, and there is significant risk at the early stages of scheme delivery about whether the scheme will ultimately progress to delivery.

Rail industry

In May 2021, government published the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail. Setting in motion changes to the structure of the rail industry including the formation of a new public body, Great British Railways, that will bring the vast majority of the network under single national leadership. Although the necessary legislation has not been enacted to bring this forward, we have seen changes to the franchising model with train companies now operating under direct contracts from government setting out the level of service being provided. The King's Speech in Autumn 2023 included scrutiny of a draft Rail Reform Bill in the next parliamentary session. This will consider establishing Great British Railways, currently set up as the Great British Railways Transition Team, changes to national passenger operating contracts and ticketing systems.

The two traditional sources of rail industry funding / improvements are from Network Rail spending programmes and franchise renewals. These are discussed below although as set out above, there is ongoing change in these arrangements.

Network Rail spending programme

Network Rail is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure, such as track, signalling and level crossings. Their spending programmes for maintenance and renewals are divided in to five-year periods.

As set out earlier, improvement schemes are now the subject of a new process. The county council will continue its engagement with the rail industry to secure investment for Norfolk's benefit in future programmes.

Franchises / Contracts

Train services are run by Train Operating Companies on a franchise or contract basis. Franchise renewals previously offered a good opportunity to secure service improvements such as enhancements to frequency, quality of service or rolling stock. These enhancements might either be specified by government (and therefore have to be paid for by the taxpayer if they do not pay for themselves through rail fares) or by train operators. If the train operator feels they will generate a financial return, they may invest their own money into projects. These projects are therefore funded by the private sector with no need for public subsidy. The direct train service between Norwich and Cambridge and rolling stock replacement were secured as part of franchise renewals.

County Council Transport Funding

Although the county council is not responsible for funding rail services or infrastructure, we have a strong record of putting in funding, although this has reduced in recent years due to reductions in our budgets. We have put funding towards infrastructure (mainly access to stations and information systems), supported essential services and plan to look into the most effective ways to use funding on feasibility studies. Recently, however, we have a much reduced level of funding available and cannot put in the same levels of funding as previously. Increasingly we will have to look towards drawing in funding from other sources to support our investment.

Our main source of funding for improvement projects (not supporting the running of services) is Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding. We will continue to consider the use of LTP funding for rail studies.

Devolution will see the county council's directly elected leader having greater influence over decisions on rail.

Other potential funding sources

Other potential funding sources include:

- Developer contributions
- Community Infrastructure Levies
- Locally retained, or supplementary, business rates
- Tax increment financing

Community Rail Partnerships

There are two Community Rail Partnerships in the county – the Bittern and Wherry Lines – overseen by Community Rail Norfolk, a not for profit company. The two partnerships comprise local communities, individuals and organisations who take on

a significant role in their local rail services. The partnerships are invaluable in the promotion and development of the services and make a significant contribution to things like upkeep of stations on a voluntary basis. Although Norfolk County Council does not directly give funding to Community Rail Partnership we are committed to supporting them and often work together on projects.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Rail Station Passenger Numbers

Station	Passengers 2019/20	Passengers 2020/21 (affected by Covid-19)	Passengers 2021/22	Passengers 2022/23
Norwich	4,041,818	967,650	3,213,504	3,963,948
King's Lynn	931,394	240,162	683,706	757,034
Diss	671,300	124,442	422,272	559,966
Great Yarmouth	344,276	117,164	347,854	393,322
Downham Market	512,772	129,058	341,550	386,270
Thetford	286,700	73,700	226,022	276,522
Cromer	213,936	60,352	212,590	244,294
North Walsham	226,116	54,894	221,032	243,208
Sheringham	182,288	53,214	233,550	232,222
Wymondham	196,036	56,424	150,466	196,452
Attleborough	158,464	41,592	131,918	168,896
Hoveton & Wroxham	125,260	38,880	112,218	124,804
Brandon	111,572	26,804	93,682	115,102
Watlington	138,366	39,078	105,886	107,724
Brundall	89,742	33,282	83,006	92,068
Lingwood	43,536	12,622	37,524	44,230
Acle	41,618	8,478	33,642	40,672
Reedham	41,074	10,770	36,230	37,042
West Runton	26,076	9,144	31,834	32,918
Gunton	18,560	3,334	22,228	28,446
Worstead	25,404	6,730	22,270	26,816
Roughton Road	21,552	3,304	20,956	24,670
Cantley	17,048	7,004	14,776	15,740
Brundall Gardens	9,408	9,318	11,358	14,558
Salhouse	9,856	11,566	12,692	14,006
Haddiscoe	12,650	2,870	9,086	10,304
Harling Road	3,794	646	978	2,104
Eccles Road	2,390	296	1,276	1,830
Berney Arms	42	348	868	950
Spooner Row	276	74	320	382
Buckenham	212	98	300	354

These figures are taken from the Office of Rail and Road's Estimates of station usage in and out. <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/estimates-of-station-usage>

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 13

Report Title: Policy and Strategy Framework

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships (Cllr Margaret Dewsbury)
Cabinet Member for Economic Growth (Cllr Fabian Eagle)
Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste (Cllr James Bensley)
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport (Cllr Graham Plant)**

Responsible Director: Sarah Rhoden (Director of Community, Information and Learning)

Executive Summary

The Select Committee has a role in developing and advising on Council policies and strategies. This report sets out information on the policies and strategies aligned to the work of this Select Committee, in the form of a policy and strategy framework.

The framework is brought to the Select Committee annually to enable the Committee to have a clear picture of the policy and strategy work being planned and undertaken.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review the policy and strategy framework at Appendix A and identify any appropriate items for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme (where not already included).

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The Select Committee has a role in developing and advising on the policy and strategy framework. The Committee has an item on the Forward Work

Programme for an annual review of this framework; this was last reviewed by the Committee in July 2021.

- 1.2 This report provides details of the current policies and strategies which align to this Select Committee along with timescales for anticipated development and review work.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The policy and strategy framework for this Select Committee is set out in Appendix A. This lists the policies and strategies which have been approved by Members, along with those under development which will be brought to Members for approval. The following definitions have been used as a general guide: -

Strategy – guides the future shape and delivery of services by setting out a high-level long-term vision and/or priorities;

Policy – sets out a principle, protocol or set of rules that guide decisions or achieve outcomes.

- 2.2 The framework covers policies and strategies only, and not all documents which may require member approval.
- 2.3 A general working assumption is that all relevant policies and strategies will be reported to this Committee prior to any formal approval. This will help Select Committee input and develop appropriate recommendations for Cabinet and/or the relevant Cabinet Member to consider. In practice, the extent to which this is possible may depend on the capacity of the Select Committee (e.g. size of agendas for meetings) and any particular timing considerations.
- 2.4 The timescales anticipated for reviewing existing policies and strategies varies, with some reviewed annually and some longer-term strategies less frequently. The framework aims for each to be reviewed at least once every 5 years.
- 2.5 The Select Committee carried out work to review and develop the following policies and strategies in the last year:-
 - Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy
 - Apprenticeships Strategy
 - CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy
 - Economic Strategy
- 2.6 In considering the policy and strategy framework, the Select Committee may wish to consider: -

Priorities – there may be priority areas that the Select Committee wish to identify e.g. areas where the Select Committee may wish to be involved in any development work in more detail.

Timings – some policies/strategies have a specified timescale to develop a revised strategy to ensure there is no gap in provision. In other cases, there is no specific timescale and there is more scope for the Select Committee to set timings for review, if needed, e.g. in line with any priorities.

Gaps – whether there may be any gaps in the current policy and strategy framework, or new requirements, where the development of a new policy or strategy may be useful.

3 Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 The policy and strategy framework helps provide clarity to the overall vision, direction and standards of services set by Members. A regular review of the framework (and individual elements within in) helps to ensure that the Select Committee is able to understand the range of activity aligned to the Committee.

4 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 As above.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 This report enables the Select Committee to understand the full picture of policies and strategies aligned to the Committee, and it is for the Committee to use this framework as a tool to help shape future agendas and discussion items.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There is no direct financial implication from a review of the policy and strategy framework. There is a general need for policies and strategies developed to be realistic in terms of the overall financial envelope to ensure that they are deliverable. This includes taking account of the opportunities to access external funding to support delivery, particularly for key areas of work or projects. This needs to be balanced against the need for some strategies to set out a long-term future vision for services or for the county.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** None arising from this report. Policy review and development is, in the round, carried out within existing staff resource. In some cases there may be a

need to commission specialist or technical resource from within available funding.

7.2 Property: None.

7.3 IT: None.

8 Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications: None arising from this report. All policies and strategies developed are assessed to ensure that they align with legislative and other similar statutory requirements. Changes in legislation or associated standards/guidance are also assessed to determine any need to review policies/strategies as a result.

8.2 Human Rights Implications: The implications of individual policies and strategies will be considered as part of their development

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included): Assessments are completed for individual policies/strategies as part of their development. Copies of these assessments will be included in relevant reports so that they can be considered as part of the decision-making process.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): None.

8.7 Any Other Implications: None.

9 Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 As above.

10 Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review the policy and strategy framework at Appendix A and identify any appropriate items for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme (where not already included).

11 Background Papers

11.1 None.

Officer Contact

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

Officer name: Sarah Rhoden – Director of Community, Information & Learning
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Policy and Strategy Framework – Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships' Portfolio				
1. Adult Education Strategy	Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com)	Mar-24	2025	See note 1
2. Arts Policy	Arts Policy	2005	2022	
3. Blue Badge (Disabled Persons) Parking Scheme Policy	Blue Badge (Disabled Persons) Parking Scheme Policy	Sep-22	2026	
4. Community Strategy				New - under development
5. Getting Norfolk Moving - Active Norfolk Strategy 2021-2026	Getting Norfolk Moving - Active Norfolk Strategy 2021-2026	10-Sep-21	2026	
6. NFRS Community Risk Management Plan*	Community risk management plan for Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service - Norfolk County Council*	Mar-23	March 2026	
7. Library Stock Management Policy	Held locally by team, not published.	Apr-21	2026	Currently under review
8. Norfolk Library Strategy	Norfolk Library Strategy (link to I&D minutes)	Mar-20	2025	Currently under review
9. Norfolk Museum Service 5 Year Strategic Framework 2019-2023	Norfolk Museum Service	Jan-20	2024	Currently under review
10. NFRS Significant Incident Review Policy	Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com) page 574	Jul-22	2027	
11. Trading Standards Business Services Policy	Trading Standards Business Services Policy	Jul-05	Annually	

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
12. Trading Standards Consumer Services Policy	Trading Standards Consumer Services Policy	2022	2026	
13. Trading Standards Service Plan	Trading Standards Service Plan	2022	Annually	
Cabinet Member for Economic Growth's Portfolio				
14. Apprenticeships Strategy	NCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2023-2025 Apprenticeships Norfolk	2023	2028	
15. Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy	Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy	2021	2026	New Economic Strategy being developed
16. Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24	Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24	2021	2024	
Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste's Portfolio				
17. Climate Strategy for Norfolk County Council*	Climate strategy - Norfolk County Council*	May-23	2026	
18. Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2010-2026 (DPD)*	Core Strategy and Minerals and Waste Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2010-2026 (DPD)*	Sep-11	Under review to be completed by March 2025	<i>See note 2 below.</i>
19. County Council Waste Policies and Moving Towards Zero Waste Strategy Document*	County Council Waste Policies and Moving Towards Zero Waste Strategy Document*	Feb-24	2025	
20. Local Nature Recovery Strategy				New - under development

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
21. Minerals Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)*	Minerals Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)*	Dec-17	Under review to be completed by March 2025	See note 2 below.
22. NCC Environmental Policy*	NCC Environmental Policy*	2021	2026	
23. Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019-2029	Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019-2029	Mar-19	2024	
24. Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Scheme*	Norfolk Minerals and Waste Development Scheme*	Aug-19	2024	On target for review completion in 2024
25. Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance Strategy	Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance – Overall Strategy	Oct-22	2025	
26. Recycling Centres Policies	Recycling Centres Policies	Feb-24	2025	
27. Recycling Credits Policy	Recycling Credits Policy	Feb-24	2025	
28. Statement of Community Involvement	Statement of Community Involvement	Oct-22	Oct-26	
29. Tipping Away Payments to Waste Collection Authorities	Tipping Away Payments to Waste Collection Authorities	2020	2026	
30. Tree Safety Management Policy	Tree Safety Management Policy	Oct-09	2023	
31. Waste Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)*	Waste Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)*	Oct-13	Under review to be completed by March 2025	See note 2 below.
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport's Portfolio				
32. Aylsham Network Improvement Strategy	Aylsham Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
33. Brown Tourist Information Signs Policy	Brown Tourist Information Signs Policy	2021	2026	
34. Bus Improvement Plan	Norfolk Bus Service Improvement Plan - October 2021	Oct-22	2027	
35. Concessionary Fares Policy	Concessionary bus pass - Norfolk County Council	Dec-23	2028	
36. Dereham Network Improvement Strategy	Dereham Network Improvement Strategy	Mar-19	2024	
37. Diss Network Improvement Strategy	Diss Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
38. Downham Market Network Improvement Strategy	Downham Market Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
39. Electric Vehicle Strategy	Electric Vehicle Strategy	Oct-21	2026	
40. Fakenham Network Improvement Strategy	Fakenham Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
41. Great Yarmouth Transport Strategy	Great Yarmouth Transport Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
42. Greater Norwich Local Plan	Greater Norwich Local Plan	2021	2026	
43. King's Lynn Transport Strategy	King's Lynn Transport Strategy	Feb-20	2025	
44. Local Flood Risk Strategy	Local Flood Risk Strategy	Jan-21	2026	
45. Local Transport Plan*	Local Transport Plan*	2022	2026	
46. Norfolk Parking Principles	Norfolk Parking Principles	May-12	Underway	
47. Norfolk Rail Prospectus	Norfolk Rail Prospectus	Jan-13	Underway	
48. Norfolk Speed Management Strategy	Norfolk Speed Management Strategy	Jan-23	2028	

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
49. Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan	2023	Annually	
50. North Walsham Network Improvement Strategy	North Walsham Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
51. Street Lighting Policy	Not currently on website - copy available on request	2019	2024	
52. Sustainable School Travel Strategy	Sustainable School Travel Strategy	Jul-14	Underway	
53. Swaffham Network Improvement Strategy	Swaffham Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
54. Thetford Network Improvement Strategy	Thetford Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
55. Transport Asset Management Plan	Transport Asset Management Plan	Mar-21	Annually	
56. Transport East Transport Strategy	Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com) page 53	Nov-22	2027	
57. Transport for Norwich (TfN)	Transport for Norwich Strategy - Norfolk County Council	2021	2026	
58. Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy	Norfolk Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy - Norfolk County Council	2024	2029	
59. Winter Maintenance Policy	Winter Maintenance Policy	May-23	2028	
60. Wroxham and Hoveton Network Improvement Strategy	Wroxham and Hoveton Network Improvement Strategy	Apr-20	2025	
61. Wymondham Network Improvement Strategy	Wymondham Network Improvement Strategy	Sep-20	2025	

Title	Latest version	Date approved/ last reviewed	Next review due (approx.)#	Notes
Relating to more than one Cabinet Member Portfolio				
62. CES Enforcement Policy	CES Enforcement Policy	2023	Annually	
63. Glyphosate Policy	Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com) page 61	Jan-23	2028	

Notes:-

1. There are also a number of detailed policies relating to Adult Learning and oversight of these is through the Adult Learning Steering Group.
 2. Together, these documents form the minerals and waste development plan, to be replaced by a single document in 2025 upon the completion of the current review.
- * Currently is part of the NCC Policy Framework set out in the Constitution, and therefore Full Council is the approval body.
- # As a general rule, aiming to review each at least once every 5 years.

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Item No: 14

Report Title: Forward Work Programme

Date of Meeting: 10 July 2024

Responsible Cabinet Member: N/A

Responsible Director: Sarah Rhoden (Director of Community, Information and Learning)

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, to enable the Select Committee to review and shape it.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix A.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee to enable the Committee to review and shape it.

2. Proposal

2.1 Forward Work Programme

The current Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee (for the next three planned meetings) is set out in Appendix A, for the Committee to use to shape future meeting agendas and items for consideration.

2.2 Member Task and Finish Groups

The Select Committee previously agreed that, to help ensure a manageable workload, there will be no more than two Member Task and Finish Groups established by this Committee operating at any one time. There is currently one active Group – the Task and Finish Group look at the subject ‘Providing Highways and Transport Development Management Advice to Local Planning Authority’s in Norfolk’.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 This report enables the Select Committee to shape agendas for future meetings so that it can include items which the Committee considers the most important to consider.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 As above.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The Committee can amend and shape the work programme.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 None.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** None.
- 7.2 **Property:** None.
- 7.3 **IT:** None.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** None.
- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** None.
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** N/A
- 8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** N/A
- 8.7 **Any Other Implications:** None.

9. Action required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee, as set out in Appendix A

10. Background Papers

11.1 None.

Officer Contact

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

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Forward Work Programme – Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Draft agendas for the next three meetings.

Report title	Reason for report
11 September 2024 meeting	
Climate Action Plan Annual Update	To provide the first annual update on progress against the action plan.
Local Transport Plan: Delivery update	To provide Members with an update on the delivery of the Local Transport Plan.
Performance of Key Highway Contracts	To review the performance of key contracts for the highways service, including customer service.
Highway and Transport Network Performance	To consider the performance of the network and identify any priorities to be considered as part of the annual review of the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) in the light of this performance.
Economic Strategy	To review the draft Strategy
Forward Work Programme	To review and agree the programme.
13 November 2024 meeting	
Strategic and Financial Planning 2025-26	Select Committee input to development of 2025-26 Budget – comments on specific proposals
CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy – annual review	To consider any proposed changes to the policy.
Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP)	To consider proposed amendments and updates for the TAMP.
Library Strategy	To review the draft Strategy for 2025 onwards
Community Strategy	To review the draft Strategy for 2025 onwards
Museums 5 year Strategic Framework	To review the draft Framework for 2025 onwards
Fire and Rescue Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)	To update the Committee and seek input from the on the initial work and emerging priorities for the CRMP 2026-29
Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP)	Annual update on the plan.
Forward Work Programme	To review and agree the programme.
15 January 2025 meeting	

Report title	Reason for report
Adult Learning Annual Plan	To review the annual plan for the Adult Learning service.
Norfolk Rail Prospectus	To consider a draft final Norfolk Rail Prospectus and make recommendations to Cabinet on its adoption.
Forward Work Programme	To review and agree the programme.