

Cabinet

Date: **Wednesday 10 May 2023**

Time: **10 am**

Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Martineau Lane,
Norwich NR1 2DH**

Cabinet Portfolios:

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management
Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships
Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste
Cabinet Member for Finance
Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport
Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance
Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

It will be live streamed on YouTube and members of the public may watch remotely by clicking on the following link: [Norfolk County Council YouTube](#)

We also welcome attendance in person, but public seating is limited, so if you wish to attend please indicate in advance by emailing committees@norfolk.gov.uk

We have amended the previous guidance relating to respiratory infections to reflect current practice but 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 any apologies.

2 Minutes

To confirm the minutes from the Cabinet Meeting held on 3 April 2023

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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 Matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council.

5 Updates from the Chairman/Cabinet Members

6 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 on Wednesday 3 May 2023. For guidance on submitting a public question, please follow this link: [Ask a question to a committee - Norfolk County Council](#)

Any public questions received by the deadline and the responses will be published on the website from 9.30am on the day of the meeting and can be viewed by clicking this link once uploaded: [Click here to view public questions and responses](#)

7 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 on Wednesday 3 May 2023.

8 Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy

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Report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

9 Local First Inclusion Update

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Report by the Executive Director of Children's Services

10 Winter Services Policy

Page 182

Report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

11 Corporate Delivery Plan – Annual Report 2022-2023

Page 211

Report by the Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation

12 Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting:

To note the delegated decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting.

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

- [Schools Catering Contract 1 year Extension](#)

Decision by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

- [Extension of Sharps Waste Collection Service](#)

Decision by the Cabinet Member for Finance

- [Electricity Purchasing](#)
- [Procurement Proposal – Major \(Construction\) Works Framework](#)

Tom McCabe

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Date Agenda Published: 28 April 2023



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Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 3 April 2023 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am

Present:

Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chairman. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships
Cllr Fabian Eagle	Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Executive Directors Present:

James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Paul Cracknell	The Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Simon George	Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services
Kat Hulatt	Assistant Director of Governance
Sarah Rhoden	Director of Community, Information and Learning
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Children's Services

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors introduced themselves.

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from the Chairman, the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services (Sarah Rhoden substituting).

1.2 Vice-Chairman Cllr Graham Plant in the Chair

1b Election of Vice-Chairman for the meeting

1b.1 Cllr Fabian Eagle proposed Cllr Greg Peck, seconded by Cllr Tom FitzPatrick. Cllr Greg Peck, the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management, was duly nominated to sit as Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on 6 March 2023

2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March as an accurate record.

3 Declaration of Interests

3.1 None declared

4 Matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council.

4.1 No matters were referred.

5 Update from the Chairman/Cabinet Members

5.1 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships gave an update on Norfolk Fire Service's 75-year anniversary:

- 1 April 2023 would be the 75th anniversary of the creation of the current fire service.
- To celebrate, events would take place throughout the year. For example, the Royal Norfolk Show would have an "Emergency Village" with the emergency services showing changes in equipment and protective clothing over this period of time.

6 Public Question Time

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

6.2.1 Liz Cross asked a supplementary question:

- Liz Cross thanked The Cabinet Member for Children's Services for the reply to her question and the time taken to investigate the response. She asked The Cabinet Member for Children's Services if he would be willing to visit HomeStart Norfolk face to face to hear the challenges they faced, hear the unheard voice of the families they supported and the impact their intervention had in creating a stable and sustainable environment to reduce costly intervention from partners.

6.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services replied that he would be happy to visit and encouraged Liz Cross to contact him directly.

7 Local Member Questions/Issues

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

8. Integrated Care Strategy for Norfolk and Waveney and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Norfolk

8.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing an overview of the agreements made by the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Partnership to produce a transitional and combined Integrated Care Strategy for Norfolk and Waveney with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Norfolk.

8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Every local area was required to have a joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy setting priorities identified in the joint strategic needs assessment that partners would deliver together to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and make improvements.
- The Health and Wellbeing Boards for Norfolk and Suffolk had their own

strategies aimed at highlighting the needs for collective responsibility for health and wellbeing and had a proven history of holding partners to account to improve health and care for the counties.

- The changes to the Health Act 2022 had created the Integrated Care System (ICS) formally bringing a range of organisations and stakeholders together and providing joined up healthcare for residents and improved services.
- The Integrated Care Partnership was part of the ICS, made up of several partners including key organisations across healthcare, local authorities, Healthwatch and the voluntary sector. The Integrated Care Partnership was required to produce an Integrated Care Strategy. This document would help partners develop their own strategy and plans, setting out challenges and opportunities that could be addressed by partnership working.
- There was a clear cross over between the Integrated Care Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Board strategy which created the opportunity to work together as a collective Integrated Care System around shared, high-level health and wellbeing board priorities.
- A lot had been achieved through joint working, strengthened by the collaborative response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The past three years had seen challenges along with hard work and commitment, with communities and providers working together to give the people of Norfolk the care and support they needed. There was an aim to build on the learning from the pandemic to enhance ways of working.
- Prevention and Early Intervention were key to the long-term sustainability of the Health and Wellbeing system. Stopping ill-health and care needs from occurring and targeting high risk groups, as well as preventing issues from getting worse through systematic planning and proactive management was key.
- Priorities had been developed which were reliant on partners taking a collaborative approach. Rather than duplicating work occurring at place level an integrated approach would be coordinated across the system.
- This was a transitional strategy encompassing the Integrated Care Strategy for Norfolk and Waveney and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy for Norfolk.
- In 2023, engagement would be carried out with people, communities and partners across the system to find out how the strategy could work for everyone. Engagement would be targeted and accessible to ensure those with quieter voices were listened to and engagement was carried out with a range of communities including rural and harder to reach.
- The strategy was a living document which would be developed as the new collaborative system developed. All partners were due to take this strategy through their own governance.
- The strategy provided an opportunity for real change and provide benefits to the people of Norfolk
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

8.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste noted that often it was not known what high-level strategies meant for communities. Through recent personal experience, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste reported that the service provided by the council and social services was excellent, caring and deliverable and thanked the team for their work. The Cabinet Member for

Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention was pleased to hear of this positive experience and would feed this back to the team.

- 8.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services welcomed the new integrated care system and noted the involvement of early intervention to support children and families and the importance of community involvement in supporting them.
- 8.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance was pleased to see partnership working across the system, supporting people at a difficult time in their lives with a smoother system.
- 8.5 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management endorsed the report, noting the importance of collaborating with partners. He hoped that housing the ICS in County Hall would support partnership working.
- 8.6 The Chairman noted that the strategy supported partnership working across all partners including the voluntary sector, health and care system
- 8.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
- a) Formally commit to adopting the Integrated Care Strategy for Norfolk and Waveney and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Norfolk
 - b) Endorse departments embedding the strategy within the County Council's activities where these impact on the priority areas outlined
 - c) Recognise that this is a transitional and active document which will be kept updated and progressed, as necessary

8.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The Integrated Care Strategy is a key element in the Norfolk and Waveney ICS. It is intended to set out the challenges and opportunities which can best be overseen by the ICS, which look beyond traditional organisational boundaries at complex, long-term issues which need integrated approaches to succeed.

There is an expectation that all partners will take the transitional strategy through their own governance arrangements, and feedback the actions their organisation will be taking in the coming year to deliver against the Integrated Care Strategy's key challenges and priority actions.

8.9 **Alternative Options**

None are being proposed.

9. **Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) 2022**

- 9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan, a shared plan containing 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 sustainable economic growth in Norfolk.
- 9.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:
- In the plan there were 26 projects which Local Authorities were leading on, facilitating delivery of 36,000 new homes and 86,000 new jobs.

- These projects aligned with the priority for improved infrastructure and ambitions of the new Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's economic strategy and renewal plan, local plans and Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. The plan was also in sync with the Government's Build Back Better and would deliver infrastructure for Levelling Up and the ambition for achieving net zero.
- The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan was a valuable tool for making investment decisions ahead of the proposed County Deal.
- Work for the 2022 plan started in May 2022, working with district councils to look at decisions and emerging projects.
- The plan had been reviewed by the Norfolk Strategic Planning Group, Norfolk Growth Delivery Group, Norfolk Chief Executives Group, Norfolk Leaders and Norfolk County Council's Infrastructure and Development Select Committee in March 2023
- The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan was a working document which was reviewed annually as information became available and projects progressed to delivery.
- Work on the 2023 plan would start soon with feedback to explore options for an online platform.
- Nine new Local Authority projects had been added for 2022, shown in paragraph 2.3 on page 92 of the report. Additional projects had been added to the list of funded projects including Marriotts Way and Bure Valley Path, North Walsham, Honing and Stalham resurfacing of the Weavers Way. There were up and coming projects, which were those likely to meet the criteria for not enough information to fully include them at that time.
- The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan allowed for all projects to be seen in one place, showing the start date and progress being made towards their delivery. Notable progress had been made so far this year and work would continue on a coordinated approach.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 9.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that without strategic overview of the Council, the projects around development of utilities set out on page 128 of the report would not have been possible. These supported the development of a vibrant economy, for example, the Thetford and Attleborough energy supplies. Highlighting the Thetford railway project as an example, The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention felt that the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan could be used to highlight to Government what was important for Norfolk and where money could be drawn down.
- 9.3 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste noted the third paragraph on page 103 of the report discussing the work being taken by districts to support the net zero commitments in the Climate Change Act and carbon targets adopted by Norfolk County Council. He welcomed the inclusion of information on climate change and its impact on Norfolk.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance was pleased to note that Fakenham had been highlighted in the plan as an area for agritech and food processing which provided a large number of jobs for the County. Project GigaBit was being rolled out across the county and an announcement was being waited for on this. The roundabout on the A148 would

be very important for Fakenham and the Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance was therefore pleased to see this in the plan.

- 9.5 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that the plan showed the importance of Great Yarmouth being an area for renewable energy and development of the road and bus network and included information on planning for development of schools across the County.
- 9.6 The Chairman added that the plan provided a strategic overview of all sectors in the County; he thanked officers for their work in producing the plan.
- 9.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED**
1. To approve the 2022 NSIDP
 2. To support the continued production of the NSIDP, together with annual review

9.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan helps the County Council identify where and when infrastructure projects could support delivery of growth and the County Council's and other Norfolk Local Authorities' priorities. This allows for informed discussions and will enable work with partners to co-ordinate implementation, prioritise activity and respond to any funding opportunities.

9.9 **Alternative Options**

If a Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan were not to be produced it would be more difficult to retain the inclusive approach to infrastructure planning. It would reduce the ability to keep track of the collective progress of the county's key infrastructure projects. The information in the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan assists in co-ordinating resources to ensure projects are delivered as planned.

10. **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Investigatory Powers Act 2016**

- 10.1.1 Cabinet received the report detailing the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) and the Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) by the Council for 2022 and seeks approval of the associated policies, which had been reviewed and slightly amended in line with current national guidance and good practice.
- 10.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This was an annual report to Cabinet. The policies had been reviewed and minor amendments had been made reflecting the change in responsibilities when someone left a service, and someone took over as a responsible person.
 - The powers had only been used by the Trading Standards service twice, once for directed surveillance and once for acquisition of communications data.
 - It was important to have these policies in place so they could be utilised if required by a service and ensured that the council was compliant with all relevant legislation.

- The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

10.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To note the use of RIPA and the IPA by the Council for 2022, as set out in Appendix A of the report; and
2. To approve the revised policy documentation provided at Appendix B and Appendix C of the report

10.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The two Acts, the associated Regulations and Codes of Practice set out expectations for local authorities in relation to the oversight of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act authorisations for directed surveillance and CHIS (Covert Human Intelligence Sources) and for the acquisition of communications data under the Investigatory Powers Act. The recommendations set out in this report meet the requirements of the legislation. There are no other reasonably viable options to the recommendations above.

10.4 **Alternative Options**

These corporate policies are considered to be the most effective way to ensure the Council fulfils its legal responsibilities, when using covert investigatory techniques to gather intelligence for the purposes of one of its regulatory functions.

11. **Corporately Significant Vital Signs**

11.1.1 Cabinet received the quarter 3 report providing an update on the Council's performance against its Corporately Significant Vital Signs.

11.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This report gave an important health check of the organisation and helped deliver on the aims of Better Together for Norfolk. The data allowed the Council to understand what was happening across the organisation and ensure early intervention could take place where there were issues.
- The Council was still in a period of challenge and looking to transform services. Opportunities would be used to make budget savings in the coming financial year and beyond.
- The report showed what was being done to address areas of challenge.
- The report was presented to Cabinet quarterly however the vital signs were reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

11.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that new indicators had been established ahead of the new school year in September, with a focus on developing mechanisms for schools to share learning and increase standards. Implementation of this strategy would improve inspection outcomes for future years. The service was also looking at a change to the way that looked after children was reported by separating out local looked after children and asylum seeking children.

- 11.3 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management endorsed the report.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships discussed the two vital signs for the Fire and Rescue Servicewhere the report was showing deteriorating performance; one of these related to a visit to an unoccupied building which was no longer required to be visited and therefore no longer a risk. This along with attempted safety visits to people who were not at home when expected, for a variety of reasons, had impacted on performance.
- 11.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
1. Review and comment on the end of quarter two performance data.
 2. Review the considerations and next steps.
 3. Agree the planned actions as set out.
- 11.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
- N/A
- 11.6 **Alternative Options**
- Information Report.
- 12 Risk Management**
- 12.1.1 Cabinet received the risk management report setting out the corporate risks, key changes to corporate risks and departmental risks.
- 12.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The responsibility for an adequate and effective risk management function sat with Cabinet, supported by portfolio holders and delivered by the risk owners as part of the risk management framework.
 - The department was also required by the constitution to report on departmental risks managed within the Council and so red rated departmental risks were also included in the report. The report set out the latest risks for monitoring and agreement following review of the corporate level risks.
 - The audit and governance committee were responsible for reviewing adequacy of the risk management system. Risk management systems were in place within the Council as set out in the constitution
 - **RM002, Income Streams:** it was proposed to temporarily reduce the score for this risk as a result of managed income streams from 2022-23. This score was proposed to be reverted back at the end of the financial year.
 - **RM037, NFRS Industrial Action:** this risk was proposed to be closed as proposed industrial action had been called off following a pay award agreement.
 - Departmental risk data was shown in appendix D of the report with full details of red rated departmental risks at appendix E of the report.
 - The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

12.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that Adult Social Services' red rated risks were related to national issues and ongoing challenges outside of the control of the council however the council was working to mitigate them as much as possible. The Adult Social Services team had worked over the last months with Government ministers to try and ensure that they understand the issues experienced in Norfolk and what the Government could do to support the Council.

12.3 The Chairman noted that RM024, "Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing" was working within budget and timeframe.

12.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

to agree:

1. The key messages detailing key changes to corporate risks since the last report to January 2023 Cabinet (paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 and Appendix A of the report)
2. The corporate risks as at April 2023 (Appendices B and C of the report)

to note:

1. The departmental risk summaries as at April 2023 (Appendix D of the report)
2. The red rated departmental level risks as at April 2023 (Appendix E of the report)

12.5 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Not applicable as no decision is being made.

12.6 **Alternative Options**

There are no alternatives identified.

13 Authority to enact revenue pipeline

13.1.1 Cabinet received the report seeking approval for the appropriate delegations to be put in place to allow procurement processes to take place.

13.1.2 The Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services discussed that the proposals in this report would put the delegations in place for procurement to take place, with Annex A of the report setting out the list of procurement actions due to take place for the upcoming period.

13.1.3 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- At the last meeting of Full Council, the procurement programme was agreed as a whole.
- This report would allow officers to engage with suppliers and agree the nature of contracts including their costs, and delegate processes to the Director of Procurement.
- The proposals set out in the report would also ensure that bidding standards and overall standards were of best practice and value.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

13.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree

1. To proceed with the procurement actions set out in Annex A of the report;

2. to delegate to each responsible chief officer authority to discuss with the contractors concerned the issues around extension of contracts designated herein as open for extension and to determine whether to extend the contracts (with such modifications as the chief officer considers necessary) or whether to conduct a procurement exercise to replace them;
3. to delegate to the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any); to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions; to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary;
4. that the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Contract Standing Orders and Public Contract Regulations 2015 and in consultation, as appropriate, with the responsible Cabinet Member. The officers shall also act in accordance with the Provider Selection Regime should it become law during this period.

13.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Cabinet recommended adoption of the budget and it is now logical that it approves the decisions in respect of contracts needed to deliver the budget. Expedient execution of the contract pipeline requires the delegations to officers set out in this paper.

Reasons for decisions about individual contracts or groups of contracts are set out at Annex A of the report.

13.4 **Alternative Options**

Cabinet could choose not to approve the delegations set out herein. This would require a plethora of individual cabinet or cabinet member decisions and be likely to delay programme execution: this course of action is not recommended.

14 **Finance Monitoring Report 2022-23 P11: February 2023**

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

14.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This report set the scene for next year, 2023-24. It was important to ensure that there were no unforeseen overspends as knock-on effects of this would be considerable. It was therefore positive that as of the end of February 2023 a balanced budget was being forecast on a net budget of £464m.
- Revenue Annex 1 of the report showed that additional costs flowing from the increased pay award had been paid off from within departmental budgets
- Children's Services continued to experience operational pressures. The department had successfully concluded an agreement with the Department for Education for the Safety Valve deal which would see spend in the dedicated schools grant reduced from £75.976m to

£47.976m by March 2023 after receipt of £28m Department for Education funding in 2023.

- Plans for new special needs schools would be brought forward as part of the local First Inclusion programme.
- Appendix 3 of the report set out additions to the capital programme funded externally including £11.484m Department for Transport funding to expand the ZEBRA scheme for electric buses and an £1.11m uplift for Better Broadband Next Generation project from BT rebates and £5m from capital funding receipts to fund the adult social care transformation programme as earmarked in appendix 3, paragraph 3.3 of the report.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report

14.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To recommend to full Council the addition of **£17.491m** to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements funded mostly from various external sources as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3 of the report, paragraph 4.1 as follows:
 - £5m flexible use of Capital Receipts to fund the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme costs as previously earmarked in Appendix 3 of the report, paragraph 3.3
 - £1.011m uplift to the Better Broadband Next Generation project funded from BT rebates received
 - £11.480m Department of Transport funding received to expand the Zero Emissions Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme for 55 additional electric buses
2. Subject to full Council approval of recommendation 1 and to delegate:
 - 2.1) To the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any) and the award criteria; to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions (in consultation with the Chief Officer responsible for each scheme); to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary.
 - 2.2) To the Director of Property authority (notwithstanding the limits set out at 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 of Financial Regulations) to negotiate or tender for or otherwise acquire the required land to deliver the schemes (including temporary land required for delivery of the works) and to dispose of land so acquired that is no longer required upon completion of the scheme;
 - 2.3) To each responsible chief officer authority to:
 - (in the case of two-stage design and build contracts) agree the price for the works upon completion of the design stage and direct that the works proceed; or alternatively direct that the works be recompleted
 - approve purchase orders, employer's instructions, compensation events or other contractual instructions necessary to effect changes in contracts that are necessitated by discoveries, unexpected ground conditions, planning conditions, requirements arising from detailed design or minor changes in scope
 - subject always to the forecast cost including works, land, fees and disbursements remaining within the agreed scheme or programme budget.
 - That the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Policy Framework, with the

approach to Social Value in Procurement endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 6 July 2020, and with the approach set out in the paper entitled “Sourcing strategy for council services” approved by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting of 16 July 2018.

3. To recognise the period 11 general fund revenue forecast of a balanced budget, noting also that Executive Directors will take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services to maintain a balance budget at the year end.
4. To recognise the period 11 forecast of 88% savings delivery in 2022-23, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
5. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2023 of **£24.340m**, assuming the Council will mitigate the overspends reported in P11.
6. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-26 capital programmes.

14.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

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

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

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

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

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

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

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

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

14.4 **Alternative Options**

To deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in this report. In terms of financing the proposed capital expenditure, no further grant or revenue funding has been identified to fund the expenditure, apart from the funding noted in Appendix 3 of the report.

15 **Limited Company Consents**

- 15.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out changes to directorships of Council owned Companies.
- 15.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:
- Limited companies owned by the Council required consent of Council before appointing directors.
 - With the Director of Financial Management due to be promoted when the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services left the Council, the Director of Financial Management was required to stand down from his director role on some of the Council's Companies. These changes were set out in Appendix A of the report.
- 15.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the change of directors to companies as detailed in appendix A of the report
- 15.3 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
- N/A
- 15.4 **Alternative Options**
- N/A
- 16 Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting**
- 16.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **note** the Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting
- 16.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention thanked Simon George, the Executive Director of Financial and Commercial Services, for his work over the years and during the challenging period of the Covid-19 Pandemic and wished him well in the future. Cabinet also gave their thanks to Simon and wished him well.

The meeting ended at 10.57

Chairman of Cabinet

Cabinet
3 April 2023
Public & Local Member Questions

	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question from Dillon Crawford Does the Cabinet believe that the County Deal for Norfolk will be effective for delivering more transparency?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance A directly elected leader for Norfolk would be accountable to the council through our own constitution, and to government and the people of Norfolk through the "Accountability Framework" published on Wednesday 15th March. by the Department for Levelling Up. This sets out the protocols for reporting and accountability for all areas with a devolution deal. This will cover the delivery of Norfolk's plans and ambitions through the county deal. We believe that a county deal will in fact increase transparency and accountability for these very reasons.</p>
6.2	<p>Question from Samantha Allison What assurances can the cabinet /full council give to the men/women of norfolk that the 15/20 minute cities will not be the doorway to digital id, travel restriction, more cameras, and fines for credit systems of pollution, fake pollution zones, and finally comunist china style fences and security.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport We are at a very early stage with looking at the concept of 15/20 minute neighbourhoods in Norfolk. However, we have already been asked a number of questions on the topic, so to help we have recently uploaded some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to the County Council website to provide a high-level summary of this potential approach. It is important to note that the concept of a 20-minute neighbourhood will mean different things to different people and that no decisions have been taken at this stage on if, when and where this concept could be implemented and the form it may take. We also recognise that the needs of local people and businesses will need to be understood before anything can be proposed for consultation and further consideration.</p> <p>Further work on this concept will help to identify whether outcomes can be delivered that enable people to be more active, improving their mental and physical health, improve air quality, strengthen community bonds and encourage local shops and services to thrive.</p>
6.3	<p>Question from Peter Lambert Under section 86 of the Education Act 1996, parents have the right to express a preference for any state-funded school in England and Wales. This includes community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, and academies. Do the plans of 20 minute districts restrict the choices that parents will be able to make in choosing secondary schools. In particular used to reduce the right to appeal a Decision.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We are at a very early stage with looking at the concept of 15/20 minute neighbourhoods in Norfolk. Providing convenient and fully accessible access to</p>

	<p>schools, along with other essential services, will be considered as we explore this concept.</p> <p>Initial thoughts are that there would be no change to the approach for Admissions set out within the Admissions Code and parents right to express a preference for schools (either First Admissions at primary or Year 7 Admissions for secondary). This includes the appeals process.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Peter Lambert What affordable options are there to provide a choice of at least 2 secondary schools within travel time less than 20 minutes. The logical mitigating factor is to provide more secondary schools locally. These will be smaller , more expensive and have less choice of subjects. Please advise how many schools would be needed to meet this policy. Does the government funds cover this cost.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services We are at a very early stage with looking at the concept of 15/20 minute neighbourhoods in Norfolk and detailed analysis would be needed to provide an appropriate response. However, initial thoughts are that there would be no change to the approach for Admissions set out within the Admissions Code and parents right to express a preference for schools.</p>
6.4	<p>Question from Liz Cross, Home Start The Princess of Wales's Royal Foundation, Central Governments Start for Life roll out and Norfolk County Council's Flourish Pledge all support the need to prioritise early childhood and document the importance of children's early years being vital to support their future health, happiness, resilience and lifelong outcomes. Home-Start Norfolk, a family support charity supporting thousands of families over the last 35 years has seen a 91% increase in demand for its service , and 70 % of those referrals come from the statutory sector. Therefore, why is it that Home-Start Norfolk is fighting for survival due to further cuts in its funding from the sector?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Norfolk benefits from a vibrant voluntary and community sector that delivers fantastic support to children and their families. They are a key partner in helping children and young people to flourish. All charities, including Home Start Norfolk, are facing financial challenges, as are many of the families they work with. Home Start have been funded by Action for Children for the last three years as part of our Early Childhood and Family Service and this service level agreement is ending as planned in March 2023. Action for Children have been in discussion with Home Start since 2022 about them providing a new service from April and I welcome this given our early childhood focus on 0-5s. As part of supporting children and their families, we are keen to develop opportunities for peer support for families. We will continue to work with charities such as Home Start to develop how families can benefit from peer support and volunteers and, should funding become available, to potentially commission new services.</p>

Cabinet
3 April 2023
Local Member Questions

	Member Question Time
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale Residents are constantly reporting potholes on Norfolk’s streets and roads. Sometimes, councillors have to get involved to get potholes repaired. Yet recently, there have been a number of cases where the patching work on potholes has been such poor quality that the holes have opened up again after just a few weeks – for example on Bowthorpe Road and Hellesdon Mill Lane. Does the Cabinet Member accept that the quality of repairs on potholes is below standard and can he explain what checks the council undertake for quality with the contractor, providing me some assurance regarding the sites I have highlighted.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport I am sorry to hear of these cases which I have asked the local Highways team to investigate. Initial feedback is that these failures are isolated incidents or new potholes forming next to the repair. The Council’s approach is to undertake permanent pothole repairs first time and this works in the majority of cases.</p> <p>I would also point out that the first three months of the year is the time when roads are most susceptible to potholes forming due to the cold and wet weather. This is a national problem and I was pleased to see the government recognise this and announced additional funding in the recent Budget for pothole repairs. Norfolk will receive over £6m of additional funding, the majority of which will be spent on proactive maintenance to stop potholes appearing in the first place. This is key and is part of this Council’s proactive asset management approach.</p> <p>As part of this approach, there is also already a resurfacing scheme planned for the junction of Farrow Road and Bowthorpe Road later this year.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Paul Neale A workplace parking levy would raise around £3m a year in revenue that could be used to improve the reliability of buses around Norwich. Will you commit to a feasibility assessment for a workplace parking levy?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Consideration of a workplace parking levy is outlined in the Transport for Norwich Strategy as one of a series of measures that would need significant further study over the coming years, with the overall aim of improving air quality. This will be done through a mix of technical study work alongside extensive engagement with partners, businesses and the general public.</p> <p>An Enhanced Partnership has been formed between the County Council and local bus operators to enable us to deliver Norfolk’s Bus Service Improvement Plan. Late last year, just under £50m of funding was awarded to Norfolk to improve public transport across Norwich and Norfolk by offering more simple and affordable fares and improved bus service frequency and reliability. Officers are working closely with</p>

	<p>bus operators on this and some measures to improve reliability and enhanced bus services have already been implemented with more to follow over the next two years.</p>
<p>7.2</p>	<p>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn The “reference design” proposed for the NWL viaduct included a 2.5m gap between the carriageways. Alongside both carriageways the design allowed a 1m-wide hard strip, 2.5m-wide verge and a 0.5m-wide barrier plinth. At the outer edges an additional 1.2m-wide working zone and parapet plinth was proposed. The “tender design” submitted by Ferrovial proposed no central gap, instead just a barrier with no verges. The outer edges of the carriageways are a simple single plinth for a combined parapet and safety barrier. Please could Cabinet Member explain why this inferior tender design was accepted?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways Infrastructure and Transport The single deck solution provided by the contractor has reduced the overall width of the viaduct and this reduces the levels of shading to the river and valley below by 20%. This was a key consideration for the rivers Special Area of Conservation status.</p> <p>By reducing the width of the viaduct, the number of supporting piers has also been reduced, which results in less impact to the valley and floodplain. There has also been a significant reduction in the overall weight of the structure, which also reduces the foundation design, resulting in further benefits.</p> <p>I therefore don’t agree with the suggestion that the contractor’s design is inferior. The accepted design meets the specification requirements and addresses the specific constraints that exist. It has optimised the overall solution and has reduced the impact of the structure, providing notable environmental benefits.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Jamie Osborn Norfolk Constabulary advise that in the case of breakdown, passengers should get out of the car and seek refuge on the verge beyond the safety barrier. Yet the NWL viaduct proposes no verges and no refuge zone behind the safety barrier. Does the Cabinet Member believe that there will not be any breakdowns on the viaduct, or does he believe that the advice from Norfolk Police is unnecessary?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways Infrastructure and Transport The Norwich Western Link (NWL) viaduct would be similar in layout to the A47 River Yare viaduct to the east of Norwich. Highway improvement projects, such as the NWL, are subject to independent safety audit processes. The NWL viaduct is designed to national design standards and is only 500m long.</p> <p>If, in the very rare likelihood of there being a breakdown on the viaduct, the general advice would be to keep to the left and travel to a place of safety before stopping. Beyond the extents of the viaduct there is a 2.5m verge. On the viaduct itself there is a minimum of a 0.6m hard verge and a 1.0m hardstrip at the edge of the carriageway that can be used in an absolute emergency.</p>
<p>7.3</p>	<p>Question from Cllr Ben Price The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan has announced new road schemes that were not in the Local Transport Plan voted on by Full Council. These</p>

include the North Walsham Western Link Road and an Attleborough Link Road. The LTP has to demonstrate quantifiable carbon reduction pathways, but these new road schemes seem to have been announced without any sustainability appraisal. Without a sustainability appraisal or measurement of carbon emissions, there is no evidence that these roads can be built while remaining in Norfolk's carbon budget. Does the Cabinet Member accept that with no sustainability appraisal, the council cannot say these projects fit within the LTP4?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

The NSIDP does not set the agenda for development or delivery of projects across the county, it simply draws together information on the key infrastructure projects being taken forward, many of which are being led by other interests and organisations and not therefore in the control of, or being delivered by, the county council. These two projects have been included in previous versions of NSIDP, which is produced collaboratively with a range of partners to provide an overview of strategic infrastructure projects across the county. In the case of the two projects mentioned, these are developer proposals for infrastructure to serve new housing. However, if delivered in the right way, they could have significant benefits for local communities.

If the proposals continue to be promoted and subsequently come forward, they will be subject to relevant assessments required by the appropriate decision-makers, in this case district councils via the planning processes, at which point the county council – as a statutory consultee – will be able to make any relevant comments.

Second question from Cllr Ben Price

Children as young as 8 are being strip-searched by police, including in schools. This is a traumatic and humiliating experience for many children. Black children are disproportionately more likely to be targeted for strip-searches. The Children's Commissioner has raised concerns about the lack of safeguarding when children are strip-searched. What is the Cabinet Member doing to work with schools and children's services to ensure there are adequate safeguards in place?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Children's Services Teams work in partnership with Norfolk Constabulary and the wider Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership on a range of issues related to safeguarding, crime prevention and support for young people. In order to support schools with issues related to exploitation, we host a termly Child Exploitation Network to support the work of Designated Safeguarding Leads across Norfolk in tackling child exploitation.

The network aims to:

- Share best practice across education and multi-agency colleagues
- Provide updates about training and responses across the multi-agency partnership
- Share current developments around the exploitation of children
- Provide an arena for reflective practice discussions
- Promote collaborative multi-agency working
- Identify areas for development
- Review the child exploitation toolkit for education settings

The issue of searching pupils was discussed at last Exploitation Network; schools have the powers to search pupils and in exercising this right are advised to ensure any searches are justified and proportionate and follow the [Department for Education Guidance](#) including their obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights including a pupil's right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy. If a child refuses to allow a school to search them, then they may call the police to assist. However, the police will only then carry out a stop search (a search of outer clothing only) where the police are satisfied there is sufficient grounds and a teacher is always present. We are not aware of any incidents of children being strip searched in a Norfolk School but in response to the learning from Case Q, Norfolk Constabulary refreshed their training and procedures for staff in this area.

An exploitation toolkit is currently being developed for schools by a range of teams and will provide further, relevant guidance on this and related matters.

Cabinet

Item No. 8

Report Title: Norfolk County Council Climate Strategy

Date of Meeting: 10 May 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

**Responsible Director:
Al Collier, Director of Procurement and Sustainability**

Steve Miller, Director of Community Culture and Heritage

Is this a Key Decision? No

Introduction from Cabinet Member

In comprehensively setting out the County Council's priorities for climate action, this strategy demonstrates to residents, businesses, Government, and funders the council's commitment and approach to supporting Norfolk's clean, green and resilient growth.

Norfolk County Council is committed to supporting Britain's journey to net zero at the local level, doing so by showing leadership in making its estate net zero by 2030 and working with partners to help Norfolk achieve carbon neutrality.

In April 2022, Cabinet endorsed the recommendation for the council to produce a formal strategy articulating in a single place its wide range of actions on tackling climate change. This report now introduces the climate strategy to Cabinet. The climate strategy brings together NCC's strategic approach to addressing its own emissions and supporting Norfolk's journey towards a low carbon and climate resilient future.

Working with others, not just other public sector bodies, but also businesses and community groups, will be key to achieving the best outcomes for the county. The strategy also highlights interlinking issues that need to be addressed in a holistic manner, particularly conserving and enhancing Norfolk's unique landscapes and wildlife. It seeks to enable the council to maintain momentum on the significant progress already made, such as halving our gross estate emissions since 2016/17 and leveraging in tens of millions of pounds in grant funding towards sustainable transport for Norfolk.

The strategy identifies a series of priorities to guide its efforts in relation to seven key focus areas, with an overview of current progress and next steps. These strategic priorities are set out in this paper.

Recommendations

Cabinet is asked:

- A. To agree the climate change strategy
- B. To agree that a series of engagement workshops be held with a view to refining specific aspects of the strategy and developing evidence-based action plans. These aspects would include:
 1. engagement with public sector partners, including the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership;
 2. bringing together key public and private stakeholders to move forward domestic retrofit;
 3. further reducing carbon emissions from buses, taxis and private hire vehicles, including those used for the council's contracts;
 4. reducing carbon emissions from other major areas of contract spend – social care, highways and construction;
 5. engagement with the private sector on partnering opportunities; and
 6. engagement to reduce emissions from schools.
- C. To agree that the definition of estate emissions for the purposes of the council's 2030 net zero target should be broadened to include emissions from the council's vehicle fleet [alongside emissions from water consumption, building heating, and building and streetlighting energy consumption]
- D. To ask officers to develop a funding blueprint that will identify high-level funding options for reducing indirect (scope 3) and county wide emissions and for climate adaptation, including leveraging in private investment, grant funding, direct investment by government agencies and community funding.
- E. To agree that proposed changes to the Policy Framework be brought to select committee and then, in the autumn, to Council to reflect the Climate Strategy
- F. To endorse the targets set out in the draft climate change strategy for
 1. a 90% reduction in gross carbon emissions from the Council's estate for the year 2030/31, compared to the 2016/17 baseline, with intermediate targets of
 2. a two-thirds reduction for the year 2024/25; and
 3. an 85% reduction for the year 2028/29.

1 Background and Purpose

1.1 The proposed strategy

- 1.1.1 In 2019, Norfolk County Council set out a commitment within its Environmental Policy to make its estate net zero by 2030 and work with

partners to help Norfolk reach carbon neutrality. Progress updates on the council's efforts towards meeting this commitment were brought to Cabinet in November 2021 and April 2022. In April 2022, Cabinet set out a further commitment to produce a formal strategy for its climate action. This report introduces this strategy which has now been drafted.

1.1.2 The climate strategy brings together all the council's strategies and targets for emissions reduction and climate adaptation in one document. It sets out the commitments for which we can be held to account and enables the public, partner organisations and funding bodies to see both our seriousness in tackling this issue and our approach to doing so.

1.1.3 The strategy sets out seven 'focus areas' for the climate strategy

- Focus area 1: reduce our estate emissions
- Focus area 2: reduce our indirect emissions
- Focus area 3: addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions
- Focus area 4: promoting a green economy for Norfolk
- Focus area 5: climate adaptation
- Focus area 6: ensure nature has space to recover and grow
- Focus area 7: engage and collaborate.

1.2 Estate emissions

1.2.1 In 2019, Council committed to lead by example in Norfolk's net zero journey by making our own estate net zero by 2030.

1.2.2 To keep in line with standard practice, we propose that the interpretation of 'estate' is expanded to include the emissions from our owned or controlled vehicle fleet. At present our estate definition covers emissions from our buildings and streetlights.

1.2.3 The carbon from our petrol and diesel vehicle fleet is categorised as 'scope 1' emissions – i.e. direct emissions from burning fossil fuels as part of our corporate operations. Not including a source of scope 1 emissions from our estate target would appear out of line with the reporting by other local authorities, with the norm now to cover all scope 1 and scope 2 emissions.

1.2.4 Vehicle scope 1 emissions were 869 tonnes in 2021/22. Including this into our estate definition would represent a 9% increase in the carbon total for the last financial year compared to when excluding vehicles (at 9,556 tCO₂e in 2021/22). When including our fleet emissions in our estate, our gross estate emissions have reduced by half since 2016/17.

1.2.5 Importantly, this strategy also sets out new interim targets for reductions in our estate emissions towards 2030. These will enable us to be held to account as to whether we are keeping on track, but also gives a clear signal

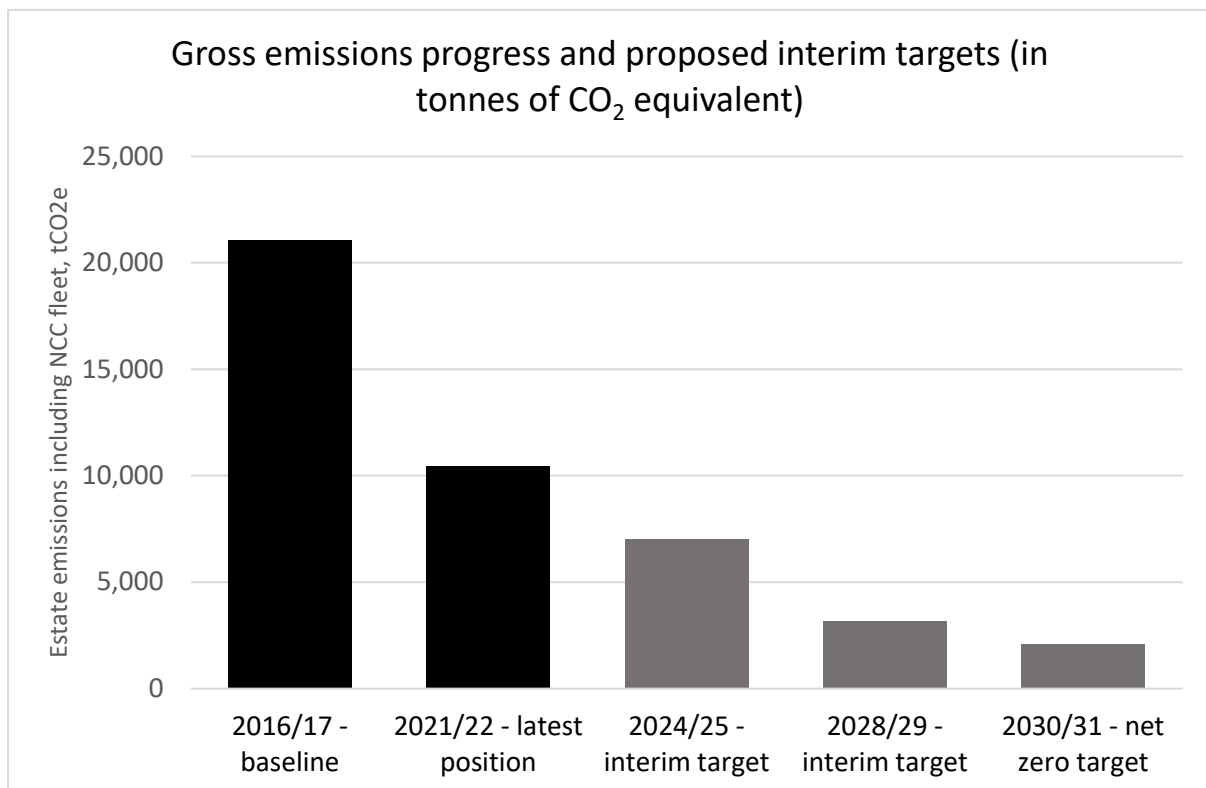
of our priority to reduce our carbon emissions from our buildings, streetlights and vehicles, and only relying on using minimal offsetting to reach net zero.

1.2.6 With gross estate emissions having halved since 2016/17, we propose interim targets to be put in place to achieve reductions of:

- two thirds by 2024/25
- 85% by 2028/29; and
- 90% by 2030/31, all compared to the 2016/17 baseline.

1.2.7 These will be driven by:

- converting remaining streetlights to LED;
- the effect of grid electricity becoming 'cleaner' as clean energy replaces fossil fuels
- retrofitting our buildings to improve energy efficiency and replace fossil-fuel heating systems with electric heating or other low carbon alternatives; and
- our policy of not buying new petrol and diesel vehicles except where the particular application precludes use of an electric alternative.



1.2.8 To achieve the net zero target, we will need to offset the remaining emissions.

1.3 Indirect (scope 3) emissions

- 1.3.1 Scope 3 emissions refer to indirect emissions that result from the council's activities but occur outside its direct operations. These emissions are the result of the works, goods and services we purchase from external suppliers (our supply chain), the carbon footprint of our companies and assets we lease out, and staff commuting, among other sources.
- 1.3.2 Indirect emissions are harder to address because they are beyond the direct control of the council. In particular, we do not have full visibility into the carbon generated by our supply chain, making it harder to quantify and tackle these emissions. This means that reducing scope 3 emissions often requires collaboration with suppliers and other stakeholders.
- 1.3.3 An estimate of our 2020/21 scope 3 emissions by the Carbon Trust indicates that, as would be expected, they are considerably higher than our estate carbon footprint. While our estate emissions are equivalent to less than 0.2% of Norfolk's county-wide carbon, our indirect emissions reflect about 7% of Norfolk's total [although not all emitted in Norfolk].
- 1.3.4 Our strategic priorities for our indirect emissions include to:
- Work with our wholly owned companies to reduce their emissions
 - Improve data quality of our supply chain emissions
 - Create carbon reduction strategies for key procurement categories
 - Integrate emissions metrics in our procurement activity
 - Use internal carbon pricing where appropriate to inform carbon reduction options appraisal
 - Work with other large public sector organisations to align procurement standards around cutting carbon where appropriate

1.4 Norfolk's county-wide emissions

- 1.4.1 The council has committed to supporting Norfolk's wider transition to a greener, low carbon future. This section of the strategy addresses six thematic areas where NCC can make an impact towards reducing Norfolk's territorial emissions through our role as place shaper and through our statutory obligations. Progress here will be founded on working with private and public sector partners to catalyse wider action beyond what we can achieve on our own. Below are the strategic priorities set for each of these thematic areas in turn.
- 1.4.2 We will support the decarbonisation of Norfolk's transport sector through our strategic priorities:
1. Working with transport providers, to continue to positively influence behaviour change and increase the range and number of sustainable

travel options available to residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk. This includes bus operators and building on the Enhanced Partnership relationship we already have in place with bus operators, and implementing Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan.

2. To prioritise transport investment into more sustainable modes, such as public transport and active travel including micromobility options, to help support the journey to net zero. This is especially important in areas where there is poor air quality.
3. To prioritise investment into net zero initiatives, including implementation of the Council's Electric Vehicle Strategy, as part of proactive transport network management, to help residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk become more sustainable.
4. To improve connectivity between rural areas and services in urban centres, with a focus on active travel and public transport.
5. To focus on identifying the key risks from climate change and directing efforts to tackling these where they are likely to be most disruptive to journeys, especially on the most critical parts of the network.

1.4.3 We will support decarbonisation of the built environment through strategic priorities to:

1. Use our position to secure more resources and seek funding opportunities to support our partners in the retrofit agenda
2. Promote green skill development to support the domestic building retrofit agenda
3. With partners, help residents to understand and engage in retrofitting their homes by information provision and active promotion
4. Promote residential development that is sustainably located.

1.4.4 We will support decarbonisation of the county's commercial and industrial sector through the following strategic priorities:

1. Support the LEP's Clean Growth Taskforce (and equivalent activity under successor arrangements) to facilitate process change in the industrial and commercial sectors and encourage the sharing of best practice
2. Support the decarbonisation of the local commercial sector through continued funding schemes such as Carbon Charter
3. Work with local networks such as the LEP to support SMEs (small and medium enterprises) on their journey to net zero.

1.4.5 We will support decarbonisation of Norfolk's energy sector through the following strategic priorities:

1. Work with Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to evolve our energy approach for Norfolk
2. Develop an energy strategy for Norfolk County Council aligned with our net zero agenda

3. Support national decarbonisation of the grid by expanding appropriate renewable energy generation across the county.
 4. Support an offshore transmission network to minimise the need for any onshore infrastructure associated with offshore wind farms.
 5. Support the upgrading of onshore transmission infrastructure where this provides appropriate benefits to Norfolk's residents and businesses and helps in delivering clean energy for housing and employment growth in Norfolk.
- 1.4.6 We will support Norfolk's decarbonisation through the following strategic priorities around digital solutions and connectivity:
1. Ensure high speed digital connectivity is made available to every property across Norfolk to reduce the need for travel.
 2. Work to improve mobile phone coverage across Norfolk
 3. Develop and allow free, universal access to Internet of Things network connectivity in support of agri-tech, environmental sensing and other applications.
- 1.4.7 We will support decarbonisation of the waste generated by Norfolk's citizens and businesses through the following:
1. Reduce: use targeted messages and work with the Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP) to drive behaviour change to help reduce the amount of waste produced with a strong focus on reducing food waste.
 2. Reuse: provide reuse facilities and promote and support opportunities for reuse and repair.
 3. Recycle: use targeted messages to increase recycling rates and drive down levels of contamination by working with the NWP. Provide easy to use and convenient recycling centre services, keep home composting as a priority and support the District, City and Borough Councils in their recycling services.
 4. Recover: focus on treatment and disposal options for residual waste that are sustainable and consider emissions and recovery, and that are flexible enough to allow for waste reduction and composition change.
 5. Policy: influence the development of national policy to support the move to the circular economy and a shift from weight based to carbon-based performance metrics.
 6. Costs: promote a total system approach to reducing costs with the Norfolk Waste Partnership and assessing the implications of future funding changes on waste services and the possibility of an emissions trading scheme and the changes they will lead to.

1.5 A green economy for Norfolk

1.5.1 Net zero is now widely recognised as the most significant growth opportunity of the 21st century. Opportunities for jobs creation, investment and business growth are more than ever tied to clean technologies and low carbon ways of working. Central to the council's approach to climate change is to take actions that enable Norfolk to harness the potential of the green economy.

1.5.2 Benefits of developing the green economy in Norfolk include:

- Job creation: green industries, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency, can create new, well paid, jobs.
- Improved competitiveness: a green economy can help the county become more attractive to businesses and investors, boosting economic growth and competitiveness.
- Environmental protection: by reducing the use of finite resources and minimising waste, a green economy can help protect the environment and preserve natural habitats.
- Better health and well-being: a green economy can improve air and water quality, reducing the risk of illnesses and promoting health and well-being.
- Energy security: by developing renewable energy sources, Norfolk can help the UK to reduce its dependence on imported energy and increase energy security.

1.5.3 Our strategic priorities for boosting Norfolk's green economy are to:

1. Promote green skill development to support the development and installation of clean technologies that can catalyse decarbonisation county-wide
2. Grow the sustainable tourism sector to support year-round, well-paid, skilled careers.
3. Support Norfolk's tourism and hospitality businesses to achieve Green Tourism accreditation.
4. Provide access to green finance and investments through the Norfolk Investment Framework.

1.6 Climate adaptation

1.6.1 Climate adaptation refers to the adjustments needed to respond to actual or expected impacts of climate change. It involves proactively reducing the vulnerability of communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change, such as sea-level rise, heat waves, and flooding .

1.6.2 Climate adaptation is vital to this strategy as the impacts of climate change are already affecting Norfolk and almost certain to get more severe throughout this century. Climate adaptation measures can help to reduce the

negative consequences of these impacts, improve the resilience of communities and ecosystems, and ensure a more sustainable future.

1.6.3 Local government across its three tiers has an important role to play in supporting climate adaptation. This can include:

- Encouraging green infrastructure: Local government can promote the development of green infrastructure, such as parks, green roofs, and sustainable urban drainage systems, to help manage the impacts of extreme weather events.
- Building community resilience: Local government can provide support and resources to help communities prepare for and manage the impacts of climate change.
- Improving disaster risk management: Local government can work through local resilience forums to improve emergency planning and response capabilities, to better prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.
- Supporting sustainable land use planning: planning authorities can encourage sustainable land use planning, such as the preservation of wetlands and green spaces, to reduce the impacts of climate change on communities and ecosystems.

1.6.4 Our strategic priorities here are:

1. Work with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia to understand better the risks of climate change impacts on our services and Norfolk's communities, and the potential adaptation responses
2. Ensure new infrastructure is designed against appropriate assumptions on the future impacts of climate change
3. Learn lessons from the extreme heat experienced in summer 2022 and the implications for public services
4. Be the voice of Norfolk residents to government bodies like the Environment Agency on securing appropriate investment on adaptation across the county.

1.7 Space for nature to recover and grow

1.7.1 Creating space for nature to recover and grow brings numerous, invaluable benefits for Norfolk. Green spaces are essential habitats for the county's unique wildlife, but also opportunities for outdoor recreation and education, and they provide key environmental services such as water purification and protection from flooding.

1.7.2 The UK Government's net zero target requires an estimated 20% of current land use to be repurposed to support its ability to store carbon and support

nature. This includes increasing forest cover, promoting low-carbon agriculture, increasing bioenergy production and restoring peatland.

- 1.7.3 In partnership with Suffolk County Council and the UEA, we released a Natural Capital Compendium which documented Norfolk's natural assets. This provides a valuable baseline for planning nature focussed solutions.
- 1.7.4 We are now provisionally responsible for producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk, which will map important habitats across the county to be conserved, restored and connected as part of addressing national-scale environmental objectives. At the heart of this is working closely with farmers, landowners and conservation groups as those 'on the ground' who bring invaluable local knowledge to inform this work.
- 1.7.5 Strategic priorities for our natural environment include:
 - 1. Producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk that prioritise areas for action focusing on species, habitats, landscapes and land use of importance to Norfolk with potential for carbon capture.
 - 2. Embracing nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation activities
 - 3. Ensuring that our actions on land use and nature recovery reflect the interests of the farming community and public at large
 - 4. In September 2024, we will put in place a robust monitoring scheme for biodiversity.

1.8 Engagement and collaboration

- 1.8.1 Tackling climate change and protecting Norfolk's environment is a huge challenge. Success is reliant upon close collaboration and engagement across all parts of society, including the public sector, businesses and community groups.
- 1.8.2 As an employer we have a role around internal engagement with our employees to build understanding of the issue and encourage beneficial shifts in behaviour to support our climate ambitions.
- 1.8.3 The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership brings together all local authorities in Norfolk to engage collaboratively on carbon reduction and climate adaptation for the county. It's main areas of focus are energy, transport and building retrofitting.
- 1.8.4 Externally, we are engaged in a wide array of partnerships focused on specific issues that are climate relevant such as flooding, nature recovery, transport and waste. In addition, we are using our relationships with academia, the NHS and local businesses as platforms to push for collaboration towards green outcomes for the county.
- 1.8.5 Our strategic priorities for engagement and collaboration are to:

1. Work closely with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and the Integrated Care System to take forward mitigation and adaptation activities where collaboration can add maximum value
2. Create a carbon-conscious culture in the council through engagement with staff
3. Facilitate a series of targeted engagement workshops with key stakeholders to refine specific aspects of the strategy and developing evidence-based action plans
4. Develop and deliver a communications strategy to ensure that stakeholders are aware of the Climate Strategy, understand their role and know how to get involved.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the Climate Strategy, attached as Appendix A this paper.

3 Impact of the proposal

- 3.1 The strategy will set out clearly and in one place the council's commitment to tackling climate change locally and supporting Norfolk's clean growth through its whole range of responsibilities and in collaboration with Norfolk residents and partner organisations.
- 3.2 It will provide a clear direction around which climate change work can be organised and, given how widespread the effects are on the council's work, enable council services and new initiatives to be designed appropriately.
- 3.3 The strategy will demonstrate to residents, businesses, Government and funders that the council is committed to tackling climate change and is clear how it is going to do so.
- 3.4 The setting of interim targets towards our 2030 net zero target will make our commitment more concrete and enable accountability over our progress.

4 Evidence and reasons for proposal

- 4.1 There can be no doubt that human activity is causing climate change, nor that climate change will have significant consequences¹.
- 4.2 The United Kingdom has written the requirement to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 into law. Increasingly, law and regulation intended to support this requirement – or to ensure that adaptation takes place - govern the council's activities.

¹ See for example the summary of the evidence provided by the Royal Society at <https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/projects/climate-change-evidence-causes/basics-of-climate-change/>

- 4.3 There are very real opportunities for Norfolk in the development of a greener economy. Norfolk and Suffolk are vital to the offshore wind industry, which plays a critical role in UK energy security and provides substantial employment opportunities in our coastal communities as North Sea oil and gas reserves decline. Retrofitting of buildings and adapting the power grid will provide good, year-round jobs. And there is a huge opportunity too for green tourism.
- 4.4 Having a climate strategy in place is increasingly a requirement to obtain funding, especially for adaptation measures; in the absence of external funding the council would need to fund these projects itself.

5 Alternative options

- 5.1 The council could opt not to have a climate strategy. Not having a strategy would make the council an outlier, both amongst local authorities and amongst other large organisations. Criticism of this would be likely to distract from the council's real achievements in reducing its carbon emissions and supporting nature recovery. More importantly, it would be likely to reduce the council's voice and credibility in environmental and infrastructure decisions that have a significant impact on residents.
- 5.2 The council could opt to adopt a narrower or less-ambitious strategy. This would not provide a clear direction towards the national requirement for net zero in 2050 and would not reflect the breadth of impact that climate change has on residents and business and on the council's activities.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1 The financial implications of climate change are considerable.
- 6.2 Individual decisions will need to be made in line with the strategy, and some individual programmes of work will require significant capital expenditure.
- 6.3 The financial envelope for capital expenditure on building retrofit is estimated at some £80m over the period to 2030. Every effort will be made to offset this as far as possible through obtaining government grants and through rigorous review of the estate.
- 6.4 Capital provision of £4m for retrofit works in 2023/24 is in the capital programme. The council has additionally secured £1.8m capital funding for 2024/25 through the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to contribute towards decarbonisation works on 16 sites. Other provision will be sought at the applicable point(s) in the programme.
- 6.5 Key to the successful delivery of this strategy will ongoing success in securing government grants. However, it will also require leveraging in private sector investment towards clean, resilient growth in Norfolk, and enabling community investments in local priorities. This is reflected in

recommendation D of this paper, which proposes that officers produce a high-level funding blueprint to support delivery of the climate strategy.

6.6 Monitoring the strategy and oversight of its delivery will be funded within existing budgets.

7 Resource implications

7.1 Staff

7.1.1 Recent structural changes are intended to ensure that there is a small central team that coordinates our net zero efforts, with clear officer responsibility. Environmental policy, waste, infrastructure, growth and development, nature recovery and other environmental issues are all in the remit of the Community and Environmental Services directorate.

7.1.2 But our response to climate change and net zero otherwise cuts across the organisation, with many functions and projects being affected in some way.

7.1.3 Staff engagement will be critical, and is likely to include:

- **Communication:** Clearly communicating the council's position on climate change and its goals for reducing emissions and adapting to its impacts will help to raise awareness and understanding among staff.
- **Employee training:** Providing training and resources to employees on the impacts of climate change and how they make a difference by reducing their own and the organisation's carbon footprint can help to engage them in taking action.
- **Employee initiatives:** Encouraging and supporting employee initiatives, such as green teams and sustainability challenges, to help to foster a culture of sustainability and drive behaviour change.
- **Integrating sustainability into performance management:** Incorporating sustainability goals and metrics into performance management processes can help to embed sustainability into the fabric of the organisation and drive progress towards its climate goals.
- **Employee feedback:** Regularly seeking feedback from employees on the organisation's sustainability efforts and making changes based on their feedback to help to build trust and engagement.

7.2 Property

7.2.1 The corporate property team will play a key role in adapting to and mitigating climate change, including:

- **Energy efficiency:** Improving the energy efficiency of buildings and facilities through retrofitting, upgrading heating and cooling systems, and installing energy-efficient lighting to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Renewable energy: Implementing renewable energy systems, such as solar panels, to lower the council's carbon footprint and reduce its reliance on fossil fuels.
- Sustainable facilities management: Maintaining a sustainable facilities approach that prioritises lower impact products and services.
- Water management: Minimising water consumption to conserve water and reduce the risk of water scarcity.
- Climate-resilient design: Incorporating climate-resilient design elements into building construction and upgrades.
- Employee engagement through facilities management: Encouraging employees to adopt environmentally-friendly practices, such as reducing energy use, recycling, and reducing waste, to help create a more sustainable workplace culture.
- Stakeholder engagement: Engaging with stakeholders, including facilities management providers, tenants, and the wider community, to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change and encourage action to mitigate and adapt to its effects.

7.3 IT

7.3.1 Information Technology (IT) will play a significant role in both climate mitigation and adaptation. Priorities will include:

- Energy efficiency: the use of cloud computing and virtualisation to further reduce the number of physical servers needed, thus reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- Data integration: making data from assorted systems available to enable performance tracking.
- Sensing: continuing to support the county-wide LoRaWAN network that enables environmental sensors.

8 Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications:

8.1.1 There are no specific legal implications of adopting this strategy, nor is it a legal obligation.

8.1.2 At national level the UK has adopted a binding target to achieve net zero by 2050. The role of local governments across the country in achieving this has not yet been comprehensively set out. The county council has a range of environmental duties.

8.1.3 Increasingly, the legal environment is shaped by climate adaptation and mitigation concerns. Adopting a clear strategy and taking action puts the

county council in the best position to abide by current and likely future legal obligations.

8.2 Human Rights Implications:

- 8.2.1 There are no specific human rights implications in adopting this strategy.
- 8.2.2 Norfolk will not be immune to the human rights implications of having to adapt to the effects of climate change – for example as sea level rise and coastal erosion makes some properties uninhabitable.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- 8.3.1 Climate change will have differential impacts for people with different protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and as individual projects are undertaken specific EqIAs will be required.
- 8.3.2 At the strategic level, residents and visitors who are older, disabled, pregnant or have young children are likely to be especially affected by the impacts of climate change – particularly extreme heat, flooding and increased occurrence of evacuation events. They may also be more affected than others by issues like poor accessibility design in structures such as flood defences.
- 8.3.3 Conversely, opportunities arise to reduce inequalities, including health inequalities. For example:
 - 8.3.3.1 electrification of transport, heat and industry and a shift to active travel will help to reduce local air pollution and reduce the burden of respiratory disease;
 - 8.3.3.2 modernised public transport is likely to be of particular benefit to older people, people who are disabled and people who cannot afford to run a car;
 - 8.3.3.3 investments in active travel and in countryside trails can make walking, cycling and the countryside more accessible to a wide range of people.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA)

- 8.4.1 No impact identified

8.5 Health and Safety implications

- 8.5.1 Climate change increases risks from flooding, heat-related health impacts and other causes. Playing our part in mitigating it reduces these risks. More directly, investing in buildings which are better-adapted to the changing climate – through being better insulated, having properly maintained fabric, and where appropriate other adaptations – and adapting services to changed conditions mitigates health and safety risks.

8.6 Any Other Implications

8.6.1 None identified

9 Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The climate strategy sets out an overall approach to climate mitigation and adaptation. Specific risk assessments will need to be undertaken for specific services and projects.

9.2 Broadly, the risks at a strategic level are:

9.2.1 Physical impact on Norfolk – sea level rise, coastal erosion, loss of land, effects on natural habitats, effects on farming, increased risk of wildfire and drought.

9.2.2 Health impact – from extreme heat and intense precipitation, and potentially mental health impacts as climate change affects livelihoods and properties

9.2.3 Economic impact – risks to important Norfolk industries like farming and food processing and tourism; cost of adaptation; effect of water and grid constraints on development; increased cost of building resilient infrastructure; loss and damage from extreme weather. Conversely there are significant opportunities in areas of strength including green energy – especially in offshore wind; food science and genomics; and green tourism.

9.2.4 Regulatory and commercial – for example, regulations will soon prohibit letting out buildings which do not meet high energy performance standards, whilst companies that do not meet high environmental performance standards will be hugely disadvantaged in public procurement.

9.2.5 Reputational – public bodies which are not seen to have a grip on the climate change agenda are likely to have less influence with government on climate issues and to have less opportunity to obtain funding.

10 Select committee comments

10.1 Infrastructure & Development Select Committee considered the Climate Strategy at its meeting on 15 March. The following motion was passed by the committee:

10.2 The Select Committee **requests** Cabinet to consider producing a policy for council to include in the policy framework later this year.

11 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked:

A. To agree the climate change strategy

- B. To agree that a series of engagement workshops be held with a view to refining specific aspects of the strategy and developing action plans. These aspects would include:
1. engagement with public sector partners, including the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership;
 2. bringing together key public and private stakeholders to move forward domestic retrofit;
 3. further reducing carbon emissions from buses, taxis and private hire vehicles, including those used for the council's contracts;
 4. reducing carbon emissions from other major areas of contract spend – social care, highways and construction;
 5. engagement with the private sector on partnering opportunities; and
 6. engagement to reduce emissions from schools.
- C. To ask officers to develop a funding blueprint that will identify high-level funding options for reducing indirect and county wide emissions and for climate adaptation, including leveraging in private investment, grant funding, direct investment by government agencies and community funding.
- D. To agree that proposed changes to the Policy Framework be brought to select committee and then, in the autumn, to Council to reflect the Climate Strategy
- E. To agree that the definition of estate emissions for the purposes of the council's 2030 net zero target should be broadened to include emissions from the council's vehicle fleet [as well as emissions from water consumption, heating and building and streetlighting energy consumption]
- F. To endorse the targets set out in the draft climate change strategy for
1. a 90% reduction in gross carbon emissions from the Council's estate for the year 2030/31, compared to the 2016/17 baseline, with intermediate targets of
 2. a two-thirds reduction for the year 2024/25; and
 3. an 85% reduction for the year 2028/29.

12 Background Papers

- 12.1 Report to Cabinet, 8 November 2021: [Natural Norfolk: Progress on delivering the Environmental Policy](#)
- 12.2 Report to Cabinet, 4 April 2022: [Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update](#)

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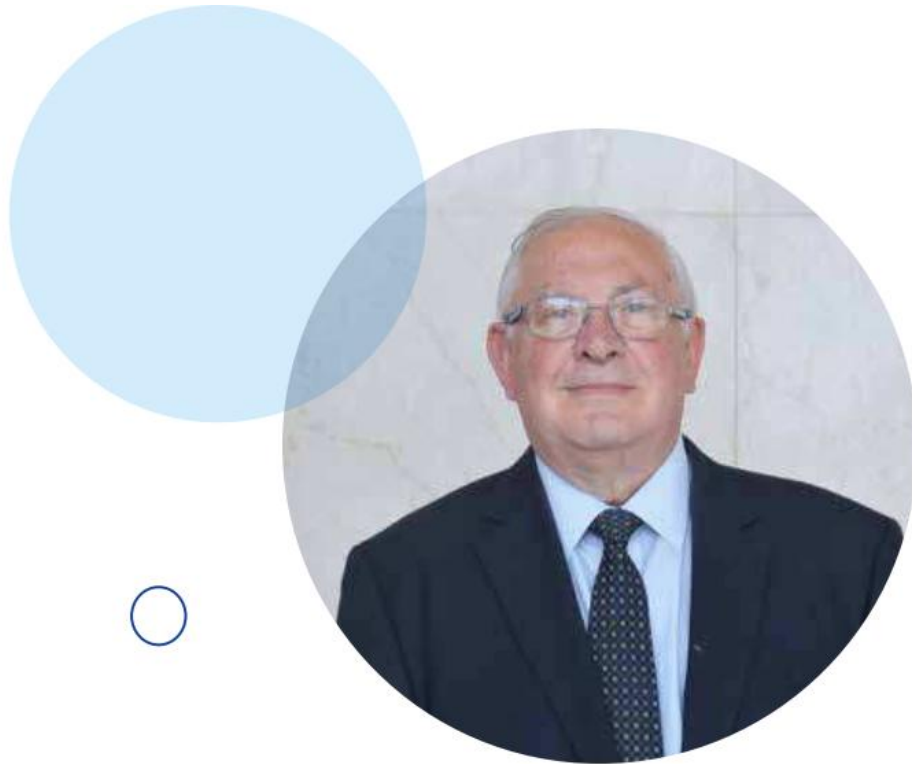
If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.



▶ Climate Strategy

Draft for Cabinet





▶ Foreword

Like everyone who lives in Norfolk, I am keenly aware of the impact of climate change. From flooding to sea-level rise and changing weather patterns, the effects of climate change are evident across the county. But we must not be discouraged. Instead, we must work together to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce our carbon footprint, build resilience against the impacts of climate change and benefit from a green economy.

As well as reducing the county council's emissions, our goal must be to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors, including households, businesses, transport, agriculture, and waste.

We must work collaboratively, looking at all aspects of our community and how we can adapt to mitigate the risks. This includes promoting sustainable land use practices, encouraging the use of renewable energy, developing sustainable transport solutions, and protecting vulnerable people and communities.

As a coastal county, Norfolk is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and this strategy acknowledges this. Equally, we have huge assets, from green energy to green tourism. We recognise the

importance of working with the private sector, other local authorities and regional partners to address shared challenges and opportunities and ensure a coordinated response to climate change.

I am confident that this strategy provides a roadmap for building a more sustainable and resilient Norfolk. But it will require the support and commitment of all members of our community, from individuals to businesses to government. I encourage you to read this strategy and join us in this vital effort to protect our environment and safeguard our future.



Cllr Eric Vardy
Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

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▶ Executive Summary

It is now beyond any reasonable doubt that climate change is taking place as a result of human activities, and its impacts are being felt both locally and globally. Governments, businesses, and individuals across the world are stepping forward to take action to protect our communities and natural places. A clear target has been set as a global community to limit rise of average global temperatures to well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial times. The imperative is now to make this happen, and local government has a key role to ensure that doing so reflects local priorities and the characteristics of the communities and places we represent.

The UK has shown leadership here. In 2019, it became the first major economy to pass laws to end its contribution to climate change by bringing all greenhouse gas emissions to 'net zero' by 2050. Net zero means

not adding to the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This is achieved through reducing emissions as much as possible and balancing out any that remain through offsetting methods, such as tree planting or carbon capture and storage technology. That same year, here at Norfolk County Council we made an ambitious commitment to lead by example locally on climate action through our [Environmental Policy](#). We pledged to make our estate net zero by 2030, and work in partnership in support of Norfolk's wider journey towards carbon neutrality.

Pushing forward with these commitments is vital as we start to see the effects of climate change taking shape, including here in Norfolk¹. Heatwaves and warm summers are now significantly more likely than a few decades ago. 2022 was the UK's warmest year since records began, and the ten warmest years have all occurred since 2003. Looking ahead, the heatwaves and drought conditions experienced in 2022 may become more like normal summer conditions by the middle of this century. We need to be prepared for more damage to homes and habitats from wildfire, further strain on our water resources, and the impacts on the health of vulnerable groups such as the young and elderly.

Climate change is also visible in rising sea levels. Since the 1981-2000 period, sea levels have risen by around 6.5 cm and are estimated to keep rising at 2.5 cm per decade. These changes will accelerate the coastal erosion being seen on parts of the Norfolk coast and raise the risks of flooding in low-lying areas during heavy storms. As well as affecting local communities and businesses, these impacts threaten our unique and sensitive habitats such as the Norfolk Broads and coastal marshes.

At the same time, the UK's net zero transition represents a real opportunity for Norfolk. In tandem with the drive to level-up regions, making our economy fit for a net zero future can bring a boost for businesses and jobs locally. Low carbon technologies and ways of working are quickly becoming the major drivers of growth nation-wide. It is vital that we try and capture this within Norfolk. Moreover, taking steps to tackle climate change is not simply about cutting carbon. It is also about making sure we have clean air in our towns and cities, accessible green spaces to enjoy, and warm, comfortable homes to live in. In this way, our work to tackle climate change serves to support the council's overarching strategic priorities set out in [Better Together, for Norfolk](#).

While some impacts are now unavoidable, taking action now to cut carbon emissions can contribute to ensuring the extent climate change affects us

¹ Data and projections in this section are from: [Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](#)

in the future is more limited. Creating a climate-resilient Norfolk therefore means both embracing clean growth and adapting to the effects of climate change. Both of these endeavours need to be done in a way that ensures we keep focus on delivering high quality local services and being responsible in our use of public money towards local priorities. Taking these steps can ensure Norfolk remains a special place where current and future generations can flourish.

This document sets out a strategic framework for the way Norfolk County Council is tackling climate change locally and building resilience to its effects. It sets out seven focus areas around which our activities will be organised. In doing so, it provides a realistic appraisal of what we as a council can address and the levers at our disposal. The seven focus areas of this strategy and the main priorities for each are set out in turn below.

Focus area 1: Our estate

Focus area 1 addresses our commitment to make our estate net zero by 2030. Our estate emissions include those from our buildings, streetlights and vehicle fleet. Significant progress has already been made, with our estate emissions having reduced by just over half since 2016/17 from 21,049 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) to 10,434 tCO₂e in 2021/22. We have worked hard to make our buildings smarter in how they use energy and converted two-thirds of our streetlights to energy efficient LED technology.

Further actions are required to sustain this momentum: we will be converting the remaining streetlights to LED; we are transitioning our vehicle fleet to electric wherever practical; and, significantly, we are undertaking a comprehensive programme of decarbonisation works on our buildings. To ensure we stay on track we are setting ambitious interim targets as stepping stones towards achieving a net zero estate in 2030. These include achieving a 66% reduction in emissions by 2024/25 relative to 2016/17, and an 85% reduction by 2028/29 relative to the same baseline. Hitting these will enable us to achieve a 90% reduction by 2030/31, with offsets in place for our remaining emissions.

Focus area 2: Indirect emissions

Our indirect (also known as 'scope 3') emissions represent our organisation's wider carbon footprint that we have influence over but which is outside of our direct control. This includes the carbon resulting from our supply chain, the companies we own, the buildings we lease, and staff travel, among other aspects.

The Carbon Trust estimated that our scope 3 emissions were over 475,000 tCO₂e in 2020/21. To put this into context, it is equivalent to around 7%



of Norfolk's total carbon footprint. Over three-quarters of this relates to the £900 million the council spends each year on works, goods and services. Therefore, procurement is a key lever for achieving large carbon reductions through influencing our supply chain.

We are already taking steps towards using our procurement to bring about carbon reductions, such as requiring our major suppliers to have carbon reduction plans in place. Our priority will be putting in place plans for each of our key procurement categories on how to achieve carbon reduction in our supply chain while maintaining a healthy and competitive supplier market.

Focus area 3: County-wide emissions

This focus area steps back to address the bigger picture of how the council can support county-wide carbon reduction. The UK's independent Climate Change Committee (CCC) notes that local authorities can influence around a third of an area's emissions through

place-shaping activities and their wider leadership role. The scale of potential influence here is much greater than our estate and scope 3 emissions. However, the degree of control we have over these wider emissions is more limited, and the CCC do not see it as appropriate for local authorities to set sectoral carbon budgets for their areas².

We aim to take a pragmatic approach to supporting carbon reduction county-wide by prioritising the areas where we have the greatest opportunity to make positive change. This focus area covers the following thematic areas:

- Transport
- Building and planning
- Commercial and industrial sector
- Energy
- Digital solutions and connectivity
- Waste and the circular economy

Our work on transport is worth highlighting here. Being a large, rural county means that a good road network is vital for connecting Norfolk's communities and businesses. However, transport also represents nearly a quarter of Norfolk's carbon footprint, so we need to ensure that we keep Norfolk connected while supporting decarbonisation of this sector.

There are three dimensions to our approach to decarbonising Norfolk's transport: supporting the switch to electric vehicles, improving the county's public transport, and encouraging more sustainable and active travel. We are working hard to lever in government funding, with recent success in securing money to:

- Bring 70 fully electric buses to Norwich in 2024 in partnership with First Bus, with Roundtree Way bus depot becoming one of the first fully electric bus depots outside of London;
- Install over 125 chargepoints in both rural and urban parts of Norfolk;
- Create Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans that cover the whole county.

Norfolk faces challenges in terms of inadequate affordable housing, low-paid jobs, and insufficient infrastructure. The county needs investment in digital connectivity, utilities, and transport infrastructure to enable businesses and communities to thrive. The council will promote investments that support sustainable housing and economic

² [Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](https://theccc.org.uk) (page 47)

growth plans, provide physical and digital access to education and employment, and reduce traffic and pollution in town centres. The challenge – which we accept - will be to minimise the carbon footprint in construction, promote biodiversity net gain and adopt technology and design that reflects progressive thinking and mitigates climate change impacts.

Focus area 4: Promoting a green economy

It is vital that Norfolk grasps the opportunities for jobs and business growth that the transition to a green economy will offer.

Government policies and more affordable technologies will drive demand for low carbon goods and services over the coming years. A workforce will be needed to match this: our buildings will need to be retrofitted, our heat pumps will need to be serviced, our renewable energy network will need to be maintained, green technologies need to be manufactured, and our land will need to be managed for the environment and food. It is estimated that there could be 700,000 jobs in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy by 2030 and more than 1.2 million by 2050.

Norfolk's position as the emerging clean energy powerhouse of Britain is just one example of the huge potential of the green economy for the county. In March this year, the energy company Vattenfall announced they were creating around 130 quality 'green-collar' jobs in Great Yarmouth. The new Operations and Maintenance Campus, which was commissioned by Norfolk County Council, was chosen by Vattenfall as the support hub for their Norfolk Offshore Wind Zone. Acting now can mean securing quality jobs like these jobs for Norfolk.

Our strategic priority here is to help Norfolk to get equipped with the skills to harness the opportunities of the green economy.

Focus area 5: Adapting to climate change

As outlined earlier, we are already starting to feel the impacts of climate change and the risks to Norfolk's communities and natural places are set to intensify over the coming decades. As a council, we must ensure that the vital local services that we provide are resilient in the face of climate hazards, and that we support the resilience of Norfolk's communities to the risks brought by coastal and inland flooding and extreme heat among others.

It is important that the actions and investments we make in adapting to climate change are evidence-based. We are fortunate in Norfolk to be home to world leading expertise on this issue at the [Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research](#) at the University of East Anglia. A strategic

priority of this focus area is to work with the Tyndall Centre to better understand the risks of climate change impacts on Norfolk and the potential adaptation responses.

We must also recognise that many of the resources and powers to undertake local adaptation lie with other government bodies. Building on a solid evidence base through our work with the Tyndall Centre, we will be the voice of Norfolk residents to government bodies like the Environment Agency on securing appropriate investment on adaptation across the county.

Focus area 6: Space for nature to recover and grow

Norfolk is a county of diverse and unique landscapes, some of which are recognised as internationally important wildlife havens. The natural environment also provides invaluable services for people, including water and air purification, flood protection, recreation opportunities, and carbon storage in soil and vegetation. These 'ecosystem services' are a vital component of climate change mitigation and adaptation in the county.

However, the county is not immune to the pressures facing the natural environment. The data of the decline in biodiversity in the UK is a sobering indicator of this. Since 1970, an estimated 41% of UK species have decreased in abundance, and 15% are threatened with extinction³. Helping nature to recover has become a national policy priority, with a nation-wide [25 Year Environment Plan](#) published in 2018.

We are the responsible authority for producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Norfolk, which will map important habitats across the county to be conserved, restored and connected as part of addressing national-scale environmental objectives. Through using our position here as the link between national and local environmental priorities, our strategic priority is to deliver an LNRS that will facilitate action to build the resilience of Norfolk's natural environment while harnessing its potential for storing carbon and managing flood risk.

Focus area 7: Engage and Collaborate

Cutting across all the other focus areas is the need to for engagement and collaboration. As mentioned, local authorities can influence around a third of emissions in their areas, but this reach cannot be achieved through working in isolation. It requires us to use our position to bring together the businesses, academic, public and community and voluntary sectors towards delivering the right changes for Norfolk.

³ [State of Nature 2019 Reports - National Biodiversity Network \(nbn.org.uk\)](#)

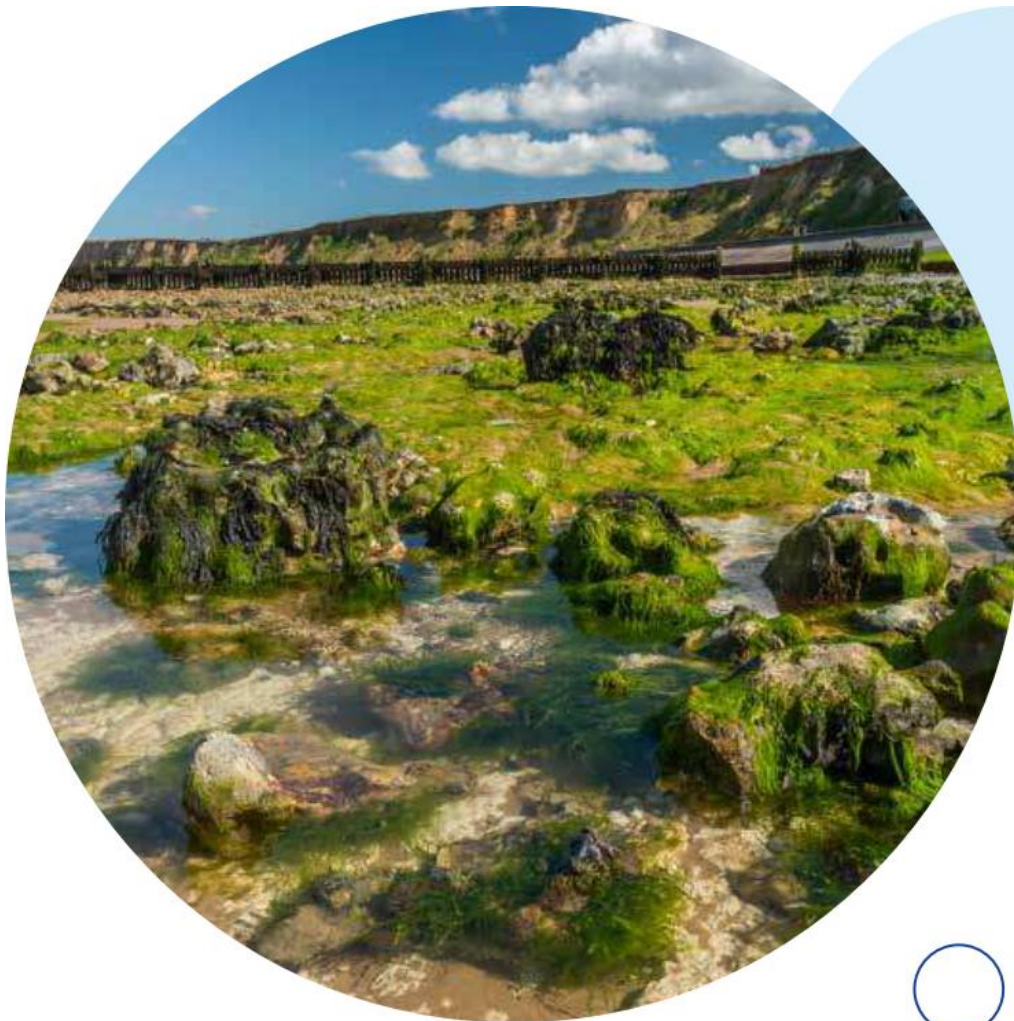
A priority here is working effectively through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership. This is a forum for collaboration between Norfolk's county, borough and city local authority partners along with the Broads Authority to align efforts on tackling climate change. The partnership's three priority areas are on identifying pathways towards decarbonising the local energy system, retrofitting the county's buildings, and enabling sustainable transport choices.

However, it is imperative that we reach out beyond the public sector and not simply be a government funding conduit. A far bigger impact can be achieved through leveraging in private investment towards clean growth for Norfolk. For this reason, we facilitated the creation of the Norfolk Investment Framework. This sets out high-level investment priorities for the county, with climate resilience specifically identified. Priorities relating to local skills development and business growth are also closely related due to the opportunities of the green economy. This framework and the pilot projects it supports are initial steps towards de-risking larger private investments in line with the needs of Norfolk's residents and businesses.



Photo credit: Beryl





▶ Introduction

A Climate-Resilient Norfolk

The scientific evidence shows beyond doubt that our climate is changing as a direct result of human activity.

Around the world, communities are already feeling the impacts of climate change with rising sea levels, severe flooding and unprecedented heat waves. Changes to the Earth's climate are also closely linked to a decline in biodiversity as nature struggles to adapt. These impacts are only expected to become more severe as climate change intensifies.

Governments, businesses, and individuals across the world are now stepping up to the need to take action on climate change. The UK has

shown positive leadership here by setting the ambitious national target of reaching net zero by 2050. Norfolk is already playing a central role in powering this ambition through tapping into its abundant offshore wind as a pivotal clean energy supply.

As the upper-tier local authority for the county, Norfolk County Council (NCC) is well placed to support action on climate change in a way that is tailored to Norfolk's particular characteristics and strengths.

This will involve stepping up to the challenges of cutting carbon, harnessing the opportunities for green jobs and business, helping nature to thrive, and supporting Norfolk to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

Taking this action now can help ensure that Norfolk continues to be a special place where current and future generations can flourish.

Purpose of this strategy

This document provides a clear statement of NCC's strategic framework to help tackle climate change. It describes how we aim to meet our commitment to reach net zero across our estate by 2030, and how we will continue to work with our partners to work towards a carbon neutral Norfolk.

We also highlight how we will address other interlinking issues that need to be dealt with in a holistic manner, particularly the decline in biodiversity, as Norfolk adapts to a changing climate.

Our priorities and targets are set out across seven key focus areas, outlining our current progress and next steps in their delivery.

Strategy Objectives

- 1.** Outline how we will deliver on our target to meet Net Zero across our estates.
- 2.** Inform Norfolk's residents, our staff, partners and local businesses of the action NCC is taking to tackle climate change across Norfolk.
- 3.** Help guide our action in the coming years on our journey to net zero and adapting services to address the impacts of climate change.



▶ **Climate change in brief**

What is climate change?

Climate change refers to the changes in global weather patterns driven by global warming. The scientific evidence is clear that human activities are driving this.

Greenhouse gases are gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat. When energy from sunlight reaches the Earth, much of it is absorbed by land or the oceans, heating the surface. Over time, the heated surface releases this energy. Some of it is absorbed by greenhouse gases, preventing it from leaving the atmosphere, a bit like a greenhouse.

This greenhouse gas effect is vital for giving Earth a habitable climate for life to flourish. However, since the Industrial Revolution, humans have released huge amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas to power our homes, factories and transport. The rapid increase in the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has intensified the naturally occurring greenhouse gas effect, trapping more heat than would naturally be the case. This is leading to global warming and causing a shift in weather patterns, which we term climate change.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most significant greenhouse gas as it is emitted in greatest quantity by human activity and remains in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. Other greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change include methane and nitrous oxide.

The terms 'carbon' and 'greenhouse gases' are often used interchangeably even if they are not exactly equivalent. To simplify measurement and reporting, the impact of these greenhouse gas emissions is measured together as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).

Global impacts of climate change

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that human activities have caused 1.0°C of global warming since pre-industrial times and this is likely to reach 1.5 °C between 2030 and 2052.

While this does not sound like a big change, even small changes to global temperatures bring big shifts in weather patterns with significant impacts for people and nature. These include⁴:

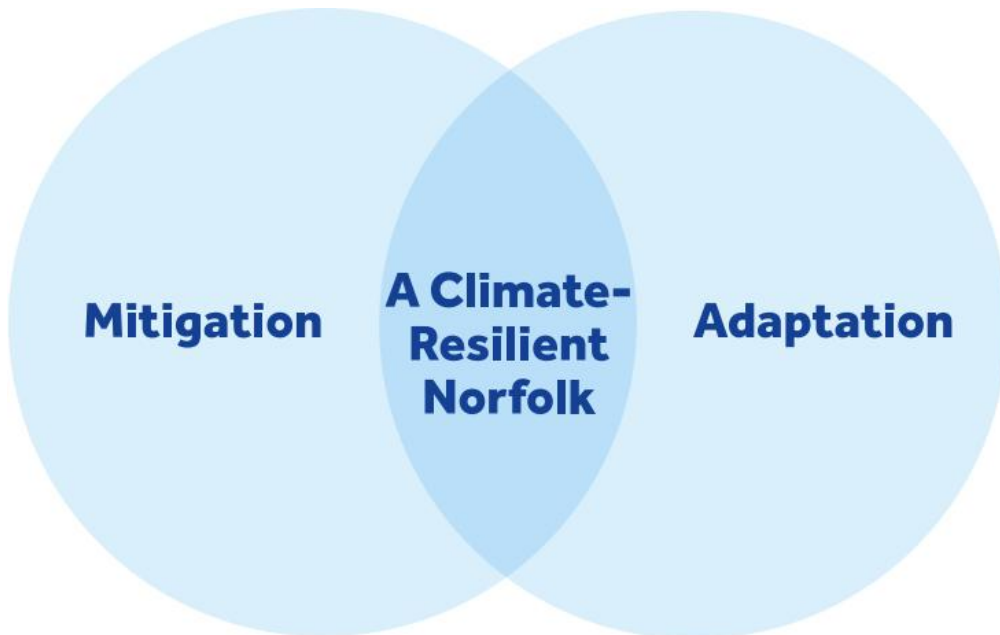
- Global sea-level has risen by about 20cm since the start of the 20th century, putting strain on coastal communities
- The last six years have been the six warmest on record globally. This has led to more frequent heatwaves, droughts and wildfires in most regions
- Extreme rainfall and related flooding has intensified, bringing damage to homes and infrastructure
- Climate change is leading to increasingly irreversible losses in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

As well as these more general impacts, the effects of climate change on weather patterns in the UK and Norfolk are becoming increasingly visible. These are summarised in the following pages.

⁴ [IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf](#)

Responding to climate change

As illustrated in the diagram, effective response to climate change requires the coordination of two approaches: climate mitigation and climate adaptation.



Climate mitigation

Climate mitigation includes actions to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases which drive climate change. Climate mitigation is needed to ultimately limit the scale of impacts that Norfolk and the rest of the world will experience.

In practice, climate mitigation can include generating energy from renewable sources rather than coal or gas; improving the energy efficiency of buildings; replacing petrol or diesel transport with electric alternatives; and planting trees and preserving forests so they can absorb and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Climate adaptation

Climate adaptation involves adjusting to the actual or expected changes in climate. These are necessary actions to help manage the risks that come with the impacts of climate change, even if we manage to rapidly reduce emissions.

Adaptation can include disaster management and business continuity plans, flood protection, habitat and species management, increasing shading in urban areas, and the enhancement of green infrastructure.



▶ The UK response

Climate mitigation

In 2015, nearly 200 governments from around the world signed the Paris Agreement. This recognised the need to accelerate actions and investment to combat climate change. A legally binding target was set by signatories to “limit global warming to well below 2, preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels”.

In 2019, the UK took the bold step to become the first major economy to bring net zero into law, with a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.



International

Keep global temperature rise to below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C



National

Achieve Net Zero by the year 2050

What is net zero?

Net zero refers to not adding to the level of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. There are two sides to this: reducing greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible as a priority, and then balancing out any remaining by removing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere (what is known as 'offsetting').

Carbon budgets

As part of the UK's 2008 Climate Change Act, the government is required to set legally binding carbon budgets. Each budget provides a five-year cap on total greenhouse emissions for the UK, to act as stepping-stones towards the national 2050 target.

The budgets are designed to reflect a cost-effective way of achieving the UK's long-term climate change objectives. Once a carbon budget has been set, the Climate Change Act places an obligation on the government to prepare policies to ensure the budget is met.

Climate adaptation

Climate adaptation is the set of actions taken in response to the actual or expected effects of climate change.

The Climate Change Act 2008 requires the government to produce a UK Climate Change Risk Assessment to identify risks and opportunities facing the UK from climate change. This must be followed by a National Adaptation Programme (NAP) setting out the actions that central government and others will take to adapt to the challenges of climate change in England over a five-year period.

The most recent NAP runs from 2018 – 2023 and covers:

- The natural environment
- Infrastructure
- People and the built environment
- Business and industry
- Local government.

▶ Impacts of climate change on the UK and Norfolk

A changing climate for Norfolk

As global emissions rise, changes in aspects of the UK's and Norfolk's weather patterns and sea levels are already being seen, including the following:

Warmer average temperatures

Average temperatures in the UK have increased by around 0.6°C since the 1981-2000 period. This may seem like a relatively small change, but the UK's top 10 warmest years on record have now occurred since 2003 and the daily maximum temperature record broke 40°C for the first time in 2022, far sooner than had been anticipated.

Rising sea levels

Globally, sea levels have risen by 20cm since the start of the 20th century. Sea levels around the UK have risen by about 6.5cm since 1981-2000 and are currently rising by around 2.5cm per decade.



Future projections

Due to the emissions already 'locked in' to the atmosphere, the UK's climate will continue to change as global temperatures increase. The projected changes include⁵:

Warmer and wetter winters

By 2050 the UK's average winter could be around 1°C warmer than it was over 1981-2000 and around 5% wetter with higher intensity of winter rainfall.

Hotter summers with frequent heatwaves

An average summer could be around 1.5°C warmer than it was on average over 1981-2000 and around 10% drier by 2050. A summer as hot and dry as 2022 could occur every other year.

Continued sea level rise

The seas around the UK will continue to rise over the next three decades to 2050. By 2050 sea levels could be up to 10 - 30cm higher than over 1981-2000, and well over 50cm higher by 2100.

Impacts of climate change

Norfolk is a county of diverse and unique landscapes, but its geographical features also leave it vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Natural environment

Climate change presents a significant threat to Norfolk's unique and sensitive habitats. The county's wetlands and freshwater habitats are especially vulnerable to higher frequency and severity of droughts, as well as the saltwater ingress and pollution pressures that come with rising sea levels and storm surges. While increased temperatures may benefit some fauna and flora, many species will struggle to adapt to the rapid changes in their environment. And high temperatures combined with periods of drought over the summer months have already increased the risk of wildfires that threaten local wildlife populations.

Health and well-being

There is a strong association between periods of extreme heat increases in illness and excess mortality. Vulnerable groups such as the very young, disabled and elderly are disproportionately affected here. This is revealed in the effects of the heat waves of summer 2022. Over 3,000 excess deaths were recorded compared to the five-year average, of which 2,800 were those aged 65 years and over⁶.

⁵ [Data and projections presented in this section are from: Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk - Climate Change Committee \(theccc.org.uk\)](#)

⁶ [Excess mortality during heat-periods - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

Economy

Norfolk has a proud agricultural tradition as a key food producing part of the country. Our farmers and fishing industry are experiencing - more directly than most - the changing weather patterns associated with climate change. Seasonal rainfall is less reliable and extremes of both temperature and rainfall bring greater risk of crop failure and livestock stress.

Our tourism industry is responsible for 18% of Norfolk jobs, but the natural assets most at risk – landscape, biodiversity, beaches and the Broads – are a particular part of the county's attractiveness to visitors.

For the UK as a whole, climate damages are estimated to cost 1 - 3% of GDP by 2050. However, some coastal and low-lying parts of Norfolk can expect climate damages to cost as much as 7 or 8% of local GDP⁸. Coastal erosion, inland flooding and extreme temperatures bring costly damage to the county's infrastructure and building assets. Repairing roads, footpaths and electricity lines brings significant public cost, and Norfolk's communities and businesses face the costs from the disruption and damage to buildings and other assets.



⁷ [What will climate change cost the UK? Risks, impacts and mitigation for the net-zero transition - Grantham Research Institute on climate change and the environment \(lse.ac.uk\)](#)

⁸ [ibid](#)

▶ Our commitment to tackling climate change

Our net zero ambition

We recognise the need to take urgent action to meet this collective global challenge. Many of the changes and decisions which are needed to reduce emissions and build climate resilience across the country have a strong local dimension. As the upper-tier local authority for Norfolk, we want to be at the heart of the climate conversation through showing local leadership, building partnerships and finding solutions that reflect Norfolk's particular characteristics and priorities. In 2019, we set two ambitious targets in support of the UK's wider climate action: to achieve net zero carbon emissions on our estates by 2030; and to work closely, with regional partners, towards carbon neutrality within our wider areas by 2030.

1. To achieve net zero carbon emission on our estates by 2030
2. To work collectively, with regional partners, towards carbon neutrality within our wider areas, also by 2030

Our target to achieve net zero on our estates relates to the emissions resulting from the operation of our buildings and streetlighting across Norfolk and from our vehicle fleet. We can also support emission reduction beyond our own operations and assets. Our target to work towards carbon neutrality within the wider area recognises our enabling role, whilst acknowledging the need for effective collaboration to drive substantive change. As the role of local authorities in the national net zero 2050 commitment has yet to be clearly set out by Government, this strategy represents our own work in bringing together the varied ways we can employ our powers and influence towards a green future.

The UK100 Network

In 2022, we became a member of the UK100 Network. This is a group of local government leaders across the country sharing knowledge, collaborating, and petitioning the UK government with their collective voice on net zero. As member, we have pledged to: "do everything within our power and influence to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions". This recognises that local authorities do not necessarily have all the powers yet to reach their ambitious net zero targets but can share best practice with each other in learning forums that the UK100 facilitates.



▶ **What we can influence**

Climate change is a major challenge. We recognise that addressing a task of this scale cannot be achieved by one organisation in isolation: it will require significant coordination and collaboration across sectors.

We aim to take a pragmatic approach to addressing climate change by prioritising areas where we have the greatest opportunity to make positive change.

However, as a county council we only have direct control over a small proportion of Norfolk's territorial emissions. The diagram highlights that the council's ability to control emissions reduces as we move further away from our own operations, whilst the scale of emissions is greater.

That said, we can use our statutory powers, convening ability and our leadership role across Norfolk to bring together our partners, businesses, and our community to facilitate climate action for Norfolk.

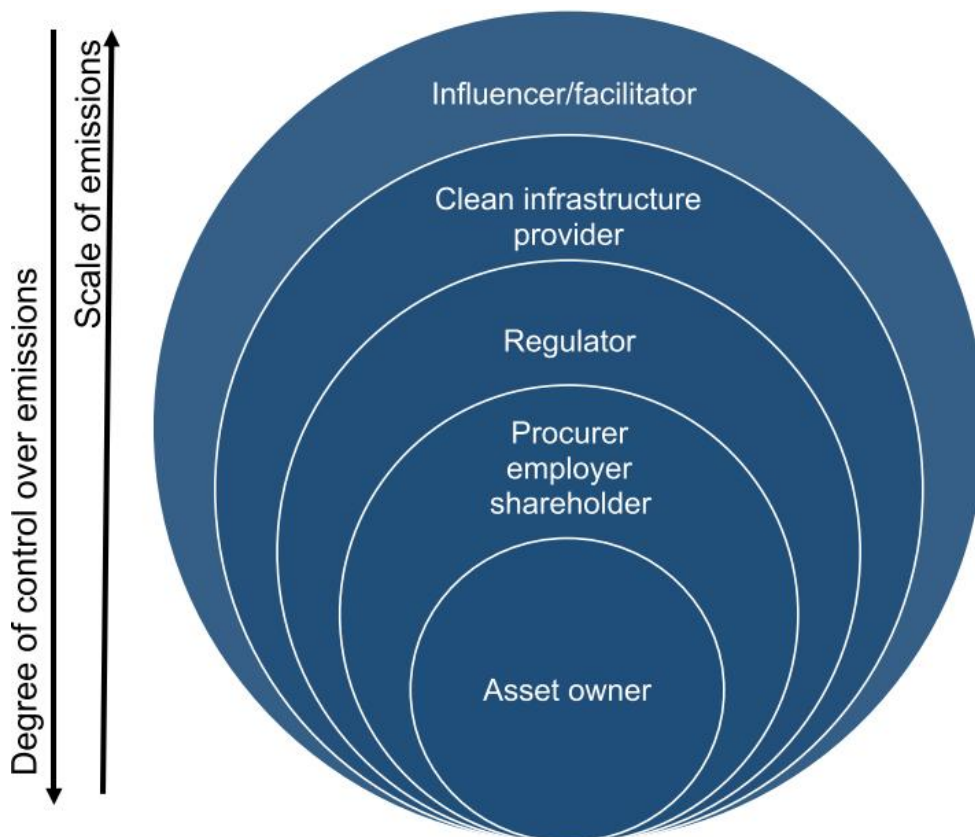
As an asset owner we can directly influence the emissions arising from the buildings we own and the vehicles we operate.

As a procurer, employer and shareholder we can create a carbon conscious culture within the council to facilitate behaviour change across our employees. Procurement is a key lever for climate action through influencing our supply chain.

As a regulator we are the responsible planning authority for waste and minerals; we are also responsible for trading standards.

As a clean infrastructure provider we can help facilitate a transition to more sustainable modes of transport such as active travel and the use of public transport. We can invest in woodland and biodiversity.

As an influencer and facilitator we can provide an enabling and communications role, engaging communities, public sector and business partners in area-wide conversations about climate change, the route to net zero and nature recovery for Norfolk.



Our strategic approach

We have identified seven key focus areas to prioritise our climate action. Our approach to each of these areas will be individually covered in this strategy.

1) Reduce our estate emissions

We have a commitment to make the council's estate net zero by 2030. This means leading by example through addressing the emissions of our buildings, streetlights and vehicles.

2) Reduce our indirect emissions

Using our influence as a procurer and shareholder, we will help drive carbon emission reductions across our supply chain and the companies we own.

3) Address Norfolk's county-wide emissions

In delivering our statutory responsibilities and duties, we will play a pivotal role in mitigating and adapting against climate change for the wider Norfolk area, identifying and implementing change that makes the biggest impact across the county.

4) Promoting a green economy

We will seek to catalyse Norfolk's private sector to be an engine for green, inclusive growth. This means working in partnership to promote jobs and business growth that harness the opportunities of a low carbon future.

5) Ensure that nature has space to recover and grow

We will use our position in the county to show leadership in ensuring bigger, better and more joined up spaces for nature. We will support better land management to increase biodiversity and co-ordinate efforts to allow nature to recover.

6) Climate adaptation

As a council we need to ensure that the essential services we deliver are resilient to the impacts of climate change, and we will work with partners to support the wider resilience of Norfolk's citizens and businesses.

7) Engagement and collaboration

We will prioritise collaborative engagement with key public, private and community stakeholders to draw on shared expertise and make delivery more efficient and cost effective.

► Policy and strategy alignment

Policy alignment

In developing this strategy we have ensured its alignment with our corporate strategic goals.

Better Together, for Norfolk

Our corporate strategy, [Better Together, for Norfolk \(BTfN\)](#), sets out the council's vision and ambition for Norfolk for 2021 – 2025. Delivery of this Climate Strategy will support the delivery of strategic objectives outlined in BTfN:

- Work to reduce our impact on the environment
- Level up our economy, building the skills that meet the needs of green, high-value and transformational businesses
- Accelerate infrastructure that supports clean growth, sustainable housing, electric vehicle charging and the decarbonisation of transport, enabling businesses and people to make choices which build climate resilience.
- Improve social mobility through inclusive growth
- Improve access to our natural and cultural landscapes, encouraging residents to use green spaces and cultural assets.
- Enhance Norfolk's natural environment by protecting its rich biodiversity and promoting the efficient use of natural resources.

Environmental Policy

In 2019, we published our [Environmental Policy](#). The policy reflects the areas that are key to protecting and maintaining the health of our distinctive environment and our residents.

The policy sets out activity across a range of areas, including those where the council has statutory environmental responsibilities. The policy objectives outlined in our Environmental Policy are reflected in this Climate Strategy.

Other NCC policies

The ambitions and priorities set out in this strategy are reflected across a number of other council policies and strategies.

This includes the:

- [Local Transport Plan](#)
 - [Electric Vehicle Strategy](#)
 - [Safe Sustainable Development Strategy](#)
 - [Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy](#)
-

Stakeholder strategies

Climate action requires significant collaboration with our stakeholders and partners. Our Climate Strategy has been developed in line with stakeholder plans and strategies, including:

- The Integrated Care System [Green Plan](#)
- The Broads Authority [Climate Adaptation Plan](#)
- The Visit East of England [Destination Development Plan](#)
- Arts Council England – [Let's Create](#)

The [Norfolk Climate Change Partnership](#) has set three areas it wishes to focus on: energy, retrofit and transport. This strategy aligns well with those priorities.

In developing the Norfolk Investment Framework, with which this strategy is aligned, the council built a comprehensive evidence base. The framework was developed with private, public and voluntary sector organisations, who recognise the need to work together and address the climate change challenge.



Governance and reporting

Governance

The implementation of this Climate Strategy will be a council-wide effort requiring engagement from a range of internal groups and public committees to govern the effective delivery of its ambitions. These include the following:

Officer Groups

- **Net Zero Board**

Chaired by the Head of Paid Service, the Net Zero Board meets bi-monthly for the Executive Directors (the council's most senior officers) to review progress and provide a steer towards achieving our net zero commitments

Councillor Groups

- **Cabinet**

Exercises executive functions and establishes appropriate arrangements for the delivery of cross-cutting functions

- **Corporate Select Committee**

Supports the Cabinet and Council in ensuring good governance in how the council deploys its resources and assets

- **Infrastructure & Development Committee**

Supports the Cabinet and Council in its work on transport, environmental services and growing the economy

- **Member Oversight Group for the Environment**

Group of both members and senior officers whose purpose is to monitor the progress being made on the council's Environmental Policy

Emissions reporting

We have published an [Emissions Dashboard](#) on the Norfolk County Council website to provide a clear view of the council's emissions and progress towards its commitment to a net zero estate by 2030. This will continue to be updated as data becomes available each year.

County-wide data reporting can be found on the [Norfolk Insight](#) website. The Environment Report for Norfolk highlights key carbon emission drivers for Norfolk and provides insight into energy demand for the county.



▶ Funding climate action

The funding context

Funding is a critical issue for enabling local authority work on net zero and must be considered in the context of mounting pressures on local authority finances and the obligation to deliver a balanced budget.

There is not yet a framework of expectations about the role of local government in achieving the national net zero target. At present, local authorities' role here does not have a statutory basis, and therefore tackling climate change must be considered on top of meeting core statutory responsibilities. Our core settlement funding from government is yet to explicitly consider the costs of tackling climate change, and this money must be prioritised on delivering the vital local services which we have a statutory responsibility for. Furthermore, demand for our services is outpacing funding growth, and the current inflationary pressures adds further strain to do more with less. Dedicated, long-term funding for tackling climate change at the local level would help us take a strategic approach to invest in local priorities and use this to draw in further private investment.

Grant funding

Outside of core settlement funding, there is a growing pot of dedicated grant funding for net zero related activities from central government which local authorities can bid for. We have had success here in securing money through these grant competitions for our work in Norfolk. This money is welcome, but it is difficult to plan for given its competitive nature, and often comes with short timescales for application and delivery.

We have secured grant funding from the Department for Transport as well as other government bodies for significant investment in walking, cycling and passenger transport improvements, and electric chargepoint infrastructure, with recent examples including:

- £38.1m of capital funding for improving sustainable transport infrastructure in Norwich through [two tranches of the Transforming Cities fund](#). This has included improvements to junctions, new bus and cycle lanes, improvements to Norwich Bus Station and the introduction of the Beryl bike and e-scooter scheme;
- £49.6m funding to deliver [Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) (of which £30.9m is for capital projects). This will improve bus infrastructure across the county as well as support measures to encourage higher ridership;
- £14.7m through the [Zero Emission Bus Regional Area \(ZEBRA\) scheme](#) matched by £21m of local investment from First Bus. This will bring 70 electric buses to Norwich in 2024 and First's Roundtree Way bus depot will become one of the first fully electric bus depots outside London;
- Nearly £2.5m worth of grants through the [Active Travel Fund tranches 1 and 2](#) (of which £2.2m for capital). These are funding projects to encourage cycling and walking through infrastructure improvements and community engagement;
- £0.17m through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' ([Defra's Air Quality Grant](#)) to bring an [e-cargo bike library to Norwich](#) to support zero carbon logistics in the city centre;
- [£1.6m capital grant through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure \(LEVI\) scheme](#), which could bring around 90 chargepoints to rural parts of Norfolk that are popular tourist destinations.

The Norfolk Investment Framework

The council has established the [Norfolk Investment Framework \(NIF\)](#), to allow Norfolk to self-determine long-term investment priorities and ensure the collective benefits of those investments are shared by all residents.

The NIF seeks to drive growth in the county over the medium to long term. The framework has been created in response to a number of factors, including the Government's [Levelling Up White Paper](#), which aims to boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, and spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.

Created in consultation with over fifty stakeholder organisations, across public, private and voluntary sector, the framework provides an evidence base for the design of future large-scale projects and investment.

Based on this detailed data and analysis, the framework itself is a set of high-level investment priorities designed to tackle four 'grand challenges' that Norfolk faces:

1. To create new opportunities for Norfolk's residents by increasing skills and labour market dynamism
2. To provide effective and efficient public services to a spatially-dispersed population
3. To strengthen and future-proof business clusters, to grow the economy
4. To protect Norfolk's economic and natural assets from climate change.

Thematic objectives for the 'climate change grand challenge' include:

- to mitigate constraints imposed on Norfolk's economy by climate change (such as circular systems for water and energy re-use)
- to reduce the costs and maximise the opportunities of the transition to net zero (such as initiatives to help Norfolk to transition to net zero, and support to build net zero businesses).

With the Framework in place, the council will work in partnership with stakeholders to deliver pilot projects that address the grand challenges.

Norfolk County Deal

As part of the government's levelling up mission to strengthen local leadership, Norfolk County Council and the government entered into a [devolution deal](#) to provide powers and funding to Norfolk. As part of this deal, the council will decide whether to adopt a governance model with a directly elected leader. If this goes ahead, a directly elected leader will be elected in May 2024. Elements of the deal, such as the transfer of new powers, require parliamentary approval through secondary legislation. The decisions to be made will be informed by local consultation.

Devolution for counties offers significant opportunities for the County Council to raise its ambitions and work with its partners to scale up activity around housing, integrated transport and net zero initiatives.

The deal is the beginning of a journey with government and offers another lever through which to achieve change. In developing our strategy, we will be mindful of the opportunities that the current deal presents, as well as those areas of future opportunity that could inform further devolution deals and deliver significant benefit to the council and the county as a whole.

The deal covers a wide range of issues relevant to the climate strategy. It recognises that despite being a significant producer and distributor of clean energy, growth opportunities are significantly constrained due to a lack of distribution capacity. It also recognises that Norfolk is one of the driest counties in the UK, and is experiencing growing pressures on water resources alongside more-intense precipitation and the likelihood of more-frequent flooding.



Funding and influencing opportunities arising from the deal that can support climate adaptation and mitigation include:

- devolving the adult education budget, which will enable to some extent focus on employability in the green economy
- making the county council the lead body for UK Shared Prosperity Funding in Norfolk
- additional revenue funding of £250,000 in both 2023/24 and 2024/25 to accelerate work on the revised local transport plan and implement quantifiable carbon reductions
- support in seeking a new rail partnership with Great British Railways, once established
- with other devolved areas, a meaningful role in planning the future energy system; and
- the County Council assuming the role of heat network zoning coordinator for the county.

In addition, government has recognised the scientific and policy expertise that is based at the UEA and the [Norwich Research Park](#) and has committed to work with departments on the potential for any future relocations of Civil Service roles to Norfolk as part of the levelling up agenda.

Crowd funding platform

From 2023, NCC is planning to deliver a crowdfunding platform. Crowdfunding is a way to support community groups, charities and businesses to grow local projects and enhance nature with extra funding. NCC has pledged a first £75,000 in match funding to support projects in the following programmes: Norfolk Windmills Trust restoration of historic wind and watermills and One Million Trees for Norfolk.

The ambition for both themes is to not only provide funding to support the programmes and increase the amount of funding available to them, but also to encourage added outputs such as creating apprenticeships to address the skills shortages in the region and provide the skills for future work.

The crowdfunding project will launch in 2023 and continue with a 9-month on, 3-month off platform, with the potential to build a pipeline of projects with a positive environmental impact.

▶ Our Council's carbon footprint

We follow the internationally recognised standards set out by the [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#) in how we categorise the council's emissions.

These are:

- **Scope 1**
Direct emissions from burning fossil fuels such as gas and oil
- **Scope 2**
Indirect emissions relating to purchased electricity
- **Scope 3**
Other indirect emissions up and down the organisation's value chain

Estate emissions

We have committed to lead by example in Norfolk's net zero journey by making our own estate net zero by 2030. Our estate includes our buildings, streetlights and vehicle fleet.

The emissions covered by our estate include all our scope 1 and 2 emissions as well as a small subset of scope 3 emissions such as those related to our water usage.



In 2021/22 our estate emissions were just under 10,500 tCO₂e, which is about half of what they were in 2016/17. This is described in more detail in focus area 1 below.

Indirect emissions

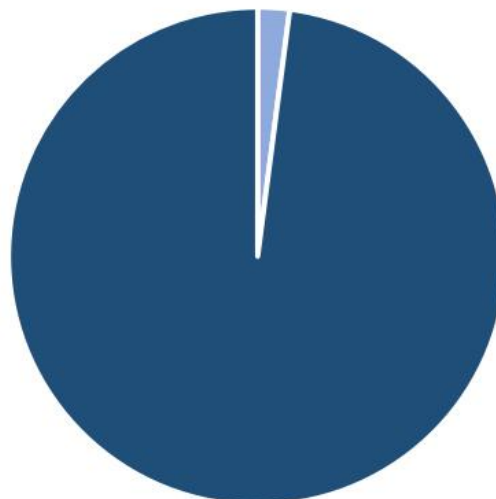
Scope 3 emissions are not produced by the council itself but are an indirect result of the council's activities.

Over 98% of our total scope 3 emissions are estimated to sit within three areas:

1. Purchased works, goods and services (our supply chain)
2. Investments (mainly NCC-owned companies)
3. Leased-out buildings

Scope 3 emissions are harder to address because they are beyond the direct control of the organisation. The organisation is unlikely to have full visibility into the emissions generated by its supply chain, making it harder to quantify and tackle these emissions. This means that reducing scope 3 emissions often requires collaboration with suppliers and other stakeholders. This is described in more detail in focus area 2. Our scope 3 emissions footprint is around 475,000 tCO₂e, which is nearly fifty times greater than that of our estate. This is represented in the figure below.

Our Corporate Emissions



■ Scope 1 and 2 emissions ■ Scope 3 emissions

Norfolk's carbon footprint

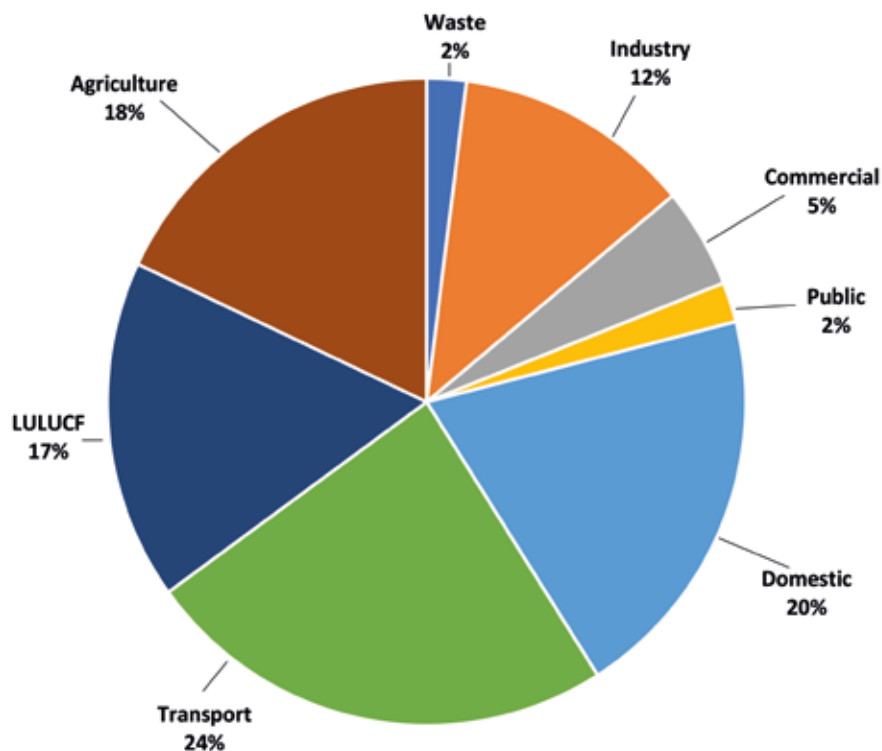
Emissions by sector

The latest data for local area emissions estimates that Norfolk's carbon footprint was 6.5 million tCO₂e in 2020.

Direct emissions are split into eight sectors:

- **Transport:** emissions from fuel use for road transport and railways.
- **Domestic:** emissions from gas use, electricity use and other fuel use from residential properties.
- **Agriculture:** emissions from agricultural activity, primarily livestock, agricultural soils and agricultural machinery.
- **Land use, Land Use Change & Forestry (LULUCF):** emissions from human induced land use such as croplands and settlements, and emissions removed through forest growth and conversion of cropland to grassland.
- **Industry:** emissions resulting from gas use, electricity use and other fuel use in industrial processes.
- **Commercial:** emissions from gas use, electricity use and other fuel use in the commercial sector.
- **Public sector:** emissions from the combustion of fuel across the public sector including government, local authorities, health and schools.
- **Waste sector:** emissions from non-electricity-related processes in the waste management sector.

Understanding the breakdown of Norfolk's carbon footprint by sectors is integral to guiding our climate action. The approximate breakdown for 2020 is set out here⁹.



The biggest sources of emissions across Norfolk are transport and domestic usage, which together make up just under half of Norfolk's total carbon footprint. Agriculture and land use are also highly significant – with agriculture accounting for 2% of the economy but 18% of emissions. Whilst LULUCF is overall a sink in the UK, the peatland soils of West Norfolk in particular make it a significant emitter in Norfolk.

The public sector's scope 1 and scope 2 emissions are only directly responsible for 2% of Norfolk's total emissions. Emissions arising from the council's estate are a small part of this, representing around 0.2% of Norfolk's total.

Whilst getting our own house in order is a priority, this data shows that we must also address the bigger picture, focusing our efforts on reducing emissions across Norfolk's highest emitting sectors.

⁹ [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2020](#)



Focus area 1:

Reduce our estate emissions

Introduction

We have committed to lead by example in Norfolk's net zero journey by making our own estate net zero by 2030. Our estate includes our buildings, streetlights and vehicle fleet.

Baseline and trends

Significant progress has already been made here since our baseline year of 2016/17. Between 2016/17 and 2021/22 our estate emissions reduced by half. Key drivers of the downward emissions trend include the conversion of over two-thirds of our streetlights to energy-efficient LED lighting by April 2023, but also substantial reductions in building electricity.

But building heating emissions from our gas and oil boilers have stayed relatively constant since 2016/17. It is vital that we address these emissions if we are to achieve net zero by 2030.

The trends of our estate emissions are shown in the chart below and on [our website](#).



Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant influence on our estate emissions. Due to lockdown restrictions, many of our staff transitioned to working from home, reducing building occupancy across our estate and reducing commuting and business travel.

Grid decarbonisation

Emissions reductions from electricity sources have also been aided by the decarbonisation of the National Grid. The government's push for all electricity to come from low carbon sources by 2035 will continue to support our carbon reduction efforts.

Strategic priorities

- 1.** Decarbonise and improve the energy efficiency of our council-owned buildings through a comprehensive retrofitting programme
- 2.** Transition towards a low-carbon vehicle fleet and more sustainable modes of transport including e-cargo bikes
- 3.** Upgrade the remainder of NCC's streetlight stock to more energy efficient LEDs to reduce electricity consumption.

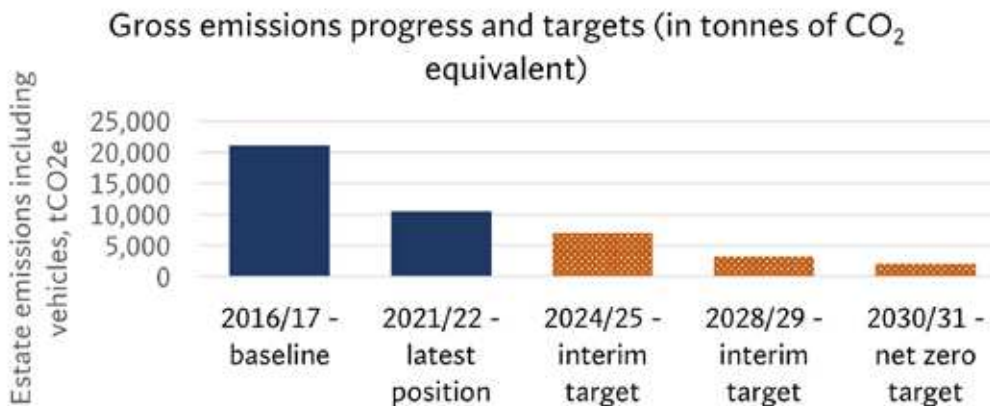


Emission reduction targets

We have direct control over our own estate and operations. Therefore, we can drive these emissions down at a faster rate than any other sector across the county.

To ensure we stay on track towards reaching net zero for our estate by 2030, we are setting ambitious interim targets as stepping-stones towards this. These are outlined in the table below and highlight that by 2030 we will achieve a reduction in our estate emissions by 90% relative to 2016/17, with the remaining emissions being balanced out with high quality offsets. This shows that we are putting carbon reduction front and centre of our approach to hitting net zero by 2030.

Date	Target
2016/2017 baseline	21,049 tCO ₂ e
2024/25	Reduce our gross estate emissions by 66%
2028/29	Reduce our gross estate emissions by 85%
2030/31	Reduce our gross estate emissions by 90%, with suitable, high-quality offsets in place for the remaining emissions to make our estate net zero



Building decarbonisation

The challenge

We own and operate out of 100 sites containing 160 buildings that utilise fossil fuel heating systems.

Addressing the emissions from our buildings, and in particular how we heat them, is the key challenge in meeting our net zero target for our estate. Our approach to building decarbonisation is based on a fabric-first approach. This means focusing first on improving energy efficiency to ensure the transition to low-carbon heating is both resilient and cost effective.

Current progress

Through County Hall's refurbishment programme, energy consumption for the main building and Archive Centre combined has reduced from a peak of 4,100 MWh in 2013/14 to less than 1,000 MWh in 2020/21. This is the equivalent of 570 tCO₂e in annual emission savings.

We have implemented over 100 IoT temperature sensors throughout our property portfolio to identify and remediate problems with heating settings. We will continue to deploy these tactically as required.

On several of our corporate sites, we have removed fossil-fuel based heating systems where they are end-of-life and have replaced them with low-carbon alternatives. There are now over 40 sites with low-carbon electric heating systems.

Since November 2021, we have ceased installing new gas and oil boilers in buildings across the corporate estate unless there is no feasible alternative.

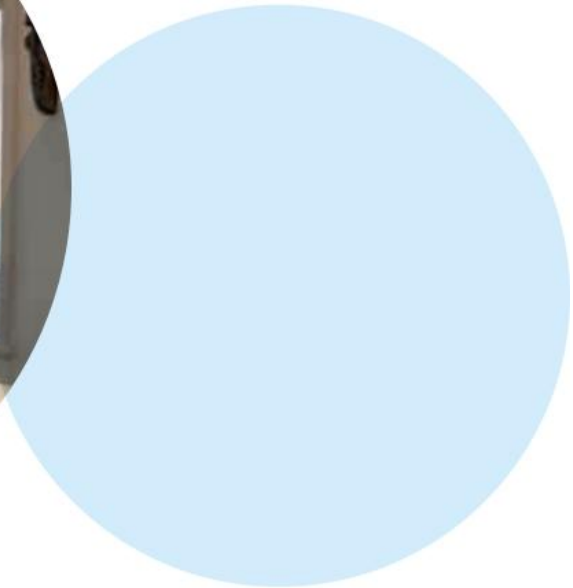
In 2022, consultants were appointed to under-take detailed decarbonisation assessments and retrofit improvement plans for the remaining fossil fuel sites.

These assessments outline the existing condition and energy performance of the buildings and then identify a package of suitable retrofit measures to improve the thermal efficiency of the buildings to allow efficiently sized non-fossil-fuel heating systems to be installed.

Next steps

On completion of the decarbonisation assessment and retrofit improvement plans in March 2023, a delivery strategy will be confirmed. All delivery routes will be subject to compliant tendering processes. Designs and modest levels of retrofit improvement works will commence in financial year 2023/24 with the full delivery programme through to 2027/28.

We have secured £1.9M of Public sector Decarbonisation Fund money to part-fund sixteen sites, that had preliminary information available when the bidding round opened. It is anticipated that further rounds of funding may open in 2023 and applications will therefore be submitted for any remaining sites that qualify, to contribute towards the overall costs.



Internal carbon price

We have developed an internal carbon pricing (ICP) tool to help integrate carbon emissions into revenue and capital investment decision-making processes within the council.

An ICP places a monetary value on emitted carbon. This can help the council make objective investment decisions for non-transport contracts, indicating at a financial level when it may be worthwhile to invest in a low carbon alternative.

The ICP mechanism now forms part of the council's Financial Regulations with a requirement for Executive Directors to ensure that when making revenue and capital investment decisions, these proposals need to be prepared in accordance with the carbon pricing guidance.

To ensure its smooth implementation we will begin trialling the ICP model on a number of pilot projects before its wider circulation across the council.

Our vehicle fleet

The challenge

We operate over 100 vehicles for a variety of functions from highways maintenance to mobile libraries. For the financial year 2021/22 our vehicle fleet was responsible for 869 tCO₂e compared to 2,357 tCO₂e in 2016/17.

This significant reduction in emissions can be partly attributed to reduced business mileage due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but we have been able to maintain much of the reduction since using new ways of working.

However, many activities and services will still require face to face contact or visits to site. It is therefore necessary to continue to find the lowest emission means of travelling in each instance.

Current progress

In a step to decarbonise the council's vehicle fleet, we have ceased buying and leasing petrol and diesel cars and light vans unless a particular function cannot be performed by an electric vehicle.

Fire and Rescue are moving from petrol and diesel lease vehicles for their emergency response vehicles, with 45 plug-in hybrid and six fully electric vehicles due to be leased in Spring 2023.

To support our fleet electrification ambitions, we have recently installed 42 fast and rapid chargers at County Hall. These put in place the necessary infrastructure to allow the transition of the council's fleet as well as promoting electric vehicle use by our staff and visitors.

Next steps

- We are starting to introduce charge points across our estate, with an initial 15 sites identified.
- The leasing contract for our Fire Service emergency response vehicles will allow for early exchange from hybrid to electric vehicles. This will allow for a transition towards a full electric fleet over the coming four years as the charging infrastructure and vehicle performance allows.
- A further 15 full-electric small vans are also to be added to the fleet over the coming two years as infrastructure allows
- We will collaborate with other public sector organisations such as the Integrated Care System to build up a network of EV charging points available to public sector staff.

Streetlighting

Current progress

Our main source of electricity consumption is for streetlighting. Since 2008 we have been upgrading our lighting stock to more energy efficient LED units. We have also introduced better controls such as central management systems to enable lighting levels to be adjusted remotely.

Between 2016/17 and 2021/22, the emissions related to our streetlighting more than halved, and over the past 18 months we've converted a further 15,000 streetlights. This latest upgrade will save an additional 5.5 million kWh each year and bring cumulative savings of nearly 5,500 tCO₂e by 2030.

Next steps

We will be converting the rest of our streetlight stock to LED technology by 2026. This will lead to further energy savings of nearly 1500MWh each year when complete. Moreover, it could bring cumulative savings of an additional 1,000 tonnes of CO₂ by 2030.

Building lighting

Current progress

The last major improvement to lighting within the corporate estate was around 10 years ago, where much of the lighting was replaced with low energy fluorescent fittings.

More recently where buildings have been refurbished, the lighting has been replaced with LED fittings, including as part of high-profile national projects such as the *Norwich Castle: Gateway to Medieval England* project.

Next steps

There are still some buildings across the estate with older, inefficient forms of fluorescent tube light fitting, as well as some with halogen floodlighting. We will complete the move to low energy lighting in all our freehold buildings by 2024, unless listed-building status or other regulatory constraints prevent this.

IT

Current progress

As part of our cloud strategy we will deliver systems and services from the cloud to take advantage of its flexibility, resilience and security.

Large scale cloud computing has advantages in improving energy efficiency with the potential to significantly reduce carbon emissions compared to on-premises datacentres. The council will therefore continue to consider cloud solutions first in preference to any on-premise solutions.

To date we have:

- Considerably reduced our number of physical servers and therefore our energy consumption in our data centres
- Integrated the Norfolk Fire and Rescue service into the corporate service further reducing the number of physical servers
- As applications are replaced, implemented the cloud version rather than the on premise version where suitable
- Refreshed our laptop estate with modern, more-efficient Lenovo portable devices, and increased their life to five years
- Migrated to Microsoft Office 365 reducing the need to increase our storage.

Next steps

- We will keep a reducing and more efficient server estate for the next three years for the remaining local requirement, reflecting a reduction in storage volumes, cloud migration and advances in server efficiency.
- We are undertaking a significant programme of software rationalisation and as applications are replaced we will use the cloud version rather than the on-premise version where it meets business needs.

▶ Focus area 2: reduce our indirect emissions

Introduction

Indirect emissions are not produced by the council itself but are an indirect result of the council's activities. These are defined as our 'scope 3' emissions according to international carbon reporting standards.

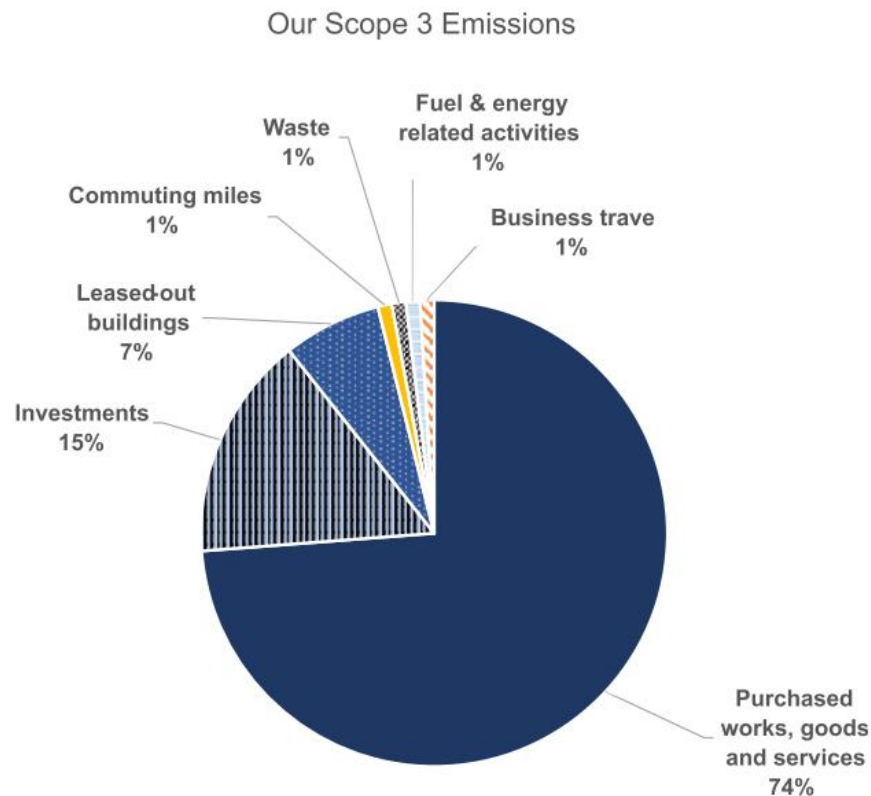
They include the emissions from the works, goods and services that the council buys from external providers such as for social care services, highways maintenance and waste management.

Indirect emissions are complicated to measure and report because the required data often lies with other organisations or individuals. We commissioned the Carbon Trust to use their expertise in this area to estimate our scope 3 carbon footprint for 2020/21. This does not enable year-on-year comparisons but does guide our priorities for carbon reduction.



The Carbon Trust estimated our indirect emissions to total a little over 475,000 tCO₂e. This is nearly fifty times more than our estate emissions and the equivalent to around 7% of Norfolk's total county-wide carbon footprint.

A summary of our scope 3 footprint covering seven key categories can be seen in the chart on this page. Our level of control over our indirect emissions is more limited compared our estate emissions. However, we can use our spending power and influence as an employer to encourage change across our supply chain and support behaviour change across our employees.



Strategic priorities

1. Work with our wholly owned companies to reduce their emissions
2. Improve data quality of supply chain carbon emissions
3. Create carbon reduction strategies for key procurement categories
4. Integrate emission metrics in our procurement activity
5. Use internal carbon pricing where appropriate to inform carbon reduction options appraisal
6. Work with other large public sector organisations to develop procurement standards where appropriate

Purchased Goods and Services [74%]

The challenge

Each year, the council spends around £900 million on a wide array of works, goods and services from external providers.

The Carbon Trust's analysis showed that our supply chain was by far the largest aspect of our scope 3 emissions, accounting for just over 350,000 tCO₂e (76% of the scope 3 total) in 2020/21.

If we extend this estimate to include spend with companies we own, our supply chain emissions rise further to around 400,000 tCO₂e which is equivalent to 6% of Norfolk's total carbon footprint.

Our procurement activities therefore represent a vital means through which we can significantly reduce emissions.

Six key procurement categories represent over 90% of supply chain emissions, as shown in the table on this page. The Carbon Trust's analysis also showed that the emissions from our supply chain are highly concentrated.

This means we can have a big impact through focussing attention on a relatively small number of key suppliers within higher emitting procurement categories.

In this section we will address opportunities for carbon reduction across the top four procurement categories that make up 80% of our supply chain emissions.

Top 6 procurement categories by emissions	Proportion of supply chain emissions
Passenger transport	38.4%
Adult care	19.0%
Waste	15.6%
Highways	7.9%
Children's Services	5.1%
Building construction and facilities management	7.3%

Complementary changes

A number of changes will help to reduce our supply chain emissions independently of our own actions. These include:

- grid decarbonisation, which will reduce emissions from our suppliers' energy use;
 - the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards regulations for commercial buildings, which will require leases of substandard commercial buildings [EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) rating F or G] to cease from 1 April 2023
 - the intention set out in the Energy White Paper to require an EPC rating of B' for leased commercial buildings by 2030.
-

Passenger transport

Home to school transport

Passenger transport is the single largest contributor to our supply chain emissions.

Around 60% of the carbon from this category is from the provision of home to school transport, which the council has a duty to provide for certain groups of children under the Education Act 1996. We arrange transport for approximately 19,000 students across the county each year, delivered through around 1,400 contracts with transport operators.

Local bus services

Most local bus services in Norfolk are arranged independent of the council by commercial providers. In some cases, where there is a social need for a service that is not being provided, the council will step in to ensure the service is offered. The council also arranges for the provision of the Norwich Park and Ride service through a commercial contract. This service offers a quick and reliable means to get into the city, reduce congestion and reduce pollution.

Current progress.

For passenger transport, a clear pathway of reducing emissions is to transition the vehicles used in our contracts away from petrol or diesel and towards electric. We have committed to engage with the passenger transport market about timescales for phasing out petrol and diesel vehicles in school transport, starting with cars before moving on to people carriers, minibuses and eventually coaches.

Furthermore, we are creating new special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) schools closer to pupils' homes to reduce the need to travel. Over time, as pupils are matched to places, we will reduce the need to transport children over long distances to reach their SEND schools. With the majority of local bus services being commercially run, our work to cut these emissions is covered in the section on public transport.

Next steps

- We will work with district councils to try to align our requirements for lower-emission passenger transport contracts with hackney and private hire licensing requirements
- We will work with schools on interventions and campaigns which encourage more sustainable travel to school



Adult social services

Nursing and residential care homes

Nursing and residential care homes make up 69% of emissions from adult social services. Many care homes across Norfolk are older, energy inefficient buildings. These homes also have significant heating needs to ensure they provide a comfortable environment for their vulnerable residents. This requires residential homes to burn a lot of gas or oil to run their boilers and meet their heating needs in energy inefficient premises.

Domiciliary care and equipment

Alongside residential care services, emissions also relate to arranging the provision of care for people in their own home as well as the provision of care equipment to aid them with day-to-day activities. With Norfolk being a large, rural county, delivering this care and equipment depends on significant travel to get between people's homes. At present, this travel is mostly undertaken in petrol or diesel vehicles.

Current progress

The care market in Norfolk is currently under tremendous pressure. The sector faces acute staff shortages while the demand for care for those with complex needs such as dementia is increasing. Any efforts to reduce the carbon of adult care services must be sensitive to these challenges. However, with fuel and energy prices likely to remain high for the foreseeable future, there is a real case for operators to invest to improve care home energy performance and reduce fuel bills. Such investments can both reduce costs and move the sector onto a net zero pathway. As a first step, we are financing energy assessments for a sample of Norfolk's residential care homes. These assessments will help the homes understand their energy usage and what steps are available to make their buildings more energy efficient. More general guidance will be drawn up from these assessments as a means to support the sector to improve energy efficiency, reduce costs and cut carbon.

Next steps

As we update category strategies for each aspect of our social care provision, we will seek to identify opportunities to reduce carbon emissions. This may include:

- working with Norse as they seek to modernise their care portfolio;
- facilitating sharing of property
- encouraging more-effective route planning and incentivising use of more-efficient vehicles.

Waste

Our waste contract

In Norfolk, kerbside household waste collection is the responsibility of the city, district and borough councils, whilst the county council arranges for the treatment and disposal of non-recyclable household waste.

Over 200,000 tonnes of non-recycled waste is generated by households in Norfolk each year (also known as 'residual' waste). For many years, this waste was disposed of in landfill sites, but now it is largely treated by incineration and used as a fuel to generate electricity and sometimes heat. We have a contract with Veolia Environmental Services to send around 180,000 tonnes of waste a year to a waste facility in Bedfordshire.

Around 20,000 tonnes a year is also sent to a facility in Great Blakenham in Suffolk. Both facilities burn the waste to generate electricity while scrap metals and ash generated from the process are recycled. Managing the county's residual waste in this way generates carbon both through the burning of waste materials and from the haulage of the waste to the facilities.

Current progress

Key to addressing the emissions from waste is reducing the amount being generated in the first place. We are working on several initiatives to reduce waste and recycle more in collaboration with the Norfolk Waste Partnership. More detail on these is provided here.

Alongside this, we need to deal with the county's residual waste in ways that reduce its impact on the environment and are good value for money. While it is still a source of carbon emissions, converting residual waste to energy is recognised as the preferable management choice here. Firstly, because it diverts rubbish away from landfill sites which leak methane - a potent greenhouse gas - and secondly, because using residual waste to generate electricity and heat means that emissions are avoided from producing that electricity from new fossil fuel sources.

We also manages the legacy of closed landfill sites in its care and where possible uses the captured landfill gas to generate electricity which is fed into the grid.

Next steps

Our contract with Veolia and the arrangement with Suffolk to manage residual waste both run until 2027, with potential to extend to 2029. As options beyond these existing arrangements are explored there will be an opportunity to review again what is the most carbon-efficient solution for processing Norfolk's residual waste.

There is a requirement to ensure that any arrangements are flexible enough to allow emerging technologies and improved treatment options to play their part.

We will continue to focus on driving down volumes of residual waste both through local initiatives and supporting national policy directions. This includes the expected requirement for all the district, city and borough councils to collect food waste and plastic films in coming years.

We can also expect the introduction of a producer responsibility scheme for packaging. This will require producers to pay councils for dealing with their packaging and change the composition of waste that is collected.



Highways

Our highways contracting

We are responsible for maintaining and improving some 6,000km of public highways in Norfolk. Constructing and maintaining the county's highways is a source of carbon emissions directly through the vehicles and machinery used, but also indirectly from the production, transport, and disposal of the materials. For routine works and maintenance, the council has two main suppliers for works of a value of around £58m per year. These works include road and footway surfacing and repairs, gully clearing, verge maintenance, bridge maintenance and winter gritting, among other works. For strategic improvement schemes, for example the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing, procurement is done separately. This is typically through a more bespoke contracting route, although the Eastern Highways Alliance Framework is an option for construction schemes worth up to £30m.

Current progress

For highways maintenance, we enabled the specification of warm asphalt in our surfacing programme in 2017, and since then the supply chain has been increasing its percentage use of the treatment on the Norfolk network. Warm mix asphalt has the potential to reduce the embodied carbon by up to 15% compared to conventional hot mixes through using less energy to manufacture. We expect the use of warm mix to increase significantly in 2022/23 and thereafter become the default option in road surfacing projects.

Next steps

For our routine works and maintenance works, a key contract with Tarmac ends in March 2026. The size of this contract means that preparations are starting well in advance to ensure carbon reduction can be integrated as part of this re-procurement exercise. The other major routine works provider is Norse Highways. Norse Highways is also home to the Norfolk Partnership Laboratory - a national centre of excellence in road pavement design and engineering. We will look to draw on their expertise for specifying appropriate low carbon materials and techniques when contracting for highways works.

For our non-routine highways works, we will seek to use carbon-specific contractual clauses and tender evaluation criteria as part of the procurement process. This can be used in setting minimum standards but also in providing the right incentives for innovation to cut emissions from these works.

Long Stratton Bypass

We are currently working to develop proposals to deliver a long-awaited bypass on the A140 around Long Stratton to cut congestion and support the local economy.

The procurement process for the bypass works will specifically score contractors' proposals to minimise carbon emissions from construction. Contractors will be expected to demonstrate their track record in reducing carbon emissions, including demonstrating progress against their corporate carbon reduction plans.

Staff travel [2%]

Business travel

The challenge

Business travel refers to emissions from the transport and accommodation of employees for business-related activities in assets controlled by third parties (including air travel, public transport, and employee-owned vehicles).

Over 4.5 million miles of business travel and about 840 nights of accommodation were recorded in the year 2020/2021, resulting in 1,560 tCO₂e of emissions. This is a 52% reduction in mileage compared to the earlier reporting period due to new ways of working promoted by Covid restrictions.

Current progress

Our employees are now supported to make low-emission, low-pollution choices when travelling for work through our partnership with Enterprise Car Hire. Through this partnership, colleagues are able to book hire cars for delivery or pick-up as well as access Enterprise Car Club vehicles around Norwich which can be used on an ad-hoc basis. Five electric cars have now been added to the Car Club Scheme exclusively for use by NCC employees.

Next steps

We have procured a 'greener car' salary sacrifice scheme. This is an employee benefit scheme enabling more staff to drive electric cars for council business. As the scheme rolls out we expect to see benefits from reduced emissions for business travel, commuting, and private use of the cars.

Employee commuting

The challenge

Employee commuting refers to emissions strictly from the transport of employees between their homes and worksites.

COVID-19 has resulted in lasting changes to ways of working and a hybrid working approach can be expected going forward, with a significant proportion of the council's workforce working remotely. But for the remaining travel requirements we need to ensure as an employer we are promoting sustainable travel options for our staff.

Current progress

We have provided good-quality cycle parking, showers and changing facilities.

In 2021, we teamed up with Konectbus to include a Park and Ride bus stop outside County Hall to reduce the demand for on-site car parking.

We have refreshed our Cycle to Work scheme, an employee salary sacrifice scheme to save money on the cost of a new bike and accessories to use for commuting to work.

We have a membership programme with Beryl Bikes which enables NCC employees to use pedal bikes for free. Beryl Bikes have bays at convenient locations across Norwich - including the bus and railway stations and County Hall, as well as two bays in Wymondham.



Photo credit: Beryl

Our investments [15%]

The challenge

Investments include all emissions associated with our wholly-owned companies, where we are the sole equity investor and has financial control over the organisation. Using our influence as shareholder can bring benefits in terms of contributing to net zero but also in pro-actively adapting our companies to the commercial and regulatory imperatives of a low carbon future.

The Carbon Trust produced an estimate of our companies' carbon footprints for 2020/21 by applying their proprietary carbon conversion factors to spend and turnover data. [Norse Group](#) is by far the largest source of emissions from our investments, forming approximately 92% of the total figure for this category. Therefore, we concentrate here on steps being taken to work with Norse to reduce its emissions.

Norse Group

Norse Group Limited is our largest wholly owned company, and stands as the largest local authority trading company in the UK. Norse Group itself is a holding company for a wider group of direct and indirect subsidiary companies which provide a broad array of services from residential care to highways maintenance.

Within the Norse Group there is significant expertise in highways and property design, as well as a waste management business recognised for its environmental performance. This makes it well-positioned to capitalise on the opportunities arising from a growing low carbon economy.

To give Norse and our other companies a mandate for carbon reduction we have issued shareholder letters setting out formal low carbon objectives. For Norse, key to this is finalising its Clean Growth Strategy in compliance with Procurement Policy Note 06/21 (PPN 06/21). This will mean putting in place a clear plan to cut its emissions in line with the national net zero 2050 target, with interim targets towards achieving this. Such a plan is in Norse's commercial interests. It will ensure the company aligns with the expectations that large public and private contracting bodies are phasing in for major suppliers. Norse will also set out specific waste, biodiversity and water strategies for operational delivery by 2024 in support of their wider corporate sustainability efforts.

Our shareholder letter also set out the need for close collaboration with Norse in the areas where they are one of our key suppliers:

- We see Norse's plans for capital improvements to its residential care homes as an opportunity to improve the energy performance of the buildings to reduce energy bills as well as carbon
- Norse's highways service is expected to keep abreast of best practice in low carbon construction, and use its expertise in pavement engineering through the Norse Partnership Laboratory to support sustainable pavement design
- We would wish Norse to develop its facilities management offer in minimising its carbon emissions, including through effective maintenance and building management practices and through minimising carbon emissions from catering and waste.

Going forward, we will continue to use our influence as shareholder to help ensure that Norse and our other companies meet their low carbon objectives and set further objectives in due course to maintain momentum in their carbon reduction efforts.



Leased-out buildings [7%]

Schools

We have an arms-length relationship with the schools where we own buildings and land, as they have responsibility for their own budgets and operations, including how they manage school buildings and utilities. There are around 200 schools in Norfolk where we still have a role in long-term maintenance through a funding arrangement with the Department for Education. Where schools have become academies, formal leasing arrangements are in place for the land and buildings to the academy trust who are fully responsible for operating and maintaining the schools.

A number of steps are being taken to support schools to reduce their carbon footprint.

In terms of the construction of new school buildings, these are being designed to be near zero carbon in use, with the intention to be entirely zero carbon in the next iteration of design (in line with guidance from the Department for Education). We are also in the process of designing a new construction procurement framework, which is anticipated to be let later in 2023. This is expected to include levers to incentivise and monitor low carbon construction standards.

We have started using some of the funding for school maintenance to commission decarbonisation surveys. These can be used for bids for further funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to address heating systems and energy efficiency. We intend to continue this approach, and use their insights to guide our capital works in schools, but the extent of this is reliant on sufficient funding from the Department for Education.

We are also using our communications with schools to share information on ways to improve energy efficiency to reduce bills and carbon. This can help them make the most of recent capital funding from central government to spend on energy saving and efficiencies.

County Farms

We [let out some 6,800 hectares of county farm land](#). Eighty-two of the leases include habitable buildings. In accordance with our policy of not installing new oil or gas boilers except when this is unavoidable, boilers in farmhouses will be replaced with either heat pumps or biomass boilers when they reach end of life, funded by the capital maintenance budget. The council will, in accordance with its obligations as a landlord, improve the energy efficiency ratings of farmhouses where it is required to do so under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards regulations.

▶ Focus area 3:

Addressing Norfolk's county-wide emissions

Introduction

This section addresses six thematic areas where we have the greatest influence on Norfolk's territorial emissions using our position in the county and our statutory obligations to help wider emission reduction. For each thematic area we will outline our strategic priorities.

Significant county wide emissions are also related to land use and agriculture. These are addressed more directly in [focus area 6](#) on ensuring nature has space to recover and grow.

Transport

Decarbonise Norfolk's transport sector, promoting and supporting active travel, the use of public transport and the uptake of electric vehicles.

Building and planning

Support the domestic building retrofit agenda and promote the delivery of sustainable developments.

Commercial and industrial sector

Support the decarbonisation of the industrial and commercial sectors through engagement with partners.

Energy

Promote a whole-systems approach to transforming the energy system, focusing on transmission and distribution of energy across Norfolk and support green energy generation.

Digital solutions and connectivity

Promote improvements to Norfolk's digital infrastructure to support innovation and enable climate action.

Waste and the circular economy

Promote the transition towards a circular economy, prioritising waste reduction, recycling and reuse.

Transport

The challenge

Although most Norfolk residents live in built-up areas, Norfolk's large, rural geography means private vehicles like cars and vans are vital for connecting businesses and communities. This is reflected in the data: the transport sector was responsible for 24% of Norfolk's territorial emissions in 2020, making it the largest source of carbon for the county. The main source of emissions from this sector is the use of petrol and diesel vehicles in road transport.

Cutting the carbon from Norfolk's transport will mean a shift towards lower carbon, electric vehicles as well as more people choosing active forms of travel and public transport. This should be achieved alongside reducing the need for people to travel by ensuring amenities are available locally to where people live.

As the Local Highways Authority, we have an important role in supporting the decarbonisation of the transport sector through the provision of sustainable infrastructure.



Photo credit: Beryl

Strategic priorities

Our Local Transport Plan represents its overarching strategy in relation to transport infrastructure until 2036. This Climate Strategy aligns with its goals but more specifically focuses on decarbonisation of transport through the following priorities:

- 1.** Working with transport providers, to continue to positively influence behaviour change and increase the range and number of sustainable travel options available to residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk. This includes bus operators and building on the Enhanced Partnership relationship we already have in place with bus operators and implementing Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 2.** To prioritise transport investment into more sustainable modes, such as public transport and active travel including micromobility options, to help support the journey to net zero. This is especially important in areas where there is poor air quality, and these will be prioritised.
- 3.** To prioritise investment into net zero initiatives, including implementation of our Electric Vehicle Strategy, as part of proactive transport network management, to help residents, visitors and businesses across Norfolk become more sustainable.
- 4.** To improve connectivity between rural areas and services in urban centres, with a focus on active travel and public transport.
- 5.** To focus on identifying the key risks from climate change and directing efforts to tackling these where they are likely to be most disruptive to journeys, especially on the most critical parts of the network.

Transport carbon targets

The Department for Transport is due to release guidance on how Local Transport Plans should incorporate quantified carbon reduction. Once this guidance has been published, we will work with our partners to develop carbon reduction targets for Norfolk's transport sector.

Electrification of the transport sector

Current progress

Reducing Norfolk's transport emissions is a major challenge due to the rurality of the county. While we strongly advocate public transport use and active modes of travel, we recognise that cars, vans and goods

vehicles will continue to be important means of travel to connect our county together.

Helping our citizens and businesses switch to electric vehicles is therefore recognised as a key strategy that will help meet the aims of both our Local Transport Plan and Environmental Policy.

In 2021, we published our Electric Vehicle Strategy, setting out a series of priorities to help support the uptake of electric vehicles in Norfolk. These are summarised in the table to the right.

We have now instigated an EV task force bringing together representatives from the county, district and borough councils across Norfolk to ensure we take a collaborative approach for the electrification of Norfolk's transport sector.

For residents who do not have driveways or off-street parking, limited access to EV charging points can be a significant barrier to realising the benefits of owning an EV. To support the electrification of Norfolk's transport sector, we need to ensure EV charging points are both reliable and accessible to our residents with convenient methods of payment. We will be installing 46 new kerbside charging points in residential areas across Norfolk without off-street parking. Funding to support this installation comes from a third-party operator and these charge points will be ready for public use in 2023.

We have also successfully secured £1.6m through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme to install 80 public chargepoints across the county with a focus on rural areas and tourist hotspots. We will encourage further roll-out of on-highway charge-points through a combination of private funding by operators and, where needed, funding from the Office of Zero-Emission Vehicles.

Priority

Accelerate Charge Point Deployment

Approach

- Support the private sector who want to invest in charge point infrastructure on our highway network.
- Take a balanced approach to delivering charge point infrastructure, by inviting private investment but helping to show where investment is needed.
- Consider the potential to integrate Electric Vehicle (EV) charging with other energy and transport services as part of new transport hubs.

Priority

Collaborative Working

Approach

- Engage with government to deliver initiatives that will reduce the cost of buying electric vehicles compared to petrol and diesel vehicles.
 - Establish an Electric Vehicle forum where the County Council can collaborate with District, City and Borough Councils to maximise opportunities
-

Priority

Update Parking and Design Standards

Approach

- Every new home with a parking space includes access to suitable charging facilities.
 - Every new non-residential development includes suitable charge point provision
 - Adopt design standards for on-street chargers to enable and manage future private sector roll-out of charge points
 - Provide guidance and support for Norfolk residents that do not have access to suitable charging facilities near or at their homes
-

Public transport

Current progress

Encouraging people to choose public transport through extensive, affordable and efficient services will be key to cutting emissions in the transport sector. The council has a strong recent record in securing funding in support of this ambition.

In 2020, we were successful in securing £32m to implement a range of schemes to improve sustainable transport in Norwich through the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Transforming Cities Fund. This has enabled investment in bus and cycle lanes, pavement widening, mobility hubs and improved junctions.

In 2022, we were awarded a further £50m of funding from the Department for Transport to support [Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan \(BSIP\)](#). We were one of only 31 local transport authorities to receive this funding. Our BSIP is focussed on making bus travel more attractive to reduce the reliance on car travel.

There are four key aims to encourage more bus passengers and enable this modal shift:

1. To rebuild and increase passenger confidence.
2. To have a green and sustainable transport offer
3. To have a public transport network that is the first-choice mode for most journeys, for existing and new customers.
4. To have a simple, seamless and affordable fares and ticketing offer

Alongside this, we have secured £14.7m from the Department for Transport to bring [70 electric buses for use in Greater Norwich in 2024](#) through the Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme, with First Bus providing an additional £21m local investment to make this happen.

This will also see First's Roundtree Way depot become one of the first fully electric depots outside London.

Next steps

We will work with bus operators to use our recent successes as a springboard to secure further funding to improve bus infrastructure and accelerate the roll-out of zero emission buses.



Active travel

Current progress

Shifting travel from private cars to public transport and active travel is important. Reducing the dominance of the car will make space for those walking, cycling and wheeling as well as making provision for improved quality of life such as green space and play areas.

To date, we have been successful in using government funding to support the improvement of active travel options. Example projects include:

- DfT's Transforming Cities fund for Norwich has seen investment in four miles of new cycle lane, improved junctions with traffic signal priority for cyclists, and the introduction of the popular Beryl bike and e-scooter share scheme
- Successful bids for over £2.5m from DfT's Active Travel funds to improve road crossings, junctions and introduce more segregated cycle lanes
- Capability funding to develop and publish a Norfolk Local Cycling and Walking Programme.
- Active Travel England funding to deliver community, schools based and workplace active travel interventions across Norfolk
- Greenways to Greenspaces in an overarching programme placing habitat connectivity at the heart of green infrastructure development. It promotes active travel as an attractive alternative to vehicular transport, linking places where people live and work, as well as connecting wildlife and plant habitats.

Next steps

We can encourage a modal shift to active transport options by providing infrastructure for footpaths and cycle paths. We are working in partnership with local authorities across the county to produce Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Norfolk.

These provide a clear picture of the network we want to create for active travel across the county, identifying and prioritising improvement schemes which can be delivered over the short, medium and long term. The aim of this is to enable more people to consider both cycling and walking as a workable, safe form of transport which also delivers physical and mental health benefit.

Behaviour change

Current progress

A significant proportion of carbon reduction will come from changes to businesses' and consumers' behaviours.

This change of behaviours will be needed across all sectors, but as a highway authority we will have a specific focus on transport.

Behaviour change interventions in transport are capable of:

- reducing people's dependency on cars in order to reduce congestion and emissions
- transitioning people away from single occupancy cars, promoting car sharing and the use of car clubs rather than car ownership
- increasing the use of public transport
- increasing the use of active modes of transport.

All of these can have a positive impact on our environment, health, and wellbeing.

Integrating behavioural change strategies into transport developments will enable substantial shifts in how we travel.

Quality, accessible information is a key enabler of behaviour change. We are developing a 'Travel Norfolk' website that will unify all county projects and campaigns which aim to make it easier for people to travel around the county, with a focus on sustainable modes of transport.

Travel Norfolk will include a sophisticated and localised route planner to help residents and visitors make low-carbon travel choices.

Next steps

- Look at the potential for behaviour change interventions such as Personalised Travel Planning
- More collaboration with Public Health and health sector partners (other public health interventions such as cycling on prescription and health walks can complement travel behaviour change).

The built environment

The challenge

In 2020, emissions arising from the domestic sector amounted to 20% of Norfolk's total emissions. These emissions are primarily from domestic heating, with a small percentage attributed to building lighting and appliance use.

The UK housing stock is one of the oldest in Europe, and 80% of buildings that will exist in 2050 have already been built¹⁰. Domestic energy performance certificates show that 62% of dwellings across Norfolk have an energy rating of D or less¹¹.

Therefore, addressing the energy efficiency and decarbonisation of heat generation in homes will be crucial to reducing domestic emissions across Norfolk and will help to address ill health caused by living in poor quality, damp and cold housing.

Beyond retrofitting opportunities, we also need to ensure that new developments are centred around the climate agenda. The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future whilst also minimising vulnerability and improving resilience to the impacts of climate change.



¹⁰ [Climate change - UKGBC - UK Green Building Council](#)

¹¹ Energy Performance of Building Certificates in England and Wales: July to September 2022

Most planning applications are considered by Local Planning Authorities. However, we are a consultee for planning applications decided by Local Planning Authorities (for example as the Highway Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority, Education Authority, Historic Environment Service, Natural Environment Team etc) and is also responsible for producing the Norfolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan, setting policies that regulate land use and development relating to waste management sites and mineral extraction sites and associated development.

It is generally accepted that Norfolk has too few affordable houses and too many low-paid jobs. It is also generally accepted that much of our infrastructure has not had the necessary investment for many decades - including digital connectivity, utilities and transport infrastructure. We need to continue to close these gaps to enable communities and businesses to benefit from reliable, 21st century internet and mobile phone coverage; from sustainable water, sewage and electricity supply; and a road system that allows transport choices, including public transport, active and other personal modes of travel.

Such infrastructure will underpin our sustainable housing and economic growth plans; enable physical and digital access to education and employment; and reduce traffic and pollution in town centres and other sensitive locations. In pursuing these gains we must seek to mitigate adverse climate effects through minimising embedded carbon in construction; achieving biodiversity net gain; and the adoption of technology that best reflects progressive thinking.

Strategic priorities

- 1.** Promote green skill development to support the domestic building retrofit agenda.
- 2.** Use our position to secure more resources, seek funding opportunities to support our partners in the retrofit agenda.
- 3.** With partners, help residents to understand and engage in retrofitting their homes by information provision and active promotion.
- 4.** Promote residential development that is sustainably located.

Building retrofit

The UK Climate Change Committee's report, '[UK Housing: Fit for the Future?](#)' outlines a number of key areas prioritising emission reduction across the domestic sector to ensure that the UK's housing stock is adequately prepared for the impacts of climate change. This includes:

1. Retrofitting existing homes so they are low-carbon and resilient to climate change.
2. Ensure new homes are built to be low-carbon, energy and water efficient, and climate resilient.
3. Performance and compliance – new homes and retrofitted existing homes must meet design standards.
4. Address the skills gap in housing design, construction and in the installation of new green technologies.

Whilst we recognise the importance of these ambitions, we do not directly own domestic housing stock. Therefore, our influencing power to decarbonise domestic buildings across Norfolk is significantly limited.

The need to retrofit existing buildings is coupled with the need to meet the increasing demand for more housing to support population growth within Norfolk.



Opportunities

Support our partners

Although we may not be able to directly drive carbon reduction from domestic housing, we can use our position to secure additional resources, seek funding opportunities and support our partners in the retrofit agenda.

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership has agreed that building retrofit will be one of its three strategic priorities.

Norfolk Warm Homes

[Norfolk Warm Homes](#) is a partnership programme led by Broadland District Council providing energy efficiency improvement works to homes occupied by low-income households.

Our Public Health team sits on the Norfolk Warm Homes steering group and is helping to support an evaluation of their work to date.

Skill development

One way to support the decarbonisation of domestic housing is to support the growth and development of our local workforce. To retrofit Norfolk's housing stock will require a workforce of sufficient scale and capability. Currently, there is a significant skills gap, from retrofit assessors and advisors to retrofit installers.

Our Green Skills Sector Development project, discussed in detail in focus area 4, centres around narrowing this skills gap using our position in the county to engage with private and voluntary sector to understand the needs of the local workforce and bring together employers and training providers in to develop plans.

Through this project we have built a partnership agreement with [Retrofit Academy](#) with the goal to develop a green skills training programme to facilitate the domestic homes retrofit agenda.

Through the Norfolk Infrastructure Framework we have allocated a further £169,000 of funding to support development of a comprehensive approach to retrofit skills.

The proposed [Norfolk County Deal](#) devolves the adult education budget to the county council and charges the county council with providing input to the Local Skills Improvement Plan. We will use this opportunity to further promote skills development for retrofit as well as other aspects of the green economy.

Next steps

- We will use the anticipated powers and influencing opportunities from the County Deal to support further green skill development to support retrofit.
- We will work within the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership in support of its agreed strategic priority to promote retrofit across owner-occupied, private rented and social housing.

Spatial planning

Planning policy

We need to ensure we enhance our built, natural and historic environment and look to ensure new developments are beneficial to Norfolk's society, economy and environment.

Climate change initiatives have been embedded into land use planning for many years with significant emphasis placed on planners to address climate change through achieving sustainable development.

[The National Planning Policy Framework](#) stipulates that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigation and adapting to climate change. It emphasises the need for new developments to ensure future resilience to climate change impacts and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions through location, orientation and design.

Our priority is to coordinate planning so that it aligns with climate resilience efforts, particularly in relation to flooding, as well as the uptake of green infrastructure across the county.

The planning process is a pivotal part of managing flood risk across Norfolk.

We are the designated Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Norfolk, making us the statutory consultee on surface water drainage for all new major developments.

To ensure planning systems support our efforts towards climate resilience across the county, the LLFA [comments on planning applications](#) in respect of surface water drainage.

As of 2015, planning policy and decisions on planning applications relating to major development are needed to ensure that sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are used for the management of surface water to lessen the likelihood and impact of surface water flooding.

Well-connected, accessible developments

Our primary goal as Lead Highways Authority is to ensure that new developments are well located, connected and designed to maximise the use of sustainable and active transport options, making them more attractive places to live.

In line with our Local Transport Plan, we will support the building of new developments in locations that knit into the existing urban fabric where new residents can easily access schools, shops and services by walking and cycling, building complete and compact neighbourhoods and enhancing connectivity with safe and efficient infrastructure.

Next steps

At the local policy level, the County Planning Authority is currently preparing its Local Plan Review which is timetabled to be adopted by the end of 2023. It will contain the policies used to decide planning applications for mineral extraction and waste management facilities in Norfolk for the extended plan period until 2038.

Sustainable development principles are also embedded in this plan, from ensuring that sites are located at sustainable locations to ensuring new development incorporates climate change adaptation/mitigation measures and generates on-site renewable energy where possible.

The forecast annual mineral requirements for Norfolk, currently considered to be 1.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel, 754,000 tonnes of silica sand and 83,000 tonnes of Carstone, are currently provided by over 25 sites located across the county. Work on our emerging Minerals and Waste Plan shows that we are likely to need to allocate a further 17 new sites or major extensions to existing ones over the next 15 years. In addition to providing Norfolk with the essential minerals it needs the timely and sympathetic restoration of these sites represent valuable opportunities for both biodiversity and geodiversity gain, and landscape and public access improvements.

We set out our priority projects every year in our [Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan \(SIDP\)](#). Our goal is to deliver projects that will provide significant economic, housing, and jobs growth across Norfolk.

Biodiversity net gain

The policy environment

[Biodiversity Net Gain \(BNG\)](#) is an approach to development and/or land management that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

Established via the Environment Act 2021, it is expected to take legal effect for new planning applications from November 2023. Thus, where a development has an impact on biodiversity, developers will have to provide a minimum 10% Biodiversity Net Gain within their development or elsewhere.

We will be developing policies that define our approach where BNG requirements overlap with our responsibilities. We will also work with planners and businesses to ensure that there is a strategic response to the implementation of BNG.

We will aim to use BNG in areas of the county prioritised for nature and landscape recovery. Targeting delivery in these areas will maximise gains and support the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will help guide where this investment is targeted by showing opportunity areas.

These opportunity areas will drive nature recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. Among these benefits, there will be climate regulation, as the newly created habitats will capture carbon thus helping to regulate the climate. Other effects include reduced air pollution, with benefits to public health and wellbeing that could in turn increase resilience and support community cohesion.

Our own approach

Whilst developers are encouraged to deliver BNG within their developments wherever possible, it is predicted that many developers will need to provide BNG outside their own developments.

We will develop our own projects and work with others to support effective delivery of BNG credits. Opportunities for the use of our estate including County Farms will be pursued. We will work with other businesses too to ensure that there is a coordinated and effective approach to delivering nature recovery and other climate change benefits.

We will develop effective monitoring approaches to ensure that we can measure change in species, habitats and landscapes.

The commercial and industrial sector

The challenge

Together the commercial and industrial sector makes up one sixth of Norfolk's total carbon footprint. Most of these emissions are from gas and electricity consumption.

Supporting the decarbonisation of the commercial and industrial sector can help ensure that Norfolk continues to move towards clean, low carbon and inclusive economic growth.

Business and industry engagement with the climate change agenda will rely significantly upon legislative change, social pressure and broader economic factors. However, we can play a role through working with New Anglia's Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Clean Growth Task Force. Through the LEP and other key partners, we can help support Norfolk's regional businesses and organisations to assess their environmental impact and help them on their journey to net zero.



Strategic priorities

1. Support the LEP's Clean Growth Taskforce (and equivalent activity under successor arrangements) to facilitate behaviour change in the industrial and commercial sectors and encourage the sharing of best practice.
2. Support the decarbonisation of the local commercial sector through continued funding schemes such as Carbon Charter
3. Work with local networks such as the LEP to support SMEs (small and medium enterprises) on their journey to net zero.

The business sector

Net zero engagement from the business sector can support economic growth, creating new lines of business and developing skill levels across green industries.

Irrespective of the size of a business, through their operations, production of goods and consumption all directly contribute to climate change. Supporting Norfolk's businesses to examine their own contribution to climate change, identifying opportunities to mitigate this and to help them understand the potential impacts of climate change on their operations and profitability is pivotal. This work closely relates to our focus on stimulating Norfolk's green economy, described in more detail in the focus area 4 section of this strategy.

Road to Net Zero business support

We work in partnership with New Anglia LEP to deliver the [Road to Net Zero](#) project - a pilot project designed to pro-actively provide business support and grants to help businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk improve business sustainability and achieve net zero.

We have secured funding for project delivery from the UK Government [Community Renewal Fund](#) and began delivery in January 2022. The project has supported over 250 Norfolk businesses.

The Road to Net Zero is delivered through a range of partners including the New Anglia Growth Hub, Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, Suffolk and Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, UEA and the University of Suffolk and Groundwork East. Project funding totalled £793,000 across Norfolk and £686,000 across Suffolk.

Industrial decarbonisation

Point source emitters and agri-food decarbonisation

Industrial emissions are predominantly from 'point source' emitters which are large, fixed facilities. 90% of Norfolk and Suffolk's point source emissions relate to just nine point source emitters, eight of which are in Norfolk¹². These facilities relate to power production, food processing, paper production and waste management and, [as the climate change commission recognises](#), local authorities have very limited control or influence over them.

However, as well as in many cases making progress in their own right, these large emitters are a source of expertise for smaller businesses in their sectors.

Building on the learning from the Road to Net Zero project, the Norfolk Investment Framework will fund a project led by the New Anglia LEP, in partnership with British Sugar, KTN, University of East Anglia (UEA), the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce and the FSB . This pilot project is designed to begin to address challenges through building information and knowledge through peer-to-peer and personalised support as well as greater regional collaboration.

The key workstreams will include:

- An enabling route map around challenges and opportunities
- A collaborative net zero network of large industrial emitters
- A series of peer-to-peer knowledge exchange workshops led by the KTN focused on specific net zero measures including process, resource and energy efficiency, heat and building decarbonisation, renewable local energy, business planning and the circular economy.
- Better understanding of the agri-food scope of challenge and opportunity including consideration of value chain emissions
- Working with the CLA, NFU, Anglian Farmers, the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association, Norfolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group and Water Resources East to see where synergies can be found.
- An innovation and technology investment pipeline capturing clean growth opportunities around hydrogen and carbon capture, usage and storage in particular

¹² New Anglia LEP report on Industrial Decarbonisation in Norfolk and Suffolk

This project would be the first of its kind in the country. Agri-food is one of the largest sectors in Norfolk and has a number of large companies that are amongst the biggest emitters in the region. This pilot would place Norfolk in a prime position to take a lead in this area.

The programme will run for one year with the view that the outputs will be used to develop the case for further funding for a scale-up across other sectors in the future

Decarbonisation of commercial property

We have no direct influence over decarbonisation of commercial property, which is largely a matter for property owners and for government policy. The minimum energy efficiency standards regulations should, however, [improve standards](#) by making properties that do not reach a reasonable level of performance by 2030 effectively unlettable.

Energy

The challenge

Energy is fundamental to how we live, with the impact running all the way through from production to supply to use. While the UK is increasingly showing a more diverse energy mix, with significant gains happening from offshore wind to onshore solar, the energy mix still relies significantly on fossil fuels.

Together with Suffolk, Norfolk is rapidly proving itself as the centre of the UK's green energy transition. The Norfolk and Suffolk coastline is at the centre of the world's largest market for offshore wind, generating over half of the UK's offshore wind power, and contributing to a sizeable proportion of the UK's electricity energy mix¹³.

While other sections in this strategy address areas of impact at the end of the energy chain, this section addresses how we can exert more influence on directing support for Norfolk's own needs, rather than solely providing national energy infrastructure connectivity. We need to take a comprehensive approach to address the energy challenge by looking to mitigate the impact of the energy we use and adapt to the changes that the energy market has on communities, through supporting more diverse and resilient approaches to addressing our energy needs.

Some of this will support opportunities to ensure affordable energy solutions for an expanding population, but also to ensure that the distribution and transmission of energy across the county supports greater need.

¹³ [Norfolk and Suffolk leading centre for UK's Offshore Wind - New Anglia](#)

We also need to continue to support the needs of the existing community, ensuring that they have reliable and affordable energy.

Strategic priorities

1. Work with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to evolve our energy approach for Norfolk
2. Develop an energy strategy for Norfolk County Council aligned with our net zero agenda
3. Support national decarbonisation of the Grid by expanding appropriate renewable energy generation across the county.
4. Support an Offshore Transmission Network to minimise the need for any onshore infrastructure associated with offshore wind farms.
5. Support the upgrading of onshore transmission infrastructure where this provides appropriate benefits to Norfolk's residents and businesses and helps in delivering clean energy for housing and employment growth in Norfolk.



Energy constraints

Currently, there are constraints on the capacity of the electricity transmission and distribution network across Norfolk.

The existing energy grid and distribution infrastructure requires considerable investment to adapt to future energy demands and emerging technologies. Without improvements to this infrastructure the grid cannot support comprehensive electrification.

Investment to improve the network infrastructure is therefore fundamental to meeting decarbonisation aims as a county, and supporting the community itself as it transitions to an electrified future.

In addition, there are pressures for new onshore transmission infrastructure associated with the offshore wind energy sector making landfall and grid connection in Norfolk. Consideration of alternatives to new overhead transmission lines needs to be taken forward for dealing with offshore wind energy, such as an offshore transmission network; and/or opportunities for burying new transmission lines to reduce visual impacts across the county.

Where onshore solutions are taken forward, National Grid and UK Power Networks need to work together to deliver clean energy to local residents and businesses to enable sustainable growth.

Developing an energy strategy

We have been working with a range of partners concerning issues that affect the energy agenda. Part of this was to create a better understanding of the challenge faced. The first step was working with the Energy Systems Catapult to produce a [Norfolk Local Energy Asset Representation \(LEAR\)](#). The LEAR is a modelling tool that creates a visual baseline of energy assets within the county to help planning and innovation for net zero.

The outputs from the LEAR provide a robust evidence base that can guide the County Council and partners towards which clean growth opportunities are the most effective for our area.

The Norfolk LEAR reviewed building stock, energy demands, energy networks, embedded generation, domestic and public electric vehicle charging and social data. The Norfolk LEAR is the first step towards developing a net zero pathway for energy. This publicly available document highlights the potential opportunities across the county, with initial assessments identifying opportunities to decarbonise dwellings on the gas network, off street EV charging potential, and concentration of dwellings suitable for solar PV.

Next steps

Our next steps to address the energy challenge will be to work with our partners through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to develop an Energy Plan built around the structure of a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP).

It will address the following key priorities:

- Local energy solutions
- Procurement approaches
- Energy efficiency/emission reduction
- Social equity
- Energy resilience
- Investment and cost efficiency

The LAEP will provide pathways for a wide range of local stakeholders to help bring forward decarbonisation projects across the many sectors where energy infrastructure is pivotal.

Nationally significant infrastructure projects

Development consent orders

NCC has a statutory obligation to oversee the Development Consent Orders (DCOs) for discharge conditions of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) that make landfall in Norfolk.

Renewable Offshore Wind projects we are involved in include:

Hornsea Three (consented)

Hornsea Three is an offshore wind farm being delivered by Ørsted which will generate around 2.4 GW of electricity and will be capable of supplying over 2 million UK homes. It will be located approximately 121km off the Norfolk coast; make landfall at Weybourne; and grid connection at Norwich Main.

Norfolk Vanguard (consented)

[The Norfolk Vanguard](#) offshore wind farm will be delivered by Vattenfall and generate 1.8 GW of electricity and will be capable of supply 1.3 million homes. It will be located approximately 47km from the Norfolk coast. Landfall will be in Happisburgh, and will make the grid connection at Necton.

Norfolk Boreas (consented)

A sister project to the Norfolk Vanguard, [this project](#) will also be delivered by Vattenfall. It will generate 1.8 GW of electricity and will be capable of supplying 1.3 million homes. It will be located approximately 73km from the Norfolk coast.

Landfall will be in Happisburgh, and will make the grid connection at Necton. Onshore works are due to start on all three schemes in 2023.

Extension to Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon wind farms

There are proposals for a significant expansion of the existing [Dudgeon](#) and [Sheringham](#) wind farms by Equinor. The project will double the existing generating capacity taking the existing and new project to over 1.4 GW output, which will be capable of supplying around a million homes with electricity.

Community benefits from NSIPs

Skills and Employment Plans

NSIP Development Consent Orders (DCOs) include the provision of a Skill and Employment Strategy. This provides us with the opportunity to work closely with developers to influence skills and employment provision, so Norfolk's residents benefit from skills development and new job opportunities, relating to the offshore wind sector.

Skills and employment strategies provide the basis for working with local stakeholders on skills and employment to maximise the employment opportunities associated with construction, operation, and maintenance of wind farms.

We also work with offshore wind farm developers to influence supply chain support for SMEs, to support the Norfolk business community to benefit from supply chain contracts.

Community Benefit Funds

Community Benefit Funds provide funding for local communities and tend to be in place for the lifetime of the projects (typically 20 to 25 years). Vattenfall are supplying £15 million in [Community Benefit funding](#) for the Norfolk Vanguard and Boreas Projects.

Ørsted has committed to a [Community Fund](#) worth approximately £7 million over the next 20 years. £75,000 of the Fund each year is ring-fenced for a 'Skills Fund'.

Equinor is also committed to developing and taking forward a community fund after a decision on their project by the Secretary of State.

Case Study: Great Yarmouth Operations & Maintenance Campus

Commissioned by NCC, the £21.4 million Operations and Maintenance Campus is a collaboration with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It looks to capitalise on the now well-established offshore renewables sector off the east coast and the Enterprise Zone that covers sites in Great Yarmouth.

The offshore energy sector provides Great Yarmouth and Norfolk with the single most important economic opportunity for a generation. Oil and gas have been a mainstay of the economy for over 50 years and the recent emergence of offshore renewables has presented Great Yarmouth's port, its supply chain, and its skills base with the chance of enjoying hugely significant growth and investment.

This project will help create a viable, highly attractive location for offshore energy businesses to operate in an optimum location, close to flexible port facilities, and with direct access to the sea.

Feasibility work has found that 650 new green jobs will be created by the new Operations & Maintenance campus. The project has been in development for a few years and is part funded by the Government's 'Getting Building Fund', following a successful bid from Norfolk County Council.

The construction project, which includes repair of 190m of quay wall, installation of new pontoons and a revised highways layout, began in January 2023.



Digital solutions and connectivity

The challenge

Digital connectivity can be a driving force in the race to net zero carbon emissions. For example, access to high-bandwidth connectivity is enabling more flexible ways of working, reducing the necessity for travel. With more people working remotely we are seeing fewer cars on the road, in turn supporting the decarbonisation of the transport sector.

Better digital infrastructure can also enable us to take advantage of advancing technologies and data analysis such as Internet of Things (IoT) solutions. Using IoT sensor technology can allow us to better understand the local area and deliver more effective and efficient services.

We are leading the way in IoT solutions across the county, having rolled out an open-access low-power wireless wide area network to enable the council and businesses to connect sensors that enhance business processes, enable better decisions, improve efficiency and save money.

However, smart innovations can only be achieved on the back of strong network coverage. So, improving Norfolk's digital infrastructure (broadband, mobile, and wireless IoT sensors) is imperative in helping to reduce the county's carbon emissions.



Strategic priorities

1. Ensure high speed digital connectivity is made available to every property across Norfolk
2. Work to improve mobile phone coverage across Norfolk
3. Develop and allow free, universal access to IoT network connectivity.

Digital solutions and connectivity targets

Metric	2017 baseline	2025 target	2029 target
Superfast broadband coverage (% of both residential and business premises)	89%	98%	99%
Ultrafast broadband (Gigabit Capable) coverage	0.2%	85%	98%
Outdoor coverage of the NCC-funded open-access IoT service (commercial coverage figures are not available)	0%	>99%	>99%
4G or above mobile phone coverage for voice and data based on estimated outdoor geographic coverage	83%	88%	92%

Broadband connectivity

Current progress

In 2011 only 42% of Norfolk properties had a connection to superfast broadband. The majority of these were in the larger urban centres, particularly Norwich. This coverage figure now stands at over 95% across Norfolk and continues to grow.

We are leading on three programmes to help deliver superfast and then ultrafast broadband across the county.

Better Broadband for Norfolk

[Better Broadband for Norfolk](#) is a multi-million-pound partnership, funded by NCC, DEFRA (The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs), BT, and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport aimed at transforming broadband speeds across the county by installing high-speed fibre optic networks.

Local Full Fibre Network initiative

The Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) initiative aims to improve internet access for public services in the more remote parts of the county. Vital local services across all rural Norfolk can now access internet speeds at least ten times faster than their old, mostly copper-based, connections thanks to the investment. For many locations it has also reduced their ongoing annual costs.

While the fibre broadband phase of this project is now complete, some budget remains to deploy Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) to some even more remote locations.

Project Gigabit

In March 2021, the government announced the launch of a [new strategy](#) to deliver Gigabit-capable broadband to the hardest to reach parts of the country.

Next steps

- Complete phase 3 of the Better Broadband for Norfolk project.
- Support the procurement and deployment of Gigabit fibre through Project Gigabit
- Test the effectiveness of FWA connectivity to remote public buildings, such as village halls.

Internet of Things

Norfolk and Suffolk are leading on the development of the country's largest public sector Long Range Wide Area Network (LoRaWAN).

Supported by NCC, the [Norfolk and Suffolk Innovation Network](#) helps deliver pervasive low-power wireless connectivity, creating greater rural digital connectivity county-wide to encourage IoT innovation.

Through the LoRaWAN development, there are several ways IoT solutions can benefit Norfolk and support climate action, through both mitigation and adaptation measures.

Supporting agriculture

IoT solutions can allow farmers to optimise the use of resources; improve efficiency by monitoring their product and conditions in real-time; and reduce the usage of pesticides and fertilizers. This can in turn reduce nutrient and pesticide run-off and support nutrient neutrality.

We will continue to work with agritech suppliers and agritech support groups locally.

Highways

IoT can be used to check the temperature of road surfaces across Norfolk to decide if gritting is needed in the winter. Using the LoRaWAN, we have embedded a denser network of monitoring sensors on some of Norfolk's roads. The data from those sensors provides a cost-effective way of deciding whether each part of the road network could be treated less. This not only saves on salt but also fuel consumption and driver time by operating gritters less.

Building management

We have made use of IoT solutions across some of the buildings we own. We have installed a LoRaWAN based temperature, light and humidity sensor network which supplies half hourly data to a web-based dashboard. This data can help inform us to ensure buildings are heated and temperature controlled in a way that makes them cost efficient and environmentally compliant.

Environmental sensing

IoT sensors can contribute to climate adaptation, for example by:

- capturing water height and flow in remote locations to highlight areas at risk of flooding; and
- Providing weather data, such as rain fall, temperature and humidity.

Next steps

- Test and promote agritech use cases.
- Test and promote use-cases for IoT transformed council services.
- Test and promote weather and safety related use cases.

Waste and the circular economy

The challenge

Emissions from the waste management sector account for 2% of Norfolk's total emissions.

Waste can be a valuable resource and the goal is to transition from a linear process of taking materials, using them and then disposing of them, and move towards a circular economy and zero waste, built around principles of waste reduction and reuse supported by recycling where necessary. As part of this transition waste reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery of value from waste all play a part in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy, with a move away from treatment and disposal of waste to drive down emissions in this sector.

We are not responsible for the management of all the county's waste but has scope in its role as a Waste Disposal Authority to provide significant influence and leadership in this area, by promoting the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste across the county and helping the move away from the reliance on landfill to dispose of waste.



Strategic priorities

1. **REDUCE:** use targeted messages and work with the Norfolk Waste Partnership (NWP) to drive behaviour change to help reduce the amount of waste produced with a strong focus on reducing food waste.
2. **REUSE:** provide reuse facilities and promote and support opportunities for reuse and repair.
3. **RECYCLE:** use targeted messages to increase recycling rates and drive down levels of contamination by working with the NWP. Provide easy to use and convenient recycling centre services, keep home composting as a priority and support the District, City and Borough Councils in their recycling services.
4. **RECOVER:** focus on treatment and disposal options for residual waste that are sustainable and consider emissions and recovery, and that are flexible enough to allow for waste reduction and composition change.
5. **POLICY:** influence the development of national policy to support the move to the circular economy and a shift from weight based to carbon-based performance metrics.
6. **COSTS:** promote a total system approach to reducing costs with the Norfolk Waste Partnership and assessing the implications of future funding changes on waste services and the possibility of an emissions trading scheme and the changes they will lead to.

Waste targets

Measure	Baseline 20/21	2024/25	2028/29
Kilograms of residual household waste per person a year	Less than 260kg	Less than 230kg (reflects a drop following the Covid-19 increase in residual waste)	Less than 220kg (reflects a drop due to roll out of food waste collections by Norfolk councils)
% of waste diverted from disposal at recycling centres	More than 72%	More than 72.5% (better performance of new sites)	More than 73% (better performance of new replacement sites)

Food waste reduction

Around a third of residual waste in Norfolk is food waste. Wasted food contributes 8 to 10% of total manmade greenhouse gas emissions. Roughly one third of food produced around the world is wasted, therefore contributing significantly to global emissions¹⁴.

We are a signatory to the [Courtauld Agreement](#) which focuses on reducing the carbon effects of food in the entire supply chain, and its Food Savvy campaign is focused on food waste reduction and was started with the Suffolk Waste Partnership and Hubbub, since adopted by the Norfolk Waste Partnership and is being delivered by local councils.

Home composting

Our [Rooting for Nature](#) home composting initiative allows residents to produce their own compost and reduce garden waste generated. In 2021, 2,800 subsidised compost bins were sold during the campaign making it the highest number of bins distributed through the scheme in over ten years, with 2,100 sold in 2022. This shows more and more people are keen to get involved in composting to cut waste, help nature and benefit their garden.

Promote reuse and recycling

As part of a recycling centre upgrade programme two new recycling centres have been delivered in the greater Norwich area - the Norwich North and Norwich South Recycling Centres. These both provide better located and easier to use facilities with large reuse shops.

New recycling centres for the Sheringham, Wymondham, Long Stratton and North Walsham areas are in development which will also include improved reuse facilities, and support improved recycling performance and diversion from disposal as well as making the service easier for customers to use.

Reuse shops are now found on 15 of 20 recycling centres across the county, enabling reuse of materials that otherwise end up being recycled or as waste.

Zero waste direct to landfill

Residual waste collected by Norfolk's councils and from recycling centres is treated via a contract with Veolia based on the [Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility](#) near Stewartby in Bedfordshire, and an arrangement with Suffolk, based on the Great Blakenham incinerator near Ipswich.

¹⁴ Action on food waste | WRAP

This means that arrangements are in place to use residual waste as a fuel to generate electricity and recover materials for recycling in the process, and to help ensure that zero waste from Norfolk's residents is sent directly to landfill. These arrangements allow for around 50,000 tonnes of carbon emissions to be saved every year, compared to if residual waste was sent to landfill.

Legacy landfill sites

Emissions arising from the waste management sector have been primarily attributed to the release of methane gas from landfill sites. Whilst arrangements are in place to treat Norfolk's residual waste by incineration, the County Council is still responsible for several closed landfill sites across the county. These are managed to capture landfill gas and use it to generate electricity which can be fed back into the grid where this is practical.

Engaging with the business sector

We are partners on the EU funded [FACET project](#) with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, piloting solutions to help the tourism industry shift from a linear business model to deliver the circular economy, with the goal to reduce waste. This has included infrastructure solutions such as innovative smart bins to reduce frequency of waste collection, initiatives to encourage visitors to use recycling and waste bins more effectively, as well as collecting plastics from local businesses to be able to be used in new products.

Businesses that joined the FACET project had the opportunity to be involved in fully funded circular economy pilots, including a returnable cup, on-site composting and surplus food donations. Support for businesses also involved sharing the latest knowledge of environmentally friendly packaging solutions and models for joint purchasing to create workable ways for businesses to be sustainable.

Norfolk Waste Partnership

With Norfolk's district, city and borough councils being responsible for the collection of waste county-wide, and the County Council responsible for its disposal, this is an area that relies on significant collaboration and coordination.

The [Norfolk Waste Partnership](#) provides a collaborative forum for Norfolk's eight local authorities to deliver efficient and complementary services and to help ensure a collective focus on shared interests, such as:

- [Reducing waste](#)
- [Increasing recycling](#)
- [Fighting the scourge of fly-tipping](#)

The Partnership has shared resources and provides a forum for Norfolk's eight local authorities to discuss best practice and drive improvement within the waste sector.

In 2022 the Partnership looked at the composition of left-over rubbish and recycling across Norfolk and is using the findings to drive targeted initiatives and campaigns by theme, area and demographic.

National policy

Defra's [Resources and Waste Strategy for England](#) has given the direction of national waste policy, presented in three themes:

1. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): producers paying councils directly for dealing with packaging.
2. Consistency: Government telling councils what they need to do and how it will be funded.
3. Deposit Return Scheme (DRS): producers taking materials back directly.

We have been active in helping develop these themes, which will lead to a step change in helping reduce waste, increase recycling and decreasing the environmental burden of waste, whilst also shifting more costs to producers.

In 2022 the government also consulted on developing the UK Emissions Trading Scheme, and as part of this process it is possible that emissions from waste incineration and energy from waste could be included by the end of the decade, with any developments in this area possibly having financial considerations for the County.



▶ Focus area 4: Promoting a green economy for Norfolk

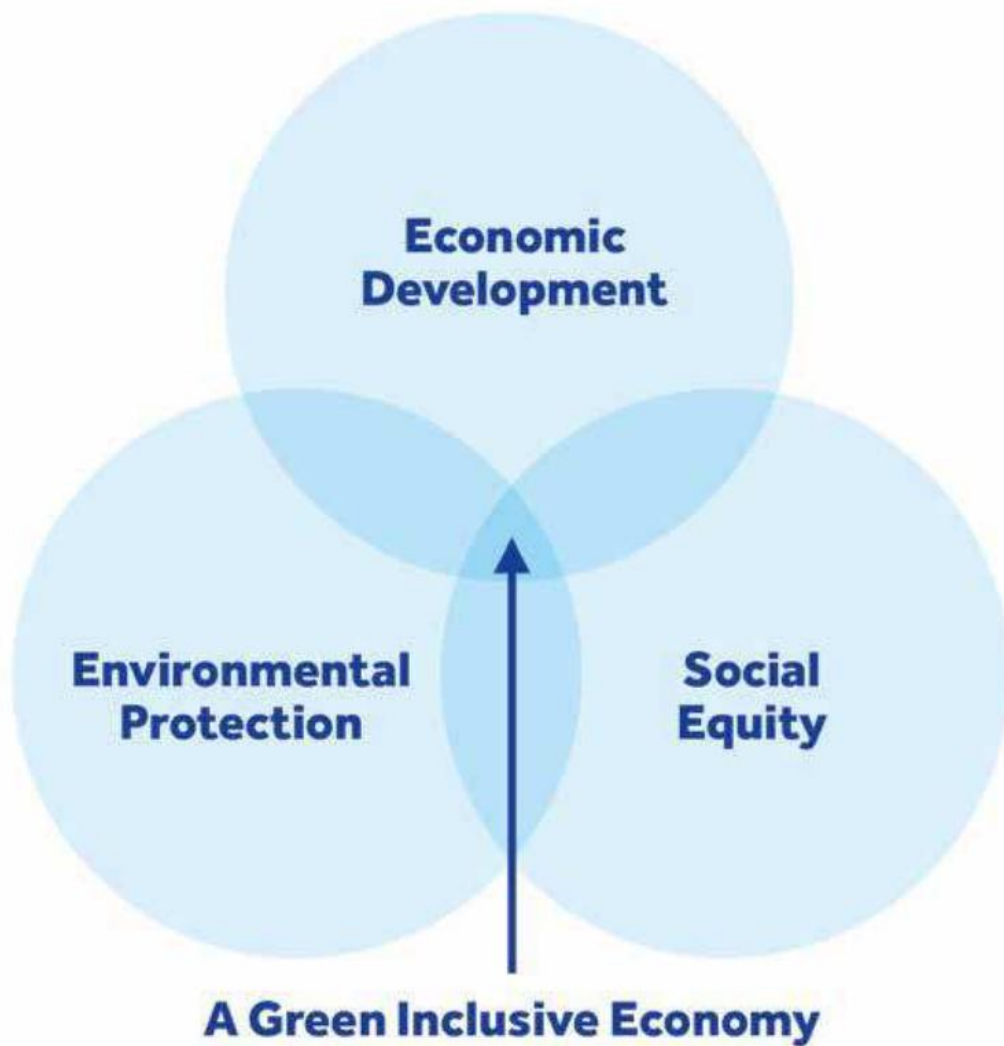
Introduction

We need to ensure that future economic growth across Norfolk is both resilient and green. Our ambition is to pursue an inclusive local economy for Norfolk where we can generate economic growth, improving social well-being whilst tackling the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change. This clean growth will involve the decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation, so that growth does not worsen the impacts of climate change.

Developing an inclusive economy built on environmental protection and social equity is a huge opportunity for Norfolk, supporting economic resilience and encouraging broader decarbonisation across the industrial and private sector.

NCC can use its position in the county to work closely with local employers to encourage green skill development, promote technological innovation and provide access to green financing opportunities.





Strategic priorities

- 1.** Promote green skill development to support the development and installation of clean technologies to support decarbonisation county-wide
- 2.** Grow the sustainable tourism sector to support year-round, well-paid, skilled careers
- 3.** Support Norfolk's tourism and hospitality businesses to achieve Green Tourism accreditation
- 4.** Provide access to green finance and investments through the Norfolk Investment Framework.

Skill development

The challenge

Green jobs and skill development is central to ensuring clean economic growth for Norfolk.

Green jobs can be broadly defined as jobs that directly or indirectly contribute to reaching climate and environmental goals. Green skills are the competencies that workers need to deliver across these areas.

[Recent estimates](#) suggest there could be 700,000 direct total jobs in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy by 2030 and more than 1.2 million by 2050¹⁵. Nearly half could be in clean electricity generation and providing low-carbon heat for homes and businesses. Around 40% of jobs will be involved in installing energy efficiency products, such as insulation, lighting and control systems; providing low-carbon services, including financial, legal and IT; and producing alternative fuels, such as bioenergy and hydrogen. The remainder will be directly involved in manufacturing low-emission vehicles and the associated infrastructure.

Across Norfolk, as elsewhere in the country, there is a significant green skills gap which can act as a barrier to our broader climate action agenda. For example, almost all homes will need to switch to low carbon heating systems by 2050, yet currently there are only around 3,000 heat pump installers in the UK compared to 130,000 registered gas heating engineers¹⁶.

To enable the county to be resilient and mitigate the impacts of climate change there needs to be a major upskilling in the clean energy and net zero economy. This will need to include both adoption of new technologies as well as training and retraining those who currently do not have sufficient skills to meet the green goals of businesses across all sectors.

Green Skills Sector Development Project

We have developed a Green Skills Sector Development project that will incorporate a range of research, feasibility and implementation themes in the development of the Norfolk Net-Zero Skills strategy.

¹⁵ [Local green jobs - accelerating a sustainable economic recovery](#) | Local Government Association

¹⁶ [The heat pump installer gap](#) | Nesta

Utilising project funds, the development of this strategy will incorporate four work themes:

1. A green skills market analysis will identify the existing retrofit/green skills market and highlight regional specialisms and areas with growth potential.
2. NCC will work in partnership with the Retrofit Academy to establish the feasibility of developing a dedicated retrofit and low carbon building training facility in the County.
3. The project proposes to support new technologies and investing in SME innovation and business growth opportunity in the offshore wind industry to enhance the local supply chain.
4. The project will also recruit a dedicated 12-month post to lead on the development and implementation of project themes.

The overarching goal of the Green Skills Sector Development project is that those trained and provided employment through this process will have transferable skills and experience, helping Norfolk to maximise green skills opportunities in commercial and domestic settings, supporting local jobs and keeping spend in the Norfolk economy.

Sustainable tourism

Norfolk: a sustainable tourism destination

The tourism industry is one of the major economic contributors and biggest employers for Norfolk, contributing about £2.8bn annually to the local economy. Developing Norfolk's sustainable tourism industry is central to our ambition to pursue green, inclusive economic growth. We want to promote Norfolk as the most sustainable tourism destination in the UK. Norfolk's sustainable tourism industry supports local businesses and supply lines to keep value in the local economy, whilst celebrating and preserving the county's natural environment such as the Broads and the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Sustainable tourism can also help transition away from the narrative of 'seasonal, low skilled, low paid' to 'year-round, well-paid, skilled' careers.

Norfolk Tourism Recovery Best Practice Group

In July 2020, the Norfolk Tourism Recovery Best Practice Group was set up to oversee the delivery of the £2.2 million Norfolk Strategic Fund-supported Tourism Recovery Programme.

Managed by NCC, the Group oversees the development and delivery of the Norfolk Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Plan and liaises with the regional Visitor Economy Group as well as the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.

Green Tourism

We have engaged with Green Tourism, an international organisation that recognises and supports sustainable achievements of tourism businesses through its green tourism accreditation programme.

In partnership with Green Tourism, we plan to trial a bespoke Norfolk approach to green accreditation that helps tourism businesses to work together, and individually to support environmental and landscape recovery aims in specific environmentally designated areas such as the Norfolk Coast AONB.

Our goal by 2030 is to ensure that the majority of Norfolk's tourism and hospitality businesses have been encouraged and supported to secure Green Tourism accreditation or a similar business sustainability award.

Focus area 6 discusses our work around adaptation to ensure that the landscapes that attract visitors are maintained and enhanced and that attractive new sites that combine biodiversity and tourism potential are developed.



EXPERIENCE project

Working alongside 13 other organisations across six pilot regions in France and England, NCC is the lead partner on the [EXPERIENCE project](#) to harness the experiential tourism trend to extend the visitor season. This is a €23.3 million project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Extending the visitor season will help generate 20 million new visitors and deliver sustainable economic growth across the Channel regions.

Together, project partners will reinvent the way the economy, environment, communities and brands interact-focusing on sustainable, low-impact tourism activities to secure the future resilience of our natural and cultural assets.

Norfolk Way Art Trail

The [Norfolk Way Art Trail](#) is a new public art trail spanning 250 miles of the existing trail network.

Through the EXPERIENCE project, NCC has commissioned six site-specific locations across Norfolk that will feature multi-sensory, accessible artworks to engage communities and inspire visitors. The trail is due to launch in March 2023.

The Rebellion Way

In partnership with Cycling UK, we have launched our sixth long-distance cycling route, the [Rebellion Way](#). This multi-day route begins and ends in Norwich taking in “quiet lanes, beautiful forests and big skies” for over 232 miles.



Agriculture and food production

The challenge

Norfolk has a greater proportion of the best grades of food-producing land than the average for England. Farms across East Anglia are important for cereal and horticulture crops, produce two thirds of England's sugar beet, a third of the nation's potato crop and have significant industries relating to pig, poultry and egg production.

Over the past 40 years, Norfolk has been at the forefront of developing agri-environment measures. Examples include the Broads Grazing Marshes Scheme which informed the Environmental Stewardship and Countryside Stewardship schemes and the [Farming in Protected Landscapes pilot project](#).

Competition for land use including that needed for biodiversity net gain, carbon sequestration and nature recovery across the county will affect how food is grown in future years. Nature recovery will have benefits against climate change and should not be seen as a threat to food production.

Trees grow well in less productive soils and in well-designed and well-managed woodlands can support the foundations of food production by improving soil health, cleaning water, and supporting biodiverse ecosystems. As a result, farm businesses can become more diverse, economically and ecologically resilient. They can provide new streams of income from timber, carbon units, and through recreation. Norfolk is a pioneer county in this respect and several exemplar projects are leading the way to this agricultural transition.

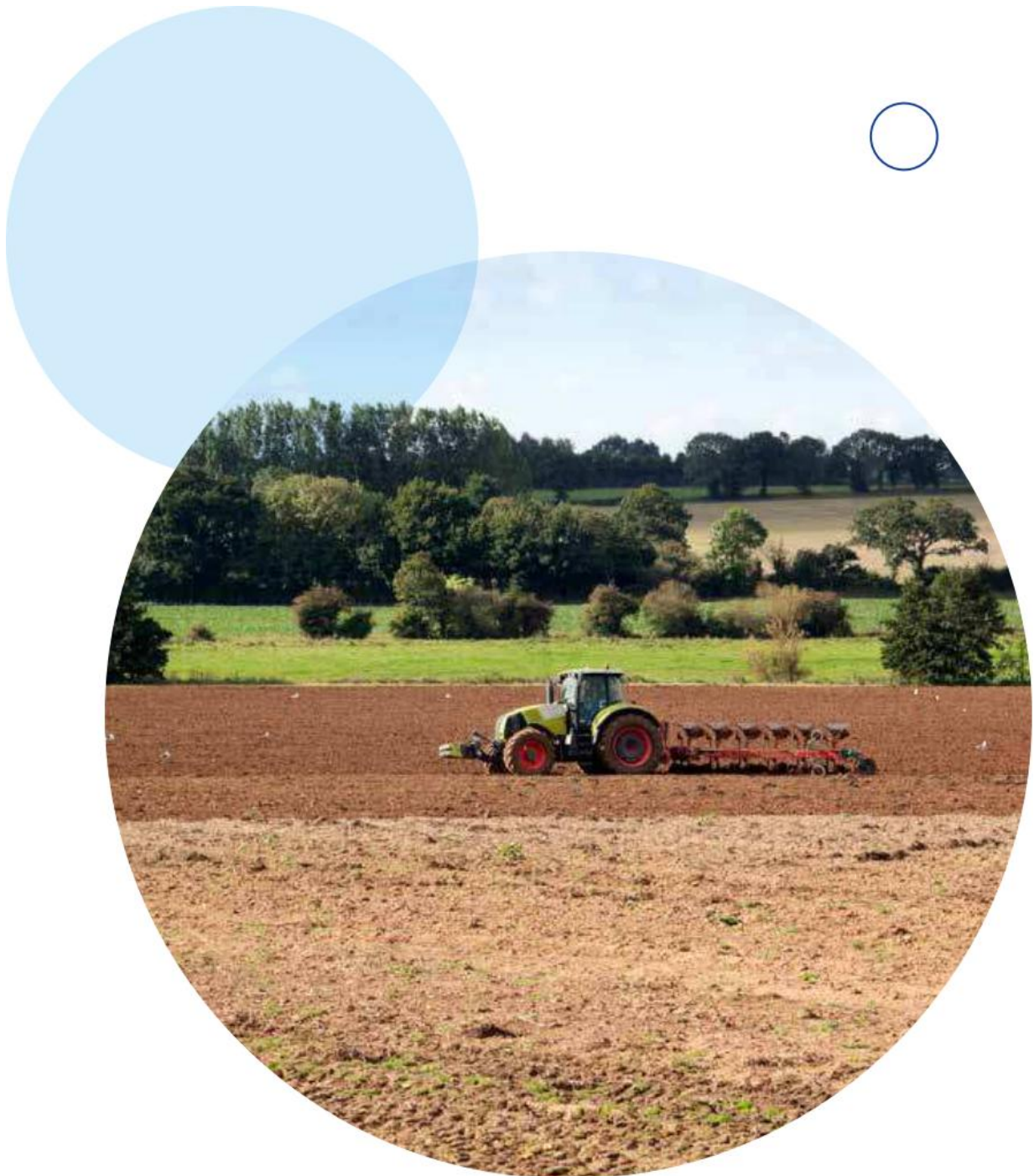
Current progress

We will work with landowners to influence and support initiatives that support nature recovery whilst keeping Norfolk's focus on food production.

An example of this already working in practice is the [Wendling Beck Environment Project](#), where NCC is a partner with landowners working together to regenerate 2000 acres of farmland for nature. The Norfolk Coast Partnership, supported by NCC, has also secured funding for a multi-partner project to recover landscape, '[North Norfolk, Wilder, Wetter, Better for Nature](#)'.

Working in partnership with local landowners and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) this project will create entirely new wildlife habitat from current arable land. It will fill in habitat gaps to give a contiguous area of habitat of 13,470 hectares across North Norfolk, making a real change for nature in the county.

We have also applied for funding for woodland creation which can support farmers to manage their land in an environmentally sustainable way while continuing to produce food. The funding will support a tree-planting campaign on privately-owned land but will also support skills development to ensure the continuity of the programme. The England Woodland Creation Offer will, from 2025, become part of Local Nature Recovery.



Focus area 5: **Climate adaptation**

Introduction

Climate change has the potential to significantly affect our local services, Norfolk's infrastructure and the health and well-being of our residents. Only by preparing for the coming changes can the UK protect its people, its economy and its natural environment.

Part of Norfolk County Council's response to climate change must focus on managing climate risk for Norfolk by building resilience across the local services it provides and adapting our infrastructure through nature-based and engineering solutions.

By developing effective climate adaptation measures we can look to reduce Norfolk's exposure and vulnerability to the hazardous impacts of climate change, ensuring it remains a place for current and future generations to thrive.

Avoid 'lock-in'

Taking action early to adapt to climate change will be the most cost-effective way to build in resilience where decisions have long lifetimes. When decisions are made that do not take account of climate change this can lead to unnecessarily 'locking-in' vulnerability or future costs. This becomes difficult and expensive to remediate later down the line and ultimately brings higher costs for society.

System-wide

Climate risks often interact with each other and have knock-on impacts. We must be alert to system-wide resilience rather than simply assess individual risks in isolation. For example, extreme weather can bring power or IT outages, affecting the ability to provide health and social care in hospitals and care facilities, while also affecting transport infrastructure used by ambulances and social care vehicles.

Maximise social benefits

Well planned climate adaptation can help create a fairer society, as those facing social and economic disadvantages are disproportionately affected by climate change. Equally, actions to address climate change could also exacerbate existing inequalities if not carefully planned.

Embracing nature

Many of the services the natural environment provides are also key to climate change resilience. These include water and air purification, protection from flooding and coastal erosion, and natural control of pests and invasive species. Nature-based solutions work with the natural resilience and adaptability of the natural environment to protect the valuable services it provides.

Collaboration

A coordinated approach to climate adaptation and resilience is needed to maximise its effectiveness.

Through the Norfolk Resilience Forum and as the Lead Local Flood Authority we will continue to work in close collaboration with the district and borough councils and Environment Agency.

Where appropriate, we will look to use nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change building partnerships and working in close collaboration with local business and residents to identify areas of opportunities and “win-wins”.



Strategic priorities

1. Work with the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia to understand better the risks of climate change impacts on Norfolk and potential adaptation responses
2. Ensure new infrastructure is designed against appropriate assumptions on the future impacts of climate change
3. Learn lessons from the extreme heat experienced in summer 2022 and the implications for public services
4. Be the voice of Norfolk residents to government bodies like the Environment Agency on securing appropriate investment on adaptation across the county

A climate-resilient council

Introduction

Extreme weather events including heatwaves and intense rainfall, and increased flooding, can have a significant effect on vulnerable people, make service delivery more difficult, and place a stress on the infrastructure and buildings the council is responsible for.

Emergency response

We host the core team for the [Norfolk Resilience Forum](#) and is a category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act. It will work with its partners to ensure that appropriate emergency response capabilities are maintained and that likely near-term scenarios including extreme heat, intense precipitation and flood are planned for and rehearsed.

Business continuity

As an employer and service provider for Norfolk, we recognise the importance of ensuring our buildings, staff and services can adapt and are resilient against the harmful impacts of climate change.

Our responsibilities at present are two-fold:

1. To ensure that physical infrastructure built now is resilient against future change
2. To ensure that services can be provided appropriately, and assets protected, when near-term severe weather events occur.

New infrastructure

We will specify new infrastructure to appropriate standards taking into account the likelihood of higher temperatures, increased risk of flood and more-intense precipitation in future.

Existing infrastructure

As we retrofit buildings our fabric-first approach will ensure that the fabric is maintained appropriately to protect against water ingress and flooding and that the effects of extreme heat and cold are mitigated through better insulation.

We will continue to maintain plans for the protection of heritage assets in the event of severe weather events.

Service provision

Most of our most vulnerable users are both more likely to suffer from the impacts of climate change and less able to be resilient in the face of it. We need to ensure our services are adapted to climate risk and realise what the impacts of climate change will mean for the delivery of our services. As we commission new services or re-specify existing ones we will consider near-term climate impact and whether any adaptation is needed. This may include both mitigations against relatively routine increases in rainfall and summer heat, where practicable, and requiring service providers to have appropriate business continuity plans in place for more extreme events.

Our staff

As a responsible employer we will ensure that our staff are suitably protected against extreme weather, whether through automating tasks, adapting work patterns or providing suitable vehicles, buildings and protective equipment.

A more resilient natural environment

Natural Capital

Natural Capital refers to the natural resources and environmental features that provide valuable goods and services, such as clean air, water and healthy soils. Norfolk has an abundance of natural capital assets, including rare freshwater habitats, marine protected areas, high-grade agricultural land and a broad range of sites under conservation management for the protection of internationally important wildlife species. These assets will come under increasing pressure as climate change alters weather patterns and water availability and allows new pests, diseases and invasive species to increase their reach. The geology of East Anglia gives Norfolk one of the fastest eroding coastlines in Europe, the risks of which will be heightened by further sea level rise. Preserving and enhancing Norfolk's natural assets will be essential to protecting not only the services they provide, but also other features that make Norfolk an attractive place to live and work: stable tourism and agriculture, and accessible green spaces for health and wellbeing.

As the authority responsible for delivering Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Norfolk County Council will draw on knowledge and evidence gained to date to define priorities for Nature Recovery in Norfolk that will form part of the national Nature Recovery Network – a joined-up system of wildlife-rich places. Alongside this work, which delivers the key objectives of the government's 25-year environment plan, we will support our public, private and NGO partners with the expertise and evidence they need to put nature-based solutions at the forefront of climate change adaptation.

Expected benefits will be noticeable across many areas including flood risk alleviation, food production and public health. This will not only mitigate the impact of change that is already taking place, but will increase our resilience to future climate risks.

In partnership with Suffolk County Council and the UEA we have released a [Natural Capital Compendium](#) documenting Norfolk's natural assets, including how land is currently being used, which provides a valuable resource for understanding what actions to recover nature will have the greatest impact on carbon sequestration and climate resilience. For example, among Norfolk's key Natural Capital assets with carbon-sequestration potential are the peat-rich soils of the Broadland area and south-west Norfolk. It is estimated that in the UK peatlands store over 3 billion tonnes of carbon, the equivalent to that stored in all the forests of the UK, France and Germany combined. Much of Norfolk's peatland area has degraded through drainage and cultivation, becoming a source of carbon emissions, rather than a carbon sink, so their restoration would bring significant benefits.

Pollinators

The declining numbers of pollinators must be addressed to ensure that negative impacts on biodiversity, crops, the sustainability of our farming communities and the public at large will be minimised.

Pollinators are a vital part of any healthy ecosystem. Without them, many species of plants would not be able to reproduce, causing the food chains they are part of to collapse. Approximately one-third of crops depend on pollinators for production, including many species grown in Norfolk like rapeseed.

The Norfolk Pollinator Action Plan contains several measures to ensure that pollinators are a key consideration in any activity carried out by the council that could affect their population levels. Progress on reported outputs and outcomes from the Pollinator Action Plan will continue to be fed back to the Environmental Policy Member Oversight Group at regular intervals.



Flood management

The challenge

Much of East of England's landscape is low-lying, with an average elevation of 35m and nearly a third of land below 20m. This leaves Norfolk highly susceptible to coastal and river flood risk, posing a threat to our residents and businesses across the county.

Coastal areas of Norfolk are predicted to experience some of the greatest increases in flooding hazard in the UK leading to service disruption, damage to buildings and flooded transport systems.

National surface water modelling produced by the Environment Agency in 2009 alongside the report "[Flooding in England - a national assessment of flood risk](#)" estimated that approximately 37,000 Norfolk properties may be at risk from flooding during a rainfall event with a 1 in 200 annual chance of occurring.

Lead local flood authority

We are the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Norfolk. As the LLFA we are responsible for developing and maintaining a local flood risk management strategy for the county. With this, the County Council's key responsibilities are:

- to investigate significant flooding from any source
- to undertake works to manage flood risk from surface run-off and groundwater
- to provide advice to Local Planning Authorities on surface water drainage in major planning applications.

To date, the LLFA has coordinated major flood alleviation schemes for high flood risk areas of Norfolk such as Dereham, Watton and Saham Toney. CATCH is a joint EU-funded project between the County Council and Anglian Water. It was developed to reduce surface water in key flood risk areas within Norwich and better protect homes from significant flood risk by installing over 1,000 specially designed water storage containers.

Norfolk strategic flood alliance

The [Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance](#) was established in 2021 to improve collaborative efforts between strategic partners involved in the prevention of flooding. Its goal is to ensure Norfolk communities and infrastructure are safer and more resilient to the risks of inland and coastal flooding as well as ensuring we have adequate water supplies during droughts.

The Alliance is a single point of focus and collaboration strategically for all flood-related challenges facing Norfolk.

Next steps

- Develop, in partnership with others, options for how flood water might be used to alleviate drought risks or managed in a more integrated multi-agency approach
- Progress a prioritised list of flood work that can be used to galvanise a collaborative approach to complex flooding sites

Public health, air quality & summer heat

The challenge

Climate change is a human issue with the potential to have significant health impacts on Norfolk's most vulnerable people, including the elderly, children and those in lower socioeconomic groups.

Although UK temperatures don't get as hot or cold as many other countries, people and our built environment are not acclimatised to extremes. Rising temperatures and an ageing population combine to make the challenge more pronounced, as older people, the young and those with existing health conditions are particularly vulnerable to extreme temperatures.

Public health

Climate change has been identified as the most important health threat of the century, but it is also the greatest opportunity to redefine the social and environmental determinants of health.

Reducing our contribution to the climate crisis and creating resilience to respond to the worst impacts of a warming climate is an opportunity to protect health.

Importantly, much of what can be done benefits both the environment and health. We know that increasing physical activity through active travel, making nutritious and sustainable food readily available and improving air quality and housing will reduce the risk of obesity, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, certain cancers and diabetes.

Equally, tackling climate change helps to address health inequalities.

Deprived areas have the poorest air quality while producing a lower proportion of housing and travel emissions and face disproportionately higher flood risk, particularly in coastal and rural zones.

Our Public Health Environment Team is developing an Environmental and Sustainability work programme covering air quality, transport and active travel, flooding and coastal erosion, housing and green spaces, and is working in partnership with others both in and outside the council to ensure public health implications are considered.

Air quality

Poor air quality is one of the largest environmental risks to public health across the UK. Long term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions including respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

NCC's efforts to decarbonise Norfolk's transport sector through the transition to electric buses, and the promotion of active travel options, will both reduce emissions and result in improved air quality.

Summer heat

As we continue to experience hotter summers we need to ensure our local communities adapt and are resilient to high temperatures.

Extreme heat is particularly hazardous in urban environments as the sun heats up hard surfaces. These structures absorb and reflect the heat of the sun during the day and radiate the heat throughout the night. As a result, urban shading, through tree canopy cover, is a critical adaptation measure. Most Norfolk people live in built-up areas - half our residents live in just 3% of the land area. Therefore, we and partners need to ensure we consider urban shade in the planning process for new developments.

The Norfolk Resilience Forum will continue to develop the multi-agency response to extreme heat. Its [Get Prepared website](#) is a useful resource for residents to prepare their homes, businesses and community for emergencies including heatwaves.



Focus area 6:

Ensure nature has space to recover and grow

Introduction

Actions that address climate change intersect with other challenges, including addressing biodiversity loss, improving food security and public health. Protecting and recovering natural spaces is a multi-faceted solution which benefits climate, people and nature at local, national and global scale.

Nature “recovery” refers to the process of restoring, enhancing or protecting natural habitats, ecosystems and biodiversity. It involves a range of actions to enhance and protect natural capital, such as planting trees, restoring degraded land, removing invasive species and connecting fragmented habitats, all with the aim of improving the health and resilience of ecosystems and increasing biodiversity – the number of species within those habitats.

This work is essential to address climate change, as healthy ecosystems absorb and store more carbon from the atmosphere. In Norfolk, 17% of territorial emissions are the result of the way land is used. Making more space for nature, in combination with supporting sustainable approaches to farming, land management, and development, will improve Norfolk’s resilience to climate change by reducing flooding, maintaining healthy soils, clean air and water, and sustaining food production.

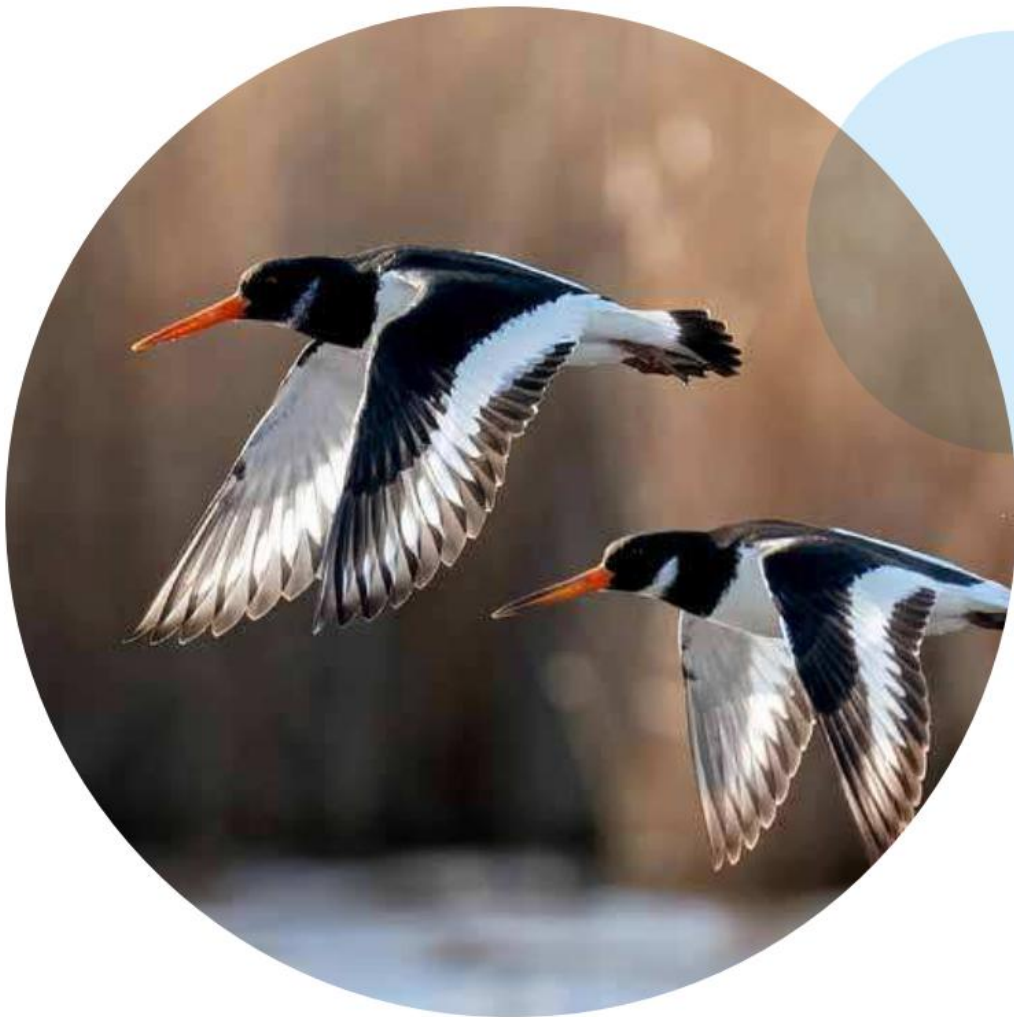
The UK Government’s net zero target requires an estimated 20% of current land use to change in support of carbon sequestration and nature recovery. This includes increasing forest cover, promoting low-carbon agriculture, extending and creating new protected sites, and the restoration of degraded soils and peatland.

A Norfolk & Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership has been created with the overarching objective of delivering nature recovery across the two counties, including their coasts and associated marine waters. By bringing together a wide range of organisations – local authorities, non-governmental organisations, land and seabed owners and managers, academic institutions and statutory bodies – the partnership will enable joined-up thinking and pool knowledge and resources to achieve better outcomes for nature, including the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. These strategies are a flagship measure in the Environment Act 2021 that together will form a nationwide Nature Recovery Network.

Locally, they will allow priority areas for nature recovery to be defined, supplying the evidence and strategy needed to effectively target Biodiversity Net Gain.

Strategic priorities

1. Produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk that prioritises areas for action focusing on species, habitats, landscapes and land use of importance to Norfolk with potential for carbon capture.
2. Embrace nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and mitigation
3. Ensure that our actions on land use and nature recovery reflect the interests of the farming community and public at large
4. In September 2024, we will put in place a new robust and resilient monitoring scheme for biodiversity.



Local nature recovery strategy

The challenge

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are the Environment Act's main measure to halt the decline of nature in Britain.

Our LNRS will also help us to deal with climate change, by improving the landscape's resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk, and sustaining vital ecosystems such as improved soil, clean water and clean air.

The LNRS will underpin the national scale Nature Recovery Network (NRN) which will require coordination across administrative boundaries. Therefore, one of the challenges is to ensure a coordinated approach which will require working across administrative boundaries. Another challenge is to ensure that farming practices work hand-in-hand with nature recovery.

We are the responsible authority for delivering Norfolk's LNRS and is supporting Suffolk with expertise to deliver their LNRS through the Norfolk-Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership. This will ensure the connectivity of habitats across administrative borders.

Current progress

The Environment Service's new geospatial analysis and communications group is developing a stakeholder-led process to create the LNRS, which will enable:

- prioritisation of areas for habitat development as part of new planning requirements (biodiversity net gain)
- identification of suitable locations for carbon sequestration through land-use change.
- landowners and managers to access future funding for managing land for nature.

We have started consultation with the farming community and developed a communication strategy to show the areas of opportunities.

We are also working with our neighbouring districts to ensure that administrative boundaries do not become a barrier for nature recovery.

Next steps

- Pending government guidance, we are gathering evidence from the farming community on their understanding and attitude to nature recovery. We are actively engaging to find tools that can ease effective communication and collaboration.
- We are also producing a biodiversity map to show areas of opportunity for nature recovery.
- We are committed to provide support to the farming community with our range of expertise and seeking funding opportunities to ensure that delivery is successful. This could include linking with developers to provide Biodiversity Net Gain and other blended finance.

Greenways and greenspaces

Current progress

Greenways to Greenspaces Programme

Increased pressure on the land has led to wildlife and nature becoming fragmented, with implications for how people can access Norfolk's green spaces.

Our Greenways to Greenspaces Programme aims to enable sustainable and green methods of access to green spaces for both visitors and residents. It focuses on habitat connectivity and promoting travel corridors for nature that increase biodiversity and promote recovery of native species.

Roadside Nature Reserve Scheme

As the responsible transport authority, we look for opportunities to manage highways assets, like verges, in a way that supports biodiversity. Norfolk's roadside verges are an integral part of the landscape, containing plant species that are now becoming nationally scarce.

The Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR) Scheme is run in partnership with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. The partnership's purpose is to support these species-rich linear features which can act as wildlife corridors for many species. Twenty-three of the existing roadside nature reserves have been identified for expansion.

Roadside verges

We are working with Suffolk County Council to plant at least four nature recovery sites on roadside verges. We are identifying locations for cutting schedule changes to inform the emerging policy on verge management, and will assess the potential to utilise arisings to generate bio-electricity.

Trail network extension

In addition to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, we will develop ten routes and at least 100km of all-ability trails by 2029. This delivers on a commitment we made in 2019 to extend the trails network to encourage everyone to explore and benefit from local countryside.

Trail network extensions conducted to date include new routes between Gressenhall Environmental Hub and Dereham (Wendling Way), and Norwich and Wymondham (Kett's Country Long Distance Path). A partnership with the Platinum Jubilee Committee will deliver five new walking routes - the Elizabeth Way (Heacham to King's Lynn), Wendling Way (Dereham to Gressenhall), Eastern Maritime Way (Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft), Chet River Circular (Loddon to Chedgrave), and West Acre Way (Gayton to Castle Acre).

One million trees

We continue to be staunchly committed to planting a million trees over five years across Norfolk. Planting has occurred on our own County Farms estate, as well as through community partnerships and local engagement.

We will continue to plant more trees that provide strategic benefits to Norfolk, whether that be for increasing biodiversity and supporting wildlife, providing recreation access to communities, contributing to carbon reduction and flood mitigation, or improving air quality. Underlying our Tree Planting ambition is the 'Right Tree, Right Place, Right Reason' philosophy.

By supporting the development of community tree nurseries, including a demonstrator site at our Environment Hub based at Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse, the project is also building a pipeline of locally sourced trees as well as engaging the public with its mission.

Protected landscapes

The challenge

Norfolk is home to nationally important landscapes that make significant contributions to the economy, environment and society. This includes the Broads National Park, the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Protected Area Network.

Climate change is already affecting these beautiful areas and the people who live there. Sea level rise and increased storm frequencies and intensities are affecting species distribution by altering habitats and niches. This has huge implications for the natural capital and ecosystem services upon which many species depend on. Walking and cycling routes are being affected by the same issue, with implications for social mobility, wellbeing and public access.

As Norfolk is home to a dynamic coastline, ensuring people are invested in the journey to make small changes that have a significant impact is essential. Behaviour change and responsible visits are two focal areas that can deliver tangible outcomes for landscape and nature recovery.

Drought is another huge challenge. Ensuring there is enough inland water for farmers to use and to support habitats for native species is going to become only more difficult as the effects of climate change take hold. Pond restoration is a key avenue for water to be retained in the landscape, ensuring there is enough resource to support both native and migratory species.

We support this work through projects, including the Farming in Protected Landscapes and Landscape Recovery projects. Both projects focus on the modern pressures that landowners face regarding the economics of farming, but also on the work they can do to improve biodiversity, increase habitat connectivity, restore rivers and diversify into carbon sequestration.

Partnership working that is grounded in local communities is essential in combatting all these problems. Ensuring these issues are dealt with in a 'Bigger, Better and More Joined-Up' way will enable people to connect to nature, incorporating advice from John Lawton's Making Space for Nature review (2010) and the later Julian Glover Landscapes Review (2019).

Next steps

To deliver on this ambition, we will:

- Lead a *Bigger, Better, More Joined-Up* approach to protecting Norfolk's landscapes
- Ensure policies and plans are aligned so that work is delivered effectively
- Re-brand Norfolk's protected coastal areas under the umbrella of the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape to enable greater public understanding and support
- Develop our strategies, plans and policies with local people so there is communal sense of place-based belonging and ownership
- In line with the government's "30 by 30" commitment we will review Norfolk's protected areas to increase these within the county, beginning with the Brecks.
- Deliver the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy
- Redesign management plans to deliver a new approach for land and sea to address these challenges and provide more inclusive action.





Focus area 7:

Engage and collaborate

Introduction

Mitigating and adapting to climate change whilst protecting our local biodiversity is a huge challenge. Success is reliant upon close collaboration and engagement across all parts of society, including the public sector, businesses and community groups.

Strategic priorities

1. Work closely with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and the Integrated Care System to take forward mitigation and adaptation activities where collaboration can add maximum value
2. Create a carbon conscious culture at NCC ensuring we engage with staff on the climate agenda
3. Develop and deliver a communications strategy to ensure that stakeholders are aware of the Climate Strategy, understand their role and know how to get involved.
4. Facilitate a series of targeted engagement workshops with key stakeholders to refine specific aspects of the strategy and developing evidence-based action plans

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership

Alongside other public sector bodies, We will continue to be an active member of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership. We will work collaboratively on value-added priorities which have a collective benefit for Norfolk as a whole, but do not duplicate the effort or work carried out by other groups or individual authorities. The three priorities for the NCCP are:

- Develop a sustainable energy plan to decarbonise energy supply for Norfolk and improve distribution of energy to citizens
- Reduce and conserve energy demand on the system through retrofitting of buildings through behaviour change, enabling a fabric first approach
- Enable greener sustainable transport solutions including a focus on behaviour change and where appropriate use statutory powers.

Internal engagement

Staff engagement

We aim to create a carbon-conscious culture at among our staff to ensure that we make the right decisions today to mitigate the impact of climate change. Through our smarter working programme, we aim to inspire and inform colleagues to take responsibility to consider carbon within corporate and personal decision making.

As an employer we have a role in supporting our employees to adopt and bring about a beneficial shift in behaviour and practice to support our climate ambitions. We will:

- Increase the promotion of greener employee benefits to all new starters and existing employees.
- Refresh our Norfolk Rewards offer to include environmentally friendly offers.
- Engage with services, staff and trade unions to develop alternative business travel arrangements that support the phasing out of diesel and petrol cars for council business.
- Improve the range of employee discounts with public transport to encourage greener travel.

Member engagement

The Environment Members' Oversight Group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, is a forum to monitor progress against the obligations set out in NCC's Environment Policy.

This cross-party member group meets regularly throughout the year to hear updates from relevant officers and guest speakers that are related to the operationalisation of our Environmental Policy. It is a chance for members to give guidance, offer feedback and suggest ways to move items forward.

Carbon literacy training

We recognise that knowledge is a critical requirement for change. We are developing a Carbon Literacy training programme across the council to empower the organisational shift towards low-carbon behaviour and practice, accelerating our journey to net zero. The Carbon Literacy programme will provide learners with an awareness of the carbon dioxide costs and effects of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis. This training opportunity will be provided for elected members, senior officers and staff across the organisation.

External engagement

Engagement with our residents

We will continue to run campaigns with its partners to promote carbon-reducing schemes and help change behaviours, as well as promoting to residents the work of NCC and its partners to reduce the impact of climate change.

Where required we will engage or consult with residents to ensure that their views are listened to, which will help shape future planning and delivery.

For corporate issues, we will feed residents' priorities through to inform our strategic direction. All relevant consultations are promoted on our consultation hub.

When seeking views on climate issues, we will predominantly engage with the [Norfolk Residents' Panel](#) – a group of around 2000 residents from across Norfolk who are invited to take part in surveys, focus groups and online sessions throughout the year.

As we progress on our climate action, we will continue to keep these communication channels with our residents open to support greater positive change.

Engagement with faith groups and the voluntary sector

Our approach to external engagement will depend on the nature of the activity we are undertaking. However, we will continue to develop our relationship with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, involving these organisations in developing our approach to climate change.

The council's funding of the [Empowering Communities Partnership](#) continues to support infrastructure activity that advances our climate aims, for example, the recruitment of volunteers that hugely contribute to sustainability projects across Norfolk.

Likewise, we acknowledge the role played by Norfolk's faith groups and will continue to nurture this relationship. Both faith groups and the VCSE sector can reach communities in a way that we can't and help build a solid base for achieving our strategy. Delivering digital inclusion projects is just one example, where working together is already bringing benefits.

Engagement at the parish level

NCC will continue to work through the [Norfolk Association of Local Councils \(Norfolk ALC\)](#) to engage with individual parish councils and

councillors to ensure that climate change remains at the forefront of hearts and minds.

Local parishes have been in touch about tree planting, which has carbon, biodiversity and public health benefits. Additionally, some parish councils have been successful in attracting funding for EV charging infrastructure, which helps in the transition from fossil-fuelled vehicles to EVs.

Academia and research

Norwich Research Park

Norwich Research Park is one of the largest single-site concentrations of research in food, genomics and health in Europe. It is positioned to play a key role in food and environmental research that will support climate resilience.

The County Deal notes that “Norfolk’s vibrant research cluster is well-placed to realise the potential for innovation that the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill will unlock for shaping our future food system in a changing climate. The Government is committed to moving roles out of Greater London and closer to the policy issues they are addressing ... The Government will continue to work with departments on the potential for any future relocations of Civil Service roles to Norfolk as part of the Levelling Up agenda.” NCC will continue to work hard to promote this agenda.

University of East Anglia

NCC has close ties with the University of East Anglia (UEA), and we have worked together on various collaborations.

The Natural Capital Compendium was commissioned by NCC and put together by UEA, and is an extensive overview of Norfolk’s Natural Capital and how it will be threatened by climate change.

UEA is also leading the mapping element of the work on Local Nature Recovery in Norfolk, highlighting the close-working between a world-leading academic institution and local authorities.

Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research

UEA is home to the headquarters of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research partnership of universities, an internationally renowned institution for combatting climate change. Its Executive Director, Asher Minns, is an observer on the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.

Schools and academy trusts

We will continue to communicate with maintained schools through established engagement channels. The most recent publication has set out our activities to address carbon reduction for existing buildings as well as providing information on reducing energy via behaviours. In addition, there are regular meetings with Academy Trust leaders where good practice can be shared. All new school buildings are moving close to carbon net zero in use, with increased PV (Photo Voltaic) panels, ASHPs (Air Source Heat Pumps) and EV charging as standard.

The Integrated Care System

The Integrated Care System (ICS) brings together upper tier authorities with the NHS to plan and deliver joined up health and care services across Norfolk. We are a member of the ICS net zero Executive Leads Group, supported by the Green Plan Delivery Group. This provides a supportive forum for discussion of operational progress, spread of best practice, areas of opportunity for collaboration, and any support needs arising through delivery.

Private sector engagement

The goals in this strategy can only be achieved through close partnership working with many stakeholders and organisations, including the private sector. Many Norfolk-based companies such as Aviva and Holkham Hall and Estate are leaders in their sector in terms of sustainability, and we will ensure we work closely with business partners to deliver our collective targets and goals.

As part of our efforts to galvanise private sector engagement, we are arranging a one-day conference to engage with Norfolk's business community on this theme. The event will engage with the business community on our climate strategy and create space for business leaders to share insights on embracing the opportunities of clean growth.

Partnership working

Collaborative work across partner organisations and key stakeholders is pivotal to delivering effective change for Norfolk.

Here are just some of the partnership organisations that we are involved with relating to the climate agenda.

Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum

Provides a forum for tackling planning issues relating to housing, economic growth, infrastructure and the environment.

Norfolk and Suffolk Nature Recovery Partnership

A collective of organisations including Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils, with the goal of delivering nature recovery across Norfolk and Suffolk through healthier and more resilient natural systems on land and coast.

Norfolk Coast Partnership

A partnership to manage the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance

Bringing together all partners involved in planning for and responding to flooding in Norfolk.

Transport East

Brings together the local transport and planning authorities, and business leaders with Network Rail and National Highways to provide strategic oversight on transport priorities across the region.

Transport for Norwich

A partnership between NCC, Norwich City Council and Broadland and South Norfolk Councils to improve accessibility and encourage more sustainable forms of transport.

Norfolk Resilience Forum

Provides information to the public to help them plan and prepare for an emergency that may affect our county.

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership

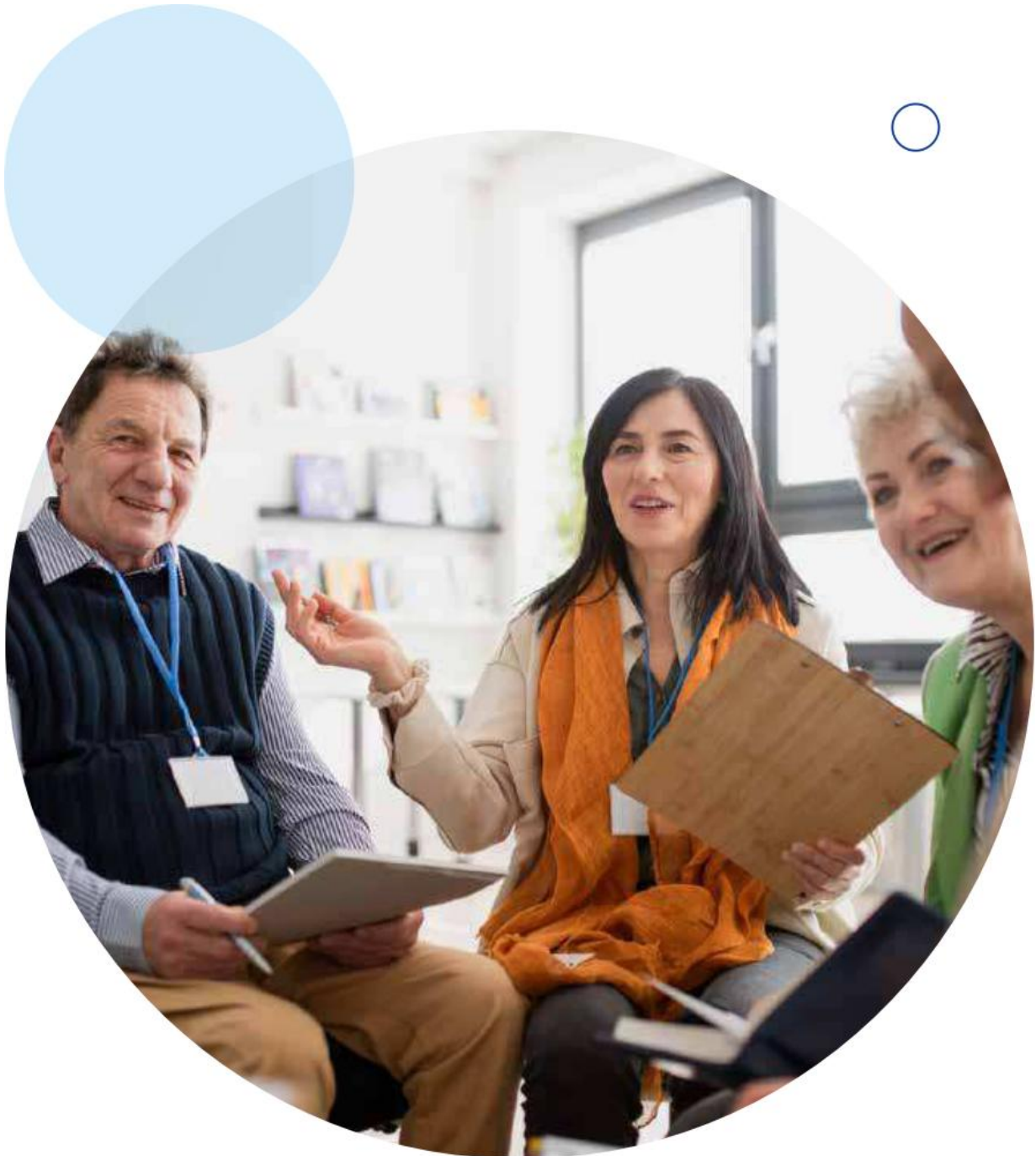
A partnership working with businesses, local authority partners and education institutions to drive growth and enterprise in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Norfolk Waste Partnership

Provides a forum for Norfolk’s eight local authorities to discuss best practice and drive improvement within the waste sector.

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership

A partnership centred around tackling climate change across the county, bringing together Norfolk’s eight local authorities, the Broads Authority, and other key stake holders.



Glossary of terms

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

An approach to development, and/or land management, that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.

Carbon

Used as abbreviation for carbon dioxide (CO₂) or carbon dioxide equivalent

Carbon budget

An amount of carbon dioxide that a country, company, or organisation has agreed is the largest it will produce in a particular period.

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e)

A standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. It expresses the impact of each different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would create the same amount of warming, using global warming potentials.

Carbon offset

Avoided, sequestered, or captured emissions that are used to compensate for emissions that occur elsewhere.

Circular economy

An economy in which resources are kept in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life

Climate adaptation

Actions to adjust to the actual or expected changes in climate. These are necessary actions to help manage the risks that come with the impacts of climate change

Climate mitigation

Actions to prevent, reduce or capture greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate resilience

The ability to cope with longer term climate changes

Greenhouse gas (GHG)

Gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat.

Green economy

A low carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive economy.

Green infrastructure

A network of multi-functional green space and other green features which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities

International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

An intergovernmental body of the United Nations leading on the monitoring and assessment of all global science related to climate change.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

Business-led partnerships between local authorities and local private sector businesses.

National Adaptation Programme

The government's strategy to address the main risks and opportunities identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment





Norfolk County Council



Cabinet

Item No: 9

Report Title: Local First Inclusion Update

Date of Meeting: 10 May 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr John Fisher (Cabinet Member for Children's Services)

Responsible Director: Sara Tough, Executive Director for Children's Services

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

This paper presents the final element of the multi-year financial plan, which is an important and vital opportunity for Norfolk to bring significant investment to enable the delivery of an ambitious programme of change to improve better outcomes.

Norfolk's Local First Inclusion plan is the next stage of our SEND Improvement Programme covering the period 2023-29. It marks the end of the first phase of our improvement planning, through the completion of the initial SEND & Alternative Provision Programme and our Written Statement of Action, having built the initial special schools and specialist resource bases and having a positive experience within the Ofsted/CQC inspection revisit in November 2022. This paper focus on an update on the establishment of a Safety Valve agreement (the funding mechanism to secure the additional significant investment) with the Department for Education, which aims to return Norfolk's Dedicated Schools Grant, specifically the High Needs Block element of it, back to an in-year balanced position and to repay the cumulative deficit.

This agreement secures additional funding for Norfolk of £70m from the Department for Education over a 7-year period and is the outcome of negotiations between Norfolk County Council and the DfE that started in May 2022 and culminated in Secretary of State approval for our plan in March 2023.

The term 'safety valve' is a DfE phrase which describes a series of agreements that they have entered into with a range of local authorities. However, in Norfolk, this programme of work is now known as 'Local First Inclusion' and provides a unique opportunity to further improve our SEND services, support and specialist provision. We will continue our £120million capital investment, alongside DfE capital

contributions and the agreement in principle from the DfE for two new Special Free Schools, to build more special schools, specialist resources alongside major investment and support to enable the majority of children and young people with special educational needs to attend local inclusive mainstream school.

Recommendations:

To agree:

- 1. to endorse the development of the Safety Valve agreement with the Department for Education.**
- 2. to delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Director of Strategic Finance, in conjunction with the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Lead Member for Finance, to sign the reports to the Department for Education enabling the draw-down of funding.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 In Spring 2022, the Council was invited to join the Safety Valve process due to the significant and growing level of year-on-year deficit on the High Needs Block budget, thus leading to a growing and significant cumulative deficit for the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant for Norfolk. The intention of the process is to identify a multi-year plan that will return the High Needs Block to a balanced position in-year and to repay the cumulative deficit, with the potential to enter a Safety Valve agreement with the DfE.
- 1.2 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding includes funding for high Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) through the High Needs Block (HNB). The DSG is allocated to local authorities and the annual budget for 2023-24 for Norfolk was set by Cabinet at its 30 January 2023 meeting.
- 1.3 Without any agreement with the DfE, Norfolk was forecast to carry a cumulative deficit of £75.976m at the end of the 2022-23 financial year. On the basis of the accounting treatment introduced in 2020 by the Government:
 - the DSG is a ring-fenced specific grant separate from the general funding of Local Authorities;
 - any deficit an authority may have on its DSG account is expected to be carried forward and is not required to be covered by the authority's general reserves;
 - the deficit should be repaid through future years DSG income.

In 2018 the Council agreed to a £120m capital investment programme for SEND and Alternative Provision, the first phase of which will deliver over 650 new places in special schools and specialist resource bases, including the opening of three new special schools.

- 1.4 The 2023-24 High Needs Block was set as a deficit budget on the basis of this multi-year plan that had been developed as part of the Safety Valve process. Further details are provided in the ‘Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding’ paper to Cabinet on 30 January 2023.
- 1.5 The Council’s revenue budget included £5.5m contribution per annum towards repayment of the DSG cumulative deficit. Whilst this contribution is contrary to the accounting treatment reference in section 1.3 above, the Council making a contribution towards the repayment of the cumulative deficit was a requirement of the Safety Valve agreement, as approved by the Secretary of State. This deficit DSG reserve position is referenced in the County Council’s reserve balances presented within the Norfolk County Council Revenue Budget 2022-23 report agreed at the 21 February 2023 Full Council meeting and is based upon the multi-year plan without any additional DfE contribution. The position does not need to be considered when assessing the sufficiency of the Council’s general reserves balances and the accounting treatment has been extended until the end of 2025/26.
- 1.6 The engagement with the DfE by Officers has been reported regularly as part of the monthly Finance Monitoring report to Cabinet meetings, and a high-level summary of the agreed contribution from the DfE with a link to the agreement published by the DfE was provided in the 3 April 2023 Cabinet report.
- 1.7 Any Safety Valve agreement requires Ministerial sign-off and the DfE placed a strict embargo on the details of their contribution to the agreement until 16 March 2023, when they published the agreement:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-very-high-deficit-intervention>
- 1.8 Confirmation of the total additional funding from the DfE, and the profile of the DfE additional contributions, was not known by NCC until March, just prior to publication:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
DfE agreed contribution	£28m	£6m	£6m	£6m	£6m	£6m	£12m

2. Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet endorses the work of Officers to develop the Safety Valve agreement with the DfE to bring additional funding into Norfolk’s special educational needs system and to enable a multi-year plan that will bring the HNB back into balance in-year and for the cumulative deficit to be repaid.

- 2.2 The DfE will require monitoring of performance by Norfolk against the plan, including written tri-annual (as a minimum) reporting of progress against the conditions of the grant and a dashboard of various Key Performance Indicators and Metrics. In addition, the DfE will need to be informed of any unforeseen difficulties or impacts of carrying out the agreement and of any significant risks to Norfolk reaching the agreed financial position. The drawdown of further funding, exceeding the £28m already provided in 2022-23 as a result of this agreement, is dependent upon the delivery of the plan.
- 2.3 These reports will need to be signed by the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Director of Strategic Finance to enable drawdown of the DfE funding. It is proposed that authority is delegated to these officers to enable this to take place.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 This agreement will enable the DSG to be brought back into an in-year balanced position by 2027/28 and for a cumulative deficit to be repaid by 2028/29.
- 3.2 This agreement is the outcome of negotiations between Norfolk County Council and the DfE that started in May 2022 and culminated in Secretary of State approval for our plan in March 2023. The term 'safety valve' is a DfE phrase which describes a series of agreements that they have entered into with a range of local authorities. However, in Norfolk, this programme of work is now known as 'LocalFirst Inclusion'.
- 3.3 Local First Inclusion is Norfolk County Council's next stage SEND Improvement Programme covering the period 2023-29. It marks the end of the first phase of our improvement planning, through the completion of the initial SEND & Alternative Provision Programme and our Written Statement of Action, having built the initial special schools and specialist resource bases and having a positive experience within the Ofsted/CQC inspection revisit in November 2022.
- 3.4 Local First Inclusion is directly linked to our negotiation with the DfE as part of their 'safety valve' programme, to provide both DfE and NCC investment to return the High Needs Block to in-year balanced budget and address the cumulative overspend.
- 3.5 In addition to revenue elements the DfE have agreed in principle to capital bids from NCC for two more Free special schools alongside the council's ongoing £120 million SEND capital investment. Local First Inclusion will continue the expansion of specialist provision, to reduce our reliance on high-cost lower quality independent sector provision but will also have a renewed focus on mainstream inclusion and a reduction in the reliance on Education Health and Care Plans.

- 3.6 Local First Inclusion is all about improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND ensuring, wherever possible and appropriate, they can attend school close to their home/in their community with the support they need to make progress in their learning alongside other children of the same age.
- 3.7 We are improving support to schools/school leaders and increasing funding to schools to ensure they have the resources and expertise to provide the right support for children and young people with SEND.
- 3.8 We anticipate fewer EHCPs will be issued to children and young people because there will be better support available in the mainstream system
- 3.9 In the majority of cases, children and young people with SEND will have better life chances if they are supported to remain in mainstream education, rather than attending special schools with a more limited cohort of children and young people, and often a significant distance from their homes/communities
- 3.10 Our state-funded special schools offer an excellent and high-quality education for children and young people with higher needs SEND and we're investing in more state specialist provision for those children and young people with higher needs.
- 3.11 Delegation of authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Director of Strategic Finance will enable the Council to meet the monitoring requirements of the DfE as well as enabling the draw-down of the additional DSG funding from the DfE as laid out in the agreement.
- 3.12 The reduction in the cumulative deficit will have a positive impact upon the cash balances held by the Council, supporting maximisation of investment income to underpin other Council activities.
- 3.13 Under the plan, the Council will need to continue to consult maintained schools each year on the Fair Funding consultation request block transfers from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. The multi-year plan presumes annual transfers of 1.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. Norfolk Schools' Forum will be required to vote on any request for a block transfer on a regular basis and block transfers above 0.5% will continue to require approval from the Secretary of State.
- 3.14 As part of the monitoring required, Officers have established significant, system-wide governance including the involvement of Norfolk's Schools Forum to monitor progress towards the plan, which is vital given the commitment required of the wider system to deliver the plan.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 The Early Years Finance (England) Regulations 2022 state the ring-fenced status of the DSG and how any DSG deficits must be handled. DSG deficits must be carried forward to be dealt with only from future DSG income. The grant conditions issued for the 2023-24 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) were published in December 2022¹.
- 4.2 Like many other local authorities, Norfolk currently has a cumulative DSG deficit. Therefore, any overspend on the DSG (for example, due to the number of special school places exceeding the funding available) is required to be repaid through future DSG income, unless the Secretary of State authorises an exception to this.
- 4.3 Whilst a deficit remains, Norfolk County Council's General Fund (council tax funding) continues to bear the hidden cost of lost interest whilst the County Council 'bank rolls' the deficit.
- 4.4 Norfolk has worked intensively with the DfE since May 2022 as part of the Safety Valve programme, to develop a DSG Management plan and to negotiate important DfE investment.
- 4.5 The core aim for DfE and NCC alike is to achieve an in-year balanced budget to enable the cumulative deficit to be addressed. Most importantly, doing so in a way in which outcomes for children and young people are improved and leading to a long-term sustainable model of local mainstream inclusion and specialist provision for those with complex needs.
- 4.6 The key requirements that need to be met by all LAs in the programme are:
- How Norfolk will control the DSG deficit and reach an in-year balance (as a minimum), and how quickly. It is requested that this be set out in the DfE DSG management plan template. The DSG management plan should also indicate any planned block transfer requests, which will be handled through the Safety Valve programme where required.
 - How Norfolk will contribute to the reduction of the historic deficit through use of DSG surpluses, in addition to reaching an in-year balance.
 - How Norfolk will ensure that the plan is deliverable, how it will be managed as it is implemented and how this plan will continue to ensure the appropriate support for children and young people with SEND. This includes ongoing monitoring of progress towards the agreement by the LA.
 - A clear explanation of the financial support Norfolk needs from the DfE to eliminate the historic deficit over the period of the agreement. This could include, if necessary, a request for some funding to help implement the proposal, as well as funding to eliminate the deficit directly, although we would not expect this to constitute a significant element of the total financial support requested.

¹ [DSG: conditions of grant 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107111/dsg-conditions-2023-24.pdf)

- 4.7 The timeline for the safety valve programme was demanding, with the final submission on 6 October 2022 (and the deadline for the final associated submission of the Free School Capital application on 10 October 2022). The decision by the Secretary of State was expected at the end of the Autumn term, but this was delayed (along with other LA's decisions) and was made in March 2023. This was subsequent to Norfolk being required to submit a revised plan in January 2023 to take account of the 2023-24 DSG funding announcements made in December 2022.
- 4.8 Throughout the negotiations the DfE reminded the Council that liability for the full cumulative deficit was, within the regulations, an NCC not DfE risk once the current account treatment referred to in section 1.3 expired.
- 4.9 Norfolk's plan met those requirements and the multi-year plan submitted in January, combined with the additional DfE funding now agreed, is provided below. It should be noted that this is prepared prior to the 2022-23 outturn and aligns with the High Needs Block budget, and Dedicated Schools Grant budget as a whole, set by Cabinet on 30 January 2023. Additionally, the Council's revenue budget included £5.5m contribution per annum as agreed by Full Council on 21 February 2023.
- 4.10 The Council's £120m capital programme committed to investing in SEND and Alternative Provision state-funded provision remains fully active and is aligned to the multi-year revenue plan to bring the HNB back into balance and to repay the cumulative deficit. This includes activity to further expand special school places and specialist resource base provision that is anticipated to deliver over 1000 additional places, including the opening of two new special schools funded by the DfE through the Free Special School programme and the relocation of the Fred Nicholas school to a new site enabling the expansion of provision.
- 4.11 Financial monitoring reports will continue to report to Cabinet on the DSG in-year and cumulative positions. Further reports on the overall strategy, i.e. the Local First Inclusion plan, will be taken to Select Committee with regular updates of progress and implementation and Scrutiny as appropriate.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
High Needs Block DSG Income	-120.578	-135.212	-141.484	-145.175	-148.682	-152.865	-157.846
1.5% Schools Block transfer	-8.529	-9.015	-9.196	-9.380	-9.567	-9.759	-9.954
Total income	-129.107	-144.228	-150.680	-154.555	-158.249	-162.623	-167.800
Maintained / Academy / Free Special Schools	46.878	53.584	56.351	58.883	62.115	64.828	67.038
Specialist Resource Bases & Deaf Resource Bases	6.314	7.966	10.466	14.291	17.959	19.497	19.887
Independent Special Schools	42.771	47.424	41.437	29.825	16.910	7.427	6.908
Alternative Provision	2.133	2.110	2.007	1.894	1.783	1.662	1.552
Short Stay Schools	8.400	8.831	8.203	7.578	6.957	6.339	5.726
Post-16 (Further Education)	8.173	8.631	8.864	8.620	8.386	8.160	7.960
Other Provisions	5.027	4.238	3.866	3.514	3.133	2.793	2.393
Inclusion fund (including mainstream SEN / EHCP support)	20.176	23.265	25.118	26.533	27.310	27.589	27.370
Speech & Language, Sensory, Youth Offending and Child & Adolescent Mental Health support & contributions	3.551	3.680	3.744	3.841	3.940	4.042	4.146
High Needs Inclusion Infrastructure, cluster teams including parent link workers	2.680	6.098	7.466	7.346	7.323	6.163	5.289
Other, including TPG/TPECG, H&SC levy and new school start-up costs	2.641	2.519	2.591	2.655	2.734	2.804	2.856
Investment contingency including Inclusion Fund	0.000	1.030	1.000	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total Expenditure	148.744	169.376	171.112	165.479	158.549	151.303	151.125
In-year +deficit/-surplus	19.637	25.149	20.433	10.924	0.300	-11.320	-16.675
Cumulative Balance without contribution	73.613	98.762	119.194	130.118	130.418	119.098	102.423
DfE Contribution	-28.000	-6.000	-6.000	-6.000	-6.000	-6.000	-12.000
NCC Contribution		-5.500	-5.500	-5.500	-5.500	-5.500	-4.923
Cumulative Balance	45.613	59.262	68.194	67.618	56.418	33.598	0.000

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 'Doing nothing' is not an option given the growing in-year deficits seen for the High Needs Block and, thus, the significant and growing cumulative deficit that Norfolk is carrying.
- 5.2 Cabinet could also request sign-off of all reporting to the DfE monitoring process, but this would instigate a significant administrative burden that may prove challenging to achieve in the timescales set by the DfE.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Central Government consulted during 2019-20 on a change to the terms and conditions of the DSG, to provide clarity regarding the responsibility of local authorities for any deficit within the DSG.
- 6.2 The outcome of this consultation and the changes introduced, i.e. that the DSG is a separate ring-fenced grant and that local authorities are not expected to contribute local resources towards it.
- 6.3 The accounting treatment for DSG cumulative deficits diverges from normal accounting practice and allows councils to carry a negative balance on these reserves. This treatment is being dictated by Government but will need to be kept under review as it potentially remains a significant issue for Norfolk County Council and will result in a material deficit balance in the council's Statement of Accounts until the DSG recovery plan has been delivered.
- 6.4 The accounting treatment was due to end at the end of the 2022-23 financial year, but an announcement in December 2022 by the Government that the accounting treatment arrangements have been extended until the end of the 2025/26 financial year. Indications from Government are that this accounting treatment will not be extended indefinitely, which would then result in the Council becoming liable for the cumulative deficit and any ongoing annual deficits.
- 6.5 It should be noted that the Council is effectively 'bank-rolling' the deficit and so there is the impact upon local Council resources of the loss of interest. The impact of this agreement secures additional funding from the DfE to reduce the cumulative deficit and, thus, reduces the impact upon the Council's resources as the loss of interest will reduce.
- 6.6 As a result of the agreement with the DfE, the Council NCC will need to commit to contribute £5.5m pa towards mitigating the deficit for the next 6 years, and this has been included within the 2023-24 Revenue Budget and MTFS.
- 6.7 This proposal does not, directly, impact upon the SEND and AP capital transformation programme previously agreed in 2018, but phase 2 of the programme has been aligned to the multi-year revenue recovery plan.

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff: The Local First Inclusion plan includes the establishment of School and Community Teams and additional specialist roles within Children’s Services to enable the operational implementation of the plan.

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) (this must be included):

There are no direct equality or accessibility implications for this report. However, as part of the Council’s ‘Safety Valve’ submission to the DfE and the related ‘disapplication request’ for a block transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, we were required to provide information within an EqIA context. For that purpose, we have stated to the DfE that: ‘A central theme to addressing local needs and, in turn the HNB recovery plan, is the development of state funded special school provision. This will ensure that complex needs, ASD and SEMH needs are met directly. In addition, we are expanding specialist resource base provision hosted by mainstream schools. Taken together these additional 500 places will increase choice and reduce travel time for children and young people with SEND.’

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): Not applicable

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): Not applicable

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): Not applicable

8.7 Any Other Implications: Not applicable

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The key risks that will need to be carefully monitored and managed are:

9.2 the risk that progress is not achieved in line with the plan, particularly in relation to

- the delivery of additional state-funded provision
- the system does not see the wider cultural change required to support more children to remain supported within mainstream schools
- costs of provision exceed multi-year forecasts, particularly given the instability of inflation at currently

- sufficiency of resources to ensure that the right children are in the right provision with the right support
- the risk significant changes to national SEND policy impacts in adverse and unexpected ways upon elements of the plan

9.3 Officers will continue to keep the DSG Budget and multi-year plan under close review throughout the financial year, reporting regularly to Cabinet through the monthly Finance Monitoring reports and termly, at least, to Norfolk Schools Forum. This reporting will be in addition to the regular reporting that is required to the DfE as part of the Safety Valve agreement.

9.4 As detailed earlier in the report, the Government has prescribed an accounting treatment for the DSG deficit. However, it should be noted that this position is not guaranteed and will remain a subject of scrutiny from External Auditors or a change in approach from the Government. If the Council is not able to reduce the DSG cumulative deficit through a combination of the transformation programme, capital investment, high needs allocations and the Safety Valve programme from the DfE, then there remains a risk to the overall financial viability of the whole Council.

10. Select Committee Comments Not applicable

11. Recommendations

To agree:

1. to endorse the development of the Safety Valve agreement with the Department for Education.
2. to delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Director of Strategic Finance, in conjunction with the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Lead Member for Finance, to sign the reports to the Department for Education enabling the draw-down of funding.

12. Background Papers

12.1 Finance Monitoring Report (Item 14, 3 April 2023 Cabinet)

<https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1907/Committee/169/Default.aspx>

12.2 Council budget paper (Item 5, 21 February 2023 County Council)

<https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1949/Committee/2/Default.aspx>

12.3 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding (Item 11, 30 January 2023 Cabinet)

<https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/CalendarofMeetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1905/Committee/169/Default.aspx>

12.4 Transforming the system for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in Norfolk (Item 8, 29 October 2018 Policy and Resources Committee)

<http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/128/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/496/Meeting/1421/Committee/21/Default.aspx>

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Cabinet

Item No: 10

Report Title: Winter Service Policy Review

Date of Meeting: 10 May 2023

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

Responsible Director: Tom McCabe (Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services)

Is this a Key Decision? Yes

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 07 September 2022

Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member

Norfolk County Council (NCC) has a statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow and ice.

Since the last policy review in 2005 and service review in 2011, there have been some significant changes, developments and events in the delivery of the winter service. These include increasing the length of the priority road network that is treated, the Salt Private Finance Initiative (PFI) ending in April 2020, and collaborative working with Public Health England to treat the routes to Covid vaccination centres.

There are 62 winter vehicles, including spare vehicles in case of breakdown, which are used to treat the 49 routes in Norfolk's priority (P1/P2) network. Each of these routes is completed within a three-hour window to ensure that the de-icing product is applied to the network to help prevent the formation of ice. Over the last six years, the average cost for delivering the winter service has been around £3.2m per year and the average cost for treating the P1/P2 routes is around £49,000 per treatment.

The Council has been proactive in adopting new technology, such as low-cost temperature sensors using the LoRaWAN and auto-salting. The Council's use of technological innovation was recognised in October 2022, when the Council won the national Highways Industry Winter Maintenance award.

Therefore, it is timely to now refresh the Council's winter service policy, although it should be noted that there are no major changes to the service which is valued by all residents and businesses across Norfolk.

Recommendations:

1. To approve the proposed Winter Service Policy in Appendix B

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 NCC as the local highway authority has a statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice (Clause 41 in the Highways Act 1980).
- 1.2 The Winter Service is planned and managed each year by the Highways Services and Highways Area Teams within the Department for Community and Environmental Services (CES) and delivered by Norse Highways operatives.
- 1.3 There are 49 treated routes in Norfolk's priority (P1/P2) network which comprise of the main A and B roads, as well as a number of local access C and U roads. Each time a countywide P1/P2 gritting action is called, around 2,200 miles (3,500 kilometres) of the network is treated within three hours. This covers over one-third of the whole road network in Norfolk. Each full countywide P1/P2 treatment uses between 160 tonnes and 320 tonnes of salt, depending on the required salt spread rate per metre square to help prevent the formation of ice based on the forecasted road surface temperatures.
- 1.4 In addition, a 636-mile (1,023 kilometre) priority 3 (P3) network is treated during periods of prolonged ice or snow and when resources allow. These P3 routes are typically less trafficked C and U class roads.
- 1.5 The spread rate for various road surface temperatures and conditions is a nationally agreed standard which is recommended by the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG). The required spread rate is assessed daily by the Duty Area Manager (DAM) & County Controller (CC) using real time data provided by our weather forecaster from weather stations positioned strategically across the county as detailed in Appendix A. The decision is taken whether it is necessary to treat any mix of the six domains that split the county as listed below. This ensures a cost-effective treatment is delivered and avoids the need to grit locations across the county where the temperature is not forecast to drop below the intervention level. These 6 domains are also shown in Appendix A.
 - A – West
 - BN – Inland North
 - BS – Inland South
 - CN – Coastal North
 - CE – Coastal East
 - NC – Norwich City

- 1.4 The gritting operation is delivered from seven strategically located salt domes across the County (Appendix A), which collectively can store 15,000 tonnes of salt. In addition, there is a 5,000-tonne reserve within a strategic salt store at Swaffham. The salt stock levels are monitored daily during the season to ensure that levels are maintained, and orders are routinely placed to ensure a regular supply of salt is received from the NCC's supplier Compass Minerals, who source the salt from their mine in Cheshire.
- 1.5 NCC treats some locally important non-public highway locations such as hospitals, Norwich Airport and park and ride sites. Borough and District Councils and other businesses are also supported by NCC providing gritting services under private gritting contracts.
- 1.6 In order to plan for the forthcoming season and capture learning points from the season just completed, annual meetings are held with client delivery teams and Norse Highways to discuss service delivery and identify suggestions for improvement and share best practice.
- 1.7 Over the last six years (covering 2016/17 to 2021/22), the average cost for delivering the winter service has been around £3.2m per year. The average cost for treating the P1/P2 routes is around £49,000 per action. The average number of actions over these five years is 70 per annum, however, this figure fluctuates season to season depending on climatic conditions.

Winter Season	Cost of delivering the winter service	Number of full route actions completed
2016/17	£2,597,491	57
2017/18	£3,370,390	113
2018/19	£2,777,865	52
2019/20	£2,924,315	45
2020/21	£4,799,410	94
2021/22	£2,643,737	54

- 1.8 Currently NCC operate 62 winter vehicles which provides a number of spare vehicles at each depot in case of breakdown. Seven new winter gritting vehicles were received in 2020. Since then, 14 new gritting vehicles have been purchased following a competitive tendering process at a cost of £1.3m to replace the older fleet vehicles and these have been operational for this 2022/23 winter season. The vehicle replacement strategy continues with a procurement exercise completed for a further 27 vehicles. These vehicles will be arriving in programmed stages through season 23/24 and 24/25 at a cost of £3.2m.
- 1.9 The support of the local farming community in Norfolk is crucial and their resource helps to support NCC in snow clearing activities. NCC has over 90 farmers under annual contract, who are allocated plans ahead of the winter season to help clear snow on P3 routes. In addition, there are over 50 other farmers who are not under contract but have expressed a willingness to help to supplement the contracted farmer resource if necessary.

- 1.10 Opportunities have been implemented over the last six years, in order to maximise efficiencies by ensuring the network is treated only when absolutely necessary. In line with industry guidance and best practice, NCC has reduced the threshold for instructing a gritting action from below +1°C to +0.5°C. This change resulted in 43 actions (costing an average of £49,000 each) that were not required, generating a £2.1m saving over the last six years.
- 1.11 In 2020/21, the practice of deferring the daily action decision was introduced for when the forecast is marginal or close to +0.5°C. This option is a useful tool in the County Controllers decision making process where they can elect to defer the winter decision (usually made at midday) in order to review to the evening forecast update from our weather service provider at 18:00hrs. This provides the team with more up to date data relating to the current road surface temperatures which may identify that treatment is not required. Over the last two seasons the introduction of this option has saved around £132,000. This option also helps the contractor manage crew rest hours.
- 1.13 The winter service operations in Norfolk commence in mid-October and end in mid-April. Since the last Policy review in 2005 and service review in 2011, there have been some significant changes/events in the delivery of the Winter Service, such as;
- The full length of the Broadland Northway and the A143/A146 link road, totalling 28 miles (45 kilometres), have been added into the P1/P2 treatment network without any increase in vehicle resources through optimisation of existing routes.
 - The salt Private Finance Initiative (PFI) with Compass Minerals came to end in April 2020.
 - Winter Service operations were transferred to Norse Highways in October 2019.
 - There were 2 significant snow events – Beast from the East in February 2018 and a further snow event in March 2021.
 - During the Covid pandemic, we have worked closely with Public Health England to support gritting treatments at designated vaccination centres, mobile testing units, local and regional testing sites.

2. Proposal

- 2.1.1. For a number of years, the County Council, as highway authority, has had an established winter maintenance policy to carry out precautionary salting on an established route priority when ice is forecast or likely to form. This winter maintenance policy has been refreshed and brought up to date, as detailed in Appendix B. It should be noted that there are no major changes proposed, but the document takes account of current national best practice and technological advances.
- 2.1.2. At times of snowfall, the current policy is to clear snow from the highway in accordance with established duty from Section 150 of the Highways Act 1980,

to remove obstructions (including snow) off the highway, as reasonably practicable.

- 2.1.3. We treat our priority 1 and 2 routes whenever icy conditions are forecast and aim to complete treatment within 3 hours of mobilisation from the depot.
- 2.1.4. Climatic and thermal differences within the county are monitored and this can lead to different areas in the county receiving different actions (salt spread rate and time of treatment) dependent upon the daily forecasts throughout the gritting season.
- 2.1.5. The current prioritisation of roads treated is based on the County route hierarchy and also accords with the national code of practice with CES Highways Area Managers using local discretion to accommodate wider transport and other priorities. Any changes to gritting routes, including additions or removals, are considered during the summer months. Alterations to approved treatment routes are not made during the winter season for operational reasons.

2.2 Grit bins

- 2.2.1. NCC Cabinet reaffirmed the policy regarding grit bins on 13 July 2011.
- 2.2.2. NCC maintains several grit bins at known trouble spots such as problematic gradients, bends, footbridges etc. for use by highway users when ice and snow conditions prevail. NCC owned grit bins that become redundant in their present location, because of network changes, can be re-sited if they can be re-located appropriately.
- 2.2.3. If a Parish or District Council requests additional grit bins on the network, they are required to seek the permission of the Area Manager where an assessment of the location will be undertaken.

Following location approval, a Parish or a District Council fund the provision of a grit bin which is then gifted to NCC. They will then be filled along with NCC's own grit bins. If they are subsequently damaged there is no obligation on NCC to replace the bin.

Parish and District Councils will only be charged for filling of the bins in exceptional circumstances. Any charge will depend on the size of the bin (litres).

- 2.2.4. The current grit bin policy has allowed the number of grit bins in Norfolk to rise from 205 in 1995 to 1,989 in 2022. A considerable number of Town and Parish Councils have funded the provision of bins allowing this growth in service provision.
- 2.2.5. Before the onset of the core Winter Period in December, the grit bins are filled with a 50/50 de-icing product/sand mix.

The budget allows for all grit bins to be refilled a second time either in January or February. The timing of this will be based on the predicted weather forecast.

2.3 Footways and Cycleways

- 2.3.1 Footway treatment in major urban areas of Norwich, Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth are included within our priority treatment network.
- 2.3.2 Additional footway treatment plans are available for town centres for treatment during extended periods of snow and ice, at which time we are able to call on resources through the existing supply chain arrangements and District Councils. Other requests for treatments are considered on an ad hoc basis once the priority network is clear.

2.4 Priorities for Treatment

- 2.4.1. The national Code of Practice states that the network hierarchy should form the starting point for winter service treatment priorities, subject to modification to accommodate Norfolk County Council's wider transport and policy strategies. More recently, the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) has advised that a risk-based approach may be more appropriate for the network, treating parts of the network that are most beneficial for the local community. The Highway Services Team will continue to review all national guidance issued and advise Members of any proposals that would change the overall service to Norfolk businesses and communities.
- 2.4.2. An Equality Impact Assessment for the delivery of Winter Services is carried out annually. The assessment is shared with Norfolk County Councils Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team.
- 2.4.3. Route priorities in Norfolk have been established, based on levels of available resource and their associated costs required to carry out operations within response and treatment times. The priorities of highways for treatment, as previously approved by Cabinet on 31st January 2005 are detailed in the following tables:
- 2.4.4

Precautionary Gritting and Snow Clearance		
Subject	NCC Priorities	Situations when treated
Roads	Priority 1 & 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All primary and principal roads • All main distributor roads • All access roads (Local and HGV) • The most important urban traffic links with more than a local significance. This includes roads leading to important industrial and military establishments, hospitals, ambulance and fire stations. 	When icy conditions are predicted.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other roads serving a local purpose and connecting to strategic routes. This includes some roads leading to bus garages, important bus routes, important commuter routes, highways serving shopping centres, single access to villages, hamlets, rural communities, schools and known trouble spots but not all. * 	
	<p>Priority 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining roads serving a local purpose and connecting to strategic routes. Local roads, including residential roads and local interconnecting roads but not all. * 	After a prolonged period of ice or snowfall as resources permit.
Roads	<p>Priority 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining roads including estate roads not included in priority 1, 2 or 3. 	After snowfall as resources permit, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing higher priority roads and footways.
	Important Traffic Restricted routes within King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Norwich. *	When frost is predicted or after snow.
	Main shopping areas and busy urban areas including footways leading to essential industrial establishments, hospitals, important bus routes and schools, and known trouble spots. *	Reactive treatment after prolonged frost or snow.
Footways	Other remaining footways.	Reactive treatment after snowfall as resources permit, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing higher priority roads and footways.
	On - road cycleways.	Treat as part of relative road priority.
Cycleways	Off - road cycleways.	To treat as resource permits, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing priority roads, footways and on-road cycleways*

2.4.5 *Based upon local discretion of local Highways Area Managers, consider the following: -

- Wider transport and other priorities.
- Accessibility dependencies.
- Known problems including significant gradients, exposed areas and other topological factors.
- Co-ordination and co-operation with other authorities.

An overall risk assessment including the need to maintain and demonstrate consistency of treatment.

2.4.6

Gritting of Private Roads	
<p>Community benefit - (demonstration) *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sections of privately maintained road / highway that provide public access or egress to either: - ▪ Emergency service facilities – Ambulance, Fire, Police Stations. ▪ Public Transport facilities; - ▪ Bus Stations, Train Stations and Airports ▪ Authority maintained Parking Facilities for access to towns ▪ Hospitals with Emergency Departments ▪ Access to Port Areas ▪ Community Services requiring emergency access: - Utility services, Environment Agency ▪ Essential Business providing key community services: - Supermarkets (main accesses only) ▪ Food distribution depots. 	<p>Treat as part of relative road priority 1 and 2. Subject to:</p> <p>1) NCC treating its network to the point of request.</p> <p>2) Resource availability and agreement being reached on specific conditions (see appendix 1 below).</p> <p>3) These are reviewed annually with customer.</p>
<p>Any other requests not included in above.</p>	<p>To treat as resource permits, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing priority roads,</p>

	footways and on-road cycleways.
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2.4.7 * Based upon local discretion of local Highways Area Managers

2.5 New Technology

2.5.1 A trial of auto-salting technology has been undertaken in 2020/21 & 2021/22, which used new equipment in three vehicles to provide satellite navigation and pre-programmed automated salting functionality.

2.5.2 The benefits of the system include improvements to more accurately record salt spreading during treatment. Any changes to routes and salt treatment can be changed remotely, which updates the in-cab system with audible direction commands for drivers. This means that drivers can concentrate on the road ahead, without needing to make adjustments manually. Over the next three years the cost savings are estimated to be between £55,000 and £180,000 (depending on the number of treatments undertaken/salt used). It is estimated that there would be an efficiency of between 10% and 15% in salt usage. Nationally, the delivery of the winter service is moving towards these technological improvements i.e., auto-salting, because of the benefits it brings in terms of reliability and consistency.

2.5.3 Routes operating in the West and Inland North forecast domains have been transferred to auto-salting for winter season 2022/23 at a cost of £85,000 (including licences), and the remaining routes operating in the City, South and East forecast domains will be transferred in 2023/24 at a cost of £100,000 (including licences). Preparation work to achieve the final tranche for 2023/24 will start immediately after the end of the current winter season 2022/23.

2.5.4 The Council has been proactive in adopting new technology when it comes to developing and using low-cost temperature sensors. These sensors complement the weather stations that we use across the county and are connected to the LoRaWAN to enable real-time information to be received. These sensors are currently being used to investigate potential heater island effects around the county and the results will enable even more refinement of the domains in the future. In turn this could lead to even more efficiencies with decision making and routing of vehicles.

2.5.5 The Council's use of technological innovation was recognised in October 2022, when the Council won the national Highways Industry Winter Maintenance award for deploying digital innovation and technology to inform the winter service in Norfolk.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 Approval of the updated Winter Service policy will enable the smooth delivery of the Highways Winter Service to continue. It will allow the authority to make best use of available technology and comply with its statutory duties imposed under the Highways Act 1980.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 NCC are recognised nationally for the way the winter service is delivered across the county. NCC has a robust winter plan which has been consistently reviewed and followed, which has allowed the service to perform well. However, there are opportunities to make efficiencies and utilise new and emerging technologies which have developed in the field of winter treatment operations. These new technologies are successfully used by other local authorities. Against strong national competition, in October 2022 NCC received a national award for the work it has carried out in using new technology to inform the winter service in the County.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The winter service will continue to deliver the operations in line with national guidance, to a high standard. The proposals outlined within the report and refreshed Winter Services policy are there to further improve the performance and cost-effectiveness of the winter service going forward.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The following proposals have potential financial implications:
- 6.2 Auto-salting will require a phased funding approach. This will be funded as part of a spend to save initiative from the winter budget and form part of the already approved Council's savings proposals. Routes operating in the West and Inland North forecast domains have been installed first, ahead of the 2022/23 season at an estimated cost of £85,000 (including licences) and the remaining routes operating in the City, South and East forecast domains are planned for installation in 2023/24 at a cost of £100,000 (including licences).

7. Resource Implications

7.1 Staff:

- 7.1.1 There are no additional staff implications arising from the proposals within this report. All proposals identified can be progressed within existing resources.

7.2 Property:

- 7.2.1 There are no property implications arising from the proposals within this report.

7.3 IT:

- 7.3.1 There are no implications on IT resources as a result of any proposals identified in this report.

8. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications: None

8.2 Human Rights Implications: None

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

A review of the Equality Impact Assessment is carried out each winter season.

The Equality Impact Assessment highlighted a possible inequality for older or disabled people, particularly those with mobility problems, because the Council does not normally treat footways, although some main shopping areas in Market Towns are treated during prolonged ice or snow, as resources permit. The current policy of providing grit bins and treating footways on a cost-benefit/resource analysis basis is thought to be appropriate in terms of helping to mitigate this issue, bearing in mind that prolonged ice or snow is infrequent and has a temporary impact. In implementing the policy, the Area Manager is also able to use their discretion to provide an additional winter service in areas where there are accessibility dependencies.

If any changes to the existing policy or service delivery were proposed, a new Equality Impact Assessment would need to be carried out to determine the potential impact. The extent to which a new policy, and different criteria, would impact on equality would depend on the changes being considered.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

There are no issues relating to this report.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

Any reduction in service delivery on the network would be risk assessed against the treatment policy criteria and any findings communicated to all key stakeholders to ensure that any possible risk to highway users is mitigated.

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

8.7 Any Other Implications:

Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 There are no additional risks to assess as a result of this report.

10. Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 The proposed Winter Services Policy was presented to the 15th March 2023 Infrastructure & Development Committee meeting. At the meeting, Members highlighted the value and importance of the winter service and thanked all those Council, Norse Highways and supply chain staff for their work, often out of hours, in delivering the winter service across Norfolk.
- 10.2 The Committee also supported the proposed Winter Services Policy document.

11. Recommendations

1. To approve the proposed Winter Service Policy in Appendix B

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 [Winter Maintenance Policy Review – Cabinet \(31st January 2005\)](#)
- 12.2 [Winter Service Review – ETD Overview and Scrutiny Panel \(13th July 2011\)](#)
- 12.3 Appendix A - Forecast Domains & Weather Stations plan
- 12.4 Appendix B – Winter Service Policy document

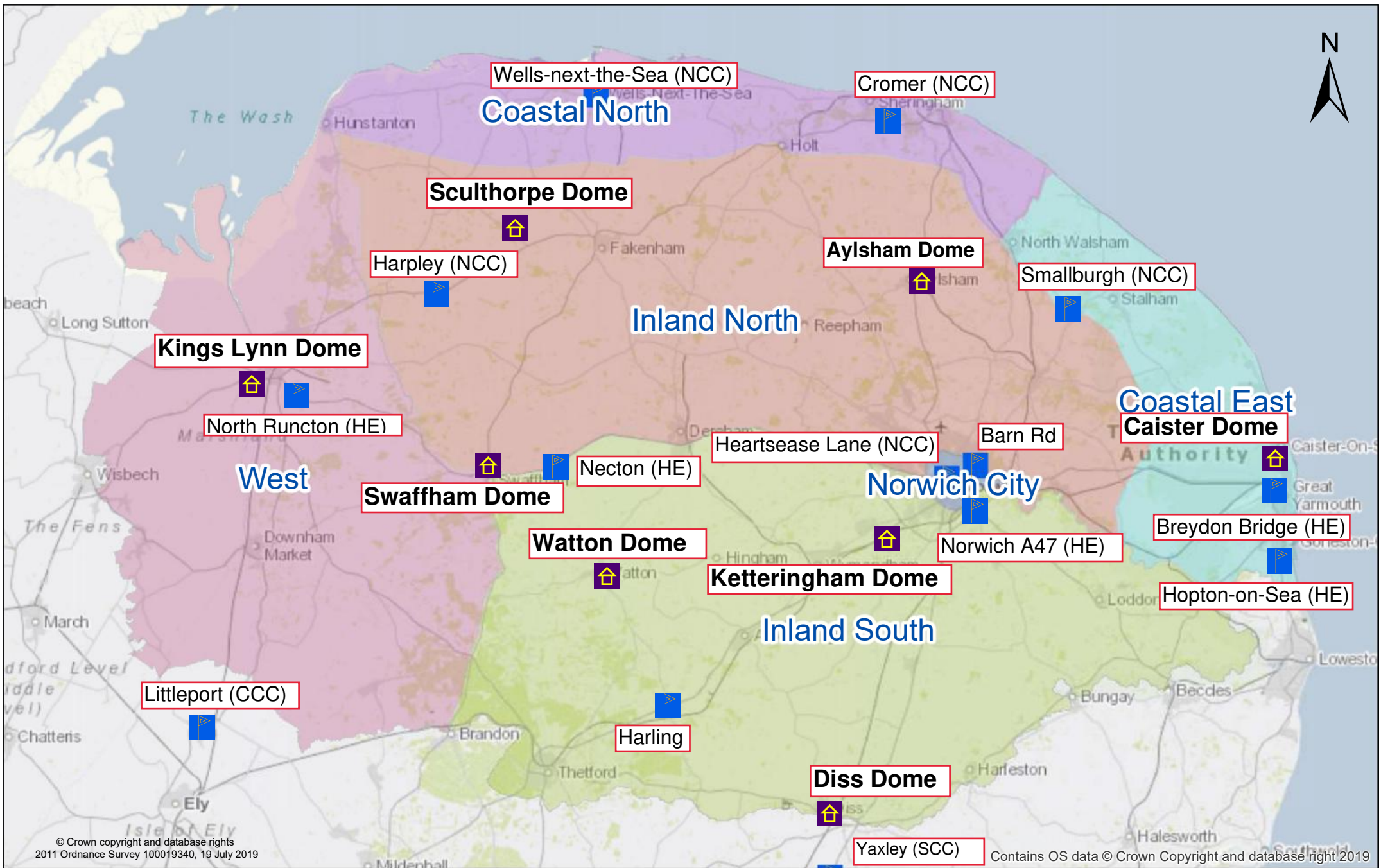
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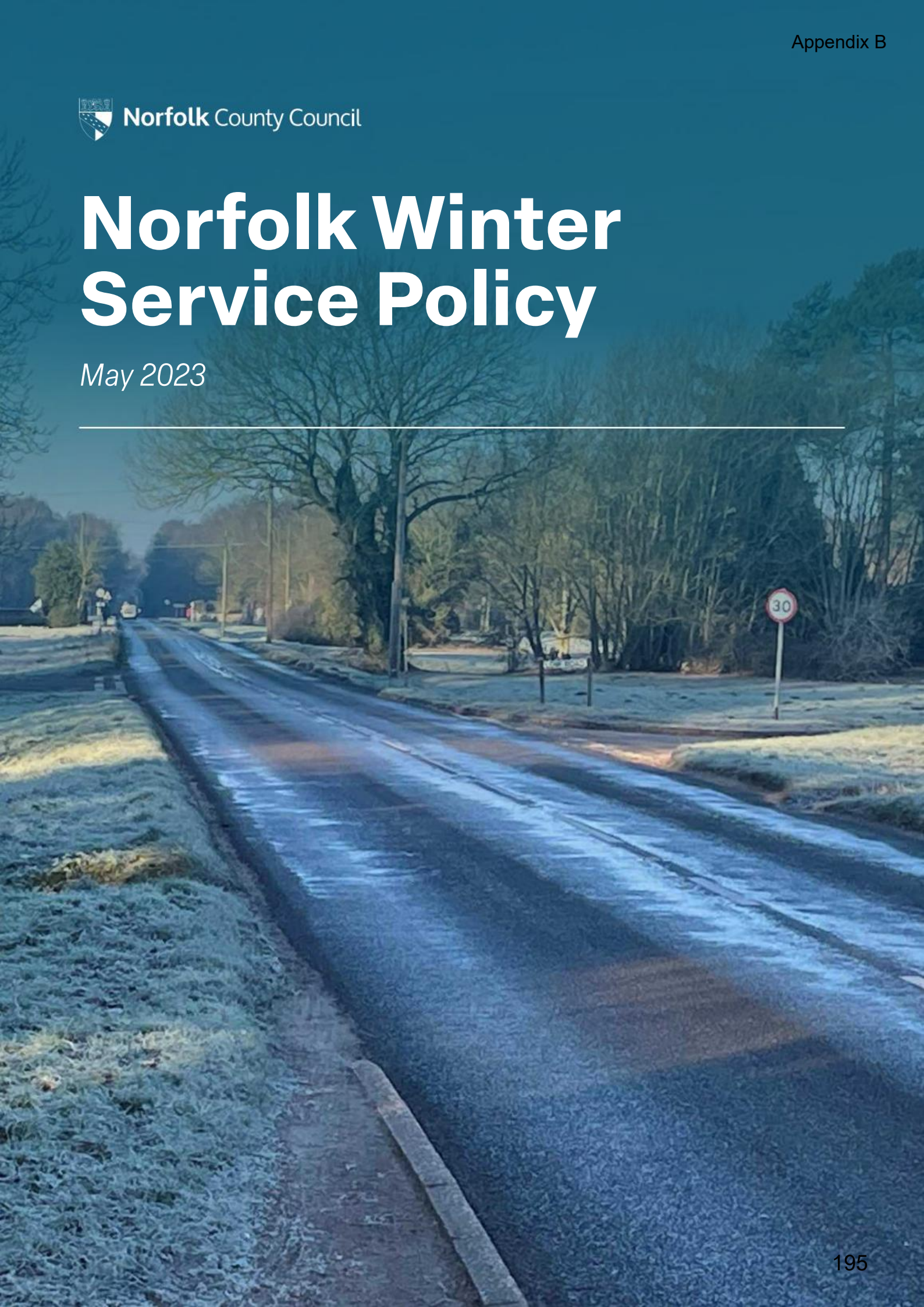
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Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2019

Map showing Forecast Domains, Ice Prediction Stations and Salt Barns 2022-23

Norfolk Winter Service Policy

May 2023



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1. Foreword

The Winter Service is relied upon for many communities, businesses and visitors to Norfolk ensuring the highway network remains open and available for use for all modes of transport in the most severe weather conditions. In total the highway network amounts to 6,125 miles (9857km) and our winter service plans aims to treat 34% of the adopted highway travelling 2,200 miles (3500km) during each gritting action. Not all roads are adopted and some roads such as A11 and A47 (trunk roads) are maintained by National Highways (formerly Highways England).

The County Council's well established operational plans results in an effective winter service with the assistance of our supply chain, such as Norse Highways gritter drivers and staff, salt supplier, farmers snowploughs, and daily weather forecast provider, notwithstanding the Council's Highways teams who manage the delivery of the service on a daily basis 24/7 to monitor weather forecasts.

The previous Winter Service Policy document was written and agreed by Members of Norfolk County Council in 2005. Since then, guidance* from both the Department for Transport (DfT) and from the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) has altered and enhanced the ways in which we deliver the winter service in Norfolk. There has been a marked increase in community engagement and volunteering since the 2005 Policy document was written and agreed. This change, along with other nationally adopted practices, has made a review of the existing policy necessary in order to capture these changes and other improvements in winter service delivery.

Delivery of the Winter Service is detailed in the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP). The TAMP sets out the standards, maintenance needs, strategy, policy and objectives for the highway network and also includes details relating to the Winter Service Operational Plan (WSOP). The WSOP is prepared annually and contains detailed information and instructions on the preparation of the plan and the delivery of the winter service.

Within Norfolk seven salt barns are located strategically at Aylsham, Caister, Diss, Ketteringham, Watton, Sculthorpe and King's Lynn. In addition, a strategic salt stock is located at Swaffham for resilience purposes during exceptional and prolonged periods of cold temperatures. In total we can store 15,000t of salt ready for use on the highway network.

Our extensive network of grit bins enables local communities to self-help where a gritting service cannot be supplied, and this is relied upon by many to treat isolated areas where ice may form.

The Winter Service period usually operates between mid-October and mid-April with the core winter period identified as 1 December to 1 March, although the Council will continue to work outside these periods if the daily forecasts indicate the service is still required.

The delivery of the Winter Service is a key highway function to ensure all users of the highway remain safe during the most severe winter conditions.

We simply cannot grit all roads, although we continue to treat a high percentage of the roads in Norfolk (34%) and have a well-structured priority network based on the function of the road, in accordance with national guidance, to ensure each community has a gritted road to enable access to the primary network. In addition, the network of grit bins in key locations offers valuable support for the communities when needed. Not only do we rely on the direct supply chain to drive the gritters, but we also appreciate the excellent work and time volunteers contribute, along with local farmers who clear snow when winter hits hard.

We will continue to communicate our daily winter service treatment decisions using social media, and also to issue safe driving messages through these well used channels, so that communities understand when we propose to grit the roads.

I am pleased that new technology is being introduced as new the new gritter fleet is being received, to help ensure the distribution of salt is undertaken as efficiently as possible and reduce the cost of the delivering winter services.

I believe this Winter Service Policy will continue to deliver a safe and resilient highway network in even the most challenging of circumstances.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Plant'.

Graham Plant
Cabinet Member
for Highways Infrastructure and Transport

May 2023

2. Policy and Practice in Norfolk

The County Council as highway authority has an established winter maintenance policy to carry out precautionary salting on an established route priority when ice is likely to form.

At times of snowfall the current policy is to clear snow from the highway in accordance with an established duty from Section 150 of the Highways Act 1980, to remove obstructions (including snow) off the highway.

We treat our strategic network (known as priority 1 and 2 routes) whenever icy conditions are predicted by our weather provider and aim to complete treatment within 3 hours of mobilisation from the depot.

Climatic and thermal differences within the county are monitored and this can lead to different areas in the county receiving different treatments at different start times dependent upon the daily forecasts throughout the gritting season.

The current prioritisation of roads treated is based on the route hierarchy that defines roads according to their function and level of use. Within this hierarchy the main road network is formed from Principal Routes (A Roads) and Main Distributor Routes (B Roads), and these roads accommodate the majority of through traffic. From this main road network, the aim is to provide a route to each of the main communities and these are designated Local Access Routes. As the Principal, Main Distributor and Local Access Routes are expected to accommodate more traffic, these routes have a maintenance priority for gritting. This principle accords with the national code of practice.



3. Strategic Framework

In 2003 an amendment to Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 made it a duty for a highway authority to ensure, so far, as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow and ice. Winter treatment to prevent the formation of ice when it is forecast falls within this duty. The legislation does not impose an absolute duty but rather involves a balance between the risk and the resources necessary to eliminate it.

Section 150 of the Act still imposes a duty upon authorities to remove any obstruction of the highway resulting from accumulation of snow or from falling of banks on the side of the highway, or from any other cause.



4. Priorities for Treatment

The Code of Practice states that the network hierarchy should form the starting point for winter service treatment priorities, subject to modification to accommodate Norfolk County Councils wider transport and policy strategies.

An Equality Impact Assessment for the delivery of Winter Services is carried out annually. The assessment is shared with Norfolk County Councils Equalities Team and filed within the winter records for the current season.

Route priorities in Norfolk have been established, based on a reasonable level of available resource and their associated costs required to carry out operations within response and treatment times. The priorities of highways for treatment are detailed below.

****Please note some of the treatment priorities below are subject to local discretion of local Highways Area Managers, who have made consideration to the following: -**

- Wider transport and other priorities.
- Accessibility dependencies.
- Known problems including significant gradients, exposed areas and other topological factors.
- Co-ordination and co-operation with other authorities.

An overall risk assessment including the need to maintain and demonstrate consistency of treatment



5. Roads – Public Highway and Private

Precautionary Gritting and Snow Clearance Subject : Roads

NCC Priorties 1 & 2

- All primary and principal roads
- All main distributor roads
- All access roads (Local and HGV)
- The most important urban traffic links with more than a local significance. This includes roads leading to important industrial and military establishments, hospitals, ambulance, and fire stations.
- Other roads serving a local purpose and connecting to strategic routes. This includes some roads leading to bus garages, important bus routes, important commuter routes, highways serving shopping centres, single access to villages, hamlets, rural communities, schools and known trouble spots but not all. **

Situations when treated

When icy conditions are predicted.

NCC Priority 3

- Remaining roads serving a local purpose and connecting to strategic routes.
- Local roads, including residential roads and local interconnecting roads but not all.**

Situations when treated

After a prolonged period of ice or snowfall as resources permit.



NCC Priority 4

- Remaining roads including estate roads not included in priority 1, 2 or 3.

Situations when treated

After snowfall as resources permit, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing higher priority roads and footways.

Community benefit - (demonstration) **

- Sections of privately maintained road / highway that provide public access or egress to either: -
- Emergency service facilities – Ambulance, Fire, Police Stations.
- Public Transport facilities; -
- Bus Stations, Train Stations and Airports
- Authority maintained Parking Facilities for access to towns
- Hospitals with Emergency Departments
- Access to Port Areas
- Community Services requiring emergency access: - Utility services, Environment Agency
- Essential Business providing key community services: - Supermarkets (main accesses only)
- Food distribution depots.

Situations when treated

Treat as part of relative road priority 1 and 2. Subject to:

- 1) NCC treating its network to the point of request.
- 2) Resource availability and agreement being reached on specific conditions (see appendix 1 below).
- 3) These are reviewed annually with customer.

Any other requests not included in above.

To treat as resource permits, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing priority roads, footways and on-road cycleways.



6. Footways and Cycleways

Some footways in Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn Town Centre are routinely treated when the priority treatment network is gritted (along with the road network). During periods of prolonged ice and snow, footway treatment plans are available for most town centres which increases the treated footway network with assistance from local councils.

In addition, footway gritting is undertaken by some local volunteers in some parish and town centres; this is a valuable community service addition to the delivery of the winter service and is fully supported by the County Council.

Precautionary Gritting and Snow Clearance Subject : Footways

NCC Priority 1

Important Traffic Restricted routes within King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Norwich. **

Situations when treated

When frost is predicted or after snow.

NCC Priority 2

Main shopping areas and busy urban areas including footways leading to essential industrial establishments, hospitals, important bus routes and schools, and known trouble spots. **

Situations when treated

Reactive treatment after prolonged frost or snow.

NCC Priority 3

Other remaining footways.*

Situations when treated

Reactive treatment after snowfall as resources permit, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing higher priority roads and footways.

Precautionary Gritting and Snow Clearance Subject : Cycleways

NCC Priority 1

On - road cycleways.

Situations when treated

When frost is predicted or after snow.

NCC Priority 2

Off - road cycleways.

Situations when treated

To treat as resource permits, having first established reasonable conditions in clearing priority roads, footways and on-road cycleways**



7. Grit bins

The Council maintains their own strategic grit bins at known hot spots such as problematic gradients with a greater rise of 5% for a minimum length of 50 metres or bends and footbridges.

Salt bins are provided at various locations throughout the county to allow communities to treat localised icy conditions or when ice and snow conditions prevail. The bins contain a salt/sand mix which is solely for use on public roads and pavements and should not be used for privately owned driveways or communal parking areas. In Norwich City, bins have been located at problematic junctions so that gritting operatives do not have to return to depots to reload salt. Council owned grit bins that become redundant in their present location, because of network changes, can be re-sited if they can be re-located appropriately.

No provisions exist allowing the Parish or Town Council to place grit bins on the highway. They may, however, donate grit bins to the County Council, subject to the Area Manager agreeing a location and for NCC to accept the cost of future refilling.

Parish or Town Councils may wish to fund additional grit bins on the public highway and if this is the case we can work with parish or town council representatives to agree and determine the best location.

Requests for grit bins cannot be received directly from members of the public. They should instead be channelled through the local Town Council, Parish Council, Norwich City Council or Local Member.

Locations of public grit bins are published on the [NCC website and marked on the map by green triangles](#).

The replenishment of the salt /sand mix in grit bins is usually undertaken twice per winter season (which is in November/December and then again after Christmas, depending upon weather conditions).



8. *Sharing information with other Authorities and Services*

During the winter season, the Council shares the daily forecast of gritting actions with neighbouring local authorities and National Highways. Even though we do not always carry out the same treatment actions, it does enable us to consider what is happening in a wider context.

Liaison arrangements through the Eastern Area Consortium with other Counties in East Anglia, provides arrangements to treat roads on the priority network that fall outside of the Norfolk County Boundary. This situation arises where the Priority treatment network bisects the County Boundary Line and it is more efficient and economical for a single authority to treat the route regardless of network ownership.

It is possible that different authorities carry out gritting actions at different times or not at all and highway users should always drive to the conditions.



9. Quality Management

The Authority's record regarding delivery of Winter Service remains very high. Focussed Winter Service Audits take place during the winter service season to ensure route compliance and salt usage. At the end of each season, the Audit process is also reviewed by key stakeholders to ensure that the content continues to be relevant.

As the condition of salt, particularly with regards to moisture content, is critical to effective and economical treatments, it is extremely important to regularly monitor the salt condition.

The Salt Supplier tests salt at the point of purchase (including moisture content) and Norse Highways (The Norfolk Partnership Laboratory) takes samples from salt deliveries to check the materials conform to specification. Both sets of test results are compared by the Norfolk Winter Team, and any appropriate action is taken as necessary.



10. Information and Publicity

Public communication of agreed actions is delivered via our Facebook and Twitter social media channels. Other supporting Winter information including a detailed map of gritting routes (see below) is published on the NCC website under 'gritting' [Gritting - Norfolk County Council](#).



An aerial view of Norfolk showing Norfolk County Council's priority gritting routes.



Cabinet

Item No: 11

Report Title: Corporate Delivery Plan – Annual Report 2022-2023

Date of Meeting: 10 May 2023

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Proctor (Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance)

Responsible Director: Paul Cracknell, Executive Director Strategy and Transformation

Is this a Key Decision? No

If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A

Executive Summary

In November 2021 Norfolk County Council formally adopted its new strategy, *Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025* as part of its policy framework. At the same time the Council committed to develop an annual Corporate Delivery Plan, to provide a cross-organisational view of the critical activities that contribute to the delivery our overall strategy.

The Corporate Delivery Plan is reviewed and refreshed on a yearly basis and the purpose of this paper is to introduce the Annual Report of the 2022-2023 Corporate Delivery Plan.

Significant Norfolk County Council achievements listed in the annual report include:

- Successfully negotiated an in-principle agreement for a Norfolk County Deal, which could bring over £600m of investment to Norfolk, subject to a final decision by the County Council in December 2023
- A significantly improved “Good” rating in all areas of Children’s services following Ofsted inspection
- Delivering a balanced budget despite significant financial pressures
- Fibre broadband delivered to over 4,000 premises
- Delivered over 2,500 additional hours per-week of home care
- Over 2 million kilometres travelled by Norfolk residents using the Beryl Bikes scheme

- Helped 1,150 residents with employment through our CHANCES scheme
- Ran 10 community food hubs with over 100 warm spaces provided supporting 15,000 people
- Processed 60,000 tonnes of waste, with 72.8% diverted from disposal
- Over 40,000 children attended programmes in libraries

Recommendations:

1. Approve the Annual Report of the 2022/23 Corporate Delivery Plan

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Norfolk County Council's strategic framework consists of individual strategic documents which set out the Council's ambitions and priorities. These are aligned to the administration's manifesto pledges, and reflect both national policy and the local operating context and challenges.
- 1.2 The framework ensures there are clear links between the strategic documents and operational plans, connecting council priorities with performance outcomes and measures at a departmental, team, and individual level.
- 1.3 The Corporate Delivery Plan is produced on an annual basis to present a single, whole-council view of key activities which reflect the council's priorities for the coming year, its response to central government policy, and work to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. We review the previous year's Plan and produce an annual report, to be presented to Cabinet at the end of the business planning cycle for that year.
- 1.4 This year's annual report provides a progress update for the key activities described in the [Corporate Delivery Plan for 2022-2023](#). The document is intended to be read alongside the plan, so that the reader can see what has been delivered against each key activity and how that progress contributes to the delivery of our overall strategic priorities from [Better Together, For Norfolk 2021-2025](#).

2. NCC Strategic Framework

- 2.1 The Corporate Delivery Plan sits within Norfolk County Council's strategic framework, which consists of:
 - The Council's Corporate Strategy, *Better Together, For Norfolk* – our high-level strategy which runs from 2021 – 2025.

- Corporate Delivery Plan – this is refreshed and reported on annually to provide a progress update on the key priorities of our strategy.
- Department Plans – these sit within each department and should be aligned to our Corporate Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Plans on a Page – These are developed annually and sit within whatever level is deemed appropriate within a department. They are delivery focussed and will tend to summarise the key priorities and work which takes place across a team.
- Personal Development Plans – these are set by each individual in discussion with their line manager. The plans should link back to delivery of the Corporate Strategy and include personal objectives.

2.2 The framework collectively functions to ensure alignment across the organisation from the very high-level vision and goals, right down to the contribution of individuals.

3. Corporate Delivery Plan

3.1 The Corporate Delivery Plan provides a cross-organisational view of the critical activities that will deliver our overall strategy as well as our Medium Term Financial Strategy and operational targets.

3.1 The activities contained within the plan do not form a comprehensive list, but instead are those that have the most significance for the organisation and which support the outcomes and objectives outlined in the strategy. They include:

- Areas of significant service activity (e.g., transformational changes in service delivery and business change projects, new services, etc.)
- Significant commissioning activities for infrastructure (e.g., highways, property, digital infrastructure) and people services (e.g., children's, adults and public health services)
- Capital delivery (e.g., delivering new education, property and community assets in our capital programme)
- Strategy and policy development (e.g., new strategies, responding to changes in national policy, and influencing government)

3.2 Essential day-to-day service delivery is captured in departmental plans and plans-on-a-page.

3.3 The Corporate Delivery Plan is structured around our 5 strategic priorities

- A vibrant and sustainable economy
- Better opportunities for children and young people

- Healthy, fulfilling, and independent lives
- Strong, engaged, and inclusive communities
- A greener, more resilient future

and sets out a narrative of how we will seek to respond to and deliver these priorities during the year.

- 3.4 The Plan also contains a section on Operational Effectiveness, which describes key activity that aims to transform the Council, including our property, technology, ways of working, engagement and workforce. These essential activities often require a cross-cutting approach across the Council.
- 3.5 The Plan is owned by the Leader, the Head of Paid Service and the Council's Executive Directors and has been collectively developed with Departmental Senior Leadership Teams.
- 3.6 The Plan is part of the corporate business planning cycle, and is reviewed and updated on an annual basis, to help the Council focus on what needs to be delivered in the next short-to-medium term.
- 3.7 The report appended to this covering paper is the Annual Report for the 2022-3 Corporate Delivery Plan.

4. The Annual Report

- 4.1 The attached Annual Report presents a concise summary of the progress made during 2022-23 on an activity-by-activity basis. Each activity identified as key in the 2022-23 Corporate Delivery Plan has a response worked up in collaboration with the relevant Directorate and operational leads that shows the most important aspects and achievements of the work undertaken during the past year.
- 4.2 The annual report is compiled from high-level perspective for reporting purposes, with only the key details and headlines included. As such it does not represent the totality of work undertaken by the Council on any given activity. It is designed to be read alongside the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2023, and can be read alongside our quarterly performance reports which provide an update on the organisation's vital signs.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The financial context for the strategy and Corporate Delivery Plan is set through our annual budget planning process and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6. Resource Implications

6.1 Staff: N/a

6.2 Property: N/a

6.3 IT: The document will need to be uploaded, in its accessible format, to the council's website under the strategy and policies section.

7. Other Implications

7.1 Legal Implications: N/a

7.2 Human Rights Implications: N/a

7.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):

The Corporate Delivery Plan consolidates projects and business activity required to deliver our strategy, ***Better Together, for Norfolk***. Each project is distinct in its own right and will have a different level of impact on people with protected characteristics and the armed forces, depending on its nature and focus. All project managers and business leads are therefore required to ensure that due regard is given to equality duty in designing, reporting on and delivering their activities. If any negative impacts are identified that cannot be mitigated, these will be reported to Cabinet for determination.

7.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): N/a

7.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): N/a

7.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): N/a

7.7 Any Other Implications: N/a

8. Risk Implications / Assessment

8.1 Prioritising key activities to ensure understanding of and focus on what is critical within the Council strategy is the major feature of the Corporate Delivery Plan. This prioritisation process provides clarity to staff and our residents about what matters to the Council, and also provides a manageable set of strategic activities for Cabinet and Leadership to monitor throughout the year.

8.2 The Council maintains a Corporate Risk Register that identifies the most significant corporate and strategic risks. It contains details of the principal risks

to the achievement of the objectives of our strategy. Each of these risks is assessed for likelihood and impact and has a responsible owner and programme of mitigating actions/controls. The register is updated throughout the year and reported quarterly to Cabinet.

9. Recommendations

1. Approve the Annual Report of the 2022/23 Corporate Delivery Plan

10. Background Papers

10.1 [Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025](#)

10.2 [2022-3 Corporate Delivery Plan](#).

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.



CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023

▶ ANNUAL REPORT

A look at key activities across Norfolk
over the past year



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▶ LEADER'S FOREWORD

I write the foreword to this Annual Report in circumstances that are some of the most unusual of the past few years.

Having emerged with confidence out of the Covid years, we now face more unsettling and troubled times: Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, rising inflation and cost of living, increasing signs of climate change with one of the hottest summers on record – all showing that we live in an increasingly volatile world.

The job of the County Council is to secure the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of our residents, businesses and communities, and we take that responsibility extremely seriously. In November 2021, we launched our strategy **Better Together, for Norfolk**, outlining our ambitions for our county, and in April 2022, we launched our Corporate Delivery Plan 2022/23 which highlighted our priorities for the year.

A year later, our ambitions have not changed. We continue to strive to be one of the highest performing counties in the country, overseeing economic growth, and creating great jobs and opportunities for the people of Norfolk, while maintaining and cherishing our environment, countryside and heritage.

It is from this ambition that in December 2022 we signed an in-principle agreement with Government to pursue a devolution deal – a County Deal for Norfolk – worth at least £600m of investment over 30 years, and bringing with it a range of other powers and funding to Norfolk too. Devolution is aimed at promoting local growth through targeted investment and skills development, improving productivity, enabling more and better affordable housing, and strengthening local leadership and making it directly accountable to the people of Norfolk. With our partners, we will work hard to raise our county’s profile nationally, and most importantly, start to make decisions in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

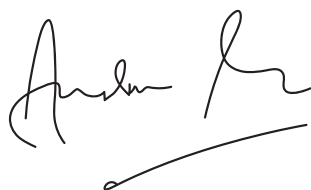
In January, we were also delighted to be rated “Good” by Ofsted for our significant improvements within Children’s Services, in a report that highlighted “exemplary” and “exceptional” areas of practice. This was the service’s first full inspection since 2017 and demonstrates how our continued investment in frontline services, transformation and our workforce has significantly improved not only the way we work, but also the outcomes for so many children and families across our county.

Of course, we would not be able to continue to invest in our frontline services were we not also focusing on reducing our cost base and achieving efficiencies within the organisation. Our Strategic Review, first announced in April 2022, has identified a number of changes necessary to ensuring the council is well-run, delivering best value to our residents, and spending money where it is needed most. This is not a one-off event however: it will be a journey of continuous improvement that will help future-proof the council and the services it delivers.

This Annual Report sets out the progress we have made over the past year on a number of our key priorities. And while we applaud our achievements, we must continue to recognise and face up to the significant challenges ahead of us, thinking creatively, working smarter and taking advantage of every opportunity we have to work better with Government and with our partners.

I am proud of what we have achieved together in Norfolk, and am confident that we can do even better over the coming year.

With best wishes,



Andrew Proctor, Leader

▶ OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN NUMBERS OVER THE PAST YEAR

Fire Service

In the past year the fire service attended



674
wildfires



2748
fires



646 road
traffic collisions

Total of **7175** emergency callouts.

Net-emissions from estates

3403

tonnes of CO₂ equivalent for 2021/2022



81.5%

decrease since 2016/2017¹



Employer training grants delivered to **344 businesses**

Over **40,000** children



attended programmes in our libraries

£61 million in savings

over past 5 years from promoting independence in ASC



Delivered over **2,500 additional hours** per week of home care

¹ Taken from the Council's net-zero Power-BI dashboard: [Microsoft Power BI](#)

Over **2 million kilometres** travelled by Norfolk residents on Beryl Bikes



£48million spent on re-dressing, resurfacing roads & delivering safety improvements

Fibre broadband delivered to **over 4000 premises**

Helped support over **1,150 residents** with employment through our CHANCES programme



“Good” rating



in all areas for Children’s Services following inspection.



laptops provided to residents, including **500** to Ukrainian refugees.

10 Community food hubs and over **100** warm spaces provided, supporting **15,000** people.



- **20** Recycling centres
- **15** reuse shops
- **1 million visits per year**



Over the past year:

60,000 tonnes processed, with **72.8%** diverted from disposal.

Recycling rates in Norfolk are up by **2.1%** to **44.2%**.

Around **186,000** tonnes of material sent to recycling.

Breakdown of waste in Norfolk

- **42%** energy from waste,
- **21.6%** composting,
- **22.4%** recycling,
- **13.6%** landfill,
- **0.4%** reuse



▶ OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We believe we can have a vibrant economy, healthy people, and resilient communities as they are all interconnected.

Our [corporate strategy](#) is designed to make a difference to our county's social infrastructure, economic infrastructure and physical infrastructure. The council's key priorities are set out below:



A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

– supporting skills, high value jobs, growth, investment and infrastructure



BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

– improved outcomes for families, better educational attainment and more employment opportunities for young people



HEALTHY, FULFILLING AND INDEPENDENT LIVES

– levelling up health outcomes, living well and better local services



STRONG, ENGAGED AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

– more participation, capacity building and empowerment of communities



A GREENER, MORE RESILIENT FUTURE

– protecting and enhancing the environment, access to quality spaces and community resilience



INTRODUCTION

This annual report provides a progress update for the key activities described in the [Corporate Delivery Plan for 2022-2023](#). The document is intended to be read alongside the plan, so that the reader can see what has been delivered against each key activity and how that progress contributes to the delivery of our overall strategic priorities from [Better Together, For Norfolk 2021-2025](#).

The following key activities do not form an exhaustive list of all the work taking place across Norfolk County Council. Instead, they serve to demonstrate how the organisation is delivering on its key strategic priorities while responding to national pressures and legislation.

National policy context

2022 saw a raft of national legislation delivered during a turbulent Parliamentary period, with many policies having impact on local government. Over the past year, multiple Prime Ministers with differing agendas has meant competing priorities emerge with each new administration. Despite this, Norfolk has remained alive to the changing nature of new policy and has responded in an adaptive and timely way.

The UK's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine has included the Homes for Ukraine programme, which has been delivered in partnership with local authorities.

Local authorities have been at the frontline of the response to the cost-of-living crisis, such as through administering Government's "Household Support Fund" which provides tailored local support such as through the Norfolk Assistance Scheme. Rising to these unexpected challenges while delivering regular functions has proven a difficult, but not impossible, task.

Despite Parliamentary difficulties, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill advanced through the House of Commons in 2022 and will attempt to put the Government's levelling up missions into law. The planning aspects of the bill have been relaxed, including the removal of mandatory housing targets.

The far-reaching Schools Bill, which would have set Government direction on education and laid out plans for further academisation of schools, is not being taken forward at this point. The council is clear



that it will need new direction set on education policy following the scrapping of this key piece of legislation. We welcome Government's recently published children's social care implementation strategy, which sets out much-needed reform and funding in this area.

The Government has delayed its widely publicised reforms to adult social care, which will include a lifetime cap on the amount people pay towards their care, more generous financial means-test thresholds, the ability for self-funders to ask their council to arrange their care, and a move towards a fair rate in respect of councils' fees to care providers. While the local government sector welcomes having more time to prepare for these reforms, we are clear that the reforms must still happen and be funded in a sustainable way. Further increasing council tax will not fully cover the costs of reform, nor is it a sustainable long-term approach for stabilising the sector.

At the time of writing, we await progress on other areas of key legislation announced in the Queen's Speech and otherwise, such as the Transport Bill, Health Disparities White Paper, Online Safety Bill, and the Fair Funding Review, which continues to be postponed.

Norfolk County Council continues to engage with Government directly, and through its local MPs to ensure that Norfolk's voice is heard within the national policymaking agenda.



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1:

▶ A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Since the 2022-2023 Corporate Delivery Plan was published, we have seen the key challenge of economic recovery following the pandemic exacerbated by a new challenge that is more starkly felt by people and businesses across the county.

The rising cost of living has dominated headlines over the past year, as a variety of factors including Russia's invasion of Ukraine and ongoing issues with global supply chains have driven up prices for the consumer, especially for food, fuel, and energy costs.

This has resulted in the Consumer Price Index (effectively an annual cost tracker on a basket of goods) peaking at 11.1% in October 2022, with the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee raising interest rates to 4% on 2 February 2023². Higher prices have resulted in reduced footfall to the retail sector, which compounds the challenges it faces coming out of the pandemic. A tight labour market has seen a high number of vacancies and a stable employment rate in Norfolk (76.6%)³, resulting in higher wages in some sectors.

While this economic backdrop makes delivering our strategic priorities far more difficult, it is now more important than ever to deliver them and is why we have pushed for progress over the last year.

² [Bank Rate increased to 4% - February 2023 | Bank of England](#)

³ [Economy - UTLA | Norfolk | Report Builder for ArcGIS \(norfolkinsight.org.uk\)](#)



► **Growth and Development**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Deliver a 5-year investment framework for Norfolk	<p>A five-year investment framework would allow us to compete nationally for funding to support growth in the county.</p> <p>The framework would allow us to deliver a programme of projects to upskill residents, give them more opportunities for work, and improve infrastructure, thus creating a more economically successful county.</p>	<p>The Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF) was signed off by Cabinet in June 2022.</p> <p>Project and programme metrics, as well as a long-term impact evaluation framework, are in development, working with the University of East Anglia and the Norfolk Office of Data Analytics (NODA).</p> <p>A £1.5m pipeline of pilot projects was endorsed by the NIF Steering Group on 24 January and is going through the council’s approval process.</p>
Support the delivery of the Norfolk Rural Strategy	<p>There will be improved collaboration between partners to tackle issues affecting the rural community such as skills, connectivity, access to services and infrastructure (including water/energy).</p> <p>NCC’s contribution to this partnership strategy is primarily the securing of funding for local challenges, based on evidence, such as projects that have their own metrics for success.</p> <p>Broader metrics will be reflected in the alignment of the rural economic strategy with the Norfolk Investment Framework, whose long-term metrics are being developed as above.</p>	<p>Norfolk’s Rural Strategy was endorsed by the council’s cabinet in December 2021.</p> <p>The Council’s IT department is working with a number of village halls to provide them with high-speed broadband – a £400k fixed wireless temporary solution, until full fibre is delivered. The Go Digital Programme has been assisting businesses to do more online and the Innovation Grant Mentoring Programme has helped SMEs target government innovation funding towards beneficiaries in rural areas and market towns.</p> <p>The Agri-tech Skills Exchange has run a pilot with industry and further education providers to support curriculum development. The results from the pilot are being fed into the development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan for Norfolk, which focuses on agri-tech, net zero, digital skills and soft skills.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Continue to roll out our economic plan for recovery and growth	Our economic plan for recovery and growth will support residents with business planning and development, innovation, digitalisation and business incubation to create a strong, diverse and thriving economy and improve residents' lives.	<p>Go Digital: Currently 540 businesses have been supported through C-CARE funding with the remaining 60 currently progressing well through the project. In addition, 271 were previously supported through district SLAs. Innovation Grant Mentoring Programme: 260 businesses have registered to the project, with 51 applications for one-to-one innovation mentoring and bid writing coaching. While 29 businesses have been approved for support, other businesses were directed to more relevant support streams. 10 businesses assisted in Bids to Innovate UK, 3 businesses were awarded grants from Innovation Funding Streams following support from the project.</p> <p>Enterprise & Business Start-Up Programme: we are using our contacts in Menta and in the People from Abroad team to help recruit the participants from a range of backgrounds.</p>
Enable the development of sites supporting new technologies	<p>By continuing to enable the development of sites supporting new technologies, we will create higher-value jobs and investment opportunities in the county.</p> <p>Such strategic sites support the creation of higher value jobs for local people and inward investment opportunities.</p>	<p>Initial demolition works were carried out last year to prepare the Operations and Maintenance site for development, construction started in January 2023 and the build is expected to take 12 months. A 3D visualisation and video were launched at the Offshore Energy Exhibition and Conference in Amsterdam – as Europe's leading offshore energy industry event, it was a unique opportunity to showcase the new Campus to business leaders, experts and professionals.</p> <p>We are also working with Vattenfall to increase collaboration in the offshore wind cluster, to support supply chains.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Business and Intellectual Property Centres – Norfolk Network</p>	<p>Delivering Business and Intellectual Property Centres is the complete solution to business information needs, supporting Norfolk residents from the first spark of inspiration to successfully starting and developing their own business.</p> <p>The centres are available to aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups and more established Small and Medium size enterprises (SMEs) in Norfolk, supporting the diverse and varied economy of the county.</p>	<p>The past year has seen significant activity delivered across our BIPC sites: we are on track to reach our target of 602 attendees by the end of the annual cycle.</p> <p>Of these attendees, 66% are women, 15% from BAME backgrounds, and 6% with disabilities demonstrating the inclusivity of the programme. 94% of customers rated their satisfaction as a 4 or 5 out of 5.</p> <p>We have been hosting refugee business start-up groups and have been promoting women in business through messaging in our campaigns. We have worked in partnership with organisations such as Menta and the Forum Trust to help deliver events such as From Craft to Career and the science festival, to workshops for Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) individuals.</p>



► **Skills and employment**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver a 5-year investment framework for Norfolk</p>	<p>A five-year investment framework would allow us to compete nationally for funding to support growth in the county.</p> <p>The framework would allow us to deliver a programme of projects to upskill residents, give them more opportunities for work, and improve infrastructure, thus creating a more economically successful county.</p>	<p>The Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF) was signed off by Cabinet in June 2022.</p> <p>Project and programme metrics, as well as a long-term impact evaluation framework, are in development, working with the University of East Anglia and the Norfolk Office of Data Analytics (NODA).</p> <p>A £1.5m pipeline of pilot projects was endorsed by the NIF Steering Group on 24 January and is going through the council’s approval process.</p>
<p>Support the delivery of the Norfolk Rural Strategy</p>	<p>There will be improved collaboration between partners to tackle issues affecting the rural community such as skills, connectivity, access to services and infrastructure (including water/energy).</p> <p>NCC’s contribution to this partnership strategy is primarily the securing of funding for local challenges, based on evidence, such as projects that have their own metrics for success.</p> <p>Broader metrics will be reflected in the alignment of the rural economic strategy with the Norfolk Investment Framework, whose long-term metrics are being developed as above.</p>	<p>Norfolk’s Rural Strategy was endorsed by the council’s cabinet in December 2021.</p> <p>The Council’s IT department is working with a number of village halls to provide them with high-speed broadband – a £400k fixed wireless temporary solution, until full fibre is delivered. The Go Digital Programme has been assisting businesses to do more online and the Innovation Grant Mentoring Programme has helped SMEs target government innovation funding towards beneficiaries in rural areas and market towns.</p> <p>The Agri-tech Skills Exchange has run a pilot with industry and further education providers to support curriculum development. The results from the pilot are being fed into the development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan for Norfolk, which focuses on agri-tech, net zero, digital skills and soft skills.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Deliver the CHANCES programme	<p>By delivering this programme, Norfolk's longer-term unemployed residents will be supported to return to work or to help find employment.</p> <p>Getting more people into work and making use of their unique skills will improve our economy and help support residents who need it.</p> <p>The participants receive regular support from the Advocates and can be given financial support where needed to help with things such as travel, childcare, specialised courses and equipment as they search for work.</p>	<p>To date CHANCES has been able to support over 1,150 residents, delivering the service within the agreed profile boundaries laid out by the Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p>CHANCES takes referrals from JobcentrePlus, but also from other voluntary sector organisations, local authorities, and the NHS, as well as people referring themselves having heard about the project through marketing and advertising campaigns. Further work is progressing with recruitment agencies, housing associations, job centres and parish councils to ensure that the project can reach the people that need support.</p> <p>Chances remains ahead of its contracted targets for moving people into employment, self-employment, training and job search. At the end of December 2022, around 500 participants had progressed through one or more of these stages resulting in significant positive life changes.</p>
Continue to deliver the NCC Employer Training Incentive Project	Residents will get up-skilled and re-skilled, thus improving the skills base in Norfolk's economy.	<p>The current programme, which finished in June 2022, saw targets exceeded: 344 Norfolk businesses accessed a grant and 1690 training interventions were delivered.</p> <p>We are continuing to explore opportunities to expand the programme, as the waiting list indicates there continues to be considerable demand.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Launch the Skills, Progression, Adaptability and Resilience (SPAR) programme</p>	<p>The programme will enable and incentivise businesses to access training, with a focus on key skills needs including: Digital Skills, Leadership & Management and Customer Services & Relationship Management.</p> <p>These skills will help bring a diverse and strong economy to the county.</p>	<p>To date 193 SMEs have completed the eligibility form, of which 135 are based in Norfolk.</p> <p>207 participants have been enrolled in the SPAR project across Norfolk and Suffolk.</p>
<p>Launch the Green Skills Roadmap</p>	<p>The project will deliver a Green Skills Roadmap for the county, including key actions to develop scalable provision to meet employer demand, and ensure a whole-county approach to the breadth of decarbonisation activities required in the short, medium and long term across Norfolk.</p>	<p>Following a procurement process, the Green Skills Roadmap is in further development.</p> <p>It will also underpin our membership of a Retrofit Academy in the next two years, ensuring that we fully exploit the job opportunities retrofitting will offer our residents.</p>
<p>Library and Learning Hub in Great Yarmouth</p>	<p>Whilst there is a wealth of opportunity in the Borough in terms of the offshore energy sector and technology sector, local residents are less likely to be able to benefit from these opportunities due to the low levels of skills and attainment: recent data from the 2021 Census indicates that Great Yarmouth is the least well-educated area in England and Wales with only 18.2% of the population holding a level 4 or above qualification.</p> <p>This project delivers vital skills and services in the heart of the town, raising aspiration, participation, and achievement.</p>	<p>The building is on track to open in Early Spring 2024 with the added partnership of the Universities of Suffolk and the UEA. The project is currently at the RIBA stage 4 phase which is the final design before full construction commences.</p> <p>Internal works to the Palmers building have commenced, stripping it back to its original structure and revealing some excellent architectural features.</p> <p>Partners are also working together to develop plans to engage residents in activities and foster interest in the facilities and services on offer to ensure that the building has maximum participation from day one.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Construction and Environmental Sustainability Hubs in Norwich and King's Lynn	<p>This activity will address the deficit of skilled construction workers and respond to the needs of adult residents who are economically inactive, unemployed and low skilled in Norfolk.</p> <p>It also helps respond to Norfolk's net zero ambitions.</p>	<p>The new construction and environmental sustainability curriculum has been developed and implemented, with a qualification pathway currently being developed with City & Guilds. Between January and July 2022, 400 adult learners completed the first construction courses at a temporary hub at Wensum Lodge, Norwich.</p> <p>While the completion of the two new construction training hubs took longer than expected, due to planning permission delays, both of the centres (Norwich and King's Lynn) are now fully converted and equipped to deliver training.</p> <p>Course delivery commenced at the Norwich training centre in November 2022 and at the King's Lynn centre in January 2023.</p>
Adult Learning Digital Leaders Programme	<p>This activity helps ensure that learning does not stop when formal education ends, particularly through improving the use of technology in Adult Learning classes.</p> <p>Introducing technology and delivering training to increase user confidence amongst digital champions helps make adult learning materials scalable and more interactive, which benefits the adult learner.</p> <p>Adult Learning is taking the national lead in the development of the use of technology in further education.</p>	<p>This project, which was completed in April 2022, has successfully improved the use of technology in Adult Learning classes. This project established a digital champions community of practice across 10 local authorities and delivered a range of professional development opportunities that focused on the use of technology in education to 416 teaching staff and increased teaching staff confidence in using technology from 5.8/10 at the outset to 7.44/10 at the end of the project. The project produced a wide range of recorded webinars and research documents that have been shared with the wider sector. Through the delivery of a series of national dissemination events, ACE Digital Leaders has subsequently reached 15,000 teaching staff and 150,000 adult learners nationally. 400 learners (540 registrations) on family learning programmes have been delivered by Adult Learning.</p>

► **Infrastructure and digital connectivity**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Implement the priorities in the annual Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan</p>	<p>The projects will offer considerable housing and job growth. They will reduce the infrastructure deficit in the county, creating better, more reliable and resilient connectivity.</p> <p>This will attract business investment into the county, and help to retain existing businesses, as well as facilitating jobs and housing growth.</p> <p>The projects will improve communities by improving the public realm and sense of place, removing extraneous traffic from neighbourhoods and improving local active travel and public transport connectivity.</p>	<p>We are continuing to work with National Highways on the delivery of committed schemes for the A47 and work to secure further rounds of investment from government.</p> <p>The construction of the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing started in January 2022, and significant progress has been made, with the crossing due to open in Spring 2023.</p> <p>Nearly half the programme for Transforming Cities is either already delivered, being built, or scheduled for construction. This delivers public and sustainable transport infrastructure within English cities.</p> <p>Government has approved the Strategic Outline Business Case for the West Winch Housing Access Road and has provided funding towards next stage of business case work. Our Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Long Stratton Bypass has been approved by government. The planning application has been updated and re-submitted. Target date for construction is late 2023.</p> <p>We are awaiting a decision from Government on the OBC for the Norwich Western Link. Our pre-planning application consultation has now completed. Should our OBC be approved, the target date for construction will be late 2024.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver the Highways Capital Programme, investing in maintaining and improving this essential asset across Norfolk</p>	<p>In addition to the major infrastructure improvements, significant annual investment is made each year in maintaining and improving the 6,200 miles of road, 2,800 miles of footway and cycleway, and 3,400 miles of Norfolk Trails and public footpaths.</p> <p>A well maintained and improved network is essential for all business and residents in the county.</p>	<p>In 2022/23 we delivered a structural maintenance programme of Norfolk's roads costing £48m.</p> <p>This includes: Surface Dressing £12m Resurfacing (schemes and patching) £14m Bridges £5.5m Footways £6.2m Drainage £5.6m Traffic Signals £1.6m</p> <p>Local improvements include signalling the junction of Victoria Road with Vines Road in Diss at cost of £520,000, and delivering a programme of local Safety Schemes of £270,000</p> <p>In the first year, 23 schemes were approved in our West Norfolk Area. By January 2023, 20 of these schemes were completed with the others progressing well.</p> <p>Our 84 members continue to have access to annual allowance of £10,000 each in the Local Member Fund, enabling them to respond to the local needs of their constituency.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver fibre broadband infrastructure</p>	<p>Connecting residents and communities across Norfolk is a key enabler towards making our economy more innovative, inclusive, and resilient.</p> <p>During the Covid-19 pandemic we saw many services make the shift to go online through necessity. Keeping the momentum of this change, we want to see more households across Norfolk connected, especially those which are hard to reach. This will help encourage businesses to come and set up in Norfolk, knowing that they can be connected wherever they are based in the county.</p>	<p>The projects within this activity have seen considerable progress over 2022-2023:</p> <p>The Local Full Fibre Network project is now complete, having delivered Fibre To The Premise (FTTP) to 394 public buildings in 2022.</p> <p>Better Broadband for Norfolk continues to rollout FTTP at pace, meaning there are an additional 4000 premises which now all have access to FTTP. This places Norfolk nearly halfway towards its target for 2024. Project Gigabit procurement is now in its final stages, with a contract award expected in March. The programme will benefit up to 86,000 hard to reach rural premises.</p>
<p>Deliver the Shared Rural Network</p>	<p>While ensuring good mobile signal coverage is especially challenging within a county of Norfolk's size, the case for doing so remains incredibly important.</p> <p>We want our residents to have the peace of mind of good 4G coverage, helping them in emergencies or just keeping in touch with friends and family.</p>	<p>The Government has determined that the majority of the Shared Rural Network funding will focus on Scotland.</p> <p>However, NCC will continue to work with the four mobile network operators to promote infrastructure improvements in Norfolk and will continue to make further investment in Norfolk as attractive and easy as possible.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver the Norfolk and Suffolk Innovation network</p>	<p>What if we use the Internet of Things technology (IoT) at a city or county level to create smart places? So road junctions can tell you if they are congested, rubbish bins can say when they need to be emptied, rivers can say when the water level is getting close to flooding, parking spaces can say whether they are empty or occupied.</p> <p>The thinking is that all this extra information will allow cities, towns and rural communities to run more smoothly, making them better places to live and work, and allow the more remote areas of our county to become better connected.</p> <p>It also creates an opportunity for new businesses in the region to develop in this emerging sector.</p>	<p>We have successfully implemented 100 Gateways, which provide coverage across Norfolk.</p> <p>We will implement the final 10 remaining Gateways in the first quarter this year.</p> <p>Our focus will now be on increasing the use of the sensor technology across the region and practically around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Farms • Highways • Social Care <p>We will also be helping to improve digital skills in the region through working with schools adopting the previously successful “Step into Tech” model where our schools team hold an event out of term time for young people to experience the technology.</p> <p>Across Norfolk and Suffolk, we provide the largest free to use IoT/Sensor network in the country.</p>



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:

▶ **BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Norfolk's children and young people are the future of the county, and we want to ensure that the future generations have the best possible start in life. While the Covid-19 pandemic and rising levels of mental health issues pose serious challenges to our young people, we are determined to ensure that Norfolk delivers opportunity and a place for them to flourish.

The past year has seen cost increases, most notably in fuel, that have driven up expenditure for key service delivery such as home-to-school transport and care.

Despite this difficult financial context, our aspiration to deliver this priority remains unchanged. We have continued with our key activities, whether they are providing support with housing and safety, or investing in young people to help them achieve their full potential. Building on these foundations, we will create a more resilient future for them, and our county.

Progress on these activities over the past year is detailed below:

► **Levelling up outcomes for families**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Continue to embed our New Roads Service</p>	<p>This service was launched in June 2021 and takes a non-traditional approach to working with adolescents experiencing complex journeys – with an innovative residential ‘Hub’ at the heart of the service.</p> <p>It provides short term placements and edge of care support through a range of specialist and wraparound services to help young people on their journey, supporting our vision to reduce the number of looked-after children in Norfolk.</p> <p>An example are trainer flats, which provide accommodation for 16-18-year-olds to live; these act as a stepping stone towards full independence, with nearby 24/7 support worker service.</p>	<p>All New Roads services are now fully embedded. However, after events in 2022, we are reviewing the use of the trainer flats attached to the Norwich Hub.</p> <p>We have been able to identify Hub Community Families, though work continues to identify high-needs families, with a meeting taking place early in 2023 to ensure we have a clear plan.</p> <p>North Yorkshire step out of the project in October 2023, with work commencing early in the new year to understand what this will look like and to work through issues such as transfers of care and handover with the DfE.</p> <p>We will also continue to work to ensure we can fully utilise beds at both hubs.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Continue to embed our Targeted Youth Support Service</p>	<p>This service was set up in March 2021 and is aimed at supporting young people at risk of harm outside the family home, through criminal or sexual exploitation. It continues to build on the work already being carried out by the council's detached youth work service in Norwich, as well as support provided across police, social care, the Youth Offending service and voluntary sector services.</p> <p>The Targeted Youth Support Service plays a key role in strategic oversight and development in relation to extrafamilial harm. This includes contribution and coordination of locality information sharing and mapping forums, operational oversight, and participation.</p>	<p>The Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS) is now embedded. It provides intensive youth work support to young people who are vulnerable to exploitation and serious youth violence. So far, the service has supported 340 young people through 1:1 work and shows a reduction in exploitation risk for 76% of young people following TYSS intervention.</p> <p>TYSS also provides detached youth workers who are deployed in targeted locations across the county to engage young people in informal learning and create safety in spaces where they choose to spend their time. This element supports contextual safeguarding partnership work in communities.</p> <p>Missing Children practitioners are now fully embedded within the service, providing return home interviews and support to young people who go missing from home or care.</p> <p>TYSS has secured significant external funding via the European Social Fund to enhance its offer and commission projects to support early intervention and prevention for young people vulnerable to exploitation. This has included specialist education training and employment workers and a number of schools-based projects.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Deliver the Healthy Child Programme	The Healthy Child Programme offers every family a programme of activities, including screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, and information and guidance to support parenting and healthy choices.	<p>Every pregnant woman in Norfolk has been offered an in-person pre-birth (antenatal check) with every baby in Norfolk receiving new-birth; 6-8 week; and 1 year and 2.5-year checks by a suitably qualified practitioner (these five checks are statutory services).</p> <p>Specialist, additional support has been provided for key groups including teenage parents, and migrant and traveller communities. We have overseen the delivery of the national child measurement programme and vision & hearing screening.</p> <p>A key element of this programme has provided support for our 5-19 year-olds, with various support pathways built into the wider Just One Norfolk and Just One Number, which offer a 'single front door' model for parents & carers, young people, practitioners and fellow professionals alike to seek guidance, advice and (as appropriate) assessment and referral into interventions.</p>
Joined up networks for support	We want residents to be able to access the help they need in simple and intuitive ways.	<p>Since the release of Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2023, we have rolled out the usage of the Norfolk Vulnerability Hub to include Pathway O hospital discharge and to support the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.</p> <p>As well as this, NCC has provided funding for universal access to the Norfolk Community Advice Network (NCAN) referral system for 18 months to test a standard and consistent approach for referrals to VCSE organisations.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Hardship Support Programme	Norfolk Households will be provided with financial support when it is needed, and we will develop sustainable, longer-term solutions for hardship.	<p>NCC has now led the delivery of the household support fund in Norfolk for 12 months. By the end of March 2023, we will have given £20 million in funding to support financially vulnerable households, working with VCSE and Local Council partners to deliver this funding to people's pockets.</p> <p>In addition, we have provided £500k to create 10 community food hubs supporting 15k people by the end of 2022 and created over 100 warm spaces by providing the Norfolk Community Foundation with seed funding to support this campaign.</p>



► **Raise educational attainment for children and young people**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Norfolk as an Education Investment Area	<p>In February 2022, Norfolk was selected by the Department for Education to be one of 55 local authorities to become Education Investment Areas.</p> <p>Norfolk’s involvement is a positive recognition of what has already been achieved through the local Opportunity Area, as well as of the challenges we continue to face in some parts of the county, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic years.</p> <p>We welcome the focus it places on rural and coastal communities and the recognition of the challenges faced by Norfolk schools in recruiting for key subjects.</p>	<p>This work is led by the Department for Education. A Norwich Priority Investment Area (PIA) Partnership Board, led by an independent chair has been established and includes representatives from the local authority, strong multi-academy trusts and LA-maintained schools.</p> <p>In keeping with DfE timescales, the partnership board completed a data-led analysis of local needs at the end of September 2022, leading the board to agree to two initial high-level priorities for Norwich:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KS2 attainment, particularly writing, and • Attendance in secondary schools <p>A delivery plan for the PIA has been submitted to the DfE and is awaiting approval before projects can be commissioned. This is likely to be February 2023.</p> <p>A Writing Pilot Project has been set up to commence in January involving six schools in the PIA. An Attendance Pilot has been commissioned and planned for Spring 2023.</p>
Deliver the £120m investment in new special schools across the county	Our ambitious plans will enable more local children to have their special educational needs met in a high-quality Norfolk school closer to where they live, minimising the need to travel long distances across the county for adequate provision.	<p>In addition to the two new special schools that opened during academic year 2021/22 an additional ten specialist resources bases have been completed (hosted by mainstream schools).</p> <p>The ongoing SEND Sufficiency strategy had previously identified the need for a third new special school (opened in January 2023) and has now also identified the need for a fourth and fifth new school. Land acquisition has been progressing throughout 2022 in parallel to our capital bid to DfE to fund these schemes.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Implement the Norfolk Special Education needs and Disabilities (SEND) Written Statement of Action Plan	The statutory need for this piece of activity continues, with future inspection expected.	<p>The programme of work to deliver 109 actions across 3 serious weakness areas (for Education Health and Care Plans, 18-25 Services, Communication and Co-production) has been completed.</p> <p>Ofsted/CQC returned to Norfolk in November 2022 and concluded that there are no longer any areas of significant weakness in support and services for children with SEND.</p>
Embed the enhanced inclusion service	<p>The consequences of the pandemic on children's education are well documented.</p> <p>On returning to school in September 2020, many children experienced several adjustment difficulties, which have led to schools significantly increasing referrals to the inclusion helpline, which we have strengthened.</p> <p>The Inclusion Helpline is an advice and support telephone service which supports schools who need help including pupils within their provision. It is delivered by staff with experience in SEND and inclusion.</p>	<p>The development and embedding of an enhanced inclusion service has been completed.</p> <p>The Inclusion and SEND Team provide a fully integrated offer of support, advice, training and challenge to mainstream schools and settings to enable them to meet the needs of children with complex and additional needs. The team works closely with Educational Psychology & Specialist Support (EPSS) as well as wider teams across Children's Services. The two-year DfE post-pandemic Return to Education support was delivered through this team to provide a broad and evidenced-based offer of support for schools and settings.</p> <p>A strong focus remains on supporting children and young people with complex and additional SEND needs and those at risk of exclusion.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Roll out the 2022 Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan</p>	<p>The Schools' Local Growth and Investment Plan (SLGIP) provides a snapshot of NCC's plans to fulfil its statutory responsibility to ensure sufficient school places for Norfolk children aged 4-16. Our aim is always to provide school places locally, whilst ensuring schools are of sufficient size (ideally 420 pupils for primary and 900 students for secondary).</p> <p>Norfolk's education landscape has developed over time and is characterised by large numbers of small schools in rural areas.</p>	<p>Our capital programme reflects investment for key identified areas, for example in Wymondham and Hethersett.</p> <p>The Place & Planning team continue to monitor the housing development with district and developer colleagues both annually and termly. S106 agreements are negotiated and monitored to manage the developer contributions from this funding stream and any land transfers.</p> <p>We completed the Department for Education's School Capacity Survey which aids NCC in receiving its basic need funding based on the pupil-led demand across the county. PAN (Pupil Admission Number) consultation is underway to address over-provision of places in areas of lower population and where demographic decline is evident. The council's statutory duty to complete a Planned Admission Number Consultation annually.</p> <p>Commissioning is in progress for the new primary free school in Cringleford. Shortlisting and interviews have been completed.</p>



► **Create better employment opportunities for young people**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver our apprenticeships strategy</p>	<p>Apprenticeships continue to play an important part in upskilling individuals and supporting business growth.</p>	<p>The Recruit Retain Reward grant of £1000 closed for applications in October 2022, successfully supporting 437 Norfolk businesses to recruit new apprentices. 70% of apprentices were aged 16-18 and 30% of apprentices were aged 19-24.</p> <p>The Access to Apprenticeships (A2A) bursary grant closed in early Spring 2023. To date, the funding has supported over 250 apprentices in Norfolk aged 16-24, to access financial support for travel expenses, equipment or digital kit to help them start a new apprenticeship.</p> <p>The Progression to Apprenticeships (P2A) pilot project closed on 31st December 2022 and successfully supported 42 businesses in Norfolk to progress a young person from the Kickstart scheme onto a full apprenticeship, through a financial and practical package of support. Through the ASK (Apprenticeships Support & Knowledge) contract with the Department for Education, the Pathways into Work team have met all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in supporting school engagements, activities involving work with young people, parents/carers and young people in vulnerable groups.</p>



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:

▶ **HEALTHY, FULFILLING AND INDEPENDENT LIVES**

Our strategy sets out the ambition for Norfolk to be a place where everyone can live fulfilling, independent lives and, where necessary, access the support they need at the right time. We want to ensure that health conditions which can compromise quality of life are addressed early and lifestyles changed for the better.

A key piece of this puzzle lies in the continuing integration of health and social care. This will enable us to respond to new pressures and demands through stronger partnership and collaboration by tackling health inequalities at their roots.

Our progress on delivering these key activities over the past year is reported below:

► **Levelling Up Health**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Adult social services “front door” and prevention programme</p>	<p>Our Promoting Independence strategy sets out the core ambitions of Norfolk County Council’s Adult Social Services, based on the recognition that helping people live independently allows them to live healthier, more fulfilling lives.</p> <p>Connecting Communities is a programme of work which focuses on prevention, early intervention and achieving the best possible outcomes for people.</p> <p>The programme will have many benefits for residents and communities in Norfolk, such as providing the right community capacity and relationship with services to support people to be as independent as possible.</p>	<p>Front-line teams have been at the heart of re-designing ways of working in our ‘front door’, (Social Care Community Engagement, SCCE). We have put in place new ways of working in short-term services and in our community care teams. This has seen waiting times in SCCE reduce, more people benefitting from reablement through Norfolk first Support, and earlier strengths-based discussions to find alternatives for people to residential care.</p> <p>We have introduced a new digital platform which can analyse our data and information. We will be using this to identify people who might benefit from earlier help, including people at risk of a fall.</p> <p>Underpinning these new ways of working is a dedicated focus on recruitment and retention.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>No Homelessness in Norfolk strategy</p>	<p>By significantly reducing homelessness and rough sleeping, we can make a significant and lasting impact on the lives of people across Norfolk, by increasing their health and wellbeing and their life chances.</p> <p>There is system-wide resolve not to return to pre-Covid-19 levels of homelessness and rough sleeping, and a determination to work on an inclusive housing recovery plan coupled with the long-term strategic aim of ‘No homelessness in Norfolk’.</p>	<p>Over the past year we have continued to actively engage with the Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership, advocating a collaborative approach to the prevention of, and solutions to, homelessness – A Norfolk Homelessness Prevention Strategy (2022-2025) has now been published. The Action Plan helps to implement key themes and aims from the Strategy and this is endorsed by all members of the Partnership.</p> <p>We have reviewed the Social Impact Bond which was £635k for the No Homelessness in Norfolk project which started in April 2021 for a 4-year period. We now have a responsive service which provides immediate support in a crisis, prioritises safeguarding, and supports people to manage in the longer term.</p> <p>We have improved service user feedback and helped improve future service delivery as part of a co-produced exercise – understanding of the person’s care and support needs and the potential type of solutions required at its centre.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver the Public Health and Wellbeing programme</p>	<p>We will see an improved position in our statutory delivery of the NHS Health Checks programme; the number of people supported to quit smoking, and people better managing their weight; and an improved position in our successful completions for those in drug & alcohol treatment.</p>	<p>A catch-up programme of NHS health checks is underway to wholly recover our position of having ‘lost’ some 36,000 NHS Health Checks during the COVID pandemic period.</p> <p>We’ve established a support service to GP partners, aiding them to return to their pre-COVID levels of BAU activity, with delivery already sitting higher than pre-COVID levels. We are working through an improvement programme with aspirations to improve our delivery of both invites and take-up rates to targets above pre-COVID delivery and are on track to achieve this.</p> <p>We’ve launched a new provider framework for weight management solutions, in order to see a wider choice of services across the county, which started on 1 April 2023.</p> <p>The Drug & Alcohol treatment service is improving its position month-on-month through a specific action plan. Stop smoking services have performed well, despite the shortage of certain products at a national level affecting local provision.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Implement Project ADDER	<p>Project ADDER (Addition, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery) commenced in 2020/21 as a nationally funded pilot; a joint initiative between the Home Office (HO) and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).</p> <p>Greater Norwich was selected as a target location and the ADDER programme has been operating in the locality since March 2021, overseen by a joint delivery group co-chaired by NCC and Norfolk Constabulary.</p> <p>ADDER, with an annual budget of £1.35m, is delivered in addition to Norfolk’s core Alcohol & Drug Behavioural Change Service, through which NCC invests £6.6m per year of its Public Health Grant income (circa 16%).</p>	<p>The integrated delivery model of ADDER has helped sustain treatment for a cohort of substance misuse users who historically struggle to maintain engagement due to episodes of homelessness, short-term prison sentences, and multiple lapses.</p> <p>The service has also helped improve access to primary care, mental health, housing, employment, and education services.</p> <p>Key achievements in 2022/23 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 2,300 referrals made to Alcohol and Drug help services • More than 500 interventions/ contacts delivered each week • Nearly 200 drug users being in structured treatment at any given time • Over 1,300 arrests for trafficking, possession, and weapons offences • Around 550 children and young people seen and supported in relation to drug use • Over 320 police officers trained and supplied with substances to treat opioid overdoses



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Healthy libraries	<p>Norfolk Libraries are trusted key community assets providing countywide cover, supporting the health and wellbeing of residents through information and activities relating to key public health priorities.</p> <p>The physical locations and community links they provide are key in helping us to create a county where everyone can start life well, live well and age well, and where no one is left behind.</p>	<p>All our Public Health campaigns are promoted through the libraries and all our staff have completed the “Making Every Contact Count” training, enabling them to offer low level advice to people on creating healthier habits and lifestyles. Projects include Digital Health with the NHS, and further development of our emotional and mental health support offers.</p> <p>To support vulnerable people, all our libraries have been used as warm spaces this winter as part of the Warm Welcome Campaign and provided Keep Warm and Go bags. Furthermore, to help families and children, we have created schemes such as such as “feed and read”.</p> <p>To support our COVID-19 effort, we created a highly successful community collect model for covid testing kits: Library Collect; Mobile Library Collect and Small Business Library Collect. Libraries have also become an essential part in the provision of NHS health checks for their local communities.</p> <p>The Healthy Libraries initiative is maintained by a joint libraries and public health strategic group, overseeing the delivery of Public Health outcomes directly to Norfolk residents who use the library service.</p>



► Living Well

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver our capital housing programmes (Independent and Supported Living)</p>	<p>Norfolk needs modern specialist housing for adults aged over 65 with care and support needs. NCC has allocated £29m to facilitate county-wide development of quality housing which offers peace of mind, helping people to stay independent in their local communities for longer. There will be more choice and control for people, with social isolation and wellbeing improved by living in communities of support. Norfolk is committed to shaping communities fit for future and to improving outcomes for all. Independent Living schemes will also look to offer new facilities such as cafes and bars that will be open to the public. New local employment opportunities in building and care will be created, and local businesses will benefit from increased use. Norfolk also needs modern specialist housing for adults aged 18-65 with care and support needs and has allocated £19m to facilitate more affordable developments across the County. There will be more choice and control for people, with social isolation and wellbeing improved by living in communities of support. Our stretched health and care system will see savings, with reductions in hospital stays, residential placements, poor mental health, frailty, falls and regular GP appointments.</p>	<p>Delivery of the Independent Living programme has and continues to be managed through a dedicated housing programme “Independent Living for older people”, aimed at making the development of affordable rental units viable, helping to fund lettings agreements for suitable units. The fund can also be used in conjunction with other funding streams. Two schemes in Acle and Fakenham have successfully opened so far, with more in the pipeline.</p> <p>We have ensured that our health and social care staff are kept up with developments so they can talk to people, and there is an ongoing programme of engagement with local communities to build a better understanding of work to be delivered and improve knowledge of what specialist housing is.</p> <p>Delivery of “Supported Living” is being managed through a dedicated housing programme.</p> <p>The capital funding will make the development of affordable rental units viable; help fund lettings agreements for suitable units; and be used alongside other funding, such as Homes England, housing authority capital and the NHS.</p> <p>8 units of bespoke accommodation for people with complex needs have been delivered in 2022, with 12 units due to be delivered for complex needs in 2023. 12 enablement units were delivered in 2022.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Review of community services</p>	<p>Norfolk County Council currently spends over £1million per day on meeting the eligible needs of Norfolk residents in terms of Adult Social Care.</p> <p>It is our duty to be ambitious and progressive in how we meet these needs in a sustainable way. If not, we risk being overwhelmed by demand in the future. The department has a programme of transformation – Promoting Independence – based around its vision which is “to support people to be independent, resilient and well”.</p> <p>Promoting Independence has, to date, largely focused on managing demand. Through a changed model of social work, investment in reablement and assistive technology, we have slowed the rate of admissions to residential care for all ages, bringing Norfolk County Council closer in line with its family group, and achieving £61m of savings over the last five years.</p> <p>Looking ahead these gains will be sustained through a step change in prevention, based on risk stratification, and targeted interventions to address known life risks, and a re-purposed ‘front door’ for adults.</p>	<p>We have re-designed ways of working in Norfolk First Response so that increasing numbers of people can benefit from reablement. Working with colleagues in the NHS, we have shifted our focus from bed-based care to better home care, and other community-based support, and by making changes in the way our teams work, our reablement workers are able to spend 25% more of their day with people.</p> <p>We have now set ourselves a target of reaching 8000 people per year who are able to start and complete reablement, and therefore enjoy more independent outcomes. We have a further ambition for 313 more people to live in a more independent setting than residential care.</p> <p>By connecting people to community services and technology, and by supporting informal carers, we will ensure people have the right amount of formal care at home to meet their needs.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Changing Places toilets initiative</p>	<p>Changing Places toilet facilities help increase independence and improve quality of life for people with complex needs and disabilities.</p> <p>As a rural County with a significant tourism economy, Norfolk County Council wants to make it easier for disabled people and their families to enjoy activities that others may take for granted, as well as enabling everyone to enjoy visiting Norfolk.</p>	<p>To create a strong network of these facilities and capitalise on wider government grants, we undertook community engagement on Changing Places, the results of which fed into District Council bids for Government funding.</p> <p>This work enabled us to understand priority places for the facilities and shaped where the additional £665,000 of funding for facilities in Norfolk should be spent, complementing the District Council bids.</p> <p>These locations have been agreed by cabinet, and the planned programme of Changing Places is coming to fruition, including the completion of the new Changing Places facility at the Castle Museum in Norwich. Site and accessibility visits are being carried out and will complete by the middle of 2023, when we will consider if further facilities could be built with any remaining funding.</p>



► **Better local services**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Home Support Transformation	<p>We want to ensure we have a sustainable, collaborative, quality focused framework of providers delivering good quality home care services equally across the county.</p> <p>We are seeking to transform our home care market to ensure that there is available capacity across all areas of the county to ensure people have access to the required type of care that they need in the community.</p>	<p>As part of our strategic planning programmes, we have delivered approximately 2,500 hours a week of additional delivery and capacity across Home Care provision.</p> <p>We have supported a reduction in our interim care list numbers of around 600 cases, down from 800 to 202, alongside reducing the number of people waiting for care after receiving rehabilitation through Norfolk First Support and those waiting for care as a result of hospital discharge. We have focused delivery of double assist through increasing hours and access to double assist care.</p> <p>We have implemented collaborative contracts to support care providers to work together more closely to improve services offered to people. Alongside this we have developed and implemented a support framework for care providers to access when they need support to remain sustainable, particularly across the winter when the pressures are greatest.</p> <p>We have now developed a strategic plan to transform our home care services to ensure they are fit for purpose, underpinned and driven by sustainability, quality, capacity and resilience, to ensure people have access to the required type of care that they need in the community.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Care Market Quality Improvement	<p>We want to increase the number of good and outstanding care providers across Norfolk, supporting sustained improvement and reducing the number where performance is deteriorating. This will lead to more choice and availability of good quality care, a reduction in the need for people to accept care that is below standard, and improved outcomes for individuals.</p> <p>We aim to provide a system-wide evidence-based approach to identify, plan, and create the right infrastructure to improve and sustain care quality improvement.</p> <p>The focus is on delivery, reducing variation in care and creating a learning culture, transforming the experience for those that are in receipt of service, creating the conditions for good quality and providing good value for money.</p>	<p>This programme of work sits across care providers, NCC teams, the Integrated Care Board (ICB), and those in receipt of care services.</p> <p>Work underway through the programme includes provider engagement; approaches to service user feedback; reviewing our approach to contract management and continuing to develop our support for quality improvement.</p> <p>We are also reviewing health functions within social care and are working, to enable projects focused on implementation of the workforce strategy, digital transformation, ethical commissioning and cost of care work.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Fulfil our leadership role in the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System	A fully integrated health and care system across Norfolk and Waveney will benefit residents, the County Council and a range of partners – from the voluntary sector, care providers, community and primary care, and local and district councils – working together to reduce inequalities and prioritise prevention.	<p>The Norfolk and Waveney’s Integrated Care Systems (ICS) gained its statutory footing on 1 July 2022.</p> <p>The Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) has produced a transitional Integrated Care Strategy and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which sets the direction for the ICS and will influence work across the system.</p> <p>NCC will continue to play a key leadership role in the ICS to improve population health and care, tackle unequal outcomes, enhance value for money, and support social and economic development.</p>
Multi User Hub development programm	Residents in key towns will be able to visit their hub for support, skills development, and accessing community activities delivered by a range of partners that meet local need.	Town Deal funding has now been fully secured for hubs in both King’s Lynn and Great Yarmouth. The Great Yarmouth hub will be delivered by Spring 2024 with the King’s Lynn hub going live in Summer / Autumn 2025, with a collective investment of £27m.



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Delivery of Active Travel and Public Transport Improvements</p>	<p>Norfolk has been keen to play an active role in enhancing the walking and cycling network across the county and improving sustainable transport.</p> <p>We want to understand how we can enable more people to cycle and walk more in the county, as well as identify the places which people want to connect with when travelling on foot or by cycle.</p>	<p>We have delivered Active Travel Phase 2 schemes at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •St Williams Way, Thorpe St Andrew: mandatory on-road cycle lanes; •Heartsease Lane Norwich: segregated road crossing on the Pink Pedalway; •Ipswich Road Norwich: mandatory on-road cycle lanes (to be delivered at the end of the year). <p>We have also delivered improved cycle parking across the county's market towns, Great Yarmouth, and King's Lynn. We have been successful in award of Active Travel Phase 3 funding for delivery in 2023/24. This will deliver a further 3 schemes at a cost of almost £1m. The council has recently been awarded £700,000 from the Active Travel Capability Fund for building capability on Active Travel in the LA and behaviour change.</p> <p>We have secured £1.8m CIL funding for the Yellow Pedalway in Hellesdon, and £0.5m towards a new shared use facility at Colney.</p> <p>Beryl Bike scheme users have travelled over two million kilometres in Norwich, with over a quarter of journeys made replacing use of a car or van. The scheme has also expanded to 3 new areas and a further extension of the e-scooter trial has also been agreed with DfT until 31 May 2024.</p> <p>£50 million funding has been secured to implement a Bus Service Improvement Plan to be invested in capital works to improve bus travel infrastructure across the county as well as schemes to increase passenger numbers. In partnership with First, we have secured £3.6m funding to bring 15 electric buses to Norwich.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Prepare for social care reform	<p>The Government is introducing widely publicised reforms to social care, which includes a lifetime cap on the amount people pay towards their care, more generous financial means-test thresholds, the ability for self-funders to ask their council to arrange their care and moving towards a fair rate of care in respect of councils' fees to care providers.</p> <p>We want people to have choice, control and support to live independent lives. Preparing to meet the requirements of the new legislation will help ensure people can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support in Norfolk and that residents benefit from fair and accessible adult social care.</p>	<p>We are putting plans in place to prepare and deliver Government's reforms across a number of key areas. To prepare for the changes and increased activity resulting from the Charging Reform, we have been developing models of self service and self-assessment, and planning for the implementation of care accounts, and the fair cost of care and market sustainability.</p> <p>We have also been developing plans to work with disability groups, service users and carers, at the right time, to identify opportunities for co-production and planning.</p> <p>Following the Government's Autumn Statement to delay the implementation of Social Care Reforms until October 2025, the programme will be rescoped to allow for the changes. We are still working on many aspects of the preparation since they will support our overall direction of travel for adults and improve our efficiency and outcomes for people.</p>
Deliver excellent Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services	<p>Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service is at the heart of protecting communities. We exist to make our county as safe as possible.</p> <p>Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service will make Norfolk a safer place through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing fires and other emergencies • Protecting people, buildings and the environment • Responding to fires and other emergencies when they arise. 	<p>We have delivered our core response functions by attending fires and other serious incidents over the past year. Throughout 2022, we shaped our Community Risk Management Plan 23-26 and published it for public consultation in December 2022. We have also strengthened the way we provide Prevention and Protection services to the county, with additional staffing and structures put in place to provide improved capacity. As a result of our increased activity responding to wildfire incidents over the summer, we instigated a review of our response and have implemented an action plan to address key areas of learning.</p>



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:

▶ **STRONG, ENGAGED AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**

We believe that individuals in Norfolk are at their best when engaged and part of a thriving community. We work in partnership to support and empower our communities to build capacity, capability and resilience so they can better help themselves.

We will continue to work with key stakeholders to ensure residents have access to good public services, information, and advice to help them live well and independently.

Our progress in this area is set out in the activity updates below:

► **Involvement and participation**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
VCSE engagement	<p>Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations are key partners in delivering Norfolk County Council’s strategic objectives, helping residents to live independent, health and aspirational lives. It is therefore important that the council engages with the sector and seeks their views on gaps, changes and priorities to determine impact and shape what is needed.</p>	<p>Health and social care commissioners, in collaboration with the VCSE sector and other system partners, have developed a set of VCSE ‘commissioning principles’. These define how organisations undertaking a commissioning function work together with the VCSE sector for the benefit of our population. Recognising that the relationship that the council has with the sector is wider than commissioning, we are also developing an overall set of principles that sets out the way that we as a council communicate, engage and work with the sector.</p> <p>Additionally, NCC funds the Empowering Communities Partnership of VCSE organisations, delivering infrastructure support to create a resilient VCSE sector, and which provides regular engagement and communications to VCSE organisations. The VCSE Assembly also supports engagement with the sector in terms of the Integrated Care System.</p>
Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant	<p>The Armed Forces Covenant helps us embed stronger, engaged, more inclusive communities, particularly within the armed service community.</p> <p>It seeks to recognise the sacrifices made by Norfolk’s armed forces community and provide bespoke assistance to those seeking support, ensuring that an individual’s service is never a barrier to them accessing services.</p>	<p>We have completed a Needs Assessment for the Armed Forces Community in Norfolk. We continue to support delivery of priorities within the Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board’s Action Plan 2019-22.</p> <p>As advocates of the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge, we are working with town and parish councils and educational establishments to enable them to secure bronze awards under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.</p> <p>We have put in place arrangements to meet the new legal requirements relating to the Duty of Due Regard for the Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.</p>



► **Building capacity**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>VCSE infrastructure support and integration with ICS VCSE Assembly</p>	<p>The VCSE sector will be better placed to support people and communities in Norfolk because they have the skills, training and support that they need to operate.</p>	<p>Our VCSE Infrastructure grant has now been re-shaped and re-granted as outlined. The partnership has been increased from 2 to 5 organisations to ensure transparency and a breadth of representation.</p> <p>New branding, website and steering groups have been implemented. We have also combined the volunteer portal funding with this grant to ensure simplified packages of funding to the sector in line with our commissioning principles. This has enabled a refreshed and modern volunteer portal making it easier to find volunteering opportunities and apply.</p> <p>Over 1000 organisations have attended best practice sessions on a range of topics that are relevant to the sector, including funding and HR. 140 organisations are actively recruiting volunteers on the portal. The grant programme led by the Norfolk Community Foundation supported 26 organisations with seed funding to increase capacity and innovate.</p>



► **Empowering our communities**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Joining up our information and signposting	We want people to be able to access the help they need simply and quickly, helping prevent problems before they get worse.	<p>The council has funded universal access to the Norfolk Community Advice Network (NCAN) referral system until March 2024 to test a single approach for referrals.</p> <p>County Council departments have been working together on a map of commissioned and grant funded information advice services to develop an easier to access model, which will be available in 2023.</p>
Digital Inclusion Strategy	<p>We want to help make Norfolk residents become digitally enabled citizens. Support will be targeted towards cohorts of people who are identified as digitally excluded using shared data from across the system.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people • People with acute health conditions and disabilities • Job seekers and low-income households • Children and young people • People experiencing multiple inequalities 	<p>Our Libraries, Adult Learning, schools and the voluntary sector provide devices and equipment, free data and connectivity, and programmes of learning that enable residents to develop digital skills and boost confidence for life and work.</p> <p>This year alone we have provided nearly 1300 laptops and devices along with data and connectivity to a wide range of residents including 500 Ukrainian refugees as well as to the voluntary sector, surpassing our 1000 devices target. We also provide awareness of scams and online exploitation, support for self-employed and start-up businesses and loan assistive technology.</p> <p>The programme submitted a bid through the Norfolk Investment Framework to fund an innovative proof of concept pilot based in King's Lynn and West district. It will provide support through an online hub via a network of trusted people in trusted places. The programme is also developing an ambitious digital skills programme for staff to improve their own skills, efficiency and help provide support and signposting for online resources to our residents.</p>



REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5:

▶ A GREENER, MORE RESILIENT FUTURE

Norfolk is renowned for its beauty, safety, and heritage. The county has a wealth of history hidden away throughout its cities, towns, and villages. From the Brecks to the Broads to the North Norfolk Coast, we have some of the most striking and diverse landscapes in the country. It is vital that we preserve and protect both our natural and historical heritage for future generations to enjoy. This starts with ensuring we prevent damage to our natural environment and safeguarding the unique features which make our county Norfolk. We will continue to ensure access to quality spaces for all communities to enjoy.

The past year has shown that meeting net-zero objectives delivers more than just environmental benefits. A strong year for renewable energy generation has meant that around 40% of the UK's energy came from wind, solar or other renewable sources over 2022. These conditions have helped the country build resilience and avoid reliance on expensive fossil fuels for electricity generation.

Our progress towards delivering on this priority through our key activities is set out below:

► **Protecting and enhancing our environment**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Implement our Environmental Policy – Nature recovery</p>	<p>Norfolk County Council’s Environmental Policy contains commitments that focus on protecting and recovering nature and conserving and enhancing natural beauty.</p> <p>Central to this is producing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) that maps out Norfolk’s Natural Capital and the opportunities for nature-based solutions, including habitat connectivity, reduced flood risk, pollinator corridors and human health and wellbeing. This is a core aspect of the UK Government’s Environment Bill (2021), which outlines key statutory responsibilities for local authorities in the area of nature recovery.</p> <p>There is a Biodiversity Net Gain requirement in the 2021 Environment Bill, which requires new developments to achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain onsite, or, when it’s not possible, purchase biodiversity credits offsite.</p>	<p>This year has seen successful bids for projects that restore nature, reduce flood risk and boost biodiversity. This includes the “Wilder, Wetter, Better for Wildlife” proposal that was submitted by NCC in partnership with Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Holkham Estate. The 1 Million Trees for Norfolk Programme has seen a 200% increase on last year’s planting total including more than 50,000 young trees and hedges being planted on county farm property.</p> <p>We are also trialling a subsidised tree scheme for Norfolk residents to plant trees on their own land.</p> <p>A volunteer-run Community Tree Nursery has joined the attractions at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, Museum of Norfolk Life, which serves as an education facility alongside building a pipeline of locally-sourced trees.</p> <p>In partnership with Suffolk County Council, we have identified four areas for planting nature recovery sites on roadside verges this winter. This is on top of identifying 23 existing roadside nature reserves for expansion.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Implement our Environmental policy – Net Zero programme</p>	<p>As part of our work to help tackle climate change, we have committed to making our estates net zero by 2030.</p> <p>Both the Council’s strategy and its Environmental policy commit us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Achieve ‘net zero’ carbon emissions on our estates by 2030 •Work towards ‘carbon neutrality’ by 2030 <p>Our estates include all of our buildings and streetlights.</p>	<p>Technical decarbonisation studies of council buildings are nearing completion and potential works to improve energy efficiency and install low carbon heating are being costed. A funding bid has been submitted to support the retrofit of 19 council buildings.</p> <p>We are on track to convert 15,000 streetlights to energy efficient LED technology by end of March 2023. These will bring carbon savings of around 5,500 tCO2e by 2030. The Fire Service will refresh leased vehicles with plug-in hybrids and work is underway to install 42 charge points at County Hall with plans for 15 charge points at other sites.</p> <p>Shareholder letters have been delivered to the council’s companies expressing the need to put in place carbon reduction plans and we have approved the use of an internal carbon price to better incorporate carbon reduction benefits into decision making</p> <p>A contract has been awarded to install 46 on-street charge points to support the uptake of electric vehicles in parts of Norwich with little off-road parking. The council has been working collaboratively with the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to refresh the collective priorities for the partnership and establish the best way work together to deliver benefits for the county. A Net Zero hub went live in January 2023 to provide information to residents on the actions NCC is taking to achieve delivery of its Net Zero outcomes.</p>



► **Access to quality spaces**

Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Castle Keep: Royal Palace Reborn</p>	<p>This restoration is one of the largest heritage projects of its kind currently underway in the UK.</p> <p>In addition to reinstating the principal floor level, offering unique views and creating learning spaces, the Keep will also have a new gallery designed in partnership with the British Museum, to showcase national medieval treasures alongside Norfolk’s own. As part of our commitment to an “accessible Norfolk”, the work will also see the installation of a new lift, ensuring that all five levels of the keep are fully accessible, for the first time in its history.</p>	<p>The first of the three-phase handover process has been successfully completed, with the new schools’ entrance, Changing Place facility and conference & banqueting toilets completed in August 2022.</p> <p>Steelwork has now been completed in the Keep and excellent progress is being made on the British Museum Partnership Gallery of the Medieval Period.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Greenways to Greenspaces	<p>Greenways aims to improve connectivity between market towns by providing safe, low-carbon travel options while also functioning as linear 62 habitats, linking the county’s Greenspaces into an extensive network and integrating biodiversity enhancement.</p> <p>These changes are expected to help create stronger communities, improved job opportunities, as well as better health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>Working with Highways, 23 existing Roadside Nature Reserves have been identified for expansion, and a policy on verge management for biodiversity is being developed.</p> <p>New Roadside Nature Reserve sites are being identified using artificial intelligence in partnership with the University of Lincoln.</p> <p>A new addition to the Norfolk Trails network was added this year with the launch of Kett’s Country Long Distance Trail. We have launched the “Jubilee Trails” project, which delivers five new walking routes developed in partnership with the Norfolk Platinum Jubilee Committee, which will open individually over the coming year.</p> <p>A new environmental data analysis team within the environment service, Natural Norfolk, has been commissioned to identify greenspace development opportunities as part of the Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy, and will be delivering a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk - a flagship measure from the Environment Act 2021.</p> <p>Outreach and engagement activities were delivered throughout the year, including at the Royal Norfolk Show. These activities have grown awareness of the project and driven applications for its subsidised “Jubilee Trees for Norfolk” scheme.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Dark Skies	<p>The Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP) in conjunction with our partners and other organisations, focuses on celebrating the dark skies and landscapes of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), while raising awareness of the vital benefits that the dark brings to people and biodiversity, and conversely, the impacts of light pollution.</p> <p>The protected areas of the Norfolk Coast and Broads contain some of the last remaining dark landscapes in the UK, so we aim to conserve and enhance those valuable nightscapes for future generations.</p>	<p>A substantial event programme is underway across the North Norfolk AONB which started with well-attended launch event featuring expert talks and a candlelit performance of sea shanties.</p> <p>In a finale event, towns will be encouraged to coordinate a synchronised “big switch-off” so residents can collectively enjoy their dark sky.</p> <p>Five events have been delivered so far with a further five to take place before March 2023, working with partners that include schools, the National Trust, RSPB, Wildlife Trust and astronomy societies.</p> <p>An accreditation programme is being created that will link to other green initiatives across the AONB.</p> <p>Self-serve resources are being developed for specific audiences including Parish Councils and developers.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Flood risk reduction and water resource management</p>	<p>Norfolk is tenth most at risk out of 149 authority areas for flooding and has been affected by several significant rainfall events in recent years.</p> <p>Assessment of surface water flood risk mapping shows that over 12,000 properties in Norfolk are at risk from a 1:30 (3.3% Annual Exceedance Probability) rainfall event and that over 30,000 properties are at risk from a 1:100 (1% Annual Exceedance Probability) rainfall event.</p> <p>The effects of climate changes on weather patterns, sea level rises, and the effects of isostatic rebound tilting the country to the south-east, all contribute to different extents, and sometimes combine, to increase the apparent frequency and severity of incidents of flooding in Norfolk.</p>	<p>The County Council has made additional funding of £1.5m available in each year between 2021/22 and 2024/25. Of this there has been capital allocation of £380,000 in 2022/23 and the following years and in 2022/23 we delivered works at Green Lane, Great and Little Plumstead (which was a Tranche 2 NSFA priority), started design work at Heacham (which is a tranche 1 NSFA priority), Pulham, and a feasibility at Acle, as well as providing contributions to partnering organisations.</p> <p>The Lead Local Flood Authority aspect of the County Council has established and progressed priority projects and secured external funding to support this priority, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £6.4m with Suffolk to implement innovative and sustainable ‘Reclaim the Rain’ water management projects in rural communities. • £120,000 from the Environment Agency for two projects in the River Burn catchment. • £600,000 from the Environment Agency for a £1.2m scheme in Dereham. <p>In terms of legislation, Government has said it will now consult in 2023 on the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Deliver waste reduction</p> <p>(Previously titled Deliver Highways, Transport & Waste Improvements – retitled as Transport improvements are captured in other activities above)</p>	<p>Reducing waste is the best way to reduce the environmental and financial costs of waste and can be achieved through minimization, reuse and recycling.</p>	<p>We have been delivering the Foodsavvy campaign to help households reduce food waste and save money, which is now extended to involve all councils in Norfolk. This works alongside our home composting campaign, which includes provision of subsidised home composters, and our reduce single-use campaign.</p> <p>Working with the Norfolk Waste Partnership we have delivered targeted and focused initiatives and campaigns to increase recycling and reduce contamination and fly-tipping. This has been reflected in an increase in countywide recycling rates and a drop in reported incidents of fly-tipping.</p> <p>Following the delivery of new improved recycling centres at Norwich North and Norwich South, new reuse shops have opened across all Norfolk’s recycling centres. We have also consulted on new sites in the Sheringham and Wymondham areas and are locating sites for new recycling centres in the Long Stratton and North Walsham areas.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Implement the NCC Libraries and Information Service Strategy</p> <p>(Combined with Libraries and Adult Learning – Families offer activity)</p>	<p>In March 2020, Norfolk County Council adopted a strategy for Norfolk Library and Information Service with a vision for our libraries to make a real difference to the people of Norfolk by being there when they need them at the heart of the community, supporting individuals, communities and businesses to be the best they can be.</p>	<p>Working with Devices dot Now and other partners, libraries are being used to distribute devices, provide connectivity and offer digital support to vulnerable adults.</p> <p>8,137 children took part in the summer reading challenge delivered by the libraries.</p> <p>31,948 children and adults have attended Bounce and Rhyme over the past year in council libraries. The past year has also seen the introduction of Story Explorers in libraries, which helps children from 0-5 years old borrow and explore books from Norfolk libraries. Libraries have been providing Kick Start placements, volunteering opportunities and Business and Intellectual Property Centres which provide support for economy and skills.</p> <p>Open Libraries have been reinstated in 43 libraries (44th is Hunstanton which is in temporary accommodation). Extended families offer in libraries will come to new locations in King's Lynn, Dereham, Millennium Library and Thetford.</p>





OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

This section of the annual report recognises work which seeks to improve the efficiency of the organisation and address emerging pressures. These key activities are not housed specifically within a strategic priority, but instead contribute to them through improving the way we work.

Making best use of technology and digital innovation remains central to our ways of working. Over 2022 we saw many staff choose to return to the office and an increase in face-to-face meetings. We are clear that providing the right spaces and hybrid technology are essential to meet modern demands in the changing world of work.



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Recovery from backlog	Frontline services have experienced significant disruption to usual workflows during the pandemic, with backlogs of assessments, reviews and new cases needing to be addressed.	<p>We have made significant progress in addressing the backlog from the Covid period, which saw social care teams across the council working in extremely challenging circumstances.</p> <p>Through careful investment, retraining of staff and a review of ways of working, we continue to address significant increases in demand for care services. We continue to press Government for a sustainable model of funding for social care so that we can continue to meet the needs of our residents</p>
Preparing for inspection (Adults/ Children's)	As part of fulfilling our statutory duties, the council is regularly inspected by independent bodies to ensure service quality is high.	<p>The recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) inspection found that Norfolk Children's Services had risen to "Good" in all areas, with Ofsted describing support for care leavers as demonstrating "exemplary practice" and said children in care are provided with "exceptional services."</p> <p>This marks a significant improvement, and Norfolk County Council will work to sustain this over the coming years. The ILACS framework has changed this year to include care leavers' experience as criteria, so future inspections of Norfolk's Children's Services will reflect this. Ofsted also found that Norfolk no longer has any significant areas of weakness following their November 2022 revisit. This marks a significant improvement in services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The new inspection regime for Adult Social Services has been introduced by the CQC but has not yet been given the formal go-ahead by Government.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Smarter Working Programme	<p>The Smarter Working Programme was established following the adoption of the 2020-2024 Medium-Term Financial Strategy with the aim of achieving savings through implementing more business-like Smarter Working, utilising physical space and technology to maximise flexibility for customers and staff whilst effectively delivering good outcomes</p> <p>We have created and published our Hybrid Working approach and guidance for managers and colleagues, and have removed Infection Control measures. This has been well received by services, with our discretionary approach bringing flexibility and control to individual services, ensuring they can match their local Hybrid Working patterns to the needs of their service users and colleagues.</p> <p>We have put in place, and continue to develop, monitoring and research in order to understand the impacts of hybrid working on colleagues as well as the tools and places they need in this new way of working, which informs the day-to-day continuous improvement of these facilities. We have implemented a range of measures to reduce energy consumption and cost across the NCC estate.</p>	<p>We have created and published our Hybrid Working approach and guidance for managers and colleagues, and have removed Infection Control measures. This has been well received by services, with our discretionary approach bringing flexibility and control to individual services, ensuring they can match their local Hybrid Working patterns to the needs of their service users and colleagues.</p> <p>We have put in place, and continue to develop, monitoring and research in order to understand the impacts of hybrid working on colleagues as well as the tools and places they need in this new way of working, which informs the day-to-day continuous improvement of these facilities.</p> <p>We have implemented a range of measures to reduce energy consumption and cost across the NCC estate.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Transformation and Innovation integrated governance	<p>The council has a dedicated Innovation Team which provides practical innovation support to complement the existing innovation and transformation work underway within departments.</p> <p>Innovation is important to find the most efficient ways of working.</p>	<p>Innovation skills have been shared through working alongside colleagues on key activities in a number of departments such as Adult Social Care and Children’s Services, as well as cross-council priorities such as Smarter Working and MyOracle, the newly implemented Human Resources and Finance system. Innovation methods have been brought to events such as Nudge-a-thon in October 2022, and support has helped develop the first Virtual Care Agency pilot in England, with Adult Social Care, a number of Domiciliary Care Providers in Norfolk and Alcove Ltd. Further work is ongoing to embed innovation in the organisation through developing toolkits, integrating with Transformation & Innovation Governance and tapping into existing or new networks. With support of colleagues in the wider organisation, the team have secured over £1.5m in NHS England funding for digital transformation in health and social care, specifically for local care providers.</p>
Embed the approach to cross-cutting priorities	<p>We recognise that joined-up working is the most efficient way of working and provides the best service to our residents. As many areas of the council’s work require input from several different teams, it is important to ensure processes are in place to ensure appropriate teams are working together, rather than separately, in support of common goals.</p>	<p>To create a better grip on cross-cutting priorities, we have firmly established a business planning group to review priorities, agree ownership and determine best course of action.</p> <p>In response to a critical priority that touches the whole council, we have established a Net Zero Board to ensure there is collective accountability with representation from all departments.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Workforce strategy	<p>Recognising that acute pressures exist around recruiting and retaining staff for some local government roles, we will develop a refreshed workforce strategy for the entire organisation to better help support staff and colleagues.</p> <p>The refreshed strategy will describe how the organisation and its workforce must change over the next few years, in support of its strategic ambitions and in response to the challenges and opportunities coming over the horizon.</p>	<p>The council's workforce strategy was endorsed in January 2023 and now forms a living document which can be adapted as needed in the future.</p> <p>The overall aims of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring strong leadership across the organisation • Developing future leaders and ensuring performance • Attracting and retaining talent • Improving skills in technology • Setting and embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion goals across the organisation • Collaboratively refreshing the council's values <p>An implementation plan has already commenced and will continue into 2023/24.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
<p>Implement our digital strategy and roadmap for the 2020s</p>	<p>We're working to make Norfolk the best-connected rural county in the UK.</p> <p>We're improving all types of fixed and mobile connectivity across the county to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business growth • Social mobility • Tourism <p>Quality of life for all our residents</p>	<p>The council's smarter working capabilities have been enhanced with 600 new high speed Wi-Fi access points deployed across 200 buildings and immersive meeting room technology has been installed in 44. We have taken a major step towards more automated, self-service internal transactions with the introduction of the myOracle Fusion Cloud ERP system and bring your own device users now used by over 3,000 staff.</p> <p>Data-driven decision making across the council and with health partners has continued to mature, with new mechanisms for secure, cloud-based access by our staff and NHS partners.</p> <p>Our cyber security has also been an important area of investment this year with Zero Trust capabilities being deployed systematically through upgraded networks with both device and identity management upgrades. Digital infrastructure for residents and businesses has continued to improve with material increases in high-speed fibre broadband availability and the largest free to use IoT/Sensor network in the country.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 – 2026/27	<p>Making best use of our land and estates is essential towards ensuring the council is running as efficiently as it can.</p> <p>We regularly oversee reviews of our corporate property to ensure it is fit for purpose and necessary to service delivery.</p> <p>When builds and property are surplus to requirements, we will sell these assets</p>	<p>The council has an ongoing programme to consolidate the existing property portfolio and exploit land and buildings no longer required for service delivery.</p> <p>In 2022/2023 we were able to achieve savings of £200,000 as part of an ongoing corporate property savings plan (commenced in 2015/16) and currently have achieved over £28.450 million in capital receipts by disposing of land and property no longer required for service delivery.</p> <p>Operational policies around property asset disposal and acquisition have been formally adopted by Cabinet.</p>
Organisational Design – Strategic Review	<p>The Council faces unprecedented financial challenges over the next few years, and we need to proactively respond to these to ensure that, as an organisation, we remain fit for purpose and able to provide the services upon which our residents rely.</p>	<p>Over the past year, the County Council has undertaken a Strategic Review of the way it is currently structured and operates resulting in a number of proposals.</p> <p>Added to the organisational changes already underway in departments and led by them, the first phase of the Strategic Review will have an impact on organisational structures, management lines, and wider ways of working, making the council effective and efficient, and better able to invest in frontline services.</p>



Activity title	Why are we doing it?	What we have delivered
County Deal for Norfolk	<p>On 2 February, government published its “Levelling Up White Paper”, outlining its approach to addressing geographical inequalities across the UK.</p> <p>One key strand of the White Paper is further devolution of centrally held powers to local areas. Norfolk has been invited to be one of 9 “front-runners” to negotiate an early devolution deal in line with the published framework for devolution.</p>	<p>In December 2022, Norfolk agreed an in-principle deal which will bring more powers and funding to the county. It will include £600m investment over the next 30 years from Government, which represents the highest per-head funding of any county deal proposed so far. In addition, the deal will include devolved fund for Adult Education and Transport, and a number of powers to accelerate delivery of affordable housing and help to unlock challenging but strategic housing and employment sites.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed to progress the in-principle deal on 17 January which meant a six-week public consultation in February and March.</p> <p>Subject to the consultation, full council will consider the change to an elected council leader model later in 2023.</p>





Norfolk County Council