

Cabinet
4 July 2022
Public & Local Member Questions

| | Public Question Time |
|-----|--|
| 6.1 | <p>Question from Ruth Goodall</p> <p>Weston Longville is the parish most affected by the NWL. If it fails to go ahead we will suffer years of ever increasing volumes of traffic having the only remaining direct routes across the Wensum Valley. If it goes ahead residents of Weston Green will have to live with a dual carriageway and 20,000 plus vehicles a day cutting through a network of footpaths and quiet lanes less than half a mile from their homes. We have supported the NWL but our support is conditional on the mitigation measures we have requested being fully implanted. We would like an assurance from this Cabinet meeting that this will be the case.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>We are committed to working with Weston Longville Parish Council and other local communities on developing and agreeing a full package of mitigation measures for the Norwich Western Link scheme.</p> <p>In addition, we are committed to continue working with Weston Longville Parish Council and National Highways (NH) to consider a scheme of mitigation works should the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling be completed before the Norwich Western Link.</p> <p>The latest position between these parties was documented in a Statement of Common Ground that was submitted to the Examining Authority during the public examination of the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Development Consent Order.</p> <p>This confirmed that the parties would continue to work together to develop a proportionate scheme of mitigation works for Weston Longville and the trigger point for the approval of such a scheme would be 9 months prior to the removal of the existing Easton roundabout and associated closure of Church Lane to through traffic.</p> <p>It is the intention of the County Council to agree a scheme of mitigation measures to the timescales set out in the Statement of Common Ground.</p> |
| 6.2 | <p>Question from Nova Fairbank, Chief Operating Officer for Norfolk Chambers of Commerce</p> <p>The creation of Broadland Northway was strongly welcomed by the Norfolk business community and we feel that it is essential for the missing link between the A1067 and A47 to be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>The overall cost of doing business is rising and any opportunity to help reduce costs and deliver benefits – such as reduced journey times, less congestion and the ability to access new markets is becoming more and more important to businesses.</p> <p>Will the delivery of the Norwich Western Link support Norfolk’s key industries such as agriculture, tourism and manufacturing by reducing journey times and transport costs as well as opening up potential new markets?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>In addition to reducing traffic on unsuitable roads through local communities such as Weston Longville, the Norwich Western Link (NWL) will reduce traffic movements</p> |

within and around the city. This will support existing businesses and unlock opportunities for economic growth by freeing up capacity to better accommodate planned housing and employment growth.

The Cabinet report outlines the some of the benefits the NWL is expected to create for Norfolk, which supports Norfolk's key industries, including (over a 60 year period and at 2010 prices):

- £353million worth of travel time benefits, an average of just over £5.5million a year.
- £26million worth of journey reliability benefits, an average of £430,000 a year.
- Productivity gains of £97million, an average of £1.6million a year.

**Cabinet
4 July
Local Member Questions**

| | Local Member Issues/Questions |
|-----|--|
| 7.1 | <p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp Why are Conservatives discriminating against King's Lynn, planning to have Council Motions debated in a new order that would always place King's Lynn South last? Elaine from South Lynn said, they can't do that. It's about accountability. It's a democracy, not a dictatorship. Nigel from Clenchwarton said, you need strong Opposition in a democracy. The Conservative plan to limit Questions, Motions, even the length of full Council meetings, prompted outrage in this Division. I discovered the changes were left off the Corporate Select Committee Agenda Report, none were tracked in the 300-page constitution. I had to press NCC to publish a log and summary of changes. NCC Transparency: Nulle Point</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy Thank you for your question, although this is not actually a matter for Cabinet. The review of the constitution is being carried out by the Director of Governance in line with Article 12 of the Constitution. Areas where amendments would be appropriate together with recommended amendments have been presented to Members to consider and refine. The Deputy Leader and I made one or two suggestions to the Director of Governance, as any Member was free to do, and some have been included in the proposals. This has been a fully transparent and inclusive process with a clear timetable. There have been several Member workshops where topics were discussed in detail; regular updates on the Councillor Portal plus an email address to receive Members' views and suggestions. Unfortunately, a technical issue occurred when publishing the agenda for Corporate Select Committee and some of the tracked changes from the report were no longer highlighted however an updated version was uploaded as soon as possible together with a log summarizing the proposed changes. The papers for the July Corporate Select Committee were published on Friday 1st July and present a comprehensive log of the suggestions, ideas and requests made for that committee to review before final recommendations are made to Full Council on 19th July.</p> |
| 7.2 | <p>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires Can you please provide a table showing how the number of care homes that are rated as inadequate or require improvement by the Care Quality Commission compared to the other local authority areas in the East of England?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>As set out in the paper presented to June Cabinet, there is a long standing challenge with the quality of care provided in the county. The Council has identified</p> |

this a priority issue and as well as taking actions prior to the Covid pandemic to strengthen the Council's quality assurance function, we have agreed a strategic approach to work with the independent providers across the integrated care system to identify and support improvement. The table below shows the position for independent care homes (residential and nursing) compared to the other authority areas in the East of England.

| | Nursing | | Residential | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| | Inadequate % (Number) | Requires Improvement | Inadequate | Requires Improvement |
| Bedford | 0% | 8.3% | 1.6% | 27% |
| Cambridgeshire | 0% | 13.3% | 0% | 6% |
| Central Bedfordshire | 10% | 25% | 0% | 21.6% |
| Essex | 0% | 22.4% | 1.3% | 13.1% |
| Hertfordshire | 2.7% | 26% | 1.7% | 10.8% |
| Luton | 0% | 0% | 3.1% | 25% |
| Norfolk | 3.4% (2/58) | 32.8% (19/58) | 4.8% (13/269) | 25.7% (69/269) |
| Peterborough | 0% | 0% | 0% | 12.5% |
| Southend-on-Sea | 8.3% | 16.7% | 4.2% | 12.7% |
| Suffolk | 1.5% | 9.2% | 3.3% | 11.5% |
| Thurrock | 0% | 20% | 0% | 9.1% |
| East of England | 2.1% | 19.8% | 2.4% | 16.1% |

7.3 Question from Cllr Rob Colwell

When the county council's director of adult social care, James Bullion, says he has never been so worried as he currently is about the state of Norfolk's care market, how bad does it have to get before Norfolk County Council demand to government that freedom of movement and single market access must return?

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

Thank you for your question.

It has been widely reported that the Government changed immigration rules for health and care workers in December last year due to representations from many authorities including Norfolk. This has meant that social care workers, care assistants and home care workers are now eligible for the Health and Care Worker Visa, in addition to senior care workers and registered managers who were already included in the list of eligible roles. Some providers are already sponsoring individuals from overseas and there is growing interest in this market. We are working with providers and the Integrated Care System to help share information and to build a support model to aid successful recruitment.

7.4 Question from Cllr Watkins

What is the current turnover rate of staff employed by Norse and how does this compare to each of the last 3 years?

Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy

The Council takes its responsibilities seriously as ultimate owner but does not receive that precise data because Norse is its own legal entity. However, each year Cabinet receives the Norse Business Plan which provides assurance that the business is managed appropriately.

Question from Cllr Watkins

An independent review has recently recommended that the minimum age for buying cigarettes should be raised by one year annually, as part of a drive to eradicate smoking by 2030. The review also suggested that the Government should commit £125 million a year in helping to make this happen. Would the Cabinet member like to see this initiative introduced in Norfolk?

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

Thank you for your question. I welcome the report and its findings. It is an important milestone, reminding all of us of the dangers of smoking and the need to have dedicated investment to achieve the national ambition of Smokefree by 2030.

The impacts on health from smoking and tobacco are substantial and we currently invest in a range of services. More national investment could allow us to further develop these services, work with partners like the NHS to prioritise prevention, and improve the health and wellbeing of Norfolk residents.

7.5

Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone

By how much has the council's debt servicing costs grown since 2016/17 relative to the council's revenue spending and how does this compare to the other local authorities in the East of England?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance

The council's debt servicing costs have increased from £25.657m in 2016-17 to £30.904m in 2021-22 per the table below.

| | Interest Payable | Net revenue budget | Ratio of interest expense to net revenue budget | Ratio of interest expense to total borrowing |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| | £ms | £ms | £m | £m |
| 2016-17 | 25.657 | 339.0 | 7.6% | 4.9% |
| 2017-18 | 25.800 | 358.8 | 7.2% | 4.8% |
| 2018-19 | 26.900 | 388.8 | 6.9% | 4.3% |
| 2019-20 | 29.000 | 409.3 | 7.1% | 4.1% |
| 2020-21 | 29.266 | 430.4 | 6.8% | 3.9% |
| 2021-22 | 30.904 | 439.4 | 7.0% | 3.6% |

| | |
|-----|---|
| | <p>The benchmarking information previously provided by CIPFA is no longer available and therefore comparative data with other local authorities in the East of England is not readily available.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone Should the County Council, given its recent support for home education, consider a fund to support home educators to mitigate the rising costs of living, especially given that their decision has a positive impact on Council budgets?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services Whilst Norfolk County Council strongly encourages attendance at school, it also respects any decision by families, who choose to take responsibility for educating their children at home. Our Service to home educators signposts advice and support and conducts some monitoring. Our website outlines the support available for families.</p> <p>Unfortunately, students who are not on roll of a school do not attract funding for the Designated Schools Grant or any grant received by Norfolk County Council. There is an additional cost for NCC to support the Home Education register and government is considering how this will change if the Schools Bill currently going through parliamentary process is enacted. Norfolk County Council already operates a number of schemes to support families experiencing hardship.</p> |
| 7.6 | <p>Question from Cllr Tim Adams To what extent is the council meeting its target repair times for road defects where known including specifically potholes, line markings, damages to signs?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The performance of the authority’s contractors in completing defects on time is measured as part of the corporate vital sign 216. Tarmac, Norse Highways, Amey and Swarco (formerly Dynniq) are included within this monitoring and reporting. This metric has been reported on since April 2021 and to date I am pleased to report that performance has exceeded the 92.5% target, which covers pothole repairs, line markings and damage to signs along with all other highway maintenance work types.</p> |
| 7.7 | <p>Question from Cllr Saul Penfold Uswitch’s Green council report: Are county councils taking sustainable steps? shows Norfolk County Council only at the Silver tier with a partial commitment to being green and behind Suffolk County Council. Will you agree to immediately changing the council’s tariff with its energy supplier to one that is for renewable energy or are you happy for the council to be seen to be lagging behind other local authorities in dealing with climate warming?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste NCC has been on a 100% renewable green tariff for electricity from the 1st October 2019 and have just signed up for another term running until 30th September 2023.</p> <p>Our supplier has not historically offered a ‘green gas tariff’, but is bringing in an option from the 1st April 2023. It’s also worth bearing in mind that we would still</p> |

| | |
|-----|--|
| | <p>receive the same natural gas (which already has a 10% biomethane mix) with a green gas tariff, it's just that the supplier invests in carbon reduction projects to offset the carbon produced – or is part of the Green Gas Certification Scheme (GGCS - https://www.greengas.org.uk/) where green gas generation (usually biomethane from waste) is injected directly into the grid. Officers are currently evaluating the accreditation and cost of the tariff.</p> <p>As part of our commitment to Net Zero, NCC is currently reviewing the whole estate to look at improving the building fabric and energy efficiency of our buildings.</p> |
| 7.8 | <p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale</p> <p>The cost of the Norwich Western Link has now ballooned to nearly £100 million over the original budget for the project. What is the upper limit to the amount of funds the county council is willing to put at risk in pursuing the Norwich Western Link?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>The budget for the project has been reviewed and updated and includes significant allowances for inflation and risk. If there is a significant change to the risks around the project in the future, we would of course take this into account in our decision making.</p> <p>The Norwich Western Link remains in the high value for money category for infrastructure projects, according to the Department of Transport's assessment criteria.</p> |
| 7.9 | <p>Question from Cllr Ian Mackie</p> <p>Rat running is causing a real problem across our rural communities, but also throughout Norwich, we witnessed this during the recent closure of Sweet Briar Road - Norwich didn't have an alternative main road to deal with such volumes of vehicles. What are the improvement in outcomes to capacity, health and safety if rat running is reduced and Norwich is given extra highway capacity?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>A resilient network is essential for Norfolk's residents, visitors and businesses. As highlighted, the recent unplanned, emergency closure of Sweetbriar Road on the Norwich outer ring road caused significant congestion for a prolonged period as traffic used alternative routes, affecting many local communities.</p> <p>By providing an alternative route around the west side of Norwich, the proposed NWL will increase the resilience of the road network in this area and result in reduced traffic movements in and around the city and within several local communities.</p> <p>The NWL is also expected to lead to improvements in road safety, with over 500 fewer accidents involving a motor vehicle over 60 years as set out in the Cabinet Report section 3.4. This in turn would create a saving worth in the region of £20million in costs associated with road traffic collisions.</p> |

| | |
|------|--|
| 7.10 | <p>Question from Cllr Barry Duffin Would I be right in saying that the increase in costs to the Norwich Western Link are not unique to this project, but normal for all similar projects across the Country?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Yes, inflation is affecting all construction projects across the country at the current time and I would expect that other projects being assessed by the Department for Transport will also be impacted by increasing cost pressures, most notably related to current inflation levels. This issue is not therefore exclusive to the Norwich Western Link project but affecting all local authorities and infrastructure providers across the country.</p> |
| 7.11 | <p>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn We now know that if the Norwich Western Link fails, the county council will have to use its revenue reserves to fund its expenditure on the road. That already amounts to £25million, and will increase to at least £35.million by spring - not including inflation which shows no signs of slowing down. Can the Cabinet Member confirm what the minimum remaining level of revenue reserves would be if the capital costs of the project revert to revenue and have to be covered by reserves?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance As set out in the Cabinet papers, if the scheme were not to go ahead, any costs incurred would fall to the revenue budget as there would be no asset to capitalise. There would be a hierarchy of how the Council would fund any such write-off as set out within the report (paragraph 6.6). The final source of funding would be a call on the General Fund reserve, but it is not possible at this point to determine what the level of any use of the General Fund would be as there are a number of variables involved, including the level of costs to be met from revenue, and the availability of other resources to meet these. However, any use of the General Fund would not impact technically on the assessment of the minimum level of General Fund which the Council seeks to hold to address major financial shocks, which is calculated and agreed annually as part of the budget setting process. In the event that it were to become necessary to use the General Fund reserve, the expectation would therefore be to seek to replenish the General Fund to the minimum level as soon as possible following any call upon it, and the plan to achieve this would be addressed as part of annual budget setting.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Jamie Osborn If the Department for Transport agrees to fund 85% of the current cost of the NWL, equivalent to £213million, the county council will have to fund any subsequent cost increases. How much is the Cabinet preparing to fund from this Council's own budget to cover for the inevitable cost increases after the DfT funding has been sealed?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance The budget for the project has been reviewed and updated and includes significant allowances for inflation and risk. If there is a significant change to the risks around the project in the future, we would of course take this into account in our decision making.</p> <p>The Norwich Western Link remains in the high value for money category for</p> |

| | |
|------|---|
| | <p>infrastructure projects, according to the Department of Transport's assessment criteria.</p> |
| 7.12 | <p>Question from Cllr Shelagh Gurney The recent closure of Sweet Briar Road adjacent to my division and subsequent diversions on the Hellesdon Bridge, Hellesdon Low Road and across Hellesdon in general, highlighted the impacts of dangerous rat running through our communities, both for road safety and the wider negative air quality implications.</p> <p>To what extent does the Norwich Western Link alleviate these problems for other impacted communities across the County?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport I would refer to my response to Cllr Mackie's and Nova Fairbank's similar questions. In addition to reducing traffic on unsuitable roads through communities such as Weston Longville, the NWL will reduce traffic movements in and around the city. The NWL is also expected to lead to improvements in road safety, with over 500 fewer accidents involving a motor vehicle over 60 years as set out in the Cabinet Report section 3.4. This in turn would create a saving worth in the region of £20million in costs associated with road traffic collisions.</p> <p>In addition, Section 3.6 of the Cabinet Report sets out the carbon emission savings with a carbon reduction range from 177,000 tCO₂e, to 350,000 tCO₂e being projected as a result of the NWL, when both construction and operation are considered.</p> <p>The NWL will therefore provide a more resilient network which is essential for Norfolk's residents, visitors and businesses, and help alleviate the problems highlighted for those local communities.</p> |
| 7.13 | <p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones When fee levels for Adult Social Care providers were agreed by Cabinet on 31st January 2022, the rates were set using a forecast CPI rate of 3.7%.</p> <p>As the CPI has been 9% or above since April 2022, can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention confirm what impact this is having on adult social care providers, how Norfolk County Council is planning to support providers facing escalating costs and protect those receiving care from any issues, given the growing cost of living crisis?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>Each year the Council reviews prices for the coming year, based on factors including National Living Wage and inflation. These rates aim to ensure a fair cost of care, but take into account affordability for the Council. Fee rates are set as part of the budget planning process and setting of council tax for the year ahead. Within</p> |

| | |
|------|--|
| | <p>the funding parameters for the Council, further price increases have been increased for home support services, reflecting the fuel cost increases experienced in April. As part of the social care reforms the Council is currently asking care providers across home support and residential and nursing care for older people to provide details of the costs of delivering services to enable a revised fair cost of care to be identified. The Council will be submitting a market sustainability plan to the Department for Health and Social Care in October.</p> |
| 7.14 | <p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy Can the Cabinet Member for Finance confirm the new estimated total cost of prudential borrowing to meet Norfolk County Council's increased share of costs related to the Norwich Western Link Road?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance As set out within the Cabinet report in the funding profile table at 2.3.3, the budgeted local contribution to the project is £37.655m. £3.131m is to be funded from pooled business rates, and £5.061m has been set aside in the capital receipts reserve, leaving a balance to be funded by prudential borrowing of £29.463m. Assuming 3% interest and MRP spread over 40 years, this equates to an annual revenue cost of £1.621m (Interest £0.884m and MRP £0.737m).</p> <p>Each additional £1m of borrowing increases the borrowing cost by £0.055m per annum.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Terry Jermy With increased inflation costs, can the Cabinet Member for Finance confirm the latest estimate for yearly costs that Norfolk County Council will incur for maintenance of the Western Link Road and what the total cost is likely to be over the road's lifespan?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance The details related to maintenance are included in sections 3.4, 4.4 and 4.5 of the Outline Business Case published on our website here. There is also an update in the draft OBC addendum which is appended to the Cabinet Report. The assessment period is over 60 years. The costs per annum will vary depending on the condition and maintenance requirements of the various features included as part of the project.</p> <p>A management and maintenance plan will be developed as part of the detailed design process, therefore a more detailed breakdown of spend profile cannot be provided at this stage.</p> |
| 7.15 | <p>Question from Cllr Alison Birmingham Following the scheduled closure of Woodside Nursery in Autumn 2022 and the proposal to withdraw from the Professional Development Centre included in the first round of budget cuts, can the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management confirm what will happen to the site if these plans go ahead?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management Should these proposals go-ahead and the site is declared surplus, then it will</p> |

| | |
|------|--|
| | <p>initially go to Corporate Property Strategy Group (CPSG), to identify whether there is an NCC use for this site. All directorates are represented at this meeting.</p> <p>If there is not an internal NCC requirement for the site, a formal Cabinet decision will be required to dispose of the site.</p> |
| 7.16 | <p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby Increasing working wages so people can afford to feed, clothe and keep a roof over their families' heads without needing support from Norfolk County Council or the Welfare system is much better for Norfolk's residents, the local economy and Norfolk County Council's budget. Doesn't the Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy agree?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy Thank you for your question.</p> <p>In order to ensure we can grow the economy and move to a high skill, high wage economy, we must continue to progress our ambitious skills programmes, giving everyone in the County the opportunity to gain new qualifications and skills, whether through the employer, apprenticeships, or through access to qualifications, is vital. We will continue to support those across all areas of the County who wish to pursue these options to participate in Norfolk's evolving economy in ways that are best for them through our Norfolk Investment Framework.</p> <p>The Norwich Western Link will ensure that those from the West of the County in particular will be able to access these employers, programmes and initiatives, which I hope will be welcomed by yourself.</p> |
| 7.17 | <p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett Given the complex and ongoing work to understand and mitigate risk to the Barbastelle Bat colony how can Cabinet satisfy itself that it is making a sound and reasonable decision today, when the risk register cannot appropriately account for the extent of unknowns in respect of risk of planning failure and of harm to this protected species</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The Council takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously. The NWL route has been refined to avoid a direct impact on a roost location used by a maternity colony of barbastelle bats which has a significant level of environmental protection. Mitigation and compensation design associated with the predicted impacts is still ongoing by the project ecologists. This work is part of the normal development of the project and will continue up to the submission of the planning application. All risks will continue to be carefully managed and considered as the project progresses.</p> |
| 7.18 | <p>Question from Cllr Ben Price The Director of Adult Social Care has commented publicly that he has never been so worried about the sector, this in light of the impact of surging inflation as well as imminent changes to the rules which mean thousands more people are about to become eligible for council-funded care. What steps is the Cabinet Member taking to ensure the sustainability of care funding?</p> |

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

Thank you for your question.

During the past 2 years, the Council ensured over £50m was provided swiftly to Norfolk's care providers to support them in the most difficult of circumstances. As Cabinet Member, I too recognise and share the Director's concerns about our essential and much valued care market. It is for this very reason that in January, I was able to secure £18m of investment into the Care Market as part of this Council's highest provider fee uplift in many years. In addition, I brought forward to Cabinet in June 2022 our new Care quality improvement framework. Today to Cabinet, I bring our Market Position Statement (Item 12), and in September will bring forward our Care Market Sustainability plan.

We welcome the reforms to Social Care being brought forward by Government. The successful implementation of these vital changes will build towards a sustainable platform for Care. We continue to work with the County Councils Network, the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Social Care to continue to make the important case for the sustainable funding of Social Care as part of this work.

Each year we have a robust process for setting our Medium Term Financial Strategy. I continue to work closely with my fellow Cabinet Members, to ensure the delivery of Care is prioritised financially, despite the difficult financial circumstances the Council faces. As the largest spending department in the Council, I work closely with the Cabinet Member for Finance to support the broader Councils approach to attracting adequate funding for Norfolk.

We continue to engage with Government, MPs and other stakeholders to campaign for adequate and sustainable funding for Norfolk to continue to deliver vital services to residents, businesses and visitors. Through submitting responses to consultations including those on the 2021 Spending Review, provisional settlement and reviews of Business Rates, we seek to maximise the funding available. We contribute to national lobbying through our broader membership of the County Council's Network and Society for County Treasurers, who also work alongside DLUHC to develop and test technical funding proposals.

The Council continues to lobby the government to ask that the Fair Funding Review be concluded to provide an adequate overall quantum of funding for local government within the system, update the relative needs formula, and fully recognise the costs associated with rurality and sparsity. We have also engaged with the Government's Levelling Up agenda and is pursuing additional powers and funding through County Deal negotiations.

Second question from Cllr Ben Price

Given care providers and UNISON advise us that employers struggle to increase pay rates because of inadequate funding by NCC, what commitments can the Cabinet member give to ensure funding is provided to ensure all workers on Council contracts receive as a minimum The Foundation Real Living Wage hourly

| | |
|------|---|
| | <p>rate?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that we pay fair prices for the services that we commission and we make sure that everyone pays at least the National Living Wage (NLW) through our contracts.</p> |
| 7.19 | <p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb It appears that the traffic modelling used in the proposed A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Project and the Norwich Western Link Strategic Outline Business case are substantially different.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport explain how Norfolk residents can have confidence that robust processes are in place across the Council when this sort of discrepancy is being highlighted to the Secretary of State for Transport?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The variation in modelled flows is partly because the two models use different base years. Therefore, some variability of flows between the two models, especially on links with low base year traffic volumes would be expected. Despite this, the main intention of strategic modelling is to understand the relative differences between scenarios and magnitudes of impact across the network, rather than to provide absolute numbers. NCC and National Highways have worked closely during the development of the two different models in order to understand the differences between them and on this basis we are comfortable that the model used for the NWL is robust.</p> |