

**Norfolk County Council
Minutes of the Meeting Held at 10am on
Tuesday 12 December 2023**

Present:

ADAMS Tim	MACKIE Ian
ADAMS Tony	MASON BILLIG Kay
ANNISON Carl	MAXFIELD Ed
AQUARONE Steffan	MORIARTY Jim
BAMBRIDGE Lesley	MORPHEW Steve
BENSLY James	NEALE Paul
BILLS David	NUNN William
BLUNDELL Sharon	OSBORN Jamie
BOWES Claire	PECK Greg
BROCIEK-COULTON Julie	PENFOLD Saul
CARPENTER Graham	PLANT Graham
CARPENTER Penny	PRICE Ben
CHENERY OF HORSBRUGH Michael	PRICE Richard
COLWELL Rob	REILLY Matt
CONNOLLY Ed	RICHMOND Will
CROFTS John	RILEY Steve
DALBY Michael	ROPER Dan
DARK Stuart	ROWETT Catherine
DAWSON Chris	SANDS Mike
DEWSBURY Margaret	SAVAGE Robert
DIXON Nigel	SAYERS David
DUIGAN Phillip	SHIRES Lucy
EAGLE Fabian	SMITH Carl
ELMER Daniel	SMITH-CLARE Mike
FISHER John	STONE Barry
FITZPATRICK Tom	STOREY Martin
GURNEY Shelagh	THOMAS Alison
HEMPSALL Lana	THOMSON Vic
JAMES Jane	VARDY Eric
JAMIESON Andrew	VINCENT Karen
JERMY Terry	WALKER Colleen
JONES Brenda	WARD John
KEMP Alexandra	WATKINS Brian
KIDDIE Keith	WHYMARK Fran
KIDDLE-MORRIS Mark	WILBY Martin
LONG Brian	

Present: 71

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Emma Corlett, Cllr Maxine Webb, Cllr Andrew Proctor, Cllr Judy Oliver, Cllr Julian Kirk, Cllr Stephen Askew, Cllr Tony White, Cllr Rhodri Oliver, Cllr Chrissie Rumsby, Cllr Alison Birmingham, Cllr Stuart Clancy, Cllr Bill Borrett, and Cllr Andy Grant.
- 1.2 The Chair reminded Councillors that meetings of the Council would not normally extend beyond 3 hours unless this was extended in accordance with rule 11. 1 (n) of the Council Procedure Rules, however it was his intention to enact rule 4 (v) and rule 4 (vi) of the constitution once the meeting period had elapsed if any business remained. The practical application of this would be that the meeting continued on a vote only basis.
- 1.3 The Chair also stated he intended to adjourn the meeting after about 2 hours for a short comfort break.

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 September 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. To receive any announcements from the Chair, Leader, or Chief Executive

- 3.1 The Chair stated the events he had recently participated in could be found on the Norfolk County Council website.
- 3.2 The Leader stated she was pleased to see a Norse publication celebrating employees, which had been distributed amongst Members. A cabinet was to be installed within the Marble Map area of County Hall for employees to display their awards.
- 3.3 The Leader explained she had recently attended a number of meetings with MPs in Westminster, putting forward the interests of Norfolk County Council.
- 3.4 Following recent changes to the political proportionality of the Council, the Leader welcomed Cllr Brian Watkins as the new Leader of the Opposition.
- 3.5 The Leader remarked that wheelchair tennis player Alfie Hewett, who was originally from Cantley, had been nominated for the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year, and wished him all the best.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp declared "an other" interest as she was a governor of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn.
- 4.2 Cllr Lesley Bambridge declared "an other" interest as she was a governor of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn and a trustee of West Norfolk Carers.

5. Petitions presented to Council

5.1 There were no items of petition for Council to consider.

6. Business (if any) remaining from the last Council meeting

6.1 There were no outstanding business items.

7. Questions to the Leader

7.1 Question from Cllr Brian Watkins

7.1.1 Cllr Brian Watkins remarked that the postponement of the Norfolk devolution deal had given this council another opportunity to engage with the public on this important change in governance. Cllr Watkins asked how the Leader would seek to make the most of this opportunity, to reach out to residents, and to make the deal one that best serves the people of Norfolk.

7.1.2 The Leader acknowledged that the County Deal was a complicated piece of governance. It was incumbent on the Council and its Members to publicise the Deal should it be approved at this meeting. It was also important to drive engagement with partners such as district councils, local businesses, and educational and health facilities. The Leader stated she had spoken to Cllr Carl Smith in his capacity as Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council, with the result being he was prepared to host further working groups for Members, with a view on how to better publicise the County Deal.

7.2 Question from Cllr Colleen Walker

7.2.1 Cllr Colleen Walker stated that at the September meeting of Full Council, it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs containing a set of requests on behalf of Norfolk's beleaguered coastal communities. However, Cllr Walker mentioned that on the 4 December 2023 she asked the Cabinet to share the letter and the response. However the reply received seemed oblivious to the decision taken at Full Council, instead referring to a recent Scrutiny Committee meeting. Cllr Walker asked if the Leader could confirm when this letter was sent, what the contents were, what reply was received from the Secretary of State, and for this information to be shared with Members. Cllr Walker added that If the letter had not been written and sent, could the Leader explain why this was the case.

7.2.2 In response, the Leader stated that the original letter would be retrieved.

7.3 Question from Cllr Paul Neale

7.3.1 Cllr Paul Neale commented that It had become clear from the Chancellor's autumn budget that local authorities would be expected to run essential services, yet again, on less, in this coming year. These services were demand-led and demand was increasing exponentially. Cllr Neale welcomed the Leader and some of her Cabinet openly criticising their own government in the regional press, and asked the Leader if she would be pleased to see a change of government before some of her Members crossed the floor to become Independents.

7.3.2 The Leader stated she did not expect any of her Conservative Group Members to become Independents, while expressing her disappointment with the contents of the Autumn Statement. The Leader acknowledged that government finances were under pressure, and that she would be meeting and lobbying ministers to illustrate what pressures local authorities across the country were dealing with. A local government settlement was expected on the 19 December 2023 and further budget savings may need to be identified. The Leader stressed that the Council did not want to be in a Section 114 situation.

7.4 **Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp**

7.4.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp expressed surprise that the Directly Elected Leader would receive a salary double that of the current Leader of the Council and asked the Leader what did this offer to Norfolk, as the current Leader already attended Westminster to lobby on behalf of the county.

7.4.2 The Leader commented that allowances were set by an independent review panel, which considered what salaries Leaders in other districts were receiving. If Members were to vote for the devolution deal on offer, the additional government funding unlocked for Norfolk would require considerable management. The Leader stated that any Directly Elected Leader should be remunerated accordingly.

7.5 **Question from Cllr Ed Connolly**

7.5.1 Cllr Ed Connolly mentioned the Leader attended a meeting last month with Lord Callanan, the Minister for Energy Efficiency and Green Finance, regarding the future of the Bacton gas terminal. Cllr Connolly asked the Leader to recall how the meeting went.

7.5.2 The Leader stated she attended the meeting alongside Duncan Baker MP, Cllr Tim Adams in his role as Leader of North Norfolk District Council and Steve Blatch, the Chief Executive of North Norfolk District Council. Bacton had been identified as a potential future site for hydrogen production and carbon storage. The Leader remarked that Bacton was in a unique position as interconnectors between Norfolk and Europe were already installed and operational. However, there was no infrastructure to pump hydrogen currently onsite. Discussions were taking place between stakeholders and companies such as Shell and Perenco about putting a bid together to install such infrastructure. The Leader stated all parties emphasised to Lord Callanan the importance of the gas terminal to North Norfolk. Norfolk County Council would continue to work with North Norfolk District Council and report back any progress to Members.

7.6 **Question from Cllr Saul Penfold**

7.6.1 Cllr Saul Penfold stated that last week, the County Councils Network (CCN) released its findings of its post-Autumn Statement budget implications survey, which warned councils were in a 'significantly worse' financial position than before the Autumn Statement. Half of respondents indicated that they would now need to make even more cuts. Cllr Penfold asked the Leader what implications this potentially meant for the Council's Capital Programme and whether significant cuts to people's services could be expected for the remaining £20m of savings required.

7.6.2 The Leader stated that the Council had to be in control of its own finances, pointing to recent Section 114 notices issued by other districts. The Leader commented that Norfolk was not in this situation faced by other councils. Increasing demand for services was causing additional budget pressures. The Council's budget was increasing every year, however demand and the costs of providing such services was also increasing. The Leader mentioned that Norfolk would continue to lobby the government to secure a fairer, longer-term funding settlement.

7.7 **Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare**

7.7.1 Cllr Mike Smith-Clare asked, in light of the continuing negative impact erosion was having on the Norfolk coastline, if the Leader had visited Hemsby and what message would she like to pass onto residents.

7.7.2 In response, the Leader mentioned she had visited the Hemsby coastline many times and had witnessed the impact of coastal erosion in the area. The Leader acknowledged it was a worrying time for residents in this area and commended Great Yarmouth Borough Council for their efforts to help affected homeowners in Hemsby. Coastal communities in Norfolk were under increased pressure and action had to be taken; it was not simply a case of waiting for the next storm. A motion regarding coastal erosion was due to be moved later in the meeting.

7.8 **Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn**

7.8.1 Cllr Jamie Osborn asked if the Leader could confirm unequivocally whether the Norwich Western Link would proceed if the government only provided 85% of the outline business case funding, leaving the Council to fund the £60m shortfall.

7.8.2 The Leader confirmed the Council was committed to the Norwich Western Link. It was originally believed only 85% of the required funding was being provided by the government, however the Leader had now been told that 100% of the funding was forthcoming, which would be announced shortly. The Leader stressed that the Norwich Western Link was important to the city, as Norwich was one of the few cities without an outer ring road. Provision of the missing link between the A47 and the Northern Distributor Road would see a reduction in rat-running through residential streets, along with benefiting the emergency services and those travelling to school or work.

7.9 **Question from Cllr Carl Annison**

7.9.1 Cllr Carl Annison stated the Innovate UK New Anglia Local Action Plan was recently launched and asked the Leader to recall how the event went.

7.9.2 The Leader stated she was pleased to be invited to a recent event at Adastral Park in Martlesham, to the east of Ipswich. Innovate UK was a body set up by the government to provide funding towards projects aimed at improving productivity and economic growth. The Norwich Research Park was one such area involved. The New Anglia Local Action Plan was the only such plan to visit this part of the country, which would provide £7.5m in funding towards agriculture and food tech solutions. The Leader remarked that she was looking forward to seeing the impact of the Local Action Plan on small and medium sized businesses in Norfolk.

8. Recommendations from Cabinet

- 8.1 The Leader moved, seconded by Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Recommendation 1 from the Cabinet meeting held on 2 October 2023.
- 8.2 Council on a show of hands **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the following amendments to the P6 capital programme for the following schemes, as set out in Capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.2-4.3 of the report.
- The inter-service virements of £1.287m from Digital Services to fund the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Command and Control System as set out in Appendix 3 of the report, note 4.2.
 - £0.075m uplift to the Environment (Planning and Advice) project to fund the additional works associated with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) responsibilities as set out in Appendix 3 of the report, note 4.3.

9. Cabinet Report (Questions to Cabinet Members)

- 9.1 The Leader moved the report of the Cabinet meetings held on the 2 October and 6 November 2023.
- 9.2 Council **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the report.
- 9.3 **Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**
- 9.3.1 Cllr Steffan Aquarone stated the X29 bus service between Norwich and Fakenham, which now ran late into the evening, was proving extremely popular with his constituents in Stibbard. However, Cllr Aquarone mentioned it was proving difficult to pass safely between the bus stop and the village. There was a good case to improve footpath access in this area, not just to access public transport but also for the residents of Ryburgh to access Stibbard Primary School and users of the Walsingham Pilgrimage Route. Cllr Aquarone asked the Cabinet Member if they could recommend where further funding could be sought for footpath and pavement improvements.
- 9.3.2 The Cabinet Member suggested making an application to Parish Partnerships to see if anything could be implemented and asked the Member to write to him with the list of concerns for the Highways Department to investigate.
- 9.4 **Question from Cllr Terry Jermy to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**
- 9.4.1 Cllr Terry Jermy recalled that in June 2023 the government declared that the remaining 33% of councils who charge for DIY waste disposal would be prevented from doing so by the end of the year. As Norfolk County Council was one of these councils, Cllr Jermy asked the Cabinet Member to confirm which arrangements were in place to stop these charges with only a few weeks of 2023 remaining.

9.4.2 The Cabinet Member stated that DIY waste disposal would be free to visitors of Norfolk's recycling centres. A booking system was not being considered at this point, but the scheme would be monitored.

9.5 **Question from Cllr Paul Neale to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing**

9.5.1 Cllr Paul Neale stated the collapse of the OneNorwich Practice was a massive blow for Norwich residents and although very recently most of the varied services had been redeployed to other providers, it was a case of fingers crossed that in such haste it would still function effectively. Cllr Neale remarked that one vital service, the Asylum Seeker Healthcare Service, was yet to be redeployed before the end of the year deadline and asked the Cabinet Member to clarify what was causing the delay to the redeployment of this service and explain what Plan B was to plug the void should the redeployment not happen.

9.5.2 As the Cabinet Member had sent apologies for the meeting, the Leader confirmed a written response would be supplied (Appendix F).

9.6 **Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.6.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp commented that her division was about to see the largest development in the history of West Norfolk and it was essential that the housing access road was provided first. However, it appeared National Highways were putting up obstacles in the way of widening the cycle route around the Hardwick Roundabout in King's Lynn, which was essential to improve active travel in this area. Cllr Kemp asked what the Cabinet Member would do to inform National Highways that West Winch required better connections to King's Lynn.

9.6.2 In response, the Cabinet Member mentioned that the project was currently going through planning, with a business case being developed. The Cabinet Member remarked he was unaware of the issues the Member had raised and requested that she write to him so a more substantial response could be provided.

9.7 **Question from Cllr Martin Wilby to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.7.1 Cllr Martin Wilby remarked it was very pleasing to see Norfolk being ranked first in the National Highways and Transport Network survey out of 29 other districts. Cllr Wilby asked if the Cabinet Member could provide some of the key highlights from Norfolk's performance.

9.7.2 The Cabinet Member welcomed this news, stating this was the second time in three years Norfolk had topped the survey. Norfolk had come first in 2021 and second in 2022. The Cabinet Member explained that the Council had achieved an above average score in 26 of the 27 key benchmark indicators within the survey. Norfolk was on the right track but more work was required to further improve standards across the board. £4.1m in pothole funding had just been secured from the government during the current financial year, with further funding forthcoming over the next 10 years.

9.8 **Question from Cllr Tim Adams to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships**

9.8.1 Cllr Tim Adams asked the Cabinet Member if she could advise what was being done to make road crossing patrols more sustainable, given there were numerous vacancies at present and concerns expressed that they were unattractive positions with limited hours available.

9.8.2 The Cabinet Member remarked that road crossing patrols came under the remit of the fire service and clarified that vacancies were advertised accordingly. A written response was to be provided to the Member (Appendix F)

9.9 **Question from Cllr Mike Sands to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.9.1 Cllr Mike Sands stated that after the way the Council unilaterally ended the Norwich Highways Agency Agreement, reneged on the joint agreement provision of the Transforming Cities funding that gave joint decision making to partner district councils, ignored the views of Norwich City Council on road schemes, and created chaos and threats to city businesses from poorly planned implementation of road schemes such as the Heartsease Roundabout and Dereham Road, could the Cabinet Member really expect district councils in Norfolk to take seriously any assertions that the devolution deal would give them a meaningful voice. Cllr Sands added that it was felt the district councils were only listened to when it suited the Council and asked if the Cabinet Member could show evidence from his handling of road and traffic issues in Norfolk to dispel this notion.

9.9.2 In response, the Cabinet Member remarked that the new Transport for Norwich Steering Group was set up following experience with similar schemes in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. The Cabinet Member stated that members were required from Norwich City Council, upon which the Steering Group could then proceed with its work.

9.10 **Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn to the Cabinet Member for Finance**

9.10.1 Cllr Jamie Osborn stated there was a risk if the Norwich Western Link did not proceed that the Council would have to repay funds drawn down from the Department for Transport (DfT). This could total £25m in 2023, £40m in 2024 and £70m in 2025. The repayment would have to come after the Council had used its reserves to cover its own contribution to the project, essentially wiping out the Council's reserves. Cllr Osborn asked the Cabinet Member if he could confirm where the funding to repay the DfT would come from.

9.10.2 The Cabinet Member stated that the outline business case for the Norwich Western Link was approved recently, which included an immediate government repayment of £24.8m back to Norfolk County Council. The first tranche was expected on the 15 December, with a second tranche at the end of January 2024. The Cabinet Member had received reassurances from the government that the £24.8m would not have to be repaid if the Norwich Western Link was shelved. Regarding the Council's reserves, the Cabinet Member referred the Member to previous answers he had given in June 2022 and July 2023.

9.11 **Question from Cllr Fran Whymark to the Deputy Leader of the Council**

9.11.1 Cllr Fran Whymark asked the Deputy Leader if he believed Norfolk would get a good deal when the local government settlement was announced this month, and what wanted to see in the settlement.

9.11.2 The Deputy Leader stated he would not make a prediction on the contents of the local government settlement, however a Policy Statement published by the government on the 5 December 2023 confirmed the majority of the Council's assumptions. The Deputy Leader expressed disappointment that there did not appear to be any additional funding for Adult Social Care. Norfolk would continue to lobby the government for improvements to the funding framework through its local MPs. The County Deal would offer the Council stable funding ringfenced for 30 years and represented an important opportunity for the Council to be "at the table" for future funding discussions.

9.12 **Question from Cllr Brian Watkins to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.12.1 Cllr Brian Watkins commented that the University of East Anglia (UEA) night bus was a vital service to ensure that students could return from nights out in the city centre safely without having to make the long walk back in the early hours. Cllr Watkins asked if the Cabinet Member could commit to reinstating funding for this vital service.

9.12.2 The Cabinet Member stated he could not commit to this scheme due to budget pressures but would take a review of such provision. Any such night bus service would need to be sustainable.

9.13 **Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.13.1 Cllr Mike Smith-Clare asked the Cabinet Member if he could dispel recent publicised rumours that the Third Crossing in Great Yarmouth was causing additional flooding.

9.13.2 The Cabinet Member stated he was aware of the rumours and had asked officers to investigate accordingly. The area up to Breydon Water was modelled during the outline business case, which illustrated the Third Crossing would not cause any additional flooding. The Cabinet Member remarked there was no basis to the rumours. The ground in the area was saturated due to recent adverse weather and the temporary failure of a pump.

9.14 **Question from Cllr Catherine Rowett to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**

9.14.1 Cllr Catherine Rowett stated that that the council had appointed WSP as the competent experts to prepare the Environmental Statement for the Norwich Western Link. The council had also appointed specialist legal advisers to advise the council on its proposed application for planning permission. A legal review of all the planning applications documents was being carried out prior to finalisation

and submission of the planning application. Cllr Rowett asked when the Cabinet Member expected to hear the outcome and what risks had been identified associated with the potential for failing to meet the legal requirements in this respect.

9.14.2 The Cabinet Member stated he would provide a written response to the Member (Appendix F).

9.15 **Question from Cllr Lana Hempsall to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care**

9.15.1 Cllr Lana Hempsall mentioned that The National Children and Adult Services Conference took place last week and asked the Cabinet Member to highlight any pertinent talking points from the conference.

9.15.2 The Cabinet Member remarked that she and officers had attended three days of the conference, which took place in Bournemouth. The conference was well attended with numerous events and presentations taking place. Sessions and workshops took place regarding the imminent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of Adult Social Care departments. The Cabinet Member commented that the highlight of the event was the Thursday, where officers from Norfolk County Council gave three presentations to the conference, two of which were on Children's Services. The Cabinet Member gave a presentation on artificial intelligence opportunities in the Adult Social Care sector at the conference, relating to the falls pilot between Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk District Council and Broadland District Council. Artificial intelligence had identified approximately 750 people at risk of a fall in the area and details of this pilot scheme were given to Members. The Cabinet Member remarked that herself and officers had received numerous emails from other districts asking for feedback.

9.16 **Question from Cllr Lucy Shires to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

9.16.1 Cllr Lucy Shires stated the extra funding to tackle potholes across the county was welcome but asked the Cabinet Member if the prolonged neglect of Norfolk's roads by the administration had condemned the Council to a never-ending game of catch up, where the pothole backlog would never be cleared.

9.16.2 The Cabinet Member stressed that the pothole backlog would be cleared; however potholes were considered a "Forth Bridge job", as when one was filled in another would be discovered elsewhere. Protection work on Norfolk roads would continue to progress. The Cabinet Member emphasised the importance of using the Council website to report potholes accordingly.

9.17 **Question from Cllr Brenda Jones to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care**

9.17.1 Cllr Brenda Jones asked the Cabinet Member if she could advise how many social work vacancies were available in Norfolk, and what was being done to actively

recruit senior social workers to take up management positions within Norfolk County Council.

9.17.2 The Cabinet Member acknowledged that social work recruitment was a challenge for all councils. It was important to recognise the hard work social workers do. A written response was to be provided to the Member (Appendix F).

9.18 **Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport.**

9.18.1 Cllr Jamie Osborn remarked that the Norwich Western Link would increase carbon emissions by 5,000 tons per year over the 60 year lifetime of the project. It was previously denied that the project would increase carbon emissions, however it had now been admitted this was the case. Cllr Osborn stated it could be assumed that carbon emissions would be higher in the first few years of the project, before the phase-out of fossil fuels and internal combustion engines, up to the year 2050. In light of 2050 being the crucial point for when the UK must reach Net Zero, Cllr Osborn asked the Cabinet Members if they had the figures for the annual carbon emission increase from the Norwich Western Link over the next 30 years.

9.18.2 Both Cabinet Members provided information to answer different portions of the question. It was acknowledged that the carbon footprint would be higher during the construction of the Norwich Western Link, however a reduction in transport emissions was expected afterwards. 70 new electric buses were being introduced in Norwich, each one saving 200 tons of carbon from entering the atmosphere per year. A second phase of electric buses was in the planning stage. Reduced public transport emissions would counter any emissions from the Norwich Western Link. Any emissions calculations would also have to factor in the sale of electric vehicles, the sales of which had increased by 20% in 2023.

10. Recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee and Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10.1 There were no recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee and the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

11. Recommendations from Committees

11.1 There were no recommendations from Committees.

12. Reports from Committees, Select Committees and Joint Committees

12.1 The Chairman proposed that Items **12, 13, 14, 15** and **16** on the agenda be considered in one block. This was unanimously **approved** by Council Members on a show of hands.

12.2 Council **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the reports.

17. Specific Business Items

17.1 **Proportional Allocation of Places on Committees and Appointment of Chair/Vice Chair for Committee**

17.1.1 Cllr Kay Mason Billig, seconded by Cllr Andrew Jamieson, moved the recommendations contained in the report.

17.1.2 Council **RESOLVED** to:

1. **APPROVE** the revised allocation of committee places.
2. **NOTE** that the Labour Group would give up one place on the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee to the Conservative Group, and one place on the Planning (Regulatory) Committee, which would be offered to a non-aligned Member.
3. **APPROVE** the appointment of Cllr Brian Long as the Vice Chair for the People and Communities Select Committee.

17.2 **Consideration of a County Deal for Norfolk**

17.2.1 Cllr Kay Mason Billig, seconded by Cllr Andrew Jamieson, moved the recommendations contained in the report.

17.2.2 Cllr Ben Price, seconded by Cllr Catherine Rowett, moved the following amendment to the recommendations contained in the report.

This Council:

a) recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year **but notes that the consultation did not consider the option of returning to a committee system.**

b) **notes that a directly elected leader system of Devolution carries the risk of centralising executive power to the detriment of citizens' engagement in the decisions that affect their lives and reduces the accountability of the county's Governance.**

c) **council supports the principle of devolution of powers from central government and higher-tier authorities to lower-tier authorities if this results in greater accountability and greater local participation in decision making.**

d) **council asks officers to investigate reverting to a committee system of Governance and to present it as one of three options to be considered alongside Option 2 and outright rejection of the deal to the July 2024 meeting of the council.**

be) commends recognises the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal **and notes that these additional benefits are minor and do not materially improve the offer. resolves that the Deal should be accepted.**

ef) agrees that if councils choose Option 2 in July 2024, that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate.

dg) agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements with options for both Option 2 and reverting to a committee system should be brought to the Full Council Meeting on 23 July 2024 for decision then, to facilitate that election date of May 2025 if Option 2 receives the support of council.

17.2.3 Following discussion, the amended motion was put to a vote and **LOST** (Appendix A). There were 5 votes in favour, 56 votes against, and 9 abstentions.

17.2.4 Following discussion, the original recommendations set out in the report were put to a vote and **AGREED** (Appendix B). There were 56 votes in favour, 14 votes against, and 1 abstention.

17.2.5 Council **RESOLVED** the following:

1. **RECOGNISED** the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year.
2. **COMMENDED** the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and **RESOLVED** that the Deal should be accepted.
3. **AGREED** that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the County Council elections in May 2025, to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate.
4. **AGREED** that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council Meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date.

18. Notice of Motions

18.1 Motion 1 – Call for a Dedicated Minister for the Coast

18.1.1 The following motion was proposed by Cllr James Bensly and seconded by Cllr Eric Vardy:

This Council acknowledges the campaign led by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Coastal Communities for the creation of a dedicated Minister for the Coast and notes the support that the campaign has been given by the Local Government Association's Coastal Special Interest Group and other cross-party stakeholders and interested parties.

There is an evident need for a dedicated Minister for the Coast, one that could work across Government and raise the profile of the needs of our unique coastal communities and who has oversight and understanding of all the challenges and opportunities that our coastal communities and businesses face.

This Council resolves to request that the Leader writes to all Party Leaders at a national level to support the call for a dedicated Minister for the Coast so that the proposal can be included in their manifestos.

18.1.2 Cllr Steve Morphew raised a point of order to suggest that due to time constraints, the debate on this motion be adjourned to the next meeting of Full Council, scheduled for January 2024. This was seconded by Cllr Mike Smith-Clare. The Chair advised that this proposal would be put to a vote.

18.1.3 On being put to a vote, the motion to adjourn the debate was **LOST** (Appendix C), with there was 8 votes in favour, 51 votes against and 1 abstention.

18.1.4 **Three Hour Meeting Time Elapses**

The Chair announced the three hours allocated for the meeting had now elapsed. Cllr Kay Mason Billig proposed a motion to extend the meeting to the end of Motion 1. This was seconded by Cllr Andrew Jamieson.

Following a show of hands, Council **AGREED** to extend the meeting to the end of Motion 1.

18.1.5 Cllr Steve Morphew commented that the Labour Group had submitted an amendment to Motion 1. Due to the three hour limit being reached, Cllr Morphew **WITHDREW** the amendment.

18.1.6 Cllr Lana Hemsall raised a point of order as to how long the Council meeting would be extended for. The Chair clarified the meeting would continue until the debate and vote on Motion 1 was concluded. Cllr Kay Mason Billig stated the motion could be put to a vote at any point during the debate.

18.1.7 On being put to the vote, the motion was **CARRIED** (Appendix D), with 65 votes in favour of the motion, 0 votes against and 0 abstentions.

18.2 As a result of the three-hour meeting period having elapsed, Council Members **agreed** to move to the part of the meeting where all remaining business relating to motions or amendments to motions would be considered, moved, and seconded in line with procedure rule 4 (iv).

18.2.1 The Chair confirmed he would deal with each motion in turn. Initially he would ask the proposer of the motion if they wanted the motion to go ahead or be withdrawn. If the motion was withdrawn, the Council would continue through the motions in the order they appeared on the agenda, which was by reference to the size of the group. If the motion was not withdrawn, the Chair would consider if there were amendments. If amendments had been submitted, then the Council would vote on those first and then, when those were completed, a vote would be taken on the substantive motion.

18.2.2 The Chair proposed that all the remaining votes in this section of the meeting be taken as recorded votes. The Chair then asked for a singular decision to do this, to extend to all votes taken in this section of the meeting. This was then proposed by Cllr Brian Long, seconded by Cllr Alexandra Kemp, and **AGREED** unanimously.

18.3 **Motion 2 – Fuel Poverty**

18.3.1 This motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

18.4 **Motion 3 – Carer Parking Permits**

18.4.1 This motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

18.5 **Motion 4 – Proactive Safe Speeds Policy for Norfolk**

18.5.1 This motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

18.6 **Motion 5 – Cash Option for Norfolk**

18.6.1 This motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

18.7 **Motion 6 – OneNorwich Collapse**

18.7.1 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Jamie Osborn and seconded by Cllr Paul Neale:

This Council notes:

OneNorwich Practices carry out a series of key functions within Norwich, including but not limited to: GP services for over 10,000 registered residents; the city's seven day a week 7am-9pm walk-in service (average 250 appointments a day); programs to help address health inequalities such as asthma in schools; lymphoedema services; vulnerable adult services; and refugee, migrant and asylum seeker services.

Altogether these provide an estimated minimum of 120,000 essential patient visits a year.

A joint statement was issued on the 23rd of October by OneNorwich Practices and the NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board to transition staff and services to other providers in the system over the coming months, and then close down the organisation.

This announcement came as a shock to hardworking staff, as well as the many patients who rely on the services.

The service run by OneNorwich service looks likely to close in January, potentially around one of the peaks of illness during the year and will be transferred to a different provider.

The Asylum Seeker Service run by OneNorwich Practices is a vital service for refugees and asylum seekers who this council has responsibility for supporting. The Asylum Seeker Service has no clinical lead with an expertise and specialist knowledge in asylum seeker healthcare, meaning there has been a lack of expertise in the way this service is managed.

- A. Ask Cabinet to present an urgent report assessing the impact the transition will have on the health landscape and risk to patients, and setting out steps that the council will take to engage with partners to minimise risk to patients.
- B. Ask Cabinet to present an urgent report on the impact of the potential closure and recommissioning of the Vulnerable Adults Service on Norfolk County Council's responsibilities regarding refugees and asylum seekers via the People from Abroad Team, and to set out steps that the council will take to engage with partners to minimise risk to patients.
- C. Ask the Chair of the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider adding an item on the OneNorwich Practice to the committee forward work programme, pending approval from the broader committee membership. This item should examine the issues of management and governance that led to the collapse of OneNorwich Practices in order to avoid similar crises in future, as well as confirming that HOSC will scrutinise the transition to new service providers. As part of this discussion, NHOSC should further examine the governance of the Asylum Seekers Service to ensure that the service is commissioned effectively and that necessary expertise and experience is in place to manage the service.
- D. Asks the Leader to write to local MPs, NHS England and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to:
 - Register its concern over the closure, and manner in which the OneNorwich Practices closure has been announced and the impact on staff and patients, including some of the city's most vulnerable service users.
 - Request an urgent inquiry into the circumstances and causes of this sudden collapse, including governance, management and financial issues; an evaluation of the service and the management of any conflicts of interest in the reletting of the contracts to providers so that an understanding of what has gone so wrong within will enable a stable future for these vital services.
 - Ensure that scrutiny regarding transparency and conflict of interest take place to ensure bids for future delivery are fair and in the public interest.

18.7.2 On being put to a vote the motion was **LOST** (Appendix E), there were 4 votes in favour of the motion, 32 votes against and 20 abstentions.

19. Questions on notice under rule 9.3

19.1 There were no questions received under rule 9.3

20. Appointments to Committees, sub-Committees and Joint Committees

20.1 There were no appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees or Joint Committees announced at the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 14:13

**Cllr Barry Stone
Chair, Norfolk County Council**



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Norfolk County Council - Date: 12 December 2023

RECORDED VOTE – ITEM NUMBER: 17.2.3 - Consideration of a County Deal for Norfolk – Green Group Amendment

FOR		AGST	ABST		FOR		AGST	ABST
	ADAMS Tim		X			LONG	X	
	ADAMS Tony	X				MACKIE	X	
	ANNISON	X				MASON BILLIG	X	
	AQUARONE		X			MAXFIELD		X
	ASKEW					MORIARTY		X
	BAMBRIDGE	X				MORPHEW	X	
	BENSLY	X		X		NEALE		
	BILLS	X				NUNN	X	
	BIRMINGHAM					OLIVER J		
	BLUNDELL	X				OLIVER R		
	BORRETT			X		OSBORN		
	BOWES	X				PECK	X	
	BROCIK-COULTON	X				PENFOLD		X
	CARPENTER G	X				PLANT	X	
	CARPENTER P	X		X		PRICE B		
	CHENERY	X				PRICE R		
	CLANCY					PROCTOR		
	COLWELL		X			REILLY	X	
	CONNOLLY	X				RICHMOND	X	
	CORLETT					RILEY		X
	CROFTS		X			ROPER	X	
	DALBY	X		X		ROWETT		
	DARK	X				RUMSBY		
	DAWSON	X				SANDS	X	
	DEWSBURY	X				SAVAGE	X	
	DIXON	X				SAYERS	X	
	DUIGAN	X				SHIRES		X
	EAGLE	X				SMITH	X	
	ELMER	X				SMITH-CLARE	X	
	FISHER	X				STONE	X	
	FITZPATRICK	X				STOREY	X	
	GRANT					THOMAS	X	
	GURNEY	X				THOMSON	X	
	HEMPSALL	X				VARDY	X	
	JAMES	X				VINCENT	X	
	JAMIESON	X				WALKER	X	
	JERMY	X				WARD	X	
	JONES	X				WATKINS	X	
X	KEMP					WEBB		
	KIDDIE	X				WHITE		
	KIDDLE-MORRIS	X				WHYMARK	X	
	KIRK					WILBY	X	

Sub-Total

Sub-Total

For
Against
Abstentions

5
56
9

Norfolk County Council - Date: 12 December 2023

RECORDED VOTE – ITEM NUMBER: 17.2.4 – Consideration of a County Deal for Norfolk

FOR		AGST	ABST	FOR		AGST	ABST
X	ADAMS Tim			X	LONG		
X	ADAMS Tony			X	MACKIE		
X	ANNISON			X	MASON BILLIG		
X	AQUARONE			X	MAXFIELD		
	ASKEW			X	MORIARTY		
X	BAMBRIDGE				MORPHEW	X	
X	BENSLY				NEALE	X	
X	BILLS			X	NUNN		
	BIRMINGHAM				OLIVER J		
X	BLUNDELL				OLIVER R		
	BORRETT				OSBORN	X	
X	BOWES			X	PECK		
	BROCIK- COULTON	X			PENFOLD		X
X	CARPENTER G			X	PLANT		
X	CARPENTER P				PRICE B	X	
X	CHENERY			X	PRICE R		
	CLANCY				PROCTOR		
X	COLWELL				REILLY	X	
X	CONNOLLY			X	RICHMOND		
	CORLETT				RILEY	X	
X	CROFTS				ROPER	X	
X	DALBY			X	ROWETT		
X	DARK				RUMSBY		
X	DAWSON				SANDS	X	
X	DEWSBURY			X	SAVAGE		
X	DIXON			X	SAYERS		
X	DUIGAN			X	SHIRES		
X	EAGLE			X	SMITH		
X	ELMER				SMITH-CLARE	X	
X	FISHER			X	STONE		
X	FITZPATRICK			X	STOREY		
	GRANT			X	THOMAS		
X	GURNEY			X	THOMSON		
X	HEMPSALL			X	VARDY		
X	JAMES			X	VINCENT		
X	JAMIESON				WALKER	X	
	JERMY	X		X	WARD		
	JONES	X		X	WATKINS		
	KEMP	X			WEBB		
X	KIDDIE				WHITE		
X	KIDDLE-MORRIS			X	WHYMARK		
	KIRK			X	WILBY		

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For
Against
Abstentions

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14
1

Norfolk County Council - Date: 12 December 2023

RECORDED VOTE – ITEM NUMBER: 18.1.3 – Labour motion to adjourn debate

FOR		AGST	ABST	FOR		AGST	ABST
	ADAMS Tim	X			LONG	X	
	ADAMS Tony	X			MACKIE	X	
	ANNISON	X			MASON BILLIG	X	
	AQUARONE	X			MAXFIELD		X
	ASKEW				MORIARTY		
	BAMBRIDGE	X		X	MORPHEW		
	BENSLY	X			NEALE	X	
	BILLS	X			NUNN		
	BIRMINGHAM				OLIVER-J		
	BLUNDELL	X			OLIVER-R		
	BORRETT				OSBORN	X	
	BOWES				PECK	X	
X	BROCIK-COULTON				PENFOLD	X	
	CARPENTER G	X			PLANT	X	
	CARPENTER P	X			PRICE B		
	CHENERY				PRICE R		
	CLANCY				PROCTOR		
	COLWELL	X		X	REILLY		
	CONNOLLY	X			RICHMOND	X	
	CORLETT				RILEY	X	
	CROFTS	X			ROPER	X	
	DALBY				ROWETT	X	
	DARK	X			RUMSBY		
	DAWSON	X		X	SANDS		
	DEWSBURY	X			SAVAGE	X	
	DIXON				SAYERS	X	
	DUIGAN	X			SHIRES	X	
	EAGLE	X			SMITH	X	
	ELMER	X		X	SMITH-CLARE		
	FISHER	X			STONE	X	
	FITZPATRICK				STOREY	X	
	GRANT				THOMAS	X	
	GURNEY	X			THOMSON	X	
	HEMPSALL				VARDY	X	
	JAMES	X			VINCENT	X	
	JAMIESON	X		X	WALKER		
X	JERMY				WARD	X	
X	JONES				WATKINS	X	
	KEMP	X			WEBB		
	KIDDIE				WHITE		
	KIDDLE-MORRIS	X			WHYMARK	X	
	KIRK				WILBY	X	

Sub-Total

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For
Against
Abstentions

8
51
1

Norfolk County Council - Date: 12 December 2023

RECORDED VOTE – ITEM NUMBER: 18.1.7 – Conservative Group Motion – Call for a Dedicated Minister for the Coast

FOR		AGST	ABST	FOR		AGST	ABST
X	ADAMS Tim			X	LONG		
	ADAMS Tony			X	MACKIE		
X	ANNISON			X	MASON BILLIG		
X	AQUARONE			X	MAXFIELD		
	ASKEW				MORIARTY		
X	BAMBRIDGE			X	MORPHEW		
X	BENSLY			X	NEALE		
X	BILLS			X	NUNN		
	BIRMINGHAM				OLIVER-J		
X	BLUNDELL				OLIVER-R		
	BORRETT			X	OSBORN		
	BOWES			X	PECK		
X	BROCIK- COULTON			X	PENFOLD		
X	CARPENTER G			X	PLANT		
X	CARPENTER P			X	PRICE B		
X	CHENERY			X	PRICE R		
	CLANCY				PROCTOR		
X	COLWELL			X	REILLY		
X	CONNOLLY			X	RICHMOND		
	CORLETT			X	RILEY		
X	CROFTS			X	ROPER		
	DALBY			X	ROWETT		
X	DARK				RUMSBY		
X	DAWSON			X	SANDS		
X	DEWSBURY			X	SAVAGE		
	DIXON			X	SAYERS		
X	DUIGAN			X	SHIRES		
X	EAGLE			X	SMITH		
X	ELMER			X	SMITH-CLARE		
X	FISHER			X	STONE		
X	FITZPATRICK			X	STOREY		
	GRANT			X	THOMAS		
X	GURNEY			X	THOMSON		
X	HEMPSALL			X	VARDY		
X	JAMES			X	VINCENT		
X	JAMIESON			X	WALKER		
X	JERMY			X	WARD		
X	JONES			X	WATKINS		
	KEMP				WEBB		
X	KIDDIE				WHITE		
X	KIDDLE-MORRIS			X	WHYMARK		
	KIRK			X	WILBY		

Sub-Total

Sub-Total

For
Against
Abstentions

65

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0

Norfolk County Council - Date: 12 December 2023

RECORDED VOTE – ITEM NUMBER: 18.7.2 – Green Group Motion – OneNorwich Collapse

FOR		AGST	ABST	FOR		AGST	ABST
	ADAMS Tim		X		LONG	X	
	ADAMS Tony				MACKIE	X	
	ANNISON	X			MASON BILLIG	X	
	AQUARONE		X		MAXFIELD		
	ASKEW				MORIARTY		
	BAMBRIDGE				MORPHEW		X
	BENSLY			X	NEALE		
	BILLS				NUNN	X	
	BIRMINGHAM				OLIVER J		
	BLUNDELL		X		OLIVER R		
	BORRETT			X	OSBORN		
	BOWES				PECK	X	
	BROCIEK-COULTON		X		PENFOLD		X
	CARPENTER G				PLANT	X	
	CARPENTER P	X		X	PRICE B		
	CHENERY				PRICE R	X	
	CLANCY				PROCTOR		
	COLWELL		X		REILLY		X
	CONNOLLY	X			RICHMOND	X	
	CORLETT				RILEY		X
	CROFTS		X		ROPER		X
	DALBY			X	ROWETT		
	DARK	X			RUMSBY		
	DAWSON	X			SANDS		X
	DEWSBURY	X			SAVAGE	X	
	DIXON				SAYERS		X
	DUIGAN	X			SHIRES		X
	EAGLE	X			SMITH	X	
	ELMER	X			SMITH-CLARE		X
	FISHER	X			STONE	X	
	FITZPATRICK	X			STOREY		
	GRANT				THOMAS	X	
	GURNEY				THOMSON	X	
	HEMPSALL	X			VARDY	X	
	JAMES	X			VINCENT		X
	JAMIESON	X			WALKER		X
	JERMY		X		WARD	X	
	JONES		X		WATKINS		X
	KEMP				WEBB		
	KIDDIE	X			WHITE		
	KIDDLE-MORRIS				WHYMARK	X	
	KIRK				WILBY		

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For
Against
Abstentions

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31
20

Questions requiring written responses from the Council Meeting – Tuesday 12 December 2023

<p>Question from Cllr Colleen Walker to Cllr Kay Mason Billig, Leader of the Council.</p>	<p>Question and response:</p> <p>Cllr Colleen Walker stated that at the September meeting of Full Council, it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs containing a set of requests on behalf of Norfolk’s beleaguered coastal communities. However, Cllr Walker mentioned that on the 4 December 2023 she asked the Cabinet to share the letter and the response. However the reply received seemed oblivious to the decision taken at Full Council, instead referring to a recent Scrutiny Committee meeting. Cllr Walker asked if the Leader could confirm when this letter was sent, what the contents were, what reply was received from the Secretary of State, and for this information to be shared with Members. Cllr Walker added that if the letter had not been written and sent, could the Leader explain why this was the case.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>The details were raised in a motion to Council in September. Further to that a report on this matter was discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting in November 2023, which also agreed a resolution to write to the government. Following this, a letter, which includes the key points raised in the motion to Council in September, is due to be hand delivered to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at a meeting planned at the end of January 2024. This letter, and the response we receive, will be made available to Members.</p>
<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Cllr Paul Neale stated the collapse of the OneNorwich Practice was a massive blow for Norwich residents and although very recently most of the varied services had been redeployed to other providers, it was a case of fingers crossed that in such haste it would still function effectively. Cllr Neale remarked that one vital service, the Asylum Seeker Healthcare Service, was yet to be redeployed before the end of the year deadline and asked the Cabinet Member to clarify what was causing the delay to the redeployment of this service and explain what Plan B was to plug the void should the redeployment not happen.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The Councillor will be aware that this is a service commissioned by the NHS and not by the County Council. The Asylum Seeker Healthcare Service is part of a wider Vulnerable Adults Service. The Norfolk and Waveney ICB announced on December 11th 2023 that North Norfolk Primary Care, an alliance of GP practices that support delivery of local primary medical care services in North Norfolk, had been awarded caretaker contracts following the winding down of OneNorwich Practices and this included the contract for the Vulnerable Adults Service. The awarding of the caretaker contracts will mean that disruption is minimised, and ongoing patient care will not be impacted by the changeover of provider.</p>

	<p>Question and response:</p> <p>North Norfolk Primary Care is a well-established GP Provider Organisation with over 6 years' experience in providing primary and secondary care across Norfolk and Waveney. It currently provides urgent care via 'GP Front Door' services at the three acute hospitals, cancer services for serious non-specific cancers, and a variety of elective care pathways which contribute to the elective recovery programme across the health system.</p>
<p>Question from Cllr Tim Adams to Cllr Margaret Dewsbury, Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships</p>	<p>Cllr Tim Adams asked the Cabinet Member if she could advise what was being done to make road crossing patrols more sustainable, given there were numerous vacancies at present and concerns expressed that they were unattractive positions with limited hours available.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>Sites eligible for school crossing patrols (SCP) are determined via an assessment process. When a member of the school cross patrol team retires or leaves their position, a review is carried out as to whether that role is still required before the role is advertised. If the assessment determines the SCP is no longer required a consultation and appeal process are in place to ensure a fair and robust approach.</p> <p>There is no set policy on the recruitment approach, and the team manager will try various methods to ensure fulfilment of the role – this can include working directly with the school in question, advertising the vacancy in prominent places locally (such as the local libraries) and getting local stakeholders involved to support the activity. There is a relatively small demographic of people who are able to take on part time work of this nature, but those who do are very committed to their local communities and many provide multiple years of service, for which we are very grateful.</p> <p>Sites do not get closed as a result of difficulty to recruit and the team manager continues to explore ways to encourage interest.</p>
<p>Question from Cllr Catherine Rowett to Cllr Eric Vardy, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p>	<p>Cllr Catherine Rowett stated that that the council had appointed WSP as the competent experts to prepare the Environmental Statement for the Norwich Western Link. The council had also appointed specialist legal advisers to advise the council on its proposed application for planning permission. A legal review of all the planning applications documents was being carried out prior to finalisation and submission of the planning application. Cllr Rowett asked when the Cabinet Member expected to hear the outcome and what risks had been identified associated with the potential for failing to meet the legal requirements in this respect.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>The outcome of the legal review will be reflected in the finalised application documents which will ensure that all legal requirements for the submission of a valid application for planning permission, including those identified in the "National and Local Validation Requirements for County Council (Regulation 3) Planning Applications" (known as the local list), will be met.</p>

<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones to Cllr Alison Thomas, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	<p>Question and response:</p> <p>Cllr Brenda Jones asked the Cabinet Member if she could advise how many social work vacancies were available in Norfolk, and what was being done to actively recruit senior social workers to take up management positions within Norfolk County Council.</p> <p>Response:</p> <p>Recruiting to frontline Social Care roles, qualified and unqualified, remains a challenge. Competition is fierce and candidates in both groups can easily source roles nationally, therefore we need to ensure we are well placed as an employer of choice with a positive brand and image in the market – clearly articulating why candidates should consider us.</p> <p>Our current vacancy position as a department is 8%. That equates to 56.1 wte (whole time equivalent) vacant posts out of 698.71 established posts.</p> <p>This figure is for frontline social worker teams only and only considers assistant practitioner, social worker, practice consultant and team manager roles, as well as equivalent occupational therapy roles.</p> <p>Our level 1 and 2 social worker vacancy rate is 14% (reduced from 21% in May 2023.) This equates to 28.05wte social worker vacancies out of a frontline establishment of 195.44wte.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our practice consultant vacancy rate is 15% (12.01 wte out of an establishment of 81.27wte) • Our team manager vacancy rate is 2% (1 post out of an establishment of 51.82 wte) • Our assistant practitioner rate is 3% (10.77 wte out of an establishment of 320.26wte) • Our OT vacancy rate is 9% (4.27 WTE out of an establishment of 49.92WTE) <p>Of the 56.1wte vacancies, we have recruited to 28.4wte posts and are awaiting commencement of the postholder.</p> <p>We have a specific dedicated ASSD HR Resource solely focused on our recruitment challenge which includes a HR Consultant (Recruitment and Talent,)HR Resourcing Advisor (Social Work) and HR Support Officer – International Recruitment, as well as a dedicated business support hub focused on workforce and recruitment. Our recruitment is geared towards attracting all social workers – including more senior and experienced social workers.</p> <p>These are among the specific steps we are taking to recruit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setup dedicated, regular Recruitment meetings with key departmental representatives to drive forward progress • Setup a central Social Work talent pipeline managed by the HR Resourcing Adviser (Social Worker) to proactively manage.
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	<p>Question and response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertised through multiple platforms including through our joint Community Care contract with Children’s Services under which we:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Posted 114 ASSD jobs2. Received 2555 views3. Saw 363 candidates click through to the content to read more.4. Created a Podcast that generated positive engagement with 2400 views (views usually range from 1500 to 4000)• Attended Community Care Live in October 2023 followed by hosting an online Social Work Event alongside NCC colleagues to promote our Service, NCC and Norfolk.• Sourced affordable housing via Norwich City Council (5 properties) for ISWs relocating to Norfolk which all remain occupied.• Setup a workstream to promote Health and Social to younger people (current workforce data indicates only 3% are below 24 years of age).• Promoted our Refer a friend scheme to encourage employees to connect with their networks and promote our roles whilst being rewarded.• Implemented a welcome payment for Social Workers.• Increased the number of SW Apprentices (20 due to start in January 2024) <p>A key plank of our recruitment approach is based on international recruitment of social workers and so we understand the implications of the proposed Visa changes by Government and how those impact on future and current recruitment activity.</p>
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