

# Cabinet

Date: **Monday 7 March 2022**

Time: **10 am**

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

## Membership

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Responsibility:</b>
Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chair. Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chair. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance
Cllr Andy Grant	Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport

## Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

It will be live streamed on YouTube and, in view of Covid-19 guidelines, we would encourage members of the public to watch remotely by clicking on the following link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyUrFjYNPfPq5psa-LFIJA/videos?view=2&live\\_view=502](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyUrFjYNPfPq5psa-LFIJA/videos?view=2&live_view=502)

However, if you wish to attend in person it would be most helpful if, on this occasion, you could indicate in advance that it is your intention to do so. This can be done by emailing [committees@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:committees@norfolk.gov.uk) where we will ask you to provide your name, address and details of how we can contact you (in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak). Please note that public seating will be limited.

Councillors and Officers attending the meeting will be taking a lateral flow test in advance. They will also be required to wear face masks when they are moving around the room but may remove them once seated. We would like to request that anyone attending the meeting does the same to help make the event safe for all those attending. Information about symptom-free testing is available [here](#).

## A g e n d a

### 1 To receive any apologies.

### 2 Minutes

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To confirm the minutes from the Cabinet Meeting held on Monday 31 January 2021

### 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 To receive any items of business which the Chair decides should be considered as a matter of urgency**

**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](mailto:committees@norfolk.gov.uk)) by 5pm on **Wednesday 2 March 2022**. For guidance on submitting a public question, view the Constitution at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-a-question-to-a-committee>.

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](mailto:committees@norfolk.gov.uk)) by 5pm on **Tuesday 1 March 2022**.

**Please note the change in deadline for Local Member Questions.**

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| <b>8 Adult Learning Annual Plan</b>   | Page 45  |
| Report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services                        |          |
| <b>9 Highways Parish Partnership Schemes 2022-23</b>  | Page 77  |
| Report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services                        |          |
| <b>10 Highways Capital Programme 2022/23/24 and Transport Asset Management Plan</b>           | Page 96  |
| Report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services                        |          |
| <b>11 Bus Back Better Bus Back Better – Norfolk’s Enhanced Partnership with Bus Operators</b> | Page 127 |
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| <b>12 Norwich Western Link Update</b>   | Page 162 |
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- 16 Corporately Significant Vital Signs Performance Report**  
Report by the Executive Director of Strategy & Transformation Page 352
- 17 Risk Management**  
Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services Page 371
- 18 Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P9 & P10: December 2021 & January 2022**  
Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services Page 412
- 19 Disposal, Acquisition & Exploitation of Property**  
Report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services Page 453
- 20 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.

**Decisions made by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:**

- [Capital borrowing for provision of loan for purchase of property](#)
- [Children's Services Annual Grants 2022-23](#)

**Decisions made by the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways and Transport:**

- [Applying for Moving Traffic Offences Civil Enforcement Powers](#)
- [School Streets](#)
- [Zero Emission Buses Regional Area \(ZEBRA\) Business Case](#)
- [Zero Emission City](#)

**Decisions made by the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management:**

- [Outwells Estate – Priory Farm acquisition and disposal](#)

**21 Exclusion of the Public**

Cabinet is asked to consider excluding the public from the meeting under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the items below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet will be presented with the conclusions of the public interest test carried out by the report author and is recommended to confirm the exclusion.

- 22 Disposal, Acquisition & Exploitation of Property: Exempt Appendix**  
Report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services

Norfolk County Council  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 25 February 2022



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**Cabinet**  
**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 31 January 2022**  
**in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am**

**Present:**

Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chairman. Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships.
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance.
Cllr Andy Grant	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance.
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management.
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

**Executive Directors Present:**

James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Helen Edwards	Monitoring Officer and Director of Governance
Simon George	Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services
Tom McCabe	Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services and Head of Paid Service.
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors formally introduced themselves.

**1 Apologies for Absence**

1.1 There were no apologies.

**2 Minutes from the meeting held on Monday.**

2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 January 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3 Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared

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

4.1 No matters were referred to Cabinet.

#### **5 Items of Urgent Business**

5.1 No items of urgent business were discussed.

#### **6 Public Question Time**

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

#### **7 Local Member Questions/Issues**

7.1 The list of Local Member questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix B. Four written supplementary questions were received and were responded to in writing; these questions and the responses are attached at appendix C of these minutes.

7.2.1 Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Brociek-Coulton stated that Norfolk County Council was responsible for Angel Road Infant School for many decades and had left the roof unsafe.
- She said that the Council found many millions of pounds to repair County Hall, with the building having been referred to as a “Rolls Royce building”, and asked why children and families shouldn’t expect a similar investment in a “Rolls Royce school”?

7.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services replied that the state of the school building before it was handed over to the academy was inspected. Both parties agreed to the building’s condition before the academy took over responsibility for the building and they had the opportunity to make representations about the condition of the building at that time.

7.3.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Kemp felt that the Cabinet Member didn’t understand the community guidelines for health visiting and the healthy child programme, which was the only programme which could engage with families in their own home to prevent problems worsening.
- She noted that the Cabinet Member intended to pay business consultants £6m to invest in social care and asked if he could commit to all five health visitor visits being made in person.

7.3.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention agreed with Cllr Kemp that health visiting was a vital service, and as such, over £8m a year was spent by the Council commissioning the NHS to provide this service. The Council would continue to invest in this service and once Covid-19 pressures across the NHS and social care sector had been mitigated it would be possible to get this service back to where it should be.

#### **8. Fee levels for adult social care providers 2022/23**

- 8.1.1 Cabinet received the report bringing forward the annual review of the fee levels relating to Adult Social Services purchased care services, and the recommended change to these for the upcoming financial year 22/23.
- 8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention introduced the report to Cabinet
- Information set out in this report was a vital part of the Council's responsibilities
  - There had been a policy of investing and supporting the care market for the past years and similar reports had been brought to Cabinet before
  - It was proposed to invest £18m, which was above inflation
  - The Council didn't directly employ staff in care homes but commissioned services to provide care
  - More than £330m was spent per year purchasing care from the market, and the Council had supported the Government's position around the national living wage by continuing to fund its increase in full to allow workers in the care system to benefit fully from the uplift.
  - The Government white paper published in December 2021, "People at the Heart of Care" included an assurance that local authorities paid a fair cost to the people who provided care on their behalf, underpinning what Norfolk already did. Extra funding had been received from Government to provide this; top tier authorities would share an additional £162m in 2022-23 and additional £600m in 23-24 and 2024-25 from an increase in national insurance levy.
  - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention felt there was a case to be made for more funding to be given to the Council to reflect the good work of the care sector.
  - Actual wages in Norfolk's care market were above the national living wage and the increase proposed today would maintain and increase this
  - This paper demonstrated that Norfolk County Council was aware of the stresses in the system and was doing all it could to support care workers and businesses dealing with care
  - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 8.2 The Chairman agreed that the balance of funding going to the NHS and social care needed rebalancing so that social care received a fair amount; table 6 on page 36 of the report showed how wide a market was being supported by the Council.
- 8.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance agreed that local authorities should receive a greater amount of the money raised through the additional 1.25% national insurance levy. Local authorities had received no firm indication of the funding which would be received beyond 2022-23 from Government and noted that one-year allocations of funding made the budget process difficult.
- 8.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that long term demand for care was increasing, with people living longer and with higher levels of need.
- 8.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Consider and agree the implementation of the outputs of the Cost of Care exercise described in section 3.2 of the paper
- b) Consider and agree the implementation of the outputs of the fee uplift exercise described in sections 3.3 - 3.11 of the paper

## 8.6 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

See section 5 of the report

## 8.7 Alternative Options

The option recommended within this report is affordable within the Council's budget planning approach and alternative options are not presented. However, members could choose to make different budget decisions as part of the County Council budget process.

## 9. Integrated Care System Places

9.1.1 Cabinet received the report updating Cabinet on development of ICS Places and outlining the Council's proposed approach to support and allocate staff resource to ICS Places.

9.1.2 The Executive Director for Adult Social Services stated that the report linked to the Council's ambition agreed in 2020 for greater integration between health and social care; there was an ambition to unite around a common purpose, with a similar report being taken to district and borough councils.

9.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention commented:

- This was the latest in a suite of reports taken to Cabinet and Full Council since October 2020
- The key aim of the report was to create partnerships in place based on district council boundaries to work on the wider determinants of health. District councils would lead work on wider determinants on health noting the importance on prevention which helped keep people healthy for longer, and put less stress on health and social care system
- Bringing in local councils to support people on a range of areas such as leisure, healthy lifestyles and housing was important in this area of work
- Working with primary care on the overall population health was a new area of work as a system but would make a difference.
- The system would be led bottom up, with local areas setting their own priorities and allocating funds and resources to identify what would make the biggest impact for people in their areas
- This paper was asking Cabinet to allocate money to support these systems and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that this demonstrated the Council's commitment to support change. He hoped that the NHS would follow the Council's lead and support these partnerships, including financially
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report

- 9.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services noted the opportunity for Norfolk County Council to take a leadership in the new system. Children’s services had been working more closely with district councils such as in housing for children leaving care, and a more joined up system would be beneficial for this work and other areas of partnership working between Children’s Services with other services. This was an opportunity to help children earlier.
- 9.3 The Chairman pointed out that this would have an impact across the whole system and authority and that all bodies seemed to be on board, with changes in joint working being seen.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste reported that conversations with officers at Great Yarmouth District Council showed there were more engaging conversations and better partnership working between authorities to put in place better outcomes for citizens.
- 9.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the following key strategic approaches:
- a) Agree NCC’s support for, and commitment to engaging with, ICS Places
  - b) Agree NCC support and staff resources be allocated to ICS Places, including to lead the development of Health and Wellbeing Partnerships
  - c) Formally ask district councils to ratify support for, and commitment to, leadership of Health and Wellbeing Partnerships within their respective areas

9.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The risks must be weighed against the potential benefits, and the alternative of ICS Places without NCC aims embedded in their purpose and approach. If navigated with care, these risks can all be mitigated to a degree that could result in a significant net benefit to the local authority, our partners and our citizens. The recommendations in this paper attempt to find a manner in which to navigate through these opportunities and challenges.

9.7 **Alternative Options**

N/A

**10. 2022 Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan**

- 10.1.1 Cabinet received the report covering the Council’s statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and providing an annual snapshot of how these would be secured.
- 10.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This annual report identified the Council’s duty to provide school places and showed how this would be achieved as set out in Annex A of the report.
  - Children’s Services worked with district councils and planning authorities to identify how new schools would be built and expanded
  - New schools were developer funded, as well as funding being received from CIL and Government
  - The plan sought to address the Council’s core duty of promoting high

standards of education through commissioning new schools, promoting DfE free school proposals, expanding age range and size of schools and agreeing changes to the admission numbers. It was also important to consider areas where child numbers were in decline

- The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services moved the recommendations as set out in the report

10.2 The Chairman noted that it was important to consider how to respond to growth areas in terms of planning when large scale growth allocations were replaced by smaller developments.

10.3 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste welcomed the report, especially the mention of the new school in Bradwell. There was outcry at new homes proposed in Bradwell due to concern about services not being provided and overcrowded schools; this school would allay residents’ concerns.

10.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that the information on Fakenham was well set out and based on housing growth with well-planned expectations that a school might be needed, based on growth and demographics and where funding would be obtained from.

10.5 The Vice-Chairman commented on the primary school being build in Bradwell in 2025; he noted that the pressure on Ling Grove academy which was at capacity and queried if there were future plans for improving the secondary provision in this area. The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services replied that there was a formula in place for determining this, informed by parent choice; if there were pressures on senior schools there would be expansions and modifications

10.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to adopt the Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan 2022.

#### 10.7 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The proposed Local Schools and Investment Plan provides the necessary detail to ensure we secure sufficient school places and prioritise capital appropriately.

#### 10.8 **Alternative Options**

The statutory duty is to provide sufficient places.

It is possible to plan for fewer additional places, where surplus places are available further afield, but within maximum recommended travel distances.

Norfolk County Council would then have a duty to provide Home to School Transport. This would add a considerable inconvenience to children and families and is outside of the Council’s policies (e.g. building local communities). It would also add to the existing transport costs, where budget pressures already exist.

### 11. **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding**

11.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the changes to the distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2022 in line with the Department of Education’s National Funding Formula arrangements.

- 11.1.2 The Executive Director for Children’s Services stated that this was an annual paper setting out how the DSG would be distributed. She highlighted an update on page 91 of the report, 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet point where it stated that “an additional one-off movement of 1% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, due to the scale of demand for high needs specialist places for pupils, if agreed by the Secretary of State”. Since writing the report, the Secretary of State had agreed to this movement. This did not change the recommendations in the report and would not increase the DSG deficit.
- 11.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services introduced the report to Cabinet
- This paper dealt with funding of local maintained schools and academies distributed in line with local funding formula
  - Main pressures for school financing were the high needs block
  - It was hoped that in spring 2022 when the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) review was published, Government funding would be identified to support the high needs block deficit
  - Early years settings would receive an increase in funding
  - The DSG deficit was forecast go up by approximately £10m
  - The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that the DSG deficit was forecast to be £54m in 2021-22 rising to £154m by 2025-26. A £1.3bn deficit across all councils was expected by the Society of Council Treasurers indicating that this was a situation that would require Government support to address.
- 11.3 The Chairman agreed that this could not be solved by individual councils therefore funding was required from Government.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste agreed that more funding needed to be allocated from Government to Children’s Services noting the increase in children diagnosed with SEND
- 11.5 The Chairman asked the Executive Director for Children’s Services what the outcome of lobbying on this situation was. The Executive Director for Children’s Services responded that the Local Government Association, County Treasurers and Association of Directors of Children’s Services were all making representation for this to be dealt with at a national level; there was a review taking place and the outcome of this was being awaited in Spring 2022.
- 11.6 The Vice-Chairman noted that page 94 of the report discussed how increasing demand was being seen for SEND school places in Norfolk which outstripped availability of places, and low parental confidence was seen in mainstream provision. The Vice-Chairman noted that lots of money was being spent out of county on higher cost provision as the provision was not available in Norfolk. Funding had been committed to increase provision in Norfolk however this was not enough to meet demand.
- 11.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree:
1. the Dedicated Schools Grant funding including
    - a. the changes to the schools funding formula;
    - b. the changes to the early years funding entitlements formula;

- c. agreeing the high needs block budget, including the changes to the alternative top-up funding model for state-funded special schools, noting that it has been assessed to meet our statutory duties and it adds to the DSG cumulative deficit;
- 2. to delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to agree the final funding cap, or allocation of additional funds, once the final DSG calculations of individual school allocations are known and in line with the principles of Cabinet's decision.

## 11.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

## 11.9 **Alternative Options**

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

## 12. ***Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025 – delivering our strategy***

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report seeking approval for the proposed approach to business planning and the Corporate Delivery Plan, and to provide an update on the Corporate Delivery Plan, refreshed Communication Strategy and refreshed Workforces Strategy.

- 12.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet
- The Strategy was agreed by council on 29 November 2021 and this report discussed how the strategy was being turned into action
  - Council recognised that the pandemic changed the context and set back delivery of previous ambitions
  - Norfolk County Council wanted Norfolk to be a place where everyone could start life well, live well and age well and where no one was left behind, with a vibrant entrepreneurial, sustainable economy supported by the right jobs, right skills, training and infrastructure. A place where communities felt safe, healthy, empowered and connected with their individual distinctiveness respected and preserved.
  - The strategy was structured around 5 key priorities as set out on page 157 of the report
  - This report updated Cabinet on activities and outlined provisional content for the delivery plan which continued to be refined ahead of final approval. It also provided an update on the workforce and communication strategies.
  - The planning framework consisted of strategic documents ensuring alignment across the organisation as set out in section 3 of the report.
  - The business planning cycle was the process for confirming content and coordination of the different levels and this was well underway
  - The purpose of the plan was to describe significant and priority actions and support a focus on delivery through enabling accountability and performance management. It was structured around the five key priorities and contained a section on the Council's significant activity which would transform property, technology, engagement and workforce and contribute to a sustainable financial position
  - The draft corporate development plan provided Cabinet with a proposed

structured approach to be developed by March 2022. This would allow the council to go into 2022-23 with clear priorities and significant activities and to plan more effectively for 2023-24 and beyond

- Over the next months, workshops with senior leadership teams would continue to confirm activities contributing to delivery of the strategy and financial sustainability, key dependencies and cross cutting priorities, identify gaps and what could be done to address them. It was important to align actions with financial planning, so business and budget planning were more integrated
- It would be important to review and redesign the performance management framework and vital signs with potential development via associated reporting and monitoring tools. One aspect would be to review use of internal and external sources of data to ensure performance measurement was best benchmarked, compared and assessed in achievable, smart and realistic ways.
- Section 7 of the report showed how the council was increasing chances of successful delivery through reviewing the performance framework by monitoring operational performance and transformation, and progress towards the strategic ambitions.
- The workforce strategy was set out in section 8 of the report. A draft strategy was anticipated at the end of the financial year 2021-22 and would deliver ambitions to create a workforce fit for the future.
- Section 9 of the report gave an update on progress in developing the communication strategy. This would create meaningful conversations with residents, staff, partners and stakeholders and involve staff and elected members to ensure they were advocates for Better Together for Norfolk in the community
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 12.3 The Vice-Chairman noted that departments would work with strategic partners to roll out plans for economic growth and recovery. It was important to tap into levelling up funding when available. The Vice-Chairman discussed some of the schemes and projects funded by the Council which supported Norfolk's economy such as the Chances Programme and offshore wind projects. It was key to have a county with better wages, skills and a vibrant economy.
- 12.4 The Cabinet Member for Finance supported the report, and the alignment of business development, performance management and financial planning to drive change
- 12.5 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services reported that staff in new roads hubs had fed back that they had more support, noting the strategy's aim to support children and young people.
- 12.6 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of ensuring that everyone could access digital technology and services. Project Gigabit for example and provision of more online services would ensure the County was well regarded for its digital provision and access.
- 12.7 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management noted that measuring performance was important to ensure the Council was delivering on the strategy and endorsed the report.

12.8 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships noted the importance of other services such as museums or libraries in supporting the vibrant economy; for example, libraries supporting older people to live an independent life.

12.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the proposed approach to business planning and developing a Corporate Delivery Plan.
2. Acknowledge, comment on and agree the work being done to develop the Communication and Workforce strategies, and the proposed timescale for delivery.

#### 12.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

#### 12.11 **Alternative Options**

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

### 13. **Capital Strategy and Programme 2022-23**

13.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the proposed capital strategy and programme and including information on the funding available to support that programme

13.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The report set out the Capital programme and was the backbone supporting the council's commitment to rebuild and regenerate the economy, with a focus on health and wellbeing of residents and taking the lead in building Norfolk's sense of community and place
- Last year the council launched Better Together for Norfolk 2021-25 to come together with other public bodies to build a single vision for the county to build back better. The council's job was to deliver on its manifesto pledge as part of this to deliver key infrastructure schemes and investment plans to attract grant funding
- The autumn statement stated that £106.8m public funding would be made available however not much of this was aimed at local government; therefore, it was vital that Norfolk took advantage of initiatives such as the UK shared prosperity fund, allocations of funding for active travel and active transport funding.
- The Council would continue with its ambitious SEND schools programme and development of extra care provision
- Development and upkeep of the road network and better broadband for Norfolk continued, augmented by schemes approved in the current year, 2021-22, for future delivery such as roll out of the full fibre network and Norwich Western Link
- Summary of current and proposed schemes were shown in Tables 1-3 on page 201 of the report.
- The commitment to rebuilding the economy was underpinned by existing programmes listed in appendix C of the report.
- A range of additional projects were in place to boost the economy, help

manage change in the environment, promote wellbeing and health and strengthen core community hubs

- £ 90.7m was being added to the capital programme in new schemes aimed at supporting the economy, promoting health and wellbeing and giving people a strong sense of community and place as shown in appendix D of the report
- The investment plan had two strands: the need to act on pressing challenges while building on the statement of intent to tackle the challenges of an ageing population, climate change and increasing automation.
- New proposals would help to grow the economy such as a £5m investment in Repton Property Developments Ltd and ongoing investment in county farms. The Council had provided for expansion at Scottow Enterprise Park and support the maintenance facility at Great Yarmouth. Physical infrastructure to support the economy was supported by the third river crossing and Long Stratton Bypass.
- Support for Health and wellbeing came from continued investment in the greenways project, expansion and renewal of Norfolk trails and footpaths and backing of jubilee trail with £6m to develop castle keep, next stage of Wensum lodge and a manifesto commitment to invest £3m in the library service
- Closer attention to capital requirements of spending departments was needed to ensure Norfolk achieved value for money, so in addition to the quarterly treasury management panel a capital programme review board had been set up to provide additional oversight. From this, £14.6m had been reprofiled as set out in table 2 of the report
- Due to borrowing decisions by outlying councils the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities council was looking at changing what was allowable under Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This may minimise the effect on MRP and on revenue budget as shown in section 5 of the report however the proposed changes would cause an additional provision of £3.4m in 2023-24.
- A prioritisation system had been produced in accordance with the county's priorities and good practice as shown in appendix B of the report.
- While the revenue budget provided resources to tackle the next stages of the Covid-19 pandemic and set the Council on the road to recovery the capital strategy underpinned a strong and stable county

13.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport was pleased to see support for major infrastructure projects such as the Norwich Western Link, Third River Crossing, A47 improvements, Greenways, Transport for Norwich and improvements to walking and cycling in Norwich. He noted the importance of supporting infrastructure at a local level as well, such as through the local Member budget and Parish Partnership scheme.

13.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted the £90m extra investment in adult social services proposed in the report, which included Living Well homes for Norfolk, and £30m investment over 10 years approved by Cabinet and Council to accelerate care housing in Norfolk to reduce unnecessary care admissions. This would allow people to live more independently in their own homes; The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention thanked Cabinet and the administration for their support in this.

- 13.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of the Norwich Western Link for air quality in Norwich and for the quality of life of people living in the West of Norfolk.
- 13.5 The Vice-Chairman noted there was a plan to ensure the Norfolk economy would grow and all communities received improvements.
- 13.6 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services discussed the new SEND schools which were being built, some of which would be open in the next academic year 2022-23, and which would impact on the home-school transport budget.
- 13.7 The Chairman noted that the Council performed well on leveraging external grants as shown in table 5 of the report. The Levelling Up white paper was due in the next few days, and he hoped that this would have a positive impact for Norfolk County Council. The full details of the Shared Prosperity Fund were also being awaited.
- 13.8 The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 13.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:
1. To agree the Capital Strategy at Appendix A of the report as a framework for the prioritisation and continued development of the Council’s capital programme;
  2. To agree the proposed 2022-27+ capital programme of £717.756m, subject to additional amounts for schemes yet to be re-profiled from 2021-22;
  3. To refer the programme to the County Council for approval, including the new and extended capital schemes outlined in Appendix D of the report;
  4. To recommend to County Council the Council's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2022-23 as set out in Section 5 of the report;
  5. To note known grant settlements as summarised in Section 3 of the report and agree that future capital grants will be added to the programme when confirmed;
  6. To note the forecast of estimated capital receipts to be generated to achieve the target of £30.0m, subject to market conditions, over the next four years to support schemes not funded from other sources, as set out in Table 5 of the report.

13.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The attached Annex to the report summarises the development of the proposed capital programme, including proposed new schemes, and a summary of forecast capital receipts.

13.11 **Alternative Options**

The papers appended to the report represent the culmination of the process to develop capital schemes to be recommended to Full Council which will improve services, promote efficiencies and address deficiencies. However, at

this stage it remains the case that new capital proposals have not been agreed and could be removed from the proposed capital programme.

#### 14. Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022-23

14.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the Council's borrowing and investment strategies for 2022-23 in accordance with regulatory requirements.

14.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The council was required to operate a balanced budget. The treasury function helped achieve this as cash flow was carefully monitored, ensuring money was available when required
- Surplus assets were invested in highly liquid, low risk assets and the treasury was responsible for funding planned capital investments and ensuring the council could meet repayment obligations over the long term.
- Interest rates were increasing, with the increasing cost of borrowing impacting on the revenue account and how capital programmes were viewed moving forward
- External debt for the following five years was set out on page 202 of the report. By the end of March 2022 debt was estimated to be £914.5m and forecast to rise to over £1bn by 2025.
- The treasury's main function operated a number of key indicators to ensure the Council worked within prudential boundaries as set out in the report; operational and authorised. The council was within these boundaries and smoothing the capital programme was likely to increase headroom along with a programme to increase capital receipts
- Borrowing projections were shown on page 202 of the report.
- Interest rates in 2021 hit an all-time low, with borrowing of £110m in 2021-22 to support the capital programme, with long-term borrowing as low as 1.65%. This secured £718,000 savings on the cost of carrying debt. No further borrowing was needed for the remainder of 2021-22
- External treasury advised a long-term forecast for base rates to rise slowly; 50yr money was assumed to cost 2.4% in 2025, up from 1.9%
- Investments in commercial activities were classified as non-treasury investments and not included in the report as they were included as capital expenditure however the cost of this would impact the overall borrowing requirement and was listed in appendix 10. This was reviewed monthly.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

14.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to endorse and recommend to County Council the Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy for 2022-23 as set out in Annex 1 of the report, including:

- The Capital Prudential Indicators included in the body of the report
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022-23 in Appendix 1 of the report
- The list of approved counterparties at Appendix 4 of the report
- The Treasury Management Prudential Indicators detailed in Appendix 5 of the report

### 14.3 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

The primary objectives of the Council's Investment and Treasury Strategy are to safeguard the timely repayment of principal and interest, whilst ensuring adequate liquidity for cashflow and the generation of investment yield. A flexible approach to borrowing for capital purposes will be maintained both in terms of timing, and in terms of possible sources of borrowing including the Public Work Loans Board (PWLB) and the UK Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA). This strategy is prudent while investment returns are low and the investment environment remains challenging.

The Investment and Treasury Strategy summarises:

- The Council's capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- A Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- The Treasury Management Strategy (how the investments and borrowings are organised) including treasury indicators; and
- An Investment Strategy (including parameters on how investments are to be managed).

### 14.4 Alternative Options

In order to achieve sound treasury management in accordance with the statutory and other guidance, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendation in the report.

## 15. Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P8: November 2021

15.1.1 Cabinet received the report giving a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2021-22 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2022, together with related financial information.

15.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- A balanced budget was being forecast
- All departments were at or near budget due to the way emergency grant funding had been used; there was no indication this funding would continue into 2022-23 or beyond.
- The impact across the council of the Covid-19 pandemic would remain including rising demand.
- Children's Services: despite full use of departmental reserves utilised to deal with ongoing added pressures and pandemic related costs, the department would overspend by £5m this year. External social care costs impacted the department and the Covid-19 pandemic reduced availability of foster carers and increased the price and availability of residential home places. These issues were being addressed by the new deal with carers and new in-house provision. Work was underway on home to school transport which was overspent by £2.6m and forecast to be overspend £4.325m in 2022-23 and £3m in 2023-24. The increase in Education Health and Care Plans with an increase in specifying school places a large distance from children's homes impacted on this budget but would be helped by the increase in SEND schools.
- Adult Social Services: the department were forecasting a balanced in-year position after using £8.9m departmental reserves, however,

additional costs from the current financial year, 2021-22, would impact costs in 2022-23, such as cost of care. The council had supported the care sector this year and it was important that purchase of care continued.

- Community and Environmental Services: strain had been seen from volatile waste recycling and garden waste volumes. Cost pressures on museums, street parking and libraries meant reserves would need to be used this year.
- Table 3 on 296 of the report showed departmental provision and the reserves forecast to be set at £136.5m at the start of the next financial year 2022-23, including a provision for a general Covid reserve of £18.8m to meet pandemic pressures for which there was no significant ongoing Government funding. This would mean this money would not be available for the 2023-24 budget.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 15.2 The Chairman noted the pressures on Children's Services and Adults Social Services and that the ability for them to make savings had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 15.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that Children's Services was a demand led service. It would be important to work with parents and schools to reduce the home to school transport budget. High placement costs were difficult to predict in advance however the Council had a responsibility to pay for placements when needed.
- 15.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention highlighted the large amount of pressure being realised in demand led services caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and thanked all officers who had helped maintain services and delivery of a balanced budget. The Chairman endorsed these comments.
- 15.5 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste noted that recycling centre investment had historically been a success in the county. The overspend on recent recycling centre costs had been impacted by building inflation caused by the pandemic particularly related to aggregates and metals.
- 15.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:
1. To recommend to County Council the addition of **£5.904m** to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.1 as follows:
    - £5.288m for the 2021-22 Schools Capital Maintenance funded by the Department for Education and carried forward into 2022-23
    - £0.601m for the 2022-23 Section 106 developer contributions for schools provision at Bradwell and Holt
    - £0.015m for Libraries services provision at Swaffham funded by Section 106 developer contributions
  2. To recommend to County Council the uplift to the capital programme by a net **£2.125m** in December 21 to address forecasted overspend in the Household Waste Recycling Centre Projects as set out in detail in Capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.3.

3. Subject to County Council approval of recommendation 1 and 2 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 recompeted
    - 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.
4. To recognise the period 8 general fund forecast revenue **of a balanced budget**, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
5. To note the COVID-19 funding available of **£99.795m**, including £22.745m brought forward from 2020-21;
6. To recognise the period 8 forecast of 90% savings delivery in 2021-22, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
7. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2022 of **£23.763m**.
8. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes.

## 15.7 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

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

Appendix 1 summarises the revenue outturn position, including:

- Forecast over and under spends
- Covid-19 grant income

- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

Appendix 2 summarises the key working capital position, including:

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

Appendix 3 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.

## 15.8 **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.

## 16 **2022-23 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-26**

- 16.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing an overview of the Council's strategic and financial planning for 2022-23 to 2025-26 and set out the detailed information to support Cabinet's Revenue Budget and council tax recommendations to County Council including the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' (Section 151 officer's) statutory assessment of the robustness of the overall budget.
- 16.1.2 The Executive Director for Finance and Commercial Services stated that his advice was clearly laid out in both the body of the report and the recommendations.
- 16.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The report included proposals for a balanced budget addressing two pressures Norfolk was facing: demand triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic and the increase in cost of living faced by residents.
  - The Covid-19 crisis affected all aspects of council service delivery, and its impact would be felt for many years by individuals, families, services and community groups with the most vulnerable being affected the most
  - The Council had stood by its partners to deliver services to vulnerable residents, schools, district councils, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary sector. The cost to the Council in savings not made and additional costs had been high and unfunded additional burdens in the medium to long term needed to be paid for.
  - The overall net budget proposed would increase to £464.325m in 2022-23 meaning council tax would be increased by 2.99%, so tax paid by a band D property would rise to £1516.95.
  - Spending would be increased in 2022-23 on key services by £68m

compared to 2021-22

- With savings by departments, it was proposed to set a robust budget for 2022-23. A budget gap would be faced in 2023-24, but there was confidence that this could be bridged, so Cabinet was not proposing to raise council tax by the maximum amount available, recognising the cost-of-living pressures on residents and not wanting to put the maximum burden on them.
- In view of the budget gap forecast for 2023-24 a higher council tax increase of 3.99% had been recommended by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services however Cabinet intended to save money from how the council was run. The council had a range of transformation programmes to deliver services more efficiently, effectively and reduce costs of delivery
- Lobbying of Government for a fair share of funding would continue through recognition of the challenges of Norfolk's ageing and rural population and for a fair share of funding for social care
- The local authority social care settlement for 2022-23 was for one year only. Limited core funding was made available however 50% of this rise assumes council tax would rise by 2.99%.
- This year, investment in Adult Social Services would be increased by £25m to £277.5m before funding changes to meet cost pressures and to develop the central theme of supporting people to be independent, resilient and well. Early intervention and targeted prevention helped the council support adults to be independent for longer
- The partnership with Newton Europe would be part of development of the next stage of the prevention programme, a better front door and a new targeted operating model. A one-off cost was involved dependent on savings targets savings being reached and would use departmental reserves set aside for this.
- The transformation programme in Children's Services was well established; the new social care model was mostly implemented, and savings were shown on page 420 of the report. £11m was being invested in Children's Services on top of covering the in-year overspend for 2021-22 of 5.05m
- Community and Environmental Services covered a wide range of services, and the list of additional costs and savings were therefore diverse. These services impacted on and were used by most residents, visitors and businesses every day. Through work of this department the council focussed on Norfolk as a place through heritage, environment and infrastructure and were supporting delivery and growth through the Norfolk and Suffolk Delivery Plan and Norfolk Investment Framework.
- Providing digital and physical infrastructure that people and businesses needed to thrive such as best possible broadband infrastructure and reducing impact on the environment were also important. This included delivering the council's environmental policy including a new electric vehicle charging strategy.
- a sustained and transformative programme set out in Better Together for Norfolk set out a roadmap to a vibrant and sustainable economy, better opportunities for children and young people, healthy and fulfilling lives a greener and more resilient future. Through improving educational outcomes, growing skills, developing good quality jobs and developing affordable housing and infrastructure, life chances and the economy would be strengthened.

- The 5 year programme Norfolk Futures was delivering on what to do to support the strategy to deal with complex demographic challenges faced in Norfolk.
- It was important to de-silo services to bring together projects holistically
- Significant new pressures listed by the main demand driven departments needed to be met and there was no indication from Government that they would provide more grant funding.
- Through careful management in 2021-22 the Council could set aside a centrally held Covid reserve of £18m which would cover the contingency to deal with pressures and protect services in the next financial year
- As the country came out of the pandemic department heads believed many transformation programmes delayed last year would be rolled out in 2022-23
- Results of the public consultation stated that 47.5% of respondents agreed with the decision to increase council tax by 1.99% with 41% disagreeing. Most respondents agreed with the 1% increase in social care precept.
- The primary objective of the medium-term financial strategy was to show a balanced position; additional savings and revenue funding needed identifying. Gaps remained in the years after 2022-23 of £94.255m were similar to gaps in previous years which were able to be resolved. Transformational change would help deliver savings needed.
- One year funding was applied to some funding such as one off services grant with Government increasingly providing funding in this way.
- Implications of the social care levy were covered in paragraph 18.3-5 of the report
- Significant medium term cost implications arose from increased and more complex need being seen in social care.
- Cabinet would continue to advocate for Norfolk, pressing Government for a fair share of funding and bringing overdue reforms to fix local authority funding; this proposed budget supported communities through investment in services and would help to make the council fit for future.

16.2 The Chairman noted that spend was increasing and discussed the impact of dealing with pressures in Children's Services and Adult Social Services with a lack of Government funding, noting that inflation played a big part in the cost of community services. The Council had consulted on the council tax increase of 2.99% which had been accepted showing this was the correct approach and would not make the medium-term financial strategy unsustainable. Core Spending power was predicated on a 3% council tax uplift which was not sustainable and could not be relied on year on year. The Chairman pointed out that the Council had responded to many consultations pointing out the issue of fair funding; reliance on one-year funding was an issue and multi-year funding was a requirement moving forward. Support funding to help with Covid-19 pressures was not available however pressures remained on services from the pandemic. The forecast gap of £94m over the medium-term financial strategy showed that work needed to be done to ensure the council was in a position to deliver what they wanted for the future. The Chairman noted the positive impact that the new corporate strategy, Government white paper and major capital programmes could bring.

16.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport discussed the Community and Environmental Services financial strategy on page 422 of the

report. This discussed reducing reliance on revenue funding achieved by sourcing funding through other sources, competitive bidding and achieving income. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted that there was a good track record in this department which would continue into the future.

- 16.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance pointed out that the report showed Norfolk County Council was innovative and transforming, learning from peers as well as teaching peers about innovative new ways of working
- 16.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention supported the proposals set out in the report; there had been challenges around funding and the Covid-19 pandemic, but he felt there was an opportunity to do more with the same amount of money if more was known about future funding streams. In Adult Social Services, efficiencies were set out in the budget however more was being spend as demand was increasing and people were living longer.
- 16.6 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services noted the importance of identifying new ways of working to make savings and the increase in cost of living for residents. He felt the Council should do all they could to support.
- 16.7 The Cabinet Member for Finance moved recommendation 1, option b and recommendation 6 d option ii. The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the rest of the recommendations as set out in the report
- 16.8 **Cabinet RESOLVED**
- 1) To consider the statements regarding the uncertain planning environment, robustness of budget estimates, assumptions and risks relating to the 2022-23 budget, and authorise the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, to make any changes required to reflect Final Local Government Finance Settlement information (if available), or changes in council tax and business rates forecasts from District Councils, in order to maintain a balanced budget position for presentation to Full Council. In recognition of the significant budget gap forecast for 2023-24, and to enable a final balanced Budget position to be recommended to County Council, Cabinet AGREED:
    - that any income shortfall will be addressed from the Corporate Business Risk Reserve (to the extent possible).
  - 2) To review the findings of public consultation as set out in Section 14 of Appendix 1 of the report and in full in Appendix 5 of the report, and consider these when recommending the budget changes required to deliver a balanced budget as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
  - 3) To consider and comment on the findings of equality impact assessments, as set out in Appendix 6 to this report, and in doing so, note the Council’s duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
    - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
    - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and

- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4) To note that the Council has responded to the consultation undertaken on the Provisional Local Government Settlement for 2022-23 as detailed in Section 3 of Appendix 1 of the report.
  - 5) To note that the Council has agreed to establish a Business Rates Pool for 2022-23 on the terms previously reported to Cabinet in November 2021 and as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 1 of the report.
  - 6) To agree to recommend to County Council:
    - a) The level of risk and budget assumptions set out in the Robustness of Estimates report (Appendix 4 of the report), which underpin the revenue and capital budget decisions and planning for 2022-26.
    - b) The general principle of seeking to increase general fund balances as part of closing the 2021-22 accounts and that in 2022-23 any further additional resources which become available during the year should be added to the general fund balance wherever possible.
    - c) The findings of public consultation (Appendix 5 of the report), which should be considered when agreeing the 2022-23 Budget (Appendix 1 of the report).
    - d) To note the advice of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services (Section 151 Officer), in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report, on the financial impact of an increase in council tax and the sustainability of the Council's medium term position, and that the Council's 2022-23 Budget will include a general council tax increase of 1.99% and a 1.00% increase in the Adult Social Care precept (being the deferred element of the 2021-22 Adult Social Care precept), an overall increase of 2.99% (shown in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report), resulting in an overall County Council Net Revenue Budget of £464.325m for 2022-23, including budget increases of £89.154m and budget decreases of -£63.924m as set out in Table 13 of Appendix 1 of the report, and the actions required to deliver the proposed savings, subject to any changes required in line with recommendation 1 above to enable a balanced budget to be proposed. This would result in a budget gap of £59.920m to be addressed for 2023-24, and £94.255m over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
    - e) The budget proposals set out for 2023-24 to 2025-26, including authorising Executive Directors to take the action required to deliver budget savings for 2023-24 to 2025-26 as appropriate.
    - f) With regard to the future years, to undertake a full review of how the Council operates to deliver its future services and strategy in view of the significant budget gap to be addressed for 2023-24 as set out in Section 4 of Appendix 1 of the report, and that further plans to meet the remaining budget shortfalls in the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 are developed and brought back to Cabinet during 2022-23.
    - g) Noting Government's historic assumptions that local authorities will raise the maximum council tax available to them, and that the final level of council tax for future years is subject to Member decisions annually (informed by any referendum principles defined by the Government), to confirm, or otherwise, the assumptions set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS Table 4 in Appendix 2 of the report) that the Council's budget planning for 2023-24 onwards will include for planning purposes:

- i) general council tax increases of 1.99%;
  - ii) Adult Social Care precept increases of 1.00%; and
  - iii) that if the referendum threshold were increased in the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 to above 1.99%, or any further discretion were offered to increase the Adult Social Care precept (or similar), the Section 151 Officer would recommend the Council take full advantage of any flexibility in view of the overall financial position.
- h) That the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services be authorised to transfer from the County Fund to the Salaries and General Accounts all sums necessary in respect of revenue and capital expenditure provided in the 2022-23 Budget, to make payments, to raise and repay loans, and to invest funds.
- i) To agree the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-26 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, including the two policy objectives to be achieved:
  - i) Revenue: To identify further funding or savings for 2023-24 to 2025-26 to produce a balanced budget in all years 2022-26 in accordance with the timetable set out in the Revenue Budget report (Section 4 of Appendix 1).
  - ii) Capital: To provide a framework for identifying and prioritising capital requirements and proposals to ensure that all capital investment is targeted at meeting the Council's priorities.
- j) The mitigating actions proposed in the equality impact assessments (Section 6 of Appendix 6 of the report).
- k) Note the planned reduction in non-schools earmarked and general reserves of 55.67% over five years, from £136.590m (March 2021) to £60.547m (March 2026) (Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report);
- l) Note the policy on reserves and provisions in Section 3 of Appendix 3 of the report;
- m) Agree, based on current planning assumptions and risk forecasts set out in Section 5 of Appendix 3 of the report:
  - i) for 2022-23, a minimum level of general balances of £23.268m, and
  - ii) a forecast minimum level for planning purposes of
    - 2023-24, £24.018m;
    - 2024-25, £25.018m; and
    - 2025-26, £26.018m.

as part of the consideration of the budget plans for 2022-26 and supporting these budget recommendations;

- n) Agree the use of non-school Earmarked Reserves, as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report.

## 16.9 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

## 16.10 Alternative Options

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

## **17 Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property**

- 17.1.1 Cabinet received the report containing proposals aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational needs can be met from elsewhere and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County.
- 17.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management introduced the report to Cabinet
- Both disposals outlined an opportunity for savings in holding costs and capital receipts.
  - A new site had been identified for a waste and recycling centre at Holt Road, Beeston Regis, to allow better vehicle access and provide significant operational benefits. The existing site was at operational capacity.
  - The new site for a waste and recycling facility identified at Spooner Row in Wymondham was currently waste ground but would provide better vehicle access. The existing site was at operational capacity and providing a new centre would allow for operational growth.
  - The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 17.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste endorsed the development of two new waste and recycling centres. He noted that the existing centre at Wymondham held six cars and the centre at Sheringham held 8 cars. At busy times, more than 20 cars could be queuing to enter the sites so this change would be beneficial as well as provide an opportunity to increase recycling rates at both sites.
- 17.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED**
1. To agree to the County Council entering an agreement for a lease and lease for 0.4 hectares of land, Holt Road, Beeston Regis as identified on the site plan for 25 years at an initial rent of £20,000 per annum and other agreed terms.
  2. To formally declare the Sheringham Recycling Centre site, Holt Road, East Beckham NR26 8TS (1025/011) and the adjacent former highway land surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of both properties subject to the replacement recycling centre being operational. In the event of the disposal receipts exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
  3. To agree to the County Council entering an agreement for a lease and lease for 0.6 hectares of land, Spooner Row, Wymondham as identified on the site plan for 25 years at an initial rent of £30,000 per annum and other agreed terms.
  4. To formally declare the - Wymondham Recycling Centre site, Strayground Lane, Wymondham NR18 9NA (7117/013) surplus to County Council

requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property subject to the replacement recycling centre being operational. In the event of the disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer

#### **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

17.4

Declaring the sites and land holdings surplus to County Council use means that the Corporate Property Team can consider options for the disposal and exploitation of these sites. The property acquisitions will support the development of new Recycling Centres.

#### **Alternative Options**

17.5

Declaring sites and land holdings surplus is a result of the sites no longer being required for service delivery. The alternative would be to retain resulting in incurring holding costs for an asset that is not contributing to service delivery.

In respect of site acquisitions, the Council's agent, NPS, confirm they undertook an extensive site search and considered the proposed sites will satisfactorily address planning and highways considerations.

#### **18. Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting**

18.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **note** the Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting.

The meeting ended at 12:24

**The Chairman**

**Cabinet**  
**31 January 2022**  
**Public & Local Member Questions**

<b>Agenda item 6</b>	<b>Public Question Time</b>
6.1	<p><b>Question from Joe Mooney</b>  This cabinet report is in my opinion a key milestone in terms of securing a new recycling centre for Wymondham. The existing site is no longer fit for purpose and it does need replacing. I welcome the news to secure the site outlined in the cabinet paper and I very much hope that it can be brought to fruition as soon as possible. My question is outlined below.</p> <p>Could you give me a timetable for the project and will the agreement to sign the lease and the removal of the soil heap be conditional on securing all of the necessary permissions such as planning and permits</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment of Waste</b>  Thank you for your support and ongoing interest in the replacement of the Wymondham Recycling Centre. Providing a new recycling centre for the Wymondham area is part of the County Council's programme of improvements to Norfolk's recycling centre network, which is to make sites easier to use, to improve recycling performance and to allow for increased usage and a greater focus on reuse.</p> <p>For the Wymondham project, applications for permission to build and operate a new recycling centre are expected in summer 2022. If approvals are secured, then construction would be expected to start in spring 2023 with the new recycling centre then opening in late 2023 or early 2024.</p> <p>And the answer to the second part of your question is yes; as the County Council will only trigger the lease for the site and payment for site clearance when it has secured the relevant permissions, and when the County Council is ready to start its work to construct the new recycling centre.</p>
6.2	<p><b>Question from Iain Duncan</b>  COUNTY HALL, NORWICH: I know that a small amount of lighting may be needed 'out-of-hours', but why is County Hall (inside and out) and its grounds apparently fully or nearly fully illuminated 24/7 and 365 days a year?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b>  Over the past few years, Norfolk County Council have consolidated a number of buildings into County Hall – which has changed the activities and hours of operation of the building. A number of teams – notably colleagues from Adult Social services, Children's Services and partners such as Norfolk police operate out of the building on a 24/7 basis.</p> <p>Cleaning, maintenance and security teams will also be working in the evening (normally starting their shift after 18.00). There is significant activity across the floors by these teams across the evening, which require the floors to be lit.</p> <p>All of the lights are on 'proximity sensors' that switch on the low voltage LED lights on when there is movement on sections of the floor. They will switch off after a set period of time. The floors in County Hall are open plan, so whilst one section may be lit – this will be visible from the windows.</p>

We have looked at the 'timing' of sensors and also on reducing security inspections of the building, however have to balance this with the comfort and usability of the building – particularly by staff working in the evening.

The use of electricity has significant fallen in County Hall over the past ten years, as well as the significant property savings from moving teams from across Norwich from (less visible) offices into County Hall.

Exterior lighting provides wider security and works with our CCTV system to ensure users of the building and the wider public using the footpaths can do so safely.

**Supplementary question from Iain Duncan**

PARK AND RIDE CAR PARKS: Why are these apparently fully illuminated at all times, and not just when the buses using them are running?

I am concerned about the apparent huge waste of energy - with large financial cost, atmospheric damage (in the face of a climate catastrophe), and light pollution.

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways and Transport**

The streetlights at the park and ride sites are left on at 50% capacity at night for security reasons – we have unfortunately had several incidents of vandalism and anti-social behaviour on the sites and so to leave them in total darkness would increase this risk and lead to more cost in repairs. However, we are exploring more efficient lighting and the use of solar power as part of our Net Zero programme.

**Cabinet**  
**31 January 2022**  
**Local Member Questions**

<b>Agenda item 7</b>	<b>Local Member Issues/Questions</b>
7.1	<p><b>Question from Cllr Paul Neale</b> If Conservative governments hadn't cut renewable energy support, people would now be paying £140 less in fuel bills. Yet it's also been revealed that only 7% of homes that should have been were insulated through the Green Homes Grant, partly due to a lack of skilled workers. There is a need for local coordination and training to ensure homes are insulated and bring down the cost of living and carbon emissions. Will the county council establish a local retrofit taskforce to ensure appropriate training and funding to achieve this?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</b> Under the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme (part of the wider suite of government funding, including the Green Homes Grant) a consortium led by Broadland District Council (including Norwich City, Breckland District Council, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council and South Norfolk District Council) successfully secured funding. Full details of successful Local Authority bids can be found <a href="#">here</a>. The current phase of the LAD scheme is managed by the Greater South East Energy Hub, which also covers Norfolk. More details about the current scheme can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has established a clean growth task force with one of the five focus areas being the Workforce for the Future and a key action being to shape the Decarbonisation Academy proposal and the wider clean growth skills agenda. The Decarbonisation Academy aim is to create the skilled workforce that is required to support a zero-carbon economy and the pilot project will look to develop the institutional and physical infrastructure needed to support the rapid deployment of high-quality training programmes needed to deliver cutting-edge property decarbonisation schemes. The County Council sits on the task and finish groups set up for the project covering a range of themes including planning, economic development, and skills.</p> <p>We have also recently funded a Local Energy Asset Representation, which has provided data on housing stock and are leading the proposal for a Local Area Energy Plan, which will set out the infrastructure and investment required to achieve the transition to net zero.</p> <p><b>Second question from Cllr Paul Neale</b> Norfolk's Enhanced Partnership Plan for improving bus services proposes bus priority studies on only 6 corridors (two in each major urban area). Considering the scale of the shift to public transport needed to meet climate targets, a limited target of 6 bus priority studies is insufficient. Will the Cabinet Member for Highways reconsider this and expand the areas considered for priority studies?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and</b></p>

	<p><b>Transport</b></p> <p>The target of 6 bus priority studies listed in the Enhanced Partnership Scheme is only a starting point – you will see that the target date is June 2022. In this initial Scheme we could only list commitments that we knew we could realistically carry out without knowing what funding we will get from the Department for Transport. Assuming we get a good level of funding for our £106m Bus Service Improvement Plan bid, which we hope to know by the end of February, our intention is to review and scale up those commitments in line with the amount of funding allocated to Norfolk.</p>
7.2	<p><b>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare</b></p> <p>Food banks in Norfolk are reporting overwhelming demand, rising running costs and an end to financial support. Most recently, Mandalay Wellbeing’s food bank in my division reported that it ran out of food, had to turn people away and its future is now uncertain.</p> <p>The Council continues to build emphasis on the community and voluntary sector supporting the delivery of public services, including health and wellbeing. As health inequalities widen in Norfolk, how does the Council propose to either help support Norfolk’s food banks in their vital work, or eradicate the need for them entirely?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</b></p> <p>Norfolk County Council, alongside Great Yarmouth Borough Council have provided £2,000 in direct funding to Mandalay Food Bank to support their ongoing food provision to vulnerable households in the town, as well as 30 pre-packed food parcels. In addition the Mandalay food bank also received £10,000 via the Norfolk Community Foundation to provide £50 grants to 200 families in Great Yarmouth. Both elements have been funded from the Household Support Fund allocated to Norfolk County Council from the Department of Work and Pensions.</p> <p>We are aware that foodbanks offer a temporary solution to concerns linked to sustainable employment, the rising cost of living and other economic factors affecting household finances exacerbated by the pandemic. Norfolk County Council has supported around 29,000 children and young people with free school meals vouchers during school holidays, increased funding to Norfolk Assistance scheme by £1.2million this winter as well as supporting over 6,000 households with direct food provision to help them shield or self isolate during the pandemic.</p>
7.3	<p><b>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb</b></p> <p>The council estimates it will spend at least £575,000 on legal fees for SEND Tribunals this year. 95% of decisions in the last year have gone in favour of the family and against Norfolk County Council. At the Council meeting in November 2021, the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services described this as “not a good figure for the Council to have to defend” and that he was to have a meeting to discuss this. Please can he give an update on the outcome of this meeting and next steps?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services</b></p> <p>The figure of 95% seems to have been taken from a national figure that has been reported by various media sources and has been used in discussions regarding the situation in Norfolk.</p>

	<p>To clarify the position for Norfolk, in academic year 2020-2021, 8% of appeals lodged were decided by a Judge. Of those 8%, 60% were upheld in favour of the parent.</p> <p>94% of the total number of all appeals lodged by parents that year were for special school places, which is reflective of the supply and demand pressures of our special school system due to the significant increase in parental requests for special school places experienced since the 2014 reforms and the expectation the tribunal places on our existing special schools to accommodate greater and greater numbers of children within ever decreasing space and facilities.</p> <p>As our new special schools open we anticipate we will see a reduction in appeals for special school placements.</p> <p>I do agree with Cllr Webb that we need to ensure council funding for SEND should be used effectively and I can reassure her that our investment for SEND over the past 3 years has led directly to our improved performance for EHCP assessments and also the opening of the first two of our new special schools.</p>
7.4	<p><b>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton</b> Angel Road Junior school has been allowed to become unsafe through lack of maintenance. It is proposed children will use modular classrooms funded by the trust instead of a new purpose built school paid for by the county council as it should be and my community deserves. Can the cabinet member explain how this council neglect led to children losing out with the only winners being the county council who will be handed back a valuable site?'</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b> Angel Road Junior School became an Academy in March 2018 along with the Infant School, originally as part of Diversa Academy Trust and then both schools were later rebrokered to join Evolution Academy Trust (a process managed solely by the DFE with no involvement with a Local Authority).</p> <p>Around the time of academisation a condition survey is completed and shared with parties. In a small number of cases Norfolk County Council funds urgent capital works to address condition issues, and this was the case at Angel Road Junior School – resulting from the age and condition of the building. The buildings are passed to an academy as safe, warm and dry at the point of academisation and after this, the responsibility for condition of buildings (including health and safety) passes to the academy trust and they are funded directly from the Department for Education either via a School Condition Allocation for larger Academy Trusts or via a bidding process for those under a specified size.</p> <p>The funding for schools' capital nationally is fragmented between central government, Academy Trusts and local authorities. It would only be appropriate for NCC to invest in a new building for an academy where there is a need for additional pupil places and this is not the case here. So when issues arise at a school such as Angel Road Junior it is not appropriate for NCC to step in to resolve but we will continue to work with all schools and academies for the benefit of children and young people in schools.</p> <p>The site is yet to formally return to NCC but we have been informed that it will</p>

	<p>happen in the coming months. The reuse of the site will be considered in the normal manner.</p>
7.5	<p><b>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy</b> There have been worrying reports of an increase in drugs paraphernalia dumped around Thetford including discarded used needles spotted in the river. Many people locally have linked these issues with a decrease in levels of NCC commissioned drugs and alcohol support services provided by 'Change Grow Lives' in the town. Will the Cabinet review the service provided locally to ensure that it is adequate?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> Thank you for your question. As you are already aware the responsibility to collect any litter is one for the local, District Council. We therefore do not hold any data on whether there has been an increase in litter in Thetford.</p> <p>I can say that there has been no reduction in the level of services we commission to treat drug and alcohol addiction. A needle exchange scheme is offered by local NHS pharmacies and at Breckland House in Thetford. All suppliers are contracted to collect used needle and syringes at their premises. They are also asked to encourage service users to return their used paraphernalia.</p> <p><b>Second question from Cllr Terry Jermy</b> Repairs to broken and faulty NCC street-lights and illuminated road signs appear to be taking a considerable amount of time at present. What is the agreed time period with the contractor for repairs to be undertaken and is this being achieved?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> Streetlighting faults including illuminated road signs should generally be rectified within five business days upon receiving notification of the fault.</p> <p>Where faults involve the repair of UK Power Network equipment, these should generally be rectified within 20 business days. This however is often outside of the control of our contractor and can take longer being dependent on attendance by UK Power Networks. We are aware of certain issues regarding UKPN faults and our contractor is actively engaging with UK Power Networks to rectify the issues being experienced. During 2020-22, more than 98% of faults were rectified on time and within the five business days.</p>
7.6	<p><b>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett</b> When RM033 was included in the Corporate Risk Register last year it was rated an Amber possible major risk. In the light of delays in the consultation, increasing controversy, continuing cost increases and adverse comments from Department of Transport officials on the environmental impact, what is the current risk rating of RM033?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> The risk register refers to delays to funding and statutory approvals. At this time, whilst the consultation has been delayed, we are looking at the overall timings for</p>

	<p>the project. There is no indication that funding is at risk. Once the project timescales have been reviewed the risk register will be updated as part of the regular review process. The rating is currently still Amber.</p>
7.7	<p><b>Question from Cllr Steve Morphew</b> We have all joined in congratulating and thanking those in Norfolk who worked so hard to guide us through the pandemic. We have all expressed heartfelt sympathy with those who lost and sacrificed so much. In the light of the Sue Gray report and police investigation into behaviour at the heart of the government will the Leader now take this opportunity to reflect the feelings of so many in Norfolk that the Prime Minister must resign?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</b> As the Sue Gray report has not yet been published, I have no comment to make</p>
7.8	<p><b>Question from Cllr Sharon Blundell</b> Is the council meeting its current pothole repair target times and how does this performance compare to those being achieved by the authorities in the rest of the East and England?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> In this current financial year, 95.1% of urgent/dangerous potholes we identify or are reported to the Council are repaired or made safe within our target timescales. All other potholes are assessed individually taking into account factors such as location and severity to form a risk based approach and response times will vary according to each individual assessment. In addition, we closely monitor contractor performance and we know that so far this financial year only 3.5 % of pothole jobs have gone past their target date. This comprises pothole jobs assessed across all priorities.</p> <p><b>Second question from Cllr Sharon Blundell</b> Section 73(14) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 says the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance is excluded by law from being taken into account for charges. The mobility component of Personal Independence Payments should also be disregarded.</p> <p>Therefore what people do with that component (leasing a motability car or otherwise) should not be factored in.</p> <p>The council's Adult Social Services Department Transport Policy reviewed in June 2021 says "Adult Social Services would not normally provide Council funded transport for a person who is in receipt of a Motability vehicle or mobility payment."</p> <p>Can you please explain how it is lawful for the council to do this?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> Thank you for your question.</p> <p>This is very straightforward; the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance</p>

	<p>(or Personal Independence Payment) is excluded in means-tested charging to allow people to keep this benefit (or a Motability vehicle) to help them get around if they have an illness or disability. This is to avoid mobility payments (or a Motability vehicle) reducing the value of this payment or preventing its use to help the person get around. Norfolk complies with this requirement within our charging arrangements. As people are expected to use the mobility payment (or a Motability vehicle) to get around, the Council's position in its policy of whether to include transport funding in care plans is that people will be using this benefit to transport themselves to whatever service they are using. The assessment process allows a full discussion of transport issues to take into account any problems or issues in applying the policy.</p>
7.9	<p><b>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</b></p> <p>According to a report from the Centre for Cities, Norwich has lost 33 weeks of potential sales during the pandemic. With the rise of online shopping, the future of our high streets across the county is extremely uncertain. Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) are particularly vulnerable and need the support of local people. The Federation of Small Businesses says that for every £1 spent with an SME, 63p goes back into the local economy. What further measures can the Council take to help SMEs survive and increase footfall, to help Norfolk avoid the closure of more local shops?</p> <p><b>Response from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy</b></p> <p>Unfortunately our high streets were already finding it challenging to compete with the rise of online retailers before the pandemic - a national problem <a href="#">reported by the Federation of Small Businesses</a> - which has led to a steady increase in vacancy rates in our towns and city over time.</p> <p>However, the County and district councils have been working closely together, to put in place measures of support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on the grants administered in the first wave of the pandemic, district councils are distributing additional grants for hospitality businesses affected by Omicron.</li> <li>• The '<a href="#">Click it Local</a>' scheme, currently covering businesses in Norwich and South Norfolk, enabling customers to order gifts, food and essentials from small businesses.</li> <li>• Town Deal high street improvements in King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth, to make these town centres more attractive to shoppers (in line with the Government's <a href="#">Build Back Better High Streets Strategy</a>).</li> <li>• Delivery of our Go Digital programme, to help SMEs improve their productivity and competitiveness with digital tools. Over 450 businesses registered on the scheme, with plans to support over 1000 by March 2023. District councils are also co-funding the programme.</li> <li>• Our Employer Training Incentive Programme is helping businesses to become more competitive through up-skilling their staff for the new trading circumstances. Over 325 SME supported to date, with over 1,200 interventions. Source of funding being explored for the waiting list of 200+ businesses, now that the initial grant funding has come to an end.</li> </ul> <p>The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June are also an opportunity for SMEs to attract people to their high streets for celebratory experiences and associated purchases.</p>

7.10	<p><b>Question from Cllr Tim Adams</b> What work is being done to address potential reduced levels of activities and increased isolation for older residents in Care homes?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> Thank you for your question. As you are already aware Care Homes in Norfolk are independent businesses.</p> <p>The Council has detailed in the specification for all the Residential and Nursing Care homes it commissions places within, a clear requirement to ensure that support is available to people, so they can enjoy a variety of activities and social opportunities based on their preferences and strengths, as part of everyday life. This includes activities within the home but also to support people's access within the wider community.</p> <p>As part of our approach to ensuring Quality of care in Norfolk, the PAMMS (Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution) audit that all residential and nursing care homes will receive, includes areas such as Personalised Care and Support, which includes this expectation. The findings of these audits are discussed with the providers to ensure any areas for improvement are identified.</p> <p>We understand that during the various restrictions placed on Care Homes to protect their residents from Covid, regarding visitors and movement of people, activities available will have been impacted. With the recent easing of social care restrictions, this will support the return of activities as well visitors, which will reduce people's isolation and improve their well-being.</p>
7.11	<p><b>Question from Cllr Dan Roper</b> Is the council looking to introduce a lane rental scheme to prevent utility companies outstaying their welcome with unnecessary traffic lights and what would the terms of the scheme be?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> The council already issues fines on utility companies where they have taken too long to complete their street works. These fines are based on the number of extra days those works took to complete. Since 2001 highway authorities have used Section 74 of the New Roads &amp; Street Works Act to achieve this.</p> <p>A lane rental scheme allows a highway authority to charge all works promoters (including those undertaken by the highway authority) for the use of the highway on a small part of their road network. These daily fees are based on the number of days taken to complete the work with the income collected used to operate the lane rental scheme.</p> <p>Only London and Kent County Council currently operate lane rental schemes. Norfolk, along with other regional highway authorities are keeping the position under review to help us consider if a lane rental scheme would be beneficial to Norfolk.</p>

7.12	<p><b>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires</b> In 2020/21, there were almost 200 cases of serious harm or death involving babies in England, which is a 31pc rise compared to 2019/20. Yet in Norfolk we see press reports that Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust, which is paid millions of pounds a year by Norfolk County Council to provide the service, has failed to visit the vast majority of Norfolk families in 2020. What are you doing to urgently address this?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> The Health Visitor, Healthy Child Programme is a Public Health commissioned, NHS delivered service. It is a universal service to support parents, and all children's healthy social, emotional, and physical development. Norfolk County Council has fully funded the service and has also used Government Covid money to increase investment during the pandemic.</p> <p>Like all NHS services our NHS provider is experiencing severe pressures due to Covid - I also understand that there is a longer-term national shortage of health visitors, who are trained by NHS Health Education England. The National Guidance supports the provision of a mix of face to face, on-line and phone appointments. In line with this the Norfolk Health Child programme offers a 'blended' service. Face-to-face appointments are undertaken for vulnerable and higher risk families. For lower need families the youngest babies are prioritised, for example 94% of new-borns are seen in face-to-face appointments. All families are contacted either in person or virtually for every mandatory check. Throughout this time the NHS has prioritised those who are the most vulnerable and families with highest need. The NHS meets regularly with the commissioners and is producing an immediate recovery trajectory with increased face-to-face appointments as short-term sickness in staff reduces with reducing numbers of Covid cases. And an in-year catch-up programme for families most affected by the pandemic is being agreed as the peak in Covid is passed.</p> <p>In addition, our NHS provider is implementing a longer-term workforce plan to address the challenges of national NHS shortages in Health Visitors.</p>
7.13	<p><b>Question from Cllr Rob Colwell</b> When considering any imminent Wisbech incinerator planning application the Planning Inspectorate will give Councils 14 days to report on the validity of the public consultation. Is this Council ready to meet this deadline and to declare the public consultation in West Norfolk to have been inadequate in its coverage of the actual population living downwind of the incinerator?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</b> No planning application has been received and if and when it does come forward Norfolk County Council will follow its obligations under planning law as a statutory consultee</p> <p>The validity of the public consultation undertaken by MVV will be assessed against the published Statement of Community Involvement dated June 2021. The contents of which would have been considered by all local planning authorities before adoption by MVV</p>

7.14	<p><b>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp</b> The NSPCC says delivery of the Health Visitor Service over the phone or on Zoom, instead of in person, makes it harder to spot developmental delay or domestic abuse. The Health Visitor needs to see how parents and children interact. This is best done face-to -face. Norfolk County Council commissions Norfolk’s Health Visitor Service. In Norfolk Health Visits after the first visit, are conducted virtually. Can the Cabinet Member ensure that Norfolk has enough Health Visitors to make every Home Visit in person?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> Thank you for your question. Please see the answer to question 7.12 for the full response.</p>
7.15	<p><b>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn</b> In 2020, Norwich City Council unanimously adopted a Green Party motion to trial safer consumption spaces in the city to reduce drug-related deaths and prevent situations where drug-users take drugs in the stairwells of residents, with faeces, blood and drug paraphernalia being left outside residents’ front doors.  Recently, Bristol welcomed the Overdose Prevention Centre, a mobile unit where drug-users can find safety and supervision to reduce deaths. This is done with the express support of the police, even though the Home Office has not granted permission.  Will Norfolk follow the example of Bristol and many European nations by working with partners to establish a safer consumption space in Norwich?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</b> Thank you for your question. As you would expect Norfolk County Council is committed to reducing the number of drug related deaths. Our public health commissioners follow National Policy, therefore we would not support “Consumption Rooms” because they are not supported by the Home Office.</p> <p><b>Second question from Cllr Jamie Osborn</b> Government proposals to make voter photo ID mandatory to vote could block 2.1 million people from voting despite voter fraud being negligible. This would disproportionately disenfranchise people from minority ethnic backgrounds (eg: 47% of Black people in England don’t have a driving license, compared to 24% of white people) and social-renters. Will the Council Leader urge his Conservative colleagues to oppose this Bill that threatens to disenfranchise already-marginalised groups in Norfolk?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</b> Thank you for the question. This is a difficult issue that will no doubt be subject to a</p>

	<p>lot of debate in the lead up to any decision being made. My position is very similar to that of the Electoral Commission- It is important that the UK's electoral system is both secure and accessible.</p> <p>There are already checks in place to confirm a voter's identity if they are voting by post. But there are no similar checks in place at polling stations in Great Britain to prevent someone claiming to be someone else and voting in their name. This makes polling station voting in Great Britain vulnerable to fraud.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, there has been a requirement to show ID when voting since 1985, updated to photo ID in 2003.</p> <p>The UK has very low levels of proven electoral fraud, and voters should feel confident about their vote. But we know from public opinion research that it is an issue that concerns some voters. Two-thirds of people say they would feel more confident in the security of the voting system if there was a requirement to show ID.</p> <p>If introduced it must be done with consideration for everyone who is eligible to vote and importantly must come with funding to allow Local Councils to implement it.</p>
7.16	<p><b>Question from Cllr Ben Price</b></p> <p>Thorpe Hamlet Children's Centre supported a top 20% most disadvantaged area offering the first Sure Start Programme in Norwich. In 2010, the centre was saved after Greens worked with parents against plans to close it. In 2019, a decision was made to shut 38 of Norfolk's 53 children's centres, including the Thorpe Hamlet centre. Removing access to this essential service had a detrimental impact on children and families I represent. Does the cabinet member accept the redesign of the service has been a failure, opportunities have been reduced for children and their families, and it's time to reinstate this essential service provision and reopen the Thorpe Hamlet centre?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b></p> <p>The transformation of our early childhood services with the creation of the Early Childhood and Family Service in 2019 was not about reducing access to support for families but about making better use of resources through focusing on funding front line delivery and support for families who need it, rather than operating buildings. Whilst the last two years have been a very challenging period with significant disruption both for families and services, the Early Childhood and Family Service has continued to support families during the pandemic through a mix of face to face delivery and online and digital support. The service is working closely with other local services and agencies, including in the Thorpe Hamlet area, to help ensure that families who need help can access the support they need in a coordinated way.</p> <p>The Thorpe Hamlet centre has continued to be used by local families as a result of Lionwood Junior School taking it over. Families are also accessing the nursery provision onsite which has been enhanced under this arrangement. The Early Childhood and Family Service is able to use the centre to meet with families, alongside other community venues and within families' homes. Through the council's community funding for early childhood groups, within the Norwich North area that Thorpe Hamlet is within, four new community groups have been supported to set up and a further two have been supported to continue to operate</p>

following the pandemic.

**Second question from Cllr Ben Price**

Norwich City Council's climate commission provides expert advice on reducing carbon emissions area-wide (not just for the council's own operations) and follows best practice for place-based climate leadership by integrating energy, governmental, educational, arts and civil society sectors in producing a credible and legitimate climate action plan. Does the county council agree that involving these sectors in decision-making is important and will it establish a climate commission for Norfolk?

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**

Norfolk County Council has committed to achieving net zero across its own estates by 2030, and also to working closely in partnership with key organisations, including District partners and the private sector, in terms of the county's wider journey towards net zero.

Norfolk County Council is an active member of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and many other networks, including the ICS, committed to tackling climate change.

The Council's Member Oversight Group for the Environment also continues to consider and make recommendations around other partnerships and the membership of wider networks and bodies, regionally and nationally, which will help Norfolk County Council deliver its net zero goals.

**Written Supplementary Questions requiring written responses from the Cabinet Meeting held on  
Monday 31 January 2022**

	<p><b>Agenda item 7</b> <b>Local Member questions</b></p>
	<p><b>Supplementary question from Cllr Steve Morpew</b> What are The Leader’s expectations for Norfolk from the long awaited Levelling Up White Paper expected on Wednesday, especially in the light of reports it will mostly recycle already made announcements that sold Norfolk short?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance</b> The White Paper and the potential of a deal for Norfolk is a real opportunity. We are currently going through the detail of the White Paper and will be beginning discussions with local partners and Government over the coming weeks. It is too early to say what the ‘Deal’ would look like for Norfolk as negotiations haven’t yet begun but I am sure Cllr Morpew and other opposition members will be supporting us in getting Norfolk the best deal possible</p>
	<p><b>Supplementary question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare</b> Will the Leader commit to work with me to explore how the Council can safeguard the future of Mandalay CIC at its current site, or identify alternative accommodation to ensure this vital community food bank continues to operate after March 2022?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance</b> The direct relationship with Mandalay Wellbeing CIC is managed via Great Yarmouth Borough Council, who we work in close partnership with. Mandalay Wellbeing CIC will still have direct support offers via the Norfolk Assistance Scheme that people can access if they need to.</p>
	<p><b>Supplementary question from Cllr Robert Colwell</b> Planning Inspectorate guidelines for local councils states the pre-application stage should be used to express their views of local residents, groups and businesses. In West Norfolk it is obvious that public sentiment is very much against an incinerator due to previous public enquiry. Why were Norfolk County Council the only neighbouring local authority to the proposed Wisbech mega incinerator, not to engage fully in the public consultation, given that local authorities are “strongly encouraged” to.</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance</b> We as an authority will respond if and when a planning application is lodged. We appreciate and note the responses of other LA’s and will make an appropriate response at the right time in the planning process.</p>

**Supplementary question from Cllr Maxine Webb**

The statistics quoted do not reveal what percentage of the 92% of appeals not heard by a judge are agreed in favour of the parent, before the date of the hearing, resulting in the appeal being withdrawn. However, my question was about the meeting the Cabinet Member was due to have. Please can he give an update on the outcome of this meeting and next steps?

**Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Thank you for your follow up question. The meeting and discussion I had with officers to discuss this was effectively covered by the narrative in the answer. My apologies if the response did not make this clear

# Cabinet

Item No: 8

**Report Title: Adult Learning Annual Plan**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

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

**Responsible Director: Tom McCabe, Executive Director, Community & Environmental Services**

**Is this a Key Decision? Yes**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 16 August 2021**

## **Introduction from Cabinet Member**

The Adult Learning service is externally funded through the Department for Education and tuition fee income and is an Ofsted-rated “Good” provider. It delivers an exceptional, comprehensive, high quality teaching, learning and assessment service to adults in Norfolk, with 9,000 learner registrations in the 2020/21 academic year.

Adult Learning is proud that its highly effective response to the needs of residents has been recognised nationally, winning the prestigious Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year at the Times Educational Supplement Awards 2021.

The judges said:

*“Norfolk County Council’s Adult Learning service has an amazing ability to do what’s right for its community. As a result, learners remain connected with education and, crucially, with each other.”*

In addition, the service was the winner of the Best of Communities Award at the Smarter Working Awards alongside colleagues in the wider Community, Information

and Learning team, and finalist at the Local Government Chronicle Awards for innovation.

Adult Learning operates at the cutting edge of the further education sector and has successfully secured over £1 million of new funding to Norfolk in 2021, firstly as a sector lead in the use of technology in education and, secondly to enable the implementation of a new construction and environmental curriculum, responding directly to the needs of Norfolk's economy. This funding will enable the service to establish two new construction training hubs in Norwich and King's Lynn that respond directly to the future skills needs of the county, with a real emphasis on skills that support a green and sustainable economy.

Adult Learning continues to provide a wide range of innovative learning programmes that Norfolk residents both welcome and benefit from. With the delivery of 50% of courses online, the service has developed a sustainable delivery pattern, combining online with a local physical presence through the development of training venues in libraries.

The annual plan set out in this paper reflects Norfolk County Council's strategic objectives, as detailed in the Better Together, For Norfolk Strategy 2021-2025.

Adult Learning proposes the following key priorities for the 2022/23 academic year:

- **Ensure** our provision meets the needs of Norfolk's economy, individuals, communities and employers
- **Empower** individuals in underrepresented and disadvantaged communities
- **Improve** social mobility and break intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes
- **Enable** adult learners to gain the skills and knowledge they need to progress
- **Address** health inequalities and reduce the need for the intervention of other services.

## **Recommendations:**

1. **To commend the Adult Learning service for its exceptional performance and contribution to Norfolk priorities.**
2. **To approve the Adult Learning Annual Plan for 2022/23.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

1.1 The Adult Learning service is an Ofsted-rated 'Good' Further Education adult and community education provider, that is externally funded through grant

funding from central Government through the Department for Education's Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and tuition fee income.

- 1.2 With a total income of **£4,689,126** in the current academic year, the service is one of the largest adult education providers in the country and is cost neutral to the Council. In addition, the service has secured **an additional £1 million** in the current academic year to deliver specific projects. It earns its external funding and tuition fee income through the delivery of information, advice and guidance; teaching, learning and assessment; as well as learner and learning support activities, with around **9,000** adult learner (age 19+) registrations across Norfolk each year.

**Appendix A** provides detailed information on the service's Income and Financial Management.

- 1.3 The service's funding enables it to deliver a wide-ranging curriculum, including:

- Qualifications from entry level to Level 5 (foundation degree equivalent)
- Apprenticeships
- Community learning courses that engage with residents who are the furthest from education and/or employment or who need support through learning
- Self-financed creative and personal development courses.

Further information about the Adult Learning Curriculum is provided in **Appendix B**.

- 1.4 Adult Learning performance and contribution to Norfolk priorities

#### National Recognition

2021 was an exceptionally successful year, in which national recognition for the high quality of the Adult Learning service's work in Norfolk, combined with the service's continuing innovation in response to the challenges faced due to the ongoing pandemic.



At the Times Education Supplement (tes) Further Education awards, Adult Learning was awarded the title of Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year 2021. The judges, who are leading professionals in the sector, said

*“Norfolk County Council’s Adult Learning service has an amazing ability to do what’s right for its community. As a result, learners remain connected with education and, crucially, with each other.”*

The service was asked to produce a 20 second video that highlights Adult Learning’s key successes. This is a link to the video for Cabinet Members to view: [Celebrating our TES Award Nomination](#)



Adult Learning was also a finalist in the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2021, reaching the final six in the ‘Innovation’ category from an overall field of 650 applications. This recognises the high level of innovation across the service, with a team that is absolutely determined to never give in to the challenges they face and to find solutions to keep Norfolk residents learning.

Voluntary Norfolk commented that: *“Throughout the pandemic, Adult Learning has had a significant impact on Norfolk’s disadvantaged and rural communities, by actively tackling loneliness and social isolation and supporting people to feel more connected and involved. Nothing but praise for the team in their willingness to innovate and solution focus in partnership working.”*



As a member of the wider Community, Information and Learning team, together with the Libraries and Information service, Adult Learning received the Best of Communities Award at the Smarter Working Live Awards 2021, for ‘Creating Communities During Covid’.

The Adult Learning service is immensely proud of these achievements and the contribution it makes to Norfolk County Council’s priorities and remains driven to achieve ever more for our residents.

Continuing to deliver to Norfolk residents

The 2020/21 academic year was challenging, as the delivery of teaching and learning continued mainly online due to national and local Covid-related restrictions.

While the service continued to deliver to its 9,000 learners, mainly through tutor-led classes delivered online, learner recruitment and the delivery of examinations were extremely challenging. These challenges were replicated across the sector and the team in Norfolk responded well in comparison with many other areas of the country. The Department for Education removed many qualifications from the national achievement rates in recognition of the challenges faced by providers.

Despite the impact of the restrictions, Adult Learning’s self-assessment report for the academic year 2020/21 provides robust evidence that the service is making strong progress towards Outstanding, with two of the four judgement areas (based on Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework) now rated as Outstanding.

<b>Education Inspection Framework Judgement Area</b>	<b>2020-21 Self-Assessment Report (SAR)</b>
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Quality of Education	Good
Behaviours and Attitudes of learners	Outstanding
Personal Development of Learners	Outstanding
Leadership and Management	Good

A copy of the Self-Assessment Report 2020-21 Key Findings is available in **Appendix C**.

## Innovation

The past 18 months has been a time to review the service's curriculum offer and consider the needs of Norfolk's economy. As a result, from January 2022, the service has introduced a new construction and environmental sustainability curriculum aimed at adults, with an initial cohort of **121** learners and a target of **608** learner registrations in the current academic year.

A temporary construction workshop has opened at Wensum Lodge in Norwich and the service has secured **£560,000** from the Community Renewal Fund to establish two permanent construction hubs, one in Norwich and the other in King's Lynn, where we will focus on courses and qualifications that respond to the future skills needs of the county, with a real emphasis on skills that will support a green and sustainable economy. Once we have demonstrated the success of our approach, we aim to secure further funding to enable the service to develop hubs in other parts of the county.



The new, temporary construction training hub at Wensum Lodge in Norwich

Our role as a sector lead in the use of technology in education, through the Further Education Professional Development Grant, will further enhance our creative use of technology to meet the needs of Norfolk residents.

## Learner Involvement

The service regularly collects feedback and produces case studies that demonstrate the impact of its services on Norfolk residents. An extremely high **97% (1,872)** of the **1,930** learners who responded to post-course surveys in the 2020/21 academic year confirmed that they enjoyed their course, with **95% (1,834)** stating they would recommend the service to friends and family.

**Appendix D** provides feedback from learners and examples of learner case studies.

The service has made great strides in involving our learners in service activities and developments. Two elected learner representatives are members of the

service's Steering Group and regular learner forums are held to gather learner views.

The service held its first Learner Awards ceremony in September 2021. This was a virtual event (15 minutes in length) that showcased the amazing achievements of our learners. With hopefully fewer Covid-related restrictions on operations in the future, the service hopes to increase the involvement of learners and staff in this annual event.

This event is available for Cabinet Members to view:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GW8EntEhba4>

## **2. Proposal**

2.1 The proposal is for Cabinet to approve the Adult Learning Annual Plan, as set out in Section 2, together with Appendices E to G.

### **2.2 Intent – The Adult Learning Vision**

Our vision is that:

*“We anticipate and respond to the needs of individuals, communities, employers and Norfolk’s economy through the delivery of outstanding, inspirational and highly flexible learning”.*

### **2.3 Intent – The Adult Learning Plan**

We have reviewed and adjusted the Adult Learning Annual Plan based on latest evidence and insight. The plan outlines how Adult Learning will use its funding and income to respond to the ambition and aspirations of the county as well as the existing and emerging learning needs of adults in Norfolk.

The curriculum planning process considers both national and regional priorities in the Further Education sector, as well as how the service will contribute to Norfolk County Council’s strategic objectives.

In revisiting the Annual Plan, the service has used evidence-based research and extensive partnership working to identify the key drivers for the future delivery of its courses. These drivers have considered both the challenges that have been caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the impact on jobs and the economy, as well as physical and mental health issues and inequalities and the impact on families and children; and the county’s ambition and aspiration to be high performing, to enjoy economic growth and to protect the environment; as well as to have safe, empowered and connected communities.

## 2.4 Intent – Adult Learning’s Key Priorities

This section outlines Adult Learning’s key priorities and how they respond to the Better Together, For Norfolk Strategy 2021-25.

Adult Learning’s key priorities for the 2022/23 academic year are to:

- **Ensure** our provision meets the needs of Norfolk’s economy, individuals, communities and employers
- **Empower** individuals in underrepresented and disadvantaged communities
- **Improve** social mobility and break intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes
- **Enable** adult learners to gain the skills and knowledge they need to progress
- **Address** health inequalities and reduce the need for the intervention of other services.

Adult Learning’s proposed vision, priorities and success measures are detailed in its Plan on a Page 2022/23 in **Appendix E**.

**Appendix F** outlines in detail how Adult Learning’s strategic and operational activities will contribute to Norfolk County Council’s Strategic Priorities as detailed in the Better Together, For Norfolk Strategy 2021-25.

## 2.5 The impact of Adult Learning on Norfolk’s priorities

The following comment was made by a learner who attended a course in the 2020-21 academic year:

*“My low income prevents me from doing many things I would love to do, but this service allows me to access education which would otherwise be closed to me.”*

This comment provides the essence of the impact that Adult Learning achieves in Norfolk. We enable people who lack confidence and opportunity to believe in themselves and we change people’s aspirations and their lives.

The following are a selection of examples of how Adult Learning’s Annual Plan impacts on Norfolk’s priorities:

- The high-quality English, numeracy and digital skills qualification programmes target **1,660** registrations through this Annual Plan, and this draws down central Government funding to the value of **£1.3 million**. In the current academic year, **46% (764)** of these learners are from the **30%** most deprived wards in Norfolk.

- The growth in the service's Apprenticeships delivery responds well to the needs of Norfolk's employers. Apprenticeship achievement in 2020/21 was **11%** above the national rate. An outstanding **98.7%** of our **79** completing apprentices have remained in sustainable, long term employment. The service is targeting significant growth in Apprenticeships over the next two years, with a target of **134** in the 2022/23 academic year and **215** in 2023/24. Current recruitment patterns provide high confidence that the service will achieve these targets.
- Adult Learning's highly successful vocational qualifications programme includes a substantial cohort of Accountancy and Bookkeeping learners. who take qualifications from Level 1 to 4. With **264** learners planned for the 2022/23 academic year, this programme will draw down central Government funding of around **£500,000**.
- An exciting new construction and environmental sustainability curriculum aims to place Norfolk at the forefront of the development of a 'green' curriculum. This is in direct response to the heavily documented national and local labour shortages and skills gaps in these sectors. The service is targeting an initial **608** adult learner enrolments in the current academic year onto its first stage courses and plans to grow. We intend to gain qualification approval and to lead the development of new net zero-based entry level qualifications ahead of the start of the 2022/23 academic year. While the entry level qualifications the market needs do not currently exist, we are working with an awarding organisation to develop new qualifications in the fields of renewable energy systems and sustainable construction.
- The service provides a wide range of opportunities that aim to respond not only to sector skills gaps, but also to the gender pay gap in Norfolk. For example:
  - Through our new construction curriculum, we are focusing on increasing female take up. Currently **33% (40)** of our first cohort of **121** Construction learners are female – and this compares well with **11%** female employment in the industry. The current pay gap for construction operatives is **23%**. By providing skills and qualifications we aim to address this issue so that we both increase the proportion of female construction workers and our female learners will secure better paid jobs in the industry.



Female learners, learning to plaster at Wensum Lodge, Norwich

- The pay gap in accountancy for financial accounts managers is **25%**. Our strong Accountancy programme, from entry Level to Level 4, has **335** learners in the current academic year. **78% (261)** learners) are female and **22% (74)** are male. Our aim is to support learners into full time, well-paid professional roles in the Accountancy industry.
- New Fire fighters now take the apprenticeship route, and over the last 3 years, while we have been delivering this apprenticeship, there has been a **33%** increase in female fire fighter recruitment. In the current academic year, we have **26** Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service apprentice fire fighters, with **19 (73%)** male and **7 (27%)** female.

Further information on how Adult Learning responds to the gender pay gap is in **Appendix G**.

- The Access to Higher Education Health and Psychosocial Professions programme, with around **30-35** learners each year, has a high progression rate into Higher Education courses such as nursing, midwifery and social work. Learners tend to be people who missed out on education the first time around and who are now successfully progressing into a long-term profession.
- The health and wellbeing programme, which includes healthy cookery, cooking on a budget, personal finance and lifestyle courses, and our employability programmes, target **1,000** registrations and provide enormous support for both physical and mental wellbeing and progression into employment.
- In 2022, the service will pilot a range of courses that have been developed in consultation with and that target Norfolk's 90,000 carers. Specific areas of interest are dementia awareness and courses that target parent carers who are supporting children/ young people with mental health needs.

## 2.6. Delivery of the Adult Learning Annual Plan

Adult Learning has already demonstrated its ability to use its external funding and income to plan both flexible and responsive learning programmes and is able to change its delivery method overnight when external circumstances require the service to do so.

Many courses returned to the physical classroom in September 2021 and the service's current offer is around 50% in the classroom and 50% online. 46% of learners during the lockdowns told us they would like to continue to learn online, so the service will maintain a mixed offer that meets their needs. An online yoga session achieved the record number of learners in one of the service's classrooms with 145 people learning yoga together – and great feedback. The service is ready to move courses from classroom to online seamlessly should it be necessary.

The service's innovative approach to digital learning has led to the national recognition already outlined in this report. From September 2021, the service has been delivering synchronously, so that learners in a classroom and online attend the same course at the same time together. This supports access to courses for residents in rural areas and learners who have a disability have welcomed the new opportunities provided through online learning. This is highly innovative and ahead of most of the rest of the country.

The service has established dedicated training rooms in the following locations:

- Attleborough Community and Enterprise Centre
- Dereham Library
- Great Yarmouth Library
- King's Lynn Library
- Norman Centre, Norwich
- Swaffham Community Centre
- Thetford Library
- Wensum Lodge, Norwich.

In addition, the service is working with other venues on an ad hoc basis, such as Merchants Place in Cromer and Charring Cross in Norwich, in addition to the two new construction training hubs currently being established in Norwich and King's Lynn.

Adult Learning is working closely with the Libraries and Information service in relation to the redevelopment projects that are contributing to high street regeneration in Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn.

The service's aspiration is that, in addition to our online offer, we will have a physical presence no more than 10 miles from 93% of adult residents in Norfolk. This is based on a detailed analysis of Norfolk data and plans to use training rooms based in 11 Norfolk libraries.

### **3. Impact of the Proposal**

- 3.1 The Adult Learning Annual Plan will enable the Council to use its central Government funding and tuition fee income to deliver the learning outcomes outlined in this proposal.

The service will use the success measures identified in its Plan on a Page (**see Appendix E**) and its self-assessment process to measure the impact of the proposed Adult Learning Annual Plan.

### **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 4.1 This paper demonstrates that the performance of the Adult Learning service, which has gained national recognition for Norfolk County Council and is making strong progress towards a self-assessment judgement of Outstanding, is exceptional in meeting the needs of Norfolk residents and communities.
- 4.2 The Adult Learning Annual Plan is based on the identified needs and priorities for adults in Norfolk. The service's external funding and income enables Norfolk County Council to provide wide-ranging opportunities to Norfolk residents and communities to learn, gain new skills and qualifications and to progress. In addition, residents can access the support they need to live healthy, connected, safe, resilient and independent lives.

### **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The proposed Adult Learning Annual Plan enables Norfolk County Council to maintain its external funding contract with the Education and Skills Funding Agency and tuition fee income and an Ofsted rating of good, as well as to deliver strong outcomes that respond to Norfolk priorities. Cabinet could decide not to deliver adult education in Norfolk and the outcome of this decision would result in the loss of this external funding and the high-quality, place-based service it currently provides to Norfolk residents, communities and employers.

### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Adult Learning is externally funded through the Education and Skills Funding Agency, student loans and tuition fee income and is financially self-sustainable.

The growth of the service's programmes, together with successful applications for additional funding, will allow for investment into future learning opportunities that respond to Norfolk's priorities.

## **7. Resource Implications**

### **7.1 Staff:**

With the exception of the new construction curriculum, there are no other resource implications as the service already has staff in place to deliver the proposed plan and will continue to recruit into new curriculum areas as required.

To support the implementation of the new construction curriculum, the service has recruited a Curriculum Manager and teaching staff who are specialists in this field.

The service continues to provide specialist training for teaching staff to enable them to deliver its online programmes effectively and has secured additional funding (£500K) through the Department for Education's Further Education Professional Development Grant Pilot to support this.

### **7.2 Property:**

An increase in hybrid working and the online delivery of courses has reduced the service's venue-associated costs. With 50% of course delivery online, the service has become less reliant on physical premises. In addition, the service is actively increasing its use of training facilities in the libraries.

The successful Community Renewal Fund application will fund the establishment of two construction training hubs in Norwich and King's Lynn, which will also provide training facilities for other subject areas, as well as digital skills training suites. The on-going costs of these new facilities, beyond the project funding (July 2022 onwards), will be managed through the service's existing budgets.

### **7.3 IT:**

The significant growth in online delivery has required the service to increase its expenditure on equipment, software and training for staff, as well as to increase the level of support for learners to access and effectively use digital platforms. The service's Department for Education learner support funding enables the service to provide digital equipment to learners who are unemployed or on a low income.

## **8. Other Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

Adult Learning operates within the requirements around funding and performance established by Ofsted, the Department for Education, the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the European Social Fund.

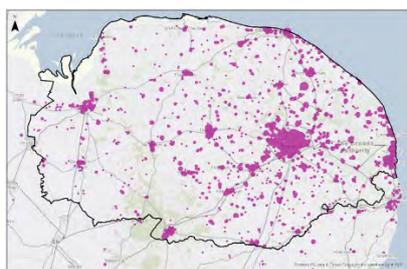
### **8.2 Human Rights Implications:**

None.

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

The Adult Learning Annual Plan actively seeks to target diverse and vulnerable individuals and communities and it is not envisaged that there will be any adverse impacts. Adult Learning has an immensely positive impact on adult residents, for example:

- **41%** of learners attending qualification programmes are from the **30%** most deprived wards in Norfolk
- The service responds well to the needs of Norfolk's ethnic minority communities, with **20%** of learners from a non-White British ethnic background
- The Independent Living Skills programme, with around **200** learner registrations each year, supports residents with a learning disability to gain the skills they need to live an independent life
- The service's approach to countywide delivery\*, with both a classroom-based and online offer, provides access to learning for residents who previously had barriers, such as residents with a disability or who live in a rural area.



\*Spread of Adult Learning learners in the 2020-21 academic year

### 8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

Adult Learning is fully compliant with data protection requirements and there are no changes in this proposal that have implications in relation to data protection.

### 8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

The delivery of the Adult Learning Annual Plan will be taken forward in line with Government regulations and in consultation with Health and Safety colleagues in the Council. An Assistant Head of Service is responsible for this process and for ensuring that learners and staff are and remain safe.

### 8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

This proposal will have a positive impact on the environment, as it is planned for 50% of the service's future learning provision to be delivered online. This will reduce travel and the use of physical premises and resources. In addition, the new construction curriculum will actively support Norfolk's net zero aspirations.

## **8.7 Any Other Implications:**

None.

## **9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

9.1 The risks associated with the Adult Learning service's operations are managed through the Community, Information and Learning service risk register. There are no additional risks resulting from this proposal.

## **10. Select Committee Comments**

10.1 The minutes of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee held on 19 January 2022 have not yet been published, however, comments raised at Committee have been responded to and reflected in this version of the report.

## **11. Recommendations**

- 1. To commend the Adult Learning service for its exceptional performance and contribution to Norfolk priorities**
- 2. To approve the Adult Learning Annual Plan for 2022/23.**

## **12. Background Papers**

12.1 None.

### **Officer Contact**

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

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**Email: [denise.saadvandi@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:denise.saadvandi@norfolk.gov.uk)**



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

## Adult Learning Income and Financial Management

Historically, the service experienced challenges in managing its budgets effectively and regularly asked the Council to support it with budget deficits of up to £500,000 each financial year. It is good to report that the financial management of the service is now robust and for the past three financial years the service has been cost neutral to Norfolk County Council, and that with strong financial management the service delivers a balanced budget each financial year.

Adult Learning is externally funded through grant funding from central Government's Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The service's income, in the 2020-21 academic year totalled £4,689,126, and was broken down as follows:

- Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£3,636,326),
- National Skills Fund (£17,800), student loans (£280,000),
- Tuition fees (£205,000) and
- Apprenticeships (£550,000).

This funding is earned through the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment across Norfolk. £150,000 from the Apprenticeships income is paid to the Norfolk Fire Service for the delivery of their Apprenticeship programme.

The impact of the pandemic in the 2020-21 academic year made it challenging to achieve the tuition fee element of the service's income, as more of the service's learners were entitled to fully funded courses and due to some course suspensions where it was not possible to deliver the course online e.g., silversmithing and pottery. The service recovered £305,000 of lost fee income through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' (DLUHC) loss of income scheme and the Covid recovery grant.

As a result of the service's over-performance in relation to its funding in the 2019-20 academic year, it received an additional £107,000 from the Department for Education in January 2021, but this was offset by the challenging environment in 2020-21, with nearly all the service's delivery online, social distancing in classrooms that has meant the service is unable to fill its classes as previously and restrictions that meant that the service could not engage as effectively with learners out in the community. This led to a small under-delivery and will see us returning £155,000 of AEB and £58,000 of National Skills Fund funding to the ESFA in January 2022. This has been taken into consideration and has been removed from the overall figures above. Nationally, the Further Education sector faced similar and in general greater challenges to those experienced here in Norfolk.

With the return to a balance of classroom and online provision from September 2021, the service expects to use all its funding in the 2021-22 academic year.

In addition to the income detailed above, Adult Learning has been highly successful in bringing more than £1 million of new funding into Norfolk.

- A Community Renewal Fund application has secured £560K that will be used to establish two construction and environmental sustainability hubs in Norwich and King's Lynn., leading the way in the development of green skills in Norfolk, and helping people into new employment.
- An application to the Department for Education's Further Education Professional Development Grant Pilot, where Adult Learning is the lead provider, has secured £500K to deliver a wide range of professional development opportunities that focus on cutting-edge developments in the use of technology in education across 10 local authority adult education services. This directly recognises the high level of digital innovation within the service.

Both projects are highly innovative and demonstrate national recognition of the immense achievements of Adult Learning in Norfolk.

## Adult Learning Curriculum

### Qualifications:

- Functional (basic English, maths and digital skills) and vocational qualifications from entry level (basic knowledge and understanding) to level 5 (foundation degree equivalent)
- Knowledge; skills; attainment; and employability skills
- Targeting residents who either do not have the basic skills and professional qualifications they need to progress, or who are seeking to reskill and retrain and/or progress into further learning and employment
- Fully funded for eligible learners, subject to Government criteria, with an element of tuition fees and student loans for other learners
- Each qualification attracts a funding tariff and 20% of the funding for each learner is earned on achievement of the qualification.

### Apprenticeships

- A fast-growing, high quality programme across a variety of employment sectors that meets the needs of Norfolk employers and residents
- This programme provides entry to sustainable employment for apprentices and opportunities to develop new and higher-level skills for those who are already in employment
- The service's apprenticeships programme addresses Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) priorities by contributing to the creation of a skilled workforce and supporting businesses to plan their strategies as they recover from the impact of the pandemic.

### Community Learning

- The community learning programme provides a vital space and a structure where residents who are the furthest from education and/or employment or who need support through learning can reengage with learning, grow and progress with confidence
- These programmes aim to break the cycle of low achievement and renew and rebuild confidence and capacity to achieve and progress
- Community Learning:
  - Responds to physical and mental wellbeing challenges and health inequalities
  - Supports residents to become connected, resilient and independent and to overcome loneliness and social isolation
  - Develops safe communities
  - Supports recovery from the pandemic
  - Enables people to live well independently
  - Provides support for carers

- Enables families to support their children and breaks intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes.

#### Self-financed creative and personal development courses

- Courses that are self-financed by the learner – completely outside the Government-funded system
- No Government funding support, so tuition fee income must cover costs and this programme has the potential to grow and generate new income
- These courses target residents who are looking for personal development opportunities without the constraints of the Government-funded system
- Highly popular creative arts programme, in particular pottery and silversmithing courses; modern foreign languages; and a growing range of general interest courses.

## Appendix C

### 1. SELF-ASSESSMENT KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

#### 1.1. Progress in Overall Effectiveness

Report	Judgement
<b>SAR 2020/21</b>	<b>Good</b>
SAR 2019/20	Good
<b>Ofsted January 2020</b>	<b>Good</b>
SAR 2018/19	Good with Outstanding Features

#### 1.2. Progress in Aspects of Performance

CIF Aspect of Performance	2018/19 (SAR)	EIF Aspect of Performance	2019/20 (SAR)*	2020/21 (SAR)*
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good	<b>Quality of Education</b>	Good	Good
<b>Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b>	Good with Outstanding Features	<b>Behaviours and Attitudes</b>	Good	Outstanding
<b>Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare</b>	Good	<b>Personal Development</b>	Good	Outstanding
<b>Effectiveness of Leadership and Management</b>	Good	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	Good	Good

\* Judgements are directly in line with the Ofsted Education and Skills Inspection Framework and as such, the judgement will not include the statement 'with outstanding features' where this applies

## 2. Executive Summary

In line with the [Education and Skills Funding Agency’s \(ESFA\) announcement](#) regarding the publication of institutional level qualification achievement rates for the 2020/21 academic year, in that they will not be used by others such as Ofsted, local authorities, or devolved authorities or within ESFA and DFE to hold institutions to account; our Qualification Achievement Rates are not published as part of this self-assessment report.

Adult Learning is fully committed to becoming an outstanding service and continues to make substantial progress in the journey to achieving this. Through strong ambition, vision and intent, combined with a highly effective delivery of its provision, the service has an enormously positive impact on its learners.

We are extremely proud that the service’s highly effective response to the needs of Norfolk residents has been recognised nationally, winning the prestigious Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year at the Times Educational Supplement Awards 2021. In addition, the service was the winner of the Best of Communities Award at the Smarter Working Awards alongside colleagues in the wider Community, Information and Learning team, and finalist at the LGC Awards for Innovation.

Aligned to the four key judgement areas of Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework, Table 2.0 below summarises the key ‘Outstanding’ and ‘Good’ features of the service’s self-assessment of the 2020/21 academic year, and also highlights the key areas for further development as the service continues its journey toward being an outstanding provider.

Key Judgement Area	Key Outstanding Features	Key Good Features	Key Areas for Development
<b>Quality of Education</b> - <b><u>Intent</u></b> - <b><u>Implementation</u></b> - <b><u>Impact</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum Intent responds well to Norfolk County Council and LEP Strategic Priorities</li> <li>An exceptional response to the pandemic enabled learners to continue learning and progressing</li> <li>Positive destinations for apprentices</li> <li>Outstanding Learner Support, including pastoral support, that encourages independent learning</li> <li>Achievement on apprenticeships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality of teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>Planning and embedding of English and maths as wider learning in Education and Training programmes</li> <li>Employer satisfaction on apprenticeship programmes</li> <li>BAME representation on community learning programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Support Assistants’ feedback to tutors requires development to further support tutor planning</li> <li>Continue to seek flexible options for the delivery of examinations during local and national restrictions</li> <li>Consistency of achievement in all subject areas and qualification types</li> <li>Inconsistent representation and achievement gaps in some learner group types</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progression of learners both internally and into further, external learning and employment</li> <li>• 41% of the Education and Training cohort were from the 30% most deprived wards in Norfolk</li> <li>• Achievement, retention and pass rates for community learning programmes.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the Family Learning curriculum to ensure it achieves a wider impact.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Behaviours and Attitudes</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High attendance on Vocational and Independent Living Skills (ILS) programmes</li> <li>• Learners demonstrate consistently outstanding behaviours and attitudes to learning</li> <li>• Learners' behaviour continuously contributes to an inclusive learning environment</li> <li>• Staff are resilient and tenacious in maintaining excellent communications with learners</li> <li>• The 'Learner Voice' is consistently captured through all formal observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and is actively used to inform service improvements</li> <li>• Exceptional level of learner satisfaction</li> </ul>		
<b><u>Personal Development</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutors promote a consistently inclusive environment that meets the needs of all learners</li> <li>• Learner benefits from learning with us extend far beyond that of the academic, vocational, and technical knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive IAG opportunities enable learners to progress well, and the service will continue to develop this further to ensure the maximum possible impact on learners.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners have multiple options to interact and engage and take these up consistently, including through the service's learner forums</li> <li>• The development of learners' understanding to enable them to keep physically healthy and maintain an active lifestyle is exceptional.</li> </ul>		
<p><b><u>Leadership and Management</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding arrangements are highly effective</li> <li>• The robust governance arrangements are outstanding</li> <li>• National recognition of exceptional leadership and management</li> <li>• 95% of learners said they would recommend Adult Learning to others</li> <li>• Staff consistently report high levels of support for wellbeing issues</li> <li>• Through regular and meaningful engagement, leaders are confident that staff issues are quickly identified and dealt with consistently and appropriately</li> <li>• Learner Services team provides an exceptional service to learners</li> <li>• A comprehensive and engaging Learner Involvement Strategy secures a high level of learner feedback and involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focussed and comprehensive staff development and CPD opportunities</li> <li>• Learner Awards celebrating the many achievements of the service's learners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Learning and Community Learning leaders and managers need to identify new approaches to ensure the successful recruitment of learners from local and hard-to-reach communities across Norfolk.</li> </ul>

Table 2.0 – Key findings of the Adult Learning 2020/21 Self-Assessment Report (SAR)



Adult Learning is a truly amazing place to learn remotely and safely

It's been the first bit of learning I've done in 39 years and it was fabulous because it got my brain going and my spirits lifted

Being able to lipread has made me feel like a human being again, it has given me back my life

It greatly improved my mental wellbeing and mood. It has given me a useful skill and has improved my confidence and given me a sense of achievement

The programme has allowed me to understand my daughter's schoolwork and support her more effectively

My course was a lifeline, giving a focus and means of expressing feelings and connection with like-minded people

I loved that it was online - I am physically disabled, chronically ill, so getting to weekly classes is essentially impossible for me due to my circumstances. With the course being online, I was able to access something that was previously inaccessible to me, which was fantastic

Absolutely brilliant courses with tutors who were always happy to help, cannot praise it enough. I find it hard to believe how much I have learnt. I couldn't leave the house but was still be able to learn and interact with other people

Breathing exercises, dyslexia support for me and got a job which is really from the help I got from my tutor

It's not an easy time for any of us but these sessions are really insightful and interesting and I'm learning a lot

The Tutors are excellent!! I couldn't ask for more, very, very helpful, making effort outside of lessons

The course helped me in acquiring a higher banded job within the NHS and it has also given me confidence in what I know

With my disabilities and remote location, I would not be able to attend classroom courses. Therefore, online courses have been a godsend!

I put off going to university for 5 years because I was too scared and didn't feel ready but by the end of the Access course I gained the confidence, knowledge, skills and preparedness to take the next step to becoming a clinical psychologist



**Name: Adrian Zabicki**  
**Course: Accounting Apprenticeship and AAT Level 3**

Accountancy had always appealed to Adrian and the finance apprenticeship seemed like the perfect opportunity to reach his goals, as he knew he didn't want to go via the university route. He started working with Thurne in 2018, alongside studying for his AAT Level 3, saying, *"I am very lucky to be with the company that I work for, and for the educational opportunities with Adult Learning. I had very good tutors and amazing teachers that really support you throughout the whole course, they are there with you until the end. The advantage of doing the apprenticeship is that you get many opportunities to learn, and my employers are very good at giving me new challenges and tasks that go hand in hand with my studies."*

Due to the lockdown he sat the endpoint assessment for his Level 3 AAT online, which meant additional support and consideration from his tutor. He said, *"We had a couple of TEAMS meetings to help me prepare for the setting of doing an important interview online."*

Adrian thinks the benefits of a hands-on apprenticeship provide even more learning opportunities. Adrian said, *"Learning and getting the experience whilst you are doing your qualification is very important because you can cross-check things, ask more questions, and better understand the processes that go with doing the job on a daily basis."*



**Name: Abbie King**  
**Course: Functional Skills English and Maths**

Abbie has overcome personal doubt to build her confidence and thrive in her studies she said, *"Doing the courses has made me so much more confident, before I first attended the class, I was very shy and I wouldn't answer questions. I told my tutor I didn't want to be picked on in class and she understood this, and she followed my wishes. Now I don't feel that way at all, I just speak freely, and I look forward to my lessons."*

This has impacted other areas of her life she said, *"My family can also see a change in me as I can now help my brother with his maths homework. I'm able to work out percentages when shopping and to do calculations in my head. I do feel really proud of how far I have come, because when I first started maths I felt like there was no hope for me, but now I enjoy it and feel I have progressed so much."*

Learning online has been beneficial for Abbie as she said, *"I have a physical disability and attending class can sometimes be a problem for me, so I have benefited from learning online as I can attend every lesson."*

A welcome result of her English studies is that Abbie has rekindled her passion for reading, saying, *"Because of doing English, one of the tests we do is reading, and I used to love reading. Since lockdown I've started reading again. I was recommended a kindle because it has a dyslexic option, and in the space of lockdown I've gone through 7 books. I find reading has really helped me again."*

**Name: Helen Gilbert**  
**Course: Healthy Living Skills**

Helen is a learner on the Healthy Living programme who has overcome her anxiety to continue learning online and build her confidence. Helen has social and emotional difficulties and Asperger's Syndrome, and has found the Covid-19 pandemic very traumatic. When courses moved online Helen was supported by her tutor and LSA (Learner Support Assistant) to continue her learning via video calls, covering the course work and building confidence in learning remotely. Her technical skills using her tablet improved, enabling her to send photographs of her work each week. This led to Helen feeling confident enough to join courses online with other learners, engaging with them and offering encouragement. Helen said *"I look forward to the adult learning sessions because they are fun and my teacher is lovely. I've learnt to use different colours and get absorbed in what I'm doing. It helps my mental health because it distracts me from more disturbing situations for a short time and gives me something else more positive to think about."*

**Name: Amanda Brown**  
**Course: Functional Skills English Level 2**

Amanda is determined to succeed and has fitted her studies around being a key worker, and volunteering in her local community group by helping people with their shopping and prescriptions. Online learning has given some much needed normality, *"It's amazing how quickly things have changed in learning and to adapting to cope with everything really. It gives you a sense of normality as well, you've got things to do at a regular time. You know we are all in the same position and it does make a difference, like keeping in touch with your regular groups."* Amanda spoke of the ongoing support from her tutor in the transition from classroom to online learning, *"He's been absolutely brilliant. He's either there at the end of the telephone, or I can email him and I know I can get an answer either way. He's been really quite encouraging, not just to me but to everybody."* She said she would love to help others achieve similar skills stating, *"I would like to be in a job where I can actually give something back and I can help people, and I can say, do you know what, this really is achievable. I've been there I've done it, you can do it too."*



**What we'll do**

**Vision:**

We anticipate and respond to the needs of individuals, communities, employers and Norfolk's economy through the delivery of outstanding, inspirational and highly flexible learning opportunities.

**Outcomes:**

We will provide learning opportunities that improve people's lives and outcomes, enable people to participate in their communities and support growth and prosperity in Norfolk.

**Priorities:**

We will:

- Ensure our provision meets the needs of Norfolk's economy, individuals, communities and employers
- Empower individuals in underrepresented and disadvantaged communities
- Improve social mobility and break intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes
- Enable adult learners and apprentices to gain the skills and knowledge they need to progress
- Address health inequalities and reduce the need for the intervention of other services.

**How we'll do it**

We will use our external funding effectively to deliver an innovative, responsive and flexible **curriculum** that **responds** directly and robustly to **individual, community and economic need in Norfolk**. We will focus on the **Priorities** outlined on this Plan on a Page. We will target individuals who need to reskill as well as the most vulnerable and isolated in our community, providing access to learning in the classroom and online, to meet the diverse needs of residents.

We will **work closely with** partners, employers and local communities, plus we will **involve** residents, learners and apprentices in the development of our service as a trusted organisation. We will use **data and insight** to effectively shape and **target our provision**. Our targeted marketing will be data driven and take into account the demographic needs of the County.

Improve **social mobility** by raising **aspirations** through the delivery of a comprehensive information, advice and guidance service. We will be ambitious for our learners, **assessing their needs** and ensuring we provide high quality **careers guidance**.

We will **operate within the budget** available from the funding we secure and the income we generate, being financially self-sustaining. We will look for ways to improve our efficiency, be **commercial**, and make the best use of our assets and resources.

We will provide **accessible, high quality learning opportunities**, support, physical and online environments and resources, which give every learner the best chance of success. We will relentlessly focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and be ambitious for our learners, ensuring support needs are quickly identified and responded to.

We will continue to enhance **our systems and processes** to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our service. Everyone will understand the importance of the **data** we capture; to support learners, monitor performance and continuously improve the service.

We will continue to provide strong leadership and governance, including through our Steering Group. We will continue to provide **an inclusive and supportive culture** for both learners and staff, where diversity is valued and people feel safe. **Safeguarding, Prevent and British Values** will continue to be embedded in our ways of working and curriculum.

**How we'll know if we've made a difference**

- Data and feedback demonstrate impact against the service **Priorities**
- Self-assessed in November 2023 as providing an Outstanding service to our learners, apprentices and staff
- Number of learners and apprentices accessing the service is strong and in line with service planning
- We have achieved our contract and income targets
- Operating within our budget
- Number of learners and apprentices who progress into further learning/education or sustainable employment
- Number of learners and apprentices who report improved health and wellbeing
- Evidence of effective implementation of the learner involvement strategy
- Evidence of effective implementation of the employer involvement strategy
- Outstanding inspection outcome at our next Ofsted inspection
- Council Survey evidences continuing improvement in staff wellbeing
- Matrix accreditation for information, advice and guidance maintained.

## Adult Learning Priority Outcomes

This document outlines in detail how Adult Learning's strategic and operational activities will contribute to Norfolk County Council's Strategic Priorities as detailed in the Better Together, For Norfolk Strategy 2021-25.

### A vibrant and sustainable economy

We will:

- Provide extensive progression routes that enable learners to increase their literacy, numeracy and digital skills
- Provide access to a wide range of skills and vocational and qualifications, as well as strong access routes into higher education
- Provide a wide range of employability skills to enable individuals to reskill and secure employment
- Grow our highly successful apprenticeship programme in key sectors to provide sustainable employment and support for employers and the economy
- Deliver community-funded courses that give residents the employability skills they need to get back into work and a range of courses that provide business start-up skills that target residents who aim to start their own business
- Establish construction training hubs where adult learners gain environmentally sustainable construction skills that will enable Norfolk to achieve its net zero targets
- Develop Wensum Lodge as a creative hub and continue to focus on further developing both our physical and online creative offer.

### Better opportunities for children and young people

We will:

- Deliver family learning opportunities that aim to break the intergenerational cycles of poor outcomes and contribute to the levelling up of outcomes for families
- Provide courses that help parents to support their children who have mental health challenges
- Deliver courses that enable families to support their children to be school ready, including targeting families at risk due to county lines
- Deliver early years training and qualifications to support the early years sector
- Provide training and qualifications for teaching assistants, enabling them to provide effective support in schools
- Develop and introduce a new Level 4 Early Intervention Apprenticeship across Norfolk's schools.

### Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives

We will:

- Provide a comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance service

- Maximise the use of support funding to enable residents to access learning, for example, we are able to provide laptops and access to broadband to our learners
- Deliver a comprehensive programme of high quality, tutor-led online learning that enables residents to access learning from home, thus overcoming the barriers to access to learning in a large, rural county like Norfolk
- Deliver an independent living skills programme that enables people with disabilities to access learning and work and to live independent lives
- Provide access to learning opportunities that respond to issues such as healthy eating and lifestyle, budgeting, loneliness, social isolation and mental wellbeing
- Provide learning opportunities for the ageing population, for example, digital skills that enable residents to access services
- Deliver a lipreading programme that supports residents with a hearing loss to continue to lead independent lives
- Offer a programme of creative and personal development courses that are self-financed by the learner, enabling residents to extend their knowledge and grow
- Raise aspirations with our learner awards and involvement programmes.

### **Strong, engaged and inclusive communities**

We will:

- Locate the service's programmes in the heart of Norfolk's communities, both in physical classrooms and through online learning, to enable residents to access teaching and learning in the way that best meets their needs
- Play a key role in rebuilding communities and responding to the rural nature of the county, by supporting individuals and communities to be healthy, connected, safe, resilient and independent
- Provide the digital skills that people need to take control of their lives and participate fully in community life
- Deliver learning programmes that connect and support Norfolk's carers
- Continue to develop training for volunteers, both in specific sectors such as health and social care and sports coaching, and by targeting the wider community through the Volunteering Passport
- Work closely with colleagues, partners and stakeholders to support community development and cohesion
- Champion Safeguarding and Prevent, including the British Values. In particular, the service will continue to work to target domestic violence, child abuse and modern slavery, as we work with residents across Norfolk.

### **A greener, more resilient future**

We will:

- Establish a sustainable construction and environmental skills training programme that enables individuals to upskill, retrain or reskill and that responds to existing and future skills gaps in the construction industry in Norfolk
- Establish and resource construction skills training hubs, dedicated to adult learners, initially in Norwich and King's Lynn, with a strong emphasis on Norfolk's net zero aspirations through an environmentally sustainable curriculum

## Appendix F

- Through the success of the two initial hubs, secure additional funding to enable the development of further hubs in other areas of the county
- Develop extensive progression routes into employment in the construction industry, through an innovative and progressive curriculum that directly contributes to Norfolk's economy and the decarbonisation agenda.

## How Adult Learning responds to the gender pay gap

- Adult Learning provides a wide range of opportunities for residents to engage with learning, gain new knowledge and skills and progress on to qualifications and apprenticeships, with 9,000 learner registrations in the 2020/21 academic year.
- Data on the national gender pay gap reveals that there are significant differences in the gender pay gap by age:
  - For age groups under 40, the gender pay gap for full-time employees is 3% or below
  - For age groups 40-49 and older, the gender pay gap is much higher, at approximately 12%.

Adult Learning courses are open to all adults age 19+, but the service is successfully reaching residents in the 40+ age group:

- On community courses, which provide first steps back into learning, 73% of learners are age 40+.
  - 45% of learners on qualification programmes are age 40+ and a quarter in the 31+ age range.
- The service had a high proportion of female learners, in 2020/21:
    - 84% of registrations on qualification programmes
    - 73% of registrations on community learning
    - 60% of registrations on apprenticeships.

National data shows that women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full time jobs have lower hourly pay (although in part-time roles women earn more than men – however fewer men work part-time so the median hourly wage for women is lower than men). The service works extensively with learners to provide foundation skills, such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills and has put in place robust progression pathways, so that learners can get the qualifications they need to progress into higher paid, full time roles.

Hourly pay excluding overtime, median, April 2018 (Share of employees)	Men	Women	Pay gap
Full-time	£14.81 (85% of men)	£13.54 (58% of women)	+8.6% $\{=(14.81-13.54)/14.81\}$
Part-time	£9.07 (15% of men)	£9.47 (42% of women)	-4.4% $\{=(9.07-9.47)/9.07\}$
All	£14.00 (100% of men)	£11.50 (100% of women)	+17.9% $\{=(14.00-11.50)/14.00\}$

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandwork/inghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2021>

## Examples of how Adult Learning is responding to the gender pay gap

- Through the service's new construction curriculum, introduced in January 2022 with an initial cohort of 121 learners, the service is focusing on increasing female take up. Currently 33% (40) of our first cohort of **Construction** learners are female – and this compares well with 11% female employment in the industry. The current pay gap for construction operatives is 23%. By providing skills and qualifications, the service aims to address this issue so that it both increases the proportion of female construction workers and our female learners will secure better paid jobs in the industry.



- The pay gap in accountancy for financial accounts managers is 25% - Adult Learning's strong **Accountancy** programme, from entry to Level 4, has 335 learners in the current academic year. 78% (261 learners) are female and (74) 22% are male. The service's aim is to support learners into full time, well-paid professional roles in the Accountancy industry.
- All new **Fire fighters** at Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) now take the apprenticeship route, and over the last 3 years, while we have been delivering this apprenticeship, there has been a 33% increase in female firefighter recruitment. In the current academic year, we have 26 NFRS apprentices, with 19 (73%) male and 7 (27%) female.
- Adult Learning's flexible approach to course delivery makes learning accessible to a wider range of residents, for example, on our **Adult Care** worker programme, we record workshops so that learners can watch a session if they are unable to attend or if they wish to revisit it.
- We take positive action to ensure equality of outcomes by closely monitoring achievement rates between male and female learners.

# Cabinet

Item No: 9

**Report Title: Highway Parish Partnership Schemes 2022-23**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Wilby** (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: 21 July 2021**

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

We established the Parish Partnership scheme to give local communities the opportunity to directly influence the programme of small highway improvements. The scheme continues to be extremely popular and officers have assessed 160 recently submitted individual bids from Town and Parish Councils across Norfolk.

This year's programme will see 153 small local schemes, delivering what communities tell us they need. This includes trods, village gateways, bus shelters and vehicle activated signs.

The way the programme is funded, with Town and Parish Councils making a contribution, means that we can more than double the impact of the funding we make available. This year, our proposed contribution of £674,739 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £62,744 to this local investment programme, will support the delivery of schemes totalling £1,493,057.

Whilst the Parish Partnership scheme is not available in those urban areas without Parish or Town Councils, these communities have not been forgotten and there continues to be significant investment in these important areas. This includes the investment we are making in Norwich as part of the Transforming Cities Fund and in Great Yarmouth with the 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing under construction.

## **Recommendations:**

- 1. To approve the 121 local schemes listed in Appendix B for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23.**
- 2. To approve the 32 vehicle activated sign schemes listed in Appendix C for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23, subject to securing funding from the Safety Camera Partnership.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1 The Parish Partnership scheme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for local highway improvements, with the County Council funding up to 50% of bid costs. The key benefits of the scheme are that it:
  - Delivers local priorities identified by local people;
  - Draws in additional funding for small scale highway improvements, enabling us to collectively deliver more;
  - Gives local communities an opportunity to directly influence the improvements in their local area.
- 1.2 The programme continues to be well received by Parish and Town Councils, Local Members and local communities. Information about the number of bids received through the scheme over the past seven years is set out in Appendix D, and information about the number and value of these bids by district is in Appendix E. These highlight the good spread across Norfolk.
- 1.3 Invitation letters for 2022/23 bids were sent out in June 2021 with a closing date of 6 December 2021 (Appendix A), giving bidders good time to develop their proposals.
- 1.4 160 bids were submitted from Town & Parish Councils for 2022/23, including 14 bids from Parishes who had not submitted before. Four bids were withdrawn as these will now be funded by the new Road Safety Community Fund. A further three bids were assessed and considered to not to be viable, deliverable or were outside the scope of the scheme. The relevant Parish Councils have been informed.
- 1.5 All bids have been assessed against the following factors:
  - Contribution to Local Transport Plan objectives;
  - Outcome for the local community;
  - Value for money;
  - Compliance with regulations.

## **2. Proposal**

### **2.1 Small highway improvements**

2.1.1 153 bids for small highway improvements have been assessed and are considered to be viable and deliverable. It is proposed that all 153 of these bids are allocated funding and added to the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23. The total funding contribution from the County Council needed to deliver these schemes is £674,739.

2.1.2 A full list of the 153 bids is included at Appendix B, with first time bidders shaded yellow. The most popular bids are for:

- Village gateways (24);
- Trods (28) - a simplified, lower cost alternative to footways (often constructed using recycled road surface material);
- Bus shelters (20);
- Part-time advisory 20mph speed limit with flashing school warning lights outside schools (13).

### **2.2 Vehicle activated signs (VAS)**

2.2.1 32 bids were received for SAM2. These are mobile VAS units which flash vehicle speed as a reminder to the driver. The SAM2 would be purchased under the scheme, and subsequently owned and maintained by the relevant Town or Parish Council.

2.2.2 For these 32 bids, officers have submitted a bid for funding of £62,744 from the Safety Camera Partnership to enable them to be delivered without any direct County Council funding. On that basis, it is proposed to add all 32 of these schemes onto the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23. A full list of these bids is included at Appendix C.

## **3. Impact of the Proposal**

3.1 A County Council contribution £674,739 and a Safety Camera Partnership contribution of £62,744, along with funding from Town and Parish Councils, will enable a programme of local works totalling £1,493,057 to be delivered.

## **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

4.1 The Parish Partnership scheme enables delivery of schemes which have been identified as important by local communities.

4.2 The contribution from Town and Parish Council's and the Safety Camera Partnership means that we can deliver more schemes on the ground. In addition, where local communities support lower cost solutions, there is a

positive impact on the wider highway's improvement programme. For example, over the last five years, the implementation of trods has enabled 36 considerably more expensive footway schemes to be removed from the forward list of future potential (but unfunded) schemes.

## **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 It could be decided to reduce the County Council's contribution to the Parish Partnership Programme, or the Council could decide to not utilise highways funding to enable all the assessed bids to progress. In which case, a set of additional criteria would need to be developed to enable the current list of proposed schemes for 2022/23 to be re-assessed. Neither of these options are recommended.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Members are considering the approval of a capital allocation of £675,000 for Parish Partnership schemes in 2022/23, under the Highways Capital Programme paper at the 7<sup>th</sup> March Cabinet meeting. The proposed County Council contribution to the Parish Partnership schemes is £674,739.

## **7. Resource Implications**

- 7.1 **Staff:** There are no staffing implications and the programme can be delivered within existing staff resource.
- 7.2 **Property:** None of the proposed schemes involve land acquisition.
- 7.3 **IT:** None.

## **8. Other Implications**

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** The legal implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process. None of the proposed schemes will require legal orders to deliver. The power to undertake such arrangements with Parish and Town councils falls within the general power of competence and the County's statutory role as highway authority.
- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** The Human Rights implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** An equality impact assessment has been undertaken on this proposal, to examine how the proposal is likely to impact on people with protected characteristics.

The assessment has identified that the proposal should promote equality for people with protected characteristics, particularly older and disabled people and parents/younger people. This is because the scheme enables Town and Parish Councils to bid for money for improvements to the highways in their local area, which includes improvements that promote accessibility and inclusion, such as bus shelters, vehicle activated speed warning signs and road markings near schools.

Careful planning takes place to ensure that new schemes are implemented correctly and take account of issues within the local area. The bidding process is accessible and inclusive, and it is a criteria of the process, that any successful bid must be accessible for disabled people. This enables the scheme to play its part in making Norfolk an accessible county – a priority identified in Together, for Norfolk, the Council’s business plan.

**8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): N/A**

**8.5 Health and Safety implications:** The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

**8.6 Sustainability implications:** Many of the schemes will have a positive contribution to sustainability, by encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling.

**8.7 Any Other Implications: None.**

## **9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

9.1 In previous years, the Safety Camera Partnership (SCP) has agreed to contribute funding towards the SAM2 bids. However, funding for 2022/23 is not guaranteed. The SCP will be considering the funding ask for SAM2 Parish Partnership bids at their next meeting. If the Council’s bid is not accepted, then alternative funding sources for this element will need to be explored.

## **10. Select Committee Comments**

10.1 N/A

## **11. Recommendations**

- 1. To approve the 121 local schemes listed in Appendix B for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23.**
- 2. To approve the 32 vehicle activated sign schemes listed in Appendix C for inclusion in the Parish Partnership Programme for 2022/23, subject to securing funding from the Safety Camera Partnership.**

## 12. Background Papers

12.1 Highway Parish Partnership Schemes 2021-22 [Report](#) to Cabinet committee 8 March 2021

12.2 Highway Capital Programme 2021/22/23/24 and Transport Asset Management Plan [Report](#) to Cabinet 8 March 2021

### Officer Contact

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

**Officer name: Kevin Townly**

**Telephone no.: 01603 222627**

**Email: [kevin.townly@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.townly@norfolk.gov.uk)**



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

cc Local Members

Your Ref:	My Ref:	HI/12/GEN/DH/KT
Date: June 2021	Tel No.:	0344 800 8020
	Email:	martin.wilby@norfolk.gov.uk

## From the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport

Dear Sir/Madam

### Delivering local highway improvements in partnership with Town and Parish Councils

I am delighted to inform you that due to the success of working in partnership with Parish/Town Councils for the last eight years the Parish Partnership Scheme Initiative will again be repeated in the financial year 2022/23. Further supporting information, including possible funding sources for your share of the bid, is available on our website (click on [this link](#)).

The County Council has again provisionally allocated £300,000 on a 50/50 basis (There is an upper limit on Norfolk County Council funding support of £25,000 per bid) to fund schemes put forward by Town and Parish Councils to deliver projects that are priorities for local communities. We are particularly keen to encourage and support first-time bids.

This letter provides more information on the process, invites you to submit bids, and explains how the County Council can support you in developing your ideas. The closing date will be the 10 December 2021. Please contact your local Highway Engineer based at the local Area Office for agreement and any advice in developing your ideas, especially around the practicalities and cost estimates.

Once all bids have been received, we will assess them and inform you of our decision in March 2022 following approval by the Norfolk County Council Cabinet.

*Continued .../*

To encourage bids from Town and Parish Councils with annual incomes (precepts plus any another income) below £2,000, we are offering the following support;

- 75% County Council contribution
- £5,000 maximum bid value
- Offer available only once to any bidder

We will also accept bids from unparished County Council Wards. Such Wards can always opt to become a formal Parish Council, but otherwise we are offering support on the basis that the Ward raises the required 50% funding. Kings Lynn Borough Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norwich City Council have kindly indicated their willingness to consider proposed schemes and potential funding for them. Further details are in the relevant committee report on our website (click on [this link](#)).

### What sort of schemes would be acceptable?

- Small lengths of formal footway
- Trods (a simplified and low-cost footway),
- Improved crossing facilities
- Improvements to Public Rights of Way.
- Flashing signs to tackle speeding. We would encourage you to consider Speed Awareness Mobile Signs (SAM2) - which flash up the driver's actual speed rather than fixed signs (VAS) - which flash up the speed limit. The number of VAS in Norfolk has grown, and checks show that speed reduction benefits can be minimal. Whilst we will still consider bids for fixed VAS, we will need to be satisfied that they will be effective in reducing speed. We consider that SAM2 mobile signs, which are moved around on an agreed rota, are better at reducing speed; **SAM2 can be jointly purchased with neighbouring Parishes and would be owned and maintained by the Parish/Town Council.** Please note this type of scheme may be dependent upon NCC securing additional funding from the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership
- Part-time 20mph signs with flashing warning lights, outside schools. The County Council generally supports these as they do show a moderate reduction in average speeds during peak times.
- "Keep Clear" carriageway markings outside schools. Applications will be considered for new school keep clear carriageway markings (which must be supported by the local school) however, these will not be enforceable without a Traffic Regulation Order which is outside the scope of the Parish Partnership Scheme. If you wish to enforce the Order, it would have to be wholly funded by the Parish or the Local Member.

New Bus Shelter or Shelter Lighting. A copy of Norfolk County Councils guidance for new bus shelters is available on our web site (click on [this link](#)). **Any new shelter would be owned and maintained by the Parish/Town Council.**

Schemes can be within or immediately adjacent to the highway. If they are off highway the future responsibility for the maintenance will fall to the Parish or Town Council.

Schemes should be self-contained and not require other schemes or works to make them effective.

Schemes that support the Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives will have a higher priority for funding. The LTP can be found on our website (click on [this link](#)).

With the County Council's agreement Parishes can employ private contractors to deliver schemes. However, any works on the highway would be subject to an agreed programme, inspection on completion, and the contractor having £10m public liability insurance.

### **Schemes which will not be considered**

- Bids for minor traffic management changes which require a Traffic Regulation Order for example:-
  - Speed Limits
  - Waiting restrictions
  - Weight restrictions
- Bids for installation of low-energy LED lighting in streetlights to help cut energy bills and maintenance.
- Mirrors in the highway
- Protection of private land from travellers

### **Information you must include in your bid**

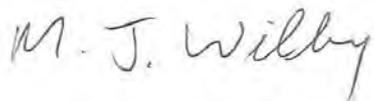
- The objective of the scheme
- Details of the scheme, its cost and your contribution.
- A plan/map of the extents of the scheme
- Who, and how many people will benefit.
- Local support, particularly from your local Member, frontagers and land owners.
- For 'off highway' schemes, your proposals for future maintenance.

Please find a simple bid application form attached to this letter. When assessing your bid, we will consider the points above, but also:

- The potential for casualty reduction.
- Any ongoing maintenance costs for the County Council.

Your bids should be emailed to [ppschemas@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:ppschemas@norfolk.gov.uk) (or posted for the attention of the County Programme Engineer, Linda McDermott, at the above address). If you need further information on the bid process please contact Linda, by email or by phoning 01603 228905. For advice on the scheme practicalities and/or likely costs, please contact your local Highway Engineer.

Yours sincerely



Martin Wilby  
Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport

**Parish Partnership bid application form**

<b>Fund applied for:</b>	Parish Partnership Fund		
<b>Applicant details:</b>			
<b>Submitted by/contact:</b>			
<b>Phone Number:</b>			
<b>Email:</b>			
<b>Sum applied for:</b>			
<b>Total project cost:</b>			
<b>Project title:</b>			
<b>Project detail:</b> (please include a plan/map of the extents of the scheme):			
<b>plan/map attached:</b>	Yes / No		
<b>Any other funding:</b>			
<b>Parish Income:</b>	<b>Precept</b>	<b>Other Income</b>	<b>Total Yearly Income</b>
<b>Reason for works:</b>			
<b>Any relevant supporting documents (e.g. supportive correspondence) :</b>			
<b>Discussed with:</b>			

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Value of Works</b>
Cromer	Adams	Feasibility	£4,000
Cromer	Adams	Feasibility	£3,500
Drayton	Adams	Surfacing	£34,200
Thorpe Market	Adams	Bus shelter	£4,172
Fritton with St Olaves	Annison	Trod	£6,000
Kettlestone	Aquarone	Bus shelter	£15,100
Little Snoring	Aquarone	Footway	£3,000
Stibbard	Aquarone	Bus shelter	£5,492
Wood Norton	Aquarone	Village Gateways	£3,444
Harling	Askew	Village Gateways	£2,580
Kenninghall	Askew	Footway	£9,500
Winterton	Bensly	Footway	£5,011
Cringleford	Bills	Village Gateways	£3,300
Costessey	Blundall	Bus Shelter	£5,130
Swanton Morley	Borrett	Trod	£30,500
Watton	Bowes	Lights	£2,400
Watton	Bowes	Trod	£14,200
Heacham	Chenery	Footway	£15,000
Sedgeford	Chenery	Trod	£7,000
Syderstone	Chenery	Trod	£20,000
Swaffham	Colman	Surfacing	£6,000
King's Lynn	Colwell	Bus shelter	£8,595
Garvestone	Connolly	20mph Wig wags	£7,054
Great Ellingham	Connolly	Village Gateways	£12,500
Saham Toney	Connolly	Surfacing	£39,536
Whinburgh	Connolly	Trod	£14,500
Blakeney	Dalby	Surfacing	£10,000
Blakeney	Dalby	Trod	£20,000

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Value of Works</b>
Blakeney	Dalby	Signs	£13,000
Stody	Dalby	Village Gateways	£3,500
Walsingham	Dalby	Bus Shelter	£9,170
Snettisham	Dark	Trod	£50,000
North Wootton	Daubney	Village Gateways	£4,000
Roydon	Daubney	Village Gateways	£5,138
Emneth	Dawson	Bus shelter	£4,995
Marshland St James	Dawson	Surfacing	£6,000
Upwell	Dawson	Trod	£22,500
Welney	Dawson	Village Gateways	£7,231
Welney	Dawson	Bus Shelter	£8,050
Hingham	Dewsbury	Bus shelter	£12,150
Wicklewood	Dewsbury	Bus shelter	£3,500
Ashmanbaugh	Dixon	Village Gateways	£5,416
Hoveton	Dixon	Bus shelter	£4,873
Winfarthing	Duffin	20mph Wig wags	£7,054
Holme Hale	Eagle	Village Gateways	£3,000
Mundford	Eagle	Kerbing	£7,200
South Pickenham	Eagle	Bench	£711
Weeting	Eagle	Trod	£6,500
East Carleton	Elmer	Signs	£1,450
Swainsthorpe	Elmer	Village Gateways	£2,000
Swardeston	Elmer	Trod	£15,500
Fakenham	Fitzpatrick	Footway	£23,550
Pudding Norton	Fitzpatrick	Village Gateways	£3,000
Martham	Grant	20mph Wig wags	£4,002
Mautby	Grant	Bus Shelter	£10,000
Rollesby	Grant	Bus Shelter	£6,064

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Value of Works</b>
Brancaster	Jamieson	Surfacing	£12,500
Holme next the sea	Jamieson	Trod	£2,000
Ringstead	Jamieson	Village Gateways	£2,194
Titchwell	Jamieson	Village Gateways	£5,000
Thetford	Jermy	trod	£30,000
King's Lynn	Kemp	Bus shelter	£4,350
West Winch	Kemp	Village Gateways	£2,094
Diss	Kiddie	PROW	£9,356
Beeston with Bittering	Kiddle-Morris	20mph Wig Wags	£7,054
Great Dunham	Kiddle-Morris	Bus shelter	£3,914
Litcham	Kiddle-Morris	Trod	£6,000
Terrington St Clement	Kirk	Trod	£35,000
Tilney All Saints	Kirk	VAS	£5,172
Walpole Cross Keys	Kirk	Village Gateways	£1,800
Walpole Highway	Kirk	Village Gateways	£8,670
West Walton	Kirk	Surfacing	£49,435
Fincham	Long	Trod	£33,539
Runcton Holme	Long	20mph Wig Wags	£6,054
Terrington St John	Long	Traffic calming	£22,500
Terrington St John	Long	Trod	£23,600
Watlington	Long	Trod	£3,100
Watlington	Long	PROW	£12,810
Wiggenhall St Germans	Long	Footway	£6,900
Alpington	Mason Billig	Footway	£2,348
Claxton	Mason Billig	Signs	£4,239
Mundesley	Maxfield	Traffic Calming	£25,000
Swafeld	Maxfield	Bus shelter	£6,300
Antingham	Maxwell	Lights	£1,500

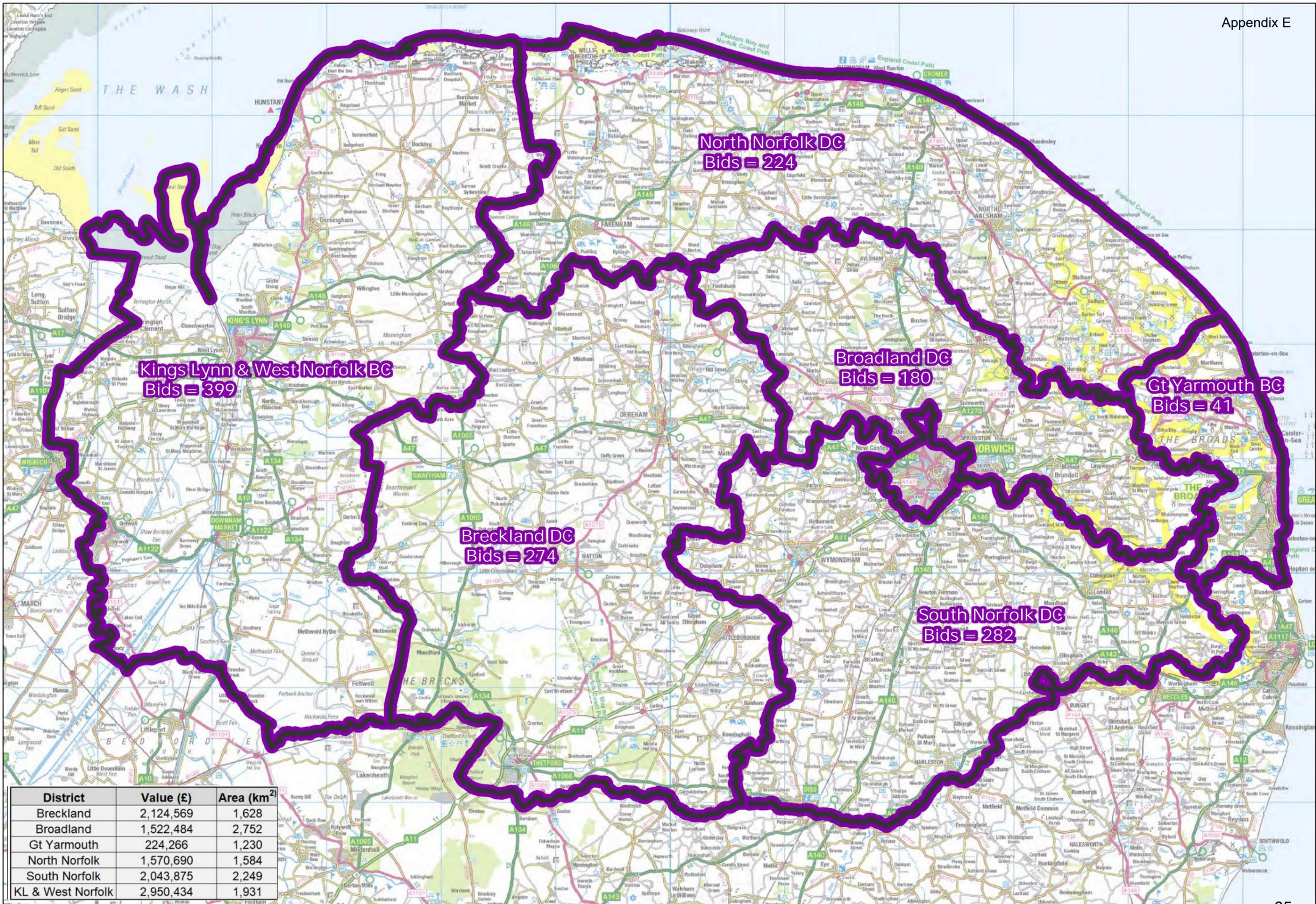
<b>Parish</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Value of Works</b>
East Winch	Moriarty	Trod	£46,086
East Rudham	Morley	20mph Wig Wags	£5,963
Sheringham	Oliver	Feasibility	£8,000
Cawston	Peck	20mph Wig Wags	£11,360
Worstead	Penfold	Trod	£8,000
Worstead	Penfold	Trod	£20,000
Horning	Price	Bench	£790
Blofield	Proctor	VAS	£8,000
Strumpshaw	Proctor	Bus shelter	£4,150
Dereham	Richmond	Bus shelter	£3,373
Dereham	Richmond	Zebra Crossing	£72,000
Blickling	Riley	Village Gateways	£4,000
Buxton with Lamas	Riley	Village Gateways	£1,750
Frettenham	Roper	Bus shelter	£2,775
Hainford	Roper	20mph Wig wags	£7,053
Wymondham	Savage	20mph Wig wags	£4,872
North Walsham	Shires	Trod	£48,984
Burgh Castle	Smith	Verge	£1,300
Earsham	Stone	20mph Wig Wags	£2,062
Hedenham	Stone	Bus Shelter	£4,518
Thurlton	Stone	Footway	£24,847
Wheatacre/ Burgh St Peter	Stone	Village Gateways	£1,962
Wortwell	Stone	Bench	£575
Hockwold cum Wilton	Storey	20mph Wig Wags	£4,051
Southery	Storey	Trod	£24,750
Stoke Ferry	Storey	Signs	£280
Long Stratton	Thomas	20mph Wig wags	£7,054
Wacton	Thomas	PROW	£2,880

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Scheme Type</b>	<b>Value of Works</b>
Bramerton	Thomson	Trod	£48,000
Poringland	Thomson	VAS	£20,493
Cley next the Sea	Vardy	Village Gateways	£4,483
Holt	Vardy	Signs	£8,610
Weybourne	Vardy	Village Gateways	£2,134
Old Catton	Vincent	Trod	£5,500
Coltishall	Whymark	20mph Wig Wags	£6,054
Salhouse	Whymark	Signs	£750
Salhouse	Whymark	Trod	£5,043
Salhouse	Whymark	Trod	£48,020
Woodbastwick	Whymark	Signs	£1,150
All Non-SAM2 bid		<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,375,369</b>
NCC Contribution			<b>£674,739</b>
Parish/Town Contribution			<b>£700,630</b>

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works
Quidenham	Askew	SAM2	£6,678
Mattishall	Borrett	SAM2	£3,050
Watton	Bowes	SAM2	£3,150
Bircham	Chenery	SAM2	£4,000
Harpley	Chenery	SAM2	£4,000
Shipdham	Connolly	SAM2	£3,050
Yaxham	Connolly	SAM2	£3,239
Hillington	Dark	SAM2	£4,000
North Wootton	Daubney	SAM2	£4,806
South Wootton	Daubney	SAM2	£3,528
Welney	Dawson	SAM2	£3,378
Scottow	Dixon	SAM2	£0
Tunstead	Dixon	SAM2	£16,705
Tivetshall	Duffin	SAM2	£3,150
Beachamwell	Eagle	SAM2	£3,231
Gooderstone	Eagle	SAM2	£3,050
Shropham	Eagle	SAM2	£3,150
Stokesby	Grant	SAM2	£3,328
Hellesdon	Gurney	SAM2	£6,400
Beighton	Hempsall	SAM2	£3,535
Holme next the sea	Jamieson	SAM2	£3,700
Burnham Market	Jamieson	SAM2	£3,800
Diss	Kiddie	SAM2	£3,050
Walpole	Kirk	SAM2	£3,800
Cantley	Proctor	SAM2	£3,428
Witton and Ridlington	Shires	SAM2	£3,930
Feltwell	Storey	SAM2	£3,330
Wretton	Storey	SAM2	£3,200
Saxlingham Nethergate	Thomas	SAM2	£393
Tasburgh	Thomas	SAM2	£3,350
Coltishall	Whymark	SAM2	£4,730
Rackheath	Whymark	SAM2	£3,350
<b>Full cost of SAM2 Schemes</b>			<b>£117,689</b>
<b>Proposed SCP contribution with remaining by Parish/Town</b>			<b>£62,744</b>







District	Value (£)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Breckland	2,124,569	1,628
Broadland	1,522,484	2,752
Gt Yarmouth	224,266	1,230
North Norfolk	1,570,690	1,584
South Norfolk	2,043,875	2,249
KL & West Norfolk	2,950,434	1,931

Number of Parish Partnership Bids to NCC per District, as of 3rd February 2022

# Cabinet

Item No: 10

**Report Title: Highways Capital Programme 2022/23/24 and Transport Asset Management Plan**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Wilby (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)**

**Responsible Director: Tom McCabe - Executive Director for Community & Environmental Services**

**Is this a Key Decision? Yes**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 21 July 2021**

## **Introduction from Cabinet Member**

Highway infrastructure is important for our growing economy as we seek to manage, maintain & develop Norfolk's highway network, facilitate major development and deliver effective services to support sustainable growth and quality of life to residents and businesses.

It supports the Council's business plan, Together, For Norfolk, and its strategy 'Better Together for Norfolk' 2021-25. The Highways Capital Programme contributes directly to the strategic priorities of:

- A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy;
- Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities; and
- A Greener, More Resilient Future.

Key outcomes for the Highway Capital Programme are:-

- A well-managed highway network that enables everyone to travel the county freely and easily; and  
A strong infrastructure for our growing economy.

The programme also helps implement the Council's Strategic Delivery Infrastructure Plan.

## Executive Summary

This report summarises the three-year settlement following the Governments October 2021 budget and the proposed allocations for 2022/23/24/25. It also includes the successful progression of the 3rd River Crossing in Great Yarmouth, the Transforming Cities Fund in the Greater Norwich Area and Long Stratton Bypass. In recent years, competitive bids have already secured significant funding from the Local Growth Fund (LGF), via the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP), as well as the Department for Transport's (DfT) "Transforming Cities Fund" for improvements, and the DfT "Challenge" and "Incentive" funds for maintenance, and Active Travel for Walking and Cycling. These funds are progressively replacing "needs based" allocations.

The recommended allocations for 2022/23, based on the expected government settlement, are set out in paragraphs 1.3.3, 1:3.4 and Appendix A of this report. At the time of writing, the actual allocations from the DfT are unknown.

## Recommendations:

- 1. Approve the Highways Capital Programme including the proposed draft allocations and programme for 2022/23 and indicative allocations for 2023/24/25 (as set out in Appendices A, B and C).**
- 2. Approve the proposals for the £10m Highway Maintenance Fund (as set out in Appendix D).**
- 3. Approve the proposals for the Road Safety Community Fund (as set out in Appendices E and F).**
- 4. Approve the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) for 2022/23 to 2026/27.**

## 1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. The Highways Capital Programme helps to deliver corporate objectives from our Council's Strategy "Better Together for Norfolk" 2021-25 and Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2. **Local Transport Plan**
  - 1.2.1. The County Council adopted its third Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026 for Norfolk, Connecting Norfolk, in 2011. In 2015, Elected Members agreed a roll-forward of the LTP Implementation Plan and, in November 2021, the Council adopted a revised Local Transport Plan strategy and committed to the development of an implementation plan.
  - 1.2.2. Until the implementation plan is adopted, the current LTP remains the LTP3 and by virtue of s108(3B) of the Transport Act 2000, the Council is required to have regard to LTP3 in complying with its duty under s108(b) of the Act. That does not negate the need for the Council also to 'carry out their functions so as to implement' the policies contained within LTP4 in accordance with s108(1)(b) of the Act. As such an appropriate level of weight is given to the LTP4 strategy in decision-making by the Council.

1.2.3. LTP3 has six main aims:

1. Managing and maintaining the transport network
2. Delivering sustainable growth
3. Enhancing strategic connections
4. Improving accessibility
5. Reducing transport emissions
6. Improving road safety

1.2.4. LTP4 strategy has the following aims:

- 1 Embracing the Future
- 2 Delivering a Sustainable Norfolk
- 3 Enhancing Connectivity
- 4 Enhancing Norfolk's Quality of Life
- 5 Increasing Accessibility
- 6 Improving Transport Safety
- 7 A Well Managed and Maintained Transport Network

1.2.5. In July 2019 Transport East, the Sub-national Transport Body covering Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock submitted its regional evidence base to government containing its priorities for large local major road schemes (those above £50m) and schemes on the MRN (typically £20-50m). Transport East's priorities included the following in Norfolk:

- Norwich Western Link (major);
- A140 Long Stratton Bypass (MRN);
- A10 West Winch Housing Access Road (MRN);
- A47/A17 Pullover Junction King's Lynn (MRN).

1.2.6. DfT fed back on these schemes and allocated further development funding for the A140 Long Stratton Bypass to progress to Outline Business Case (OBC) stage. This has now been completed and the OBC submitted to DfT in January 2021. The Norwich Western Link similarly received funding to progress to OBC. A Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for West Winch Housing Access Road was submitted to government in 2021. We are yet to receive a decision about progression to OBC. Work has commenced, in conjunction with National Highways, on Pullover Junction to take it towards SOBC. There is more detail on these projects in section 2.5 of this report.

1.2.7. It should be noted that, on 18 January 2022, DfT wrote to Transport East and local authorities, stating "the Spending Review has challenged Ministers to make choices and to focus on key departmental priorities. As a result, it is likely that we will not have sufficient funding to continue to fund all the schemes currently in the programme to the current scale or timing. In addition, since the programme was set up in 2019 there have been changes to Government policy around transport investment, analytical requirements especially on carbon impacts, the impact of new forecasts and of course the effects of Covid on

delivery and future demand. It is therefore right that we now take the opportunity to review the programme.

1.2.8. “As a first step we would like to give all scheme promoters and the relevant STBs the option to reconsider the schemes in the current programme.... The starting point for the review is that any scheme that already has approval at Outline Business Case stage will not be considered for removal unless the LA/STB decides otherwise or unless the case for the scheme changes significantly.”

1.2.9. At the time of writing this review has not been completed. Of the Norfolk schemes in this programme:

- Long Stratton Bypass has OBC approval
- Norwich Western Link OBC submitted, awaiting approval
- West Winch SOBC submitted, awaiting approval
- Pullover, pre-SOBC completed, commenced work on SOBC

### 1.3. **Funding**

1.3.1. National funding levels from the Department for Transport (DfT) for both Structural Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block grants was announced in the three-spending review announced in October 2021. Whilst the Government stated the size of several grants for Local Highway Authorities, they are yet to confirm the individual allocations for each authority. Therefore, this report is based upon similar levels to the 2021/22 allocation.

1.3.2. The Integrated Transport budget is funded from DfT allocations, but more significantly we look to other sources of funding, such as Transforming Cities and District funded Town Deals as well as funding from developers.

1.3.3. In planning the 2022/23/24 programme, we have made assumptions around the availability and success in achieving future competitive based funding opportunities. Where the funding source has not been confirmed, these are detailed with the comments against the schemes in Appendix C.

1.3.4. Members should note that in addition to DfT Integrated Transport funding, schemes of this type are also delivered from various funding sources including developer funding (Section 106, CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy); one-off bidding rounds; National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF); and Local Growth Fund (LGF). The total value of this programme is estimated at some £59.007m, which considerably exceeds the proposed LTP allocation of £1.977m.

1.3.5. The team continue to explore potential funding opportunities and facilitate the preparation and submission of bids that support County Council priorities and objectives. This maximises the opportunity to seek and secure additional funding for the County.

1.3.6. The highways capital programme is actively managed throughout the year to aim for full delivery within the allocated budget. Schemes are planned at the start of the year but may be delayed for a variety of reasons e.g., planning

consent or public consultation. When it is identified that a scheme may be delayed, then other schemes will be planned and progressed to ensure delivery of the overall programme and the original schemes will be included later.

## **2. Proposals**

### **2.1. Structural Maintenance and Bridge Strengthening**

- 2.1.1. It is recognised that the existing level of funding makes the maintenance of current condition challenging, but our planned interventions have had a generally positive outcome over the years, although overall due to current funding levels the maintenance backlog has increased in recent years.
- 2.1.2. The overall highway asset backlog in April 2021 is £47.9m. This is an increase compared with £45.1m in 2019/20 and £36.4m in 2018/19 and reflects the current funding levels from government.
- 2.1.3. The Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy, together with targets, has been reviewed, revised, and was considered by the July 2019 Infrastructure and Development Select Committee. It has been monitored by the committee as part of the Highway and Transport Network Performance Report in 2020 and 2021.
- 2.1.4. The Strategy will be reviewed later this year by Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, as part of the annual Highway Transport Performance Report, when the full details of the spending review for the 3-year period will be known.
- 2.1.5. Construction industry inflation indices are heavily based on energy and oil derived products such as asphalt, bitumen, and concrete. These inflation indices are likely to be in the region of 10-15% in the new financial year which will diminish the Council's purchasing power. Indications are that the DfT allocations will not include an allowance for inflation.
- 2.1.6. To help with the challenge of managing the asset we will continue to look for opportunities for additional funds as they become available over and above the DfT allocations.
- 2.1.7. **Additional £10m investment in highway maintenance by the Council**
  - 2.1.7.1. Last summer, the County Council announced an additional £10m investment into highway maintenance over the next four years.
  - 2.1.7.2. Proposals for 2021-22 were agreed at Cabinet on 6 September 2021. Four resurfacing schemes were announced as part of an £0.5m allocation to resurfacing and schemes at A143 Needham, A143 Mundford, A149 Wells, B1354 Hainford will be completed by the end of March 2022.
  - 2.1.7.3. Proposals for 2022-23 and future years are summarised in Appendix D. The additional funding is funding the Council resurfacing programme. This includes £2m on our A road network including the A1066 at Roydon, A1151 Wroxham Road, Spowston, A1075 Norwich Road Thetford, B1108 Colney, B1112

Methwold, B1146 Hoe, Paston Road and Beach Road in Mundesley, Boniface Close in Norwich, and Gorleston High Road. We are proposing to spend more in 2022/23 to maximise the value of the investment.

2.1.8. Details of the proposed allocation of the structural maintenance and bridges budget for 2022-23 can be found in Appendix B, and distribution of the additional Council investment in Appendix D.

## 2.2. **Carrow Bridge, Norwich**

2.2.1. In last year's Highway Capital Report, the need to establish a longer-term solution for Carrow Bridge was highlighted. Discussions are ongoing with key partners, including the Broads Authority, to agree short-term and longer-term options for improvement at this sensitive part of the transport network. The programme of ongoing maintenance works continues on a regular basis.

## 2.3. **Active Travel**

2.3.1. In summer 2020, the DfT published 'Gear Change'. This new strategy from government has made clear the ambition of achieving a step change in walking in cycling in the coming years, calling for bold action and a 'once in a generation chance to accelerate active travel'. This includes the vision that cycling, and walking will be the natural first choice and account for half of all journeys in our towns and cities by 2030.

2.3.2. Publication of the DfT Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, gave guidance on the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans. Expressions of interest were requested, and Norfolk received £65,000 to develop a walking and cycling Strategy for Greater Norwich. This has included developing a prioritised network plan for cycling and walking infrastructure improvements based on effectiveness, cost and deliverability, which helped inform the Transforming Cities Funding Bid.

2.3.3. The Council's cycling and walking strategy is now being refreshed to reflect the need for change and importance of Cycling and Walking for health and wellbeing, community resilience, environment, and the economy. We have well developed LCWIP's for Kings Lynn, Great Yarmouth District and Dereham. Through a successful bid to the DfT's Capability Fund we are currently progressing with an LCWIP covering all of Norfolk.

2.3.4. The DfT are currently funding this work through an annual bidding process.

2.3.5. Norfolk received a £1.5m grant from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 2. This is primarily to encourage cycling and walking. Of this £1.2m was for capital projects.

2.3.6. We have delivered an upgraded segregated crossing where National Cycle route 1 crosses the A148 Gaywood Road in Kings Lynn and are currently delivering additional cycling parking across Norfolk.

- 2.3.7. Three of the larger schemes in Broadland and Norwich are still going through a consultation process, with construction extended into 2022-23.
- 2.3.8. The £300,000 revenue element of the Tranche 2 funding will build vital capacity to implement the Active Travel programme, including increased community engagement, consultation and behavior change initiatives. The insight led approach created through the revenue funding will enable us to evidence the plans we intend to resource in future iterations of the Active Travel Fund. It has also allowed us to expand our employee engagement through Mobilityways and pilot School Streets work with Sustrans.
- 2.3.9. We have also been successful in continuing and expanding our existing Active Travel Programme. The Pushing Ahead Access Fund programme, promoting Active Travel in Norwich and Great Yarmouth, was successful in an application to continue until December 2021. This provided a bike loan scheme, employee engagement and set up of community cycle hubs. We also were successful in a £285,000 project to promote e cycles across Norfolk. This programme will continue across 2022 with an e-bike loan offer already live in North Norfolk and we are planning to extend the Beryl Hire e-bike scheme to Wymondham, Hethersett and Drayton.
- 2.3.10. Active Travel England (ATE) announced in 2020, will be the inspectorate and funding body in the future. It will be responsible for driving up the standards of cycling and walking infrastructure and managing the national active travel budget, awarding funding for projects that improve both health and air quality.
- 2.3.11. Design guidance LTN 1/20 was issued in July 2020 to provide guidance to local authorities on delivering high quality, cycle infrastructure. It is expected that any bids will be informed by this.
- 2.3.12. In June 2021 we were invited by the DfT to bid for further capital funding for cycling and walking infrastructure schemes to be delivered in 2022/23.
- 2.3.13. Criteria set by government broadly follows that of phase 2, with the added requirement that all schemes put forward must be aligned with local cycling and walking infrastructure plans (LCWIP).
- 2.3.14. The Council's bid was submitted to the DfT on 6 August 2021. It comprises 11 schemes totaling £2.465m.
- 2.3.15. We still await the outcome of the bid and ATE have asked to undertake a design review of some of the schemes in our bid. The schemes have not been added to the Highway Capital Programme, but will be, pending a successful announcement of the award.

## 2.4. **Integrated Transport**

- 2.4.1. Integrated Transport funding covers all expenditure on new infrastructure such as improvements at bus interchanges and rail stations, local safety schemes, pedestrian crossings, footways, traffic management, route and junction improvements and cycle paths. It used to be largely funded by the DfT

Integrated Transport block grant. It is now heavily supplemented by other funding sources such as specific funding for Majors, Community Investment Levy, and Housing Infrastructure Fund.

- 2.4.2. Budget summaries for the proposed programme is detailed in Appendix A. Individual schemes are detailed in Appendix C.
- 2.4.3. The proposed allocation from the LTP grant is £1.977m. This is allocated for mainly low-cost improvement schemes including the parish partnership programme, and contributions to developing major schemes.
- 2.4.4. **Local Safety Schemes (LSS)**
  - 2.4.4.1. The 1988 Road Traffic Act places a statutory duty on local authorities to study road collisions, and to reduce and prevent them. Improving road safety is also one of six strategic aims within the LTP.
  - 2.4.4.2. LSS proposals enter the capital programme following an evaluation of accident statistics and their potential for casualty reduction. Accident cluster locations are included where the first-year rate of return of the proposed remedial measures exceeds 200%. LSS are treated as a priority due to their positive impact on road safety and casualty reduction.
  - 2.4.4.3. A sample of LSS implemented over recent years has been reviewed, to check whether expected benefits have been delivered. LSS are generally performing as expected and delivering cost benefits in terms of accident reduction savings, based on low-cost measures.
- 2.4.5. **Parish Partnership programme**
  - 2.4.5.1. The Parish Partnership programme began in September 2011, when Parish and Town Councils were invited to submit bids for small highway improvements. The County Council offered to support up to 50% of the cost of schemes. The intention being to ensure that limited funds could be used to meet local community needs, helping promote the developing localism agenda.
  - 2.4.5.2. From 2020/21, it was proposed that annually the Council would support Parish Partnerships with an annual £350,000 allocation.
  - 2.4.5.3. The Safety Camera Partnership in 2021-22 gave £39,117 for Speed Activated Message signs (SAMs) to be purchased and managed by Parishes. We have reviewed the parish bids for 2022/22, (see separate report to March Cabinet) to confirm the continuing level of demand for these signs and a funding bid will be submitted to the Safety Camera Scrutiny Board of £62,744.
  - 2.4.5.4. The fund has been heavily oversubscribed in 2022-23 and to enable the demand to be met we have increased the allocation from the LTP budget on a one-off basis. We are anticipating a match fund of £674,739 for 50% County Council contributions. There is a separate report on the agenda for Cabinet 7 March 2022, covering this in more detail. It will enable a total programme of £1,493,057.

- 2.4.5.5. To give Parish/Town Council time to develop bids, letters inviting bids were sent out in June 2021. Bids are assessed against their contribution towards the six main aims that support the vision in the LTP, and viable schemes identified.
- 2.4.5.6. To further assist Town/Councils, the County Council [website](#) provides key supporting information.

#### 2.4.6. **Additional Highways Investment**

- 2.4.6.1. At the Policy & Resources Committee on 27 November 2017, Members noted that one of the priorities for the administration was a commitment to invest an extra £20m in Norfolk's roads.
- 2.4.6.2. This funding was allocated to the delivery of major projects, junction improvements, market town schemes, footways and crossing improvements and a contribution to Parish Partnership, Local Member fund and public rights of way. Much of this funding has been spent and schemes delivered over the previous four-year period for example we have delivered new pedestrian crossing facilities in Hellesdon, North Walsham, Norwich, Old Buckenham Terrington St Clement and Wells.

#### 2.4.6.3. **Local Road schemes / Junction Improvements**

- 2.4.6.3.1. The proposed investment will enable those schemes already approved in 2019-20 to continue to progress with design and construction. These are the B1146 Hempton Roundabout, A1066 Victoria Road junction with Vines Road, Diss and Station Road Link, Diss.
- 2.4.6.3.2. The Council submitted a proposal to replace the existing staggered junction at Stradsett A1122/A134 to the DfT Pinch Point Fund. Unfortunately, this bidding opportunity was closed by Government. We are continuing with outline design with specific Council borrowing in expectation of a future funding opportunity.

#### 2.4.6.4. **Market Town Network Improvement Strategies**

- 2.4.6.4.1. All ten market town strategies (Dereham, Swaffham, North Walsham, Thetford, Diss, Downham Market, Fakenham, Wroxham/Hoveton, Wymondham, Aylsham), have now been adopted by the Council.
- 2.4.6.4.2. The resultant Network Improvement Strategies will help inform future development and opportunities, as demonstrated by the Heritage Funded works planned in North Walsham Market Place led by North Norfolk District Council but supported by the County Council.

#### 2.4.6.5. **Pedestrian Crossings and Footways**

- 2.4.6.5.1. The proposed investment was used to fund assessment and study work together with some scheme delivery. New facilities were delivered for Hellesdon, and Harleston during 2021/22 and we are currently upgrading the traffic signals

adding new improved pedestrian crossing facilities in Old Catton/Sprowston. Other assessments are being undertaken to inform the priorities and cost for inclusion in a future programme.

#### 2.4.6.6. **Public Rights of Way (PROW)**

2.4.6.6.1. The £20m investment allowed approximately £200,000 to be invested in capital improvement and maintenance on PROW, including surfacing and footbridge reconstruction. This was delivered over 2018/19/20. Funding from the LTP Integrated Transport remains at £15,000 for 2022/23.

#### 2.4.6.7. **Local Member Fund budget**

2.4.6.7.1. Members were advised by email in June 2017 that a new fund had been created to provide each Member with an annual budget of £6,000 to be used on highway work within each financial year. This offers flexibility to progress small highway projects based upon local need.

2.4.6.7.2. From 2021-22 it was agreed as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process to increase this fund per member to £10,000 per annum, with the scope of the fund was widened to include environmental aspects such as tree planting and the installation of Electrical Vehicle charging points.

#### 2.4.7. **Major Projects**

##### 2.4.7.1. **Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing**

2.4.7.1.1. In the 2017 Autumn Budget, the Government announced a £98m grant for this project. £2m funding has also been secured from the LGF and £1m from County Council funds was allocated in 2020-21. The remaining £19m is being funded from local contributions, and we have been successful in securing a reduced borrowing rate to support this.

2.4.7.1.2. The Secretary of State granted development consent in September 2020 and the Full Business Case was and approved by the Department of Transport in November 2020.

2.4.7.1.3. Construction work commenced on 4 January 2021 and the budget and programme remain on track, with the scheme due to be opened in Spring 2023.

##### 2.4.7.2. **Transforming Cities**

2.4.7.2.1. Transforming Cities is a £2.5bn transport fund to support connectivity in some of England's largest cities, with funding running from 2018-19 to 2022-23. Around half has been allocated to Metro Mayoral Combined Authorities on a devolved basis with the remaining £1.2billion to be allocated across 12 cities, including Greater Norwich.

2.4.7.2.2. In 2019/20 we successfully bid for funding from Tranche 1 and received £6.1m for six schemes. These schemes are now complete.

2.4.7.3. In September 2020, the DfT awarded Norwich £32m capital funding from Tranche 2. The bid was based on a range of projects aimed at improving clean

and shared transport to create a healthy environment, increasing social mobility and boosting productivity through enhanced access to employment and learning. The TCF allocation is based upon the funding breakdown shown in the following table.

2.4.7.4.	DfT	Local Authority	Third-Party	Total
Medium	£32.2m	£7.9m	£18.8m	£59.9m

2.4.7.5. As a result of this funding award, the TCF programme is a significant addition to the Highway Capital Programme. Delivery of the TCF programme is going well and schemes that have already been delivered are performing well in terms of delivering journey time savings for public transport and improved environments for those walking and cycling around Norwich. We are currently looking at the remainder of the TCF programme with a view to engaging with DfT on delivering some elements of the programme beyond March 2023.

2.4.8. **Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan**

2.4.8.1. Other significant projects are being scoped using available funding sources but are not yet developed in sufficient detail for inclusion in the capital programme. These are part of the Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan refreshed for 2021, that was reported to Infrastructure and Development Select Committee on 17 November 2021 and agreed by Cabinet on 6 December 2021.

2.4.8.2. Those which would form part of the adopted road network are:

- Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road
- Attleborough Link Road
- A10 West Winch Housing Access Road
- A140 Long Stratton Bypass
- Fakenham A148 Roundabout Enhancement
- Norwich Western Link
- A17/A47 Pullover Junction (part local road, part strategic (trunk) road).

2.4.8.3. The Broadland Growth Triangle Link Road, Attleborough Link Road and Fakenham A148 Roundabout Enhancement sites are development lead projects which are not part of our Highway Capital Programme. The remaining schemes are as follows:

2.4.8.4. **West Winch Housing Access Road**

2.4.8.4.1. The Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted to the DfT in March 2021. The DfT then asked for a separate Options Appraisal Report (OAR) and an Appraisal Specification Report (ASR) to be prepared and asked for some

clarification questions to be answered. These were submitted in September 2021 and resulted in a further set of clarification questions. A number of other requests have also been made relating to a Carbon Management Strategy and assurances on the delivery timescales for the 4,000 new homes the road would enable.

- 2.4.8.4.2. The responses to these questions and requests have been prepared and are being finalised for submission in January 2022. The DfT will need to present our scheme to one of their monthly Investment Committee meetings, using the information we have provided, before they can grant approval to our SOBC and agree to provide funding towards the next Outline Business Case (OBC) stage.
- 2.4.8.4.3. There are a number of challenges to overcome in relation to gas main diversions and stakeholder approval, but if these can be overcome, construction could commence in 2024, subject to a funding announcement by government.
- 2.4.8.5. **A140 Long Stratton Bypass**
- 2.4.8.5.1. In July 2021, the Outline Business Case (OBC) was approved by DfT. This confirmed that, based on the importance and benefits of the proposed scheme, DfT were providing the necessary funding contribution of £26.21m to enable the scheme to continue with the development of the statutory approval processes and through the tendering process to identify a preferred contractor.
- 2.4.8.5.2. Alongside completion of the OBC process, the project team have finalised the scheme design for planning purposes and worked with the Developer to update the existing planning applications, which were submitted in August 2021. It is anticipated that the applications will be approved in the late Spring of 2022, which will allow the County Council to progress the scheme through the Highway Orders process culminating in a proposed start of works during 2023 and programmed completion by the end of 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.4.8.6. **Norwich Western Link**
- 2.4.8.6.1. In May 2020, the Norwich Western Link was given conditional entry into the DfT Large Local Majors funding programme via acceptance of the Strategic Outline Business Case and as a result the Council has continued developing the project.
- 2.4.8.6.2. The submission of the Outline Business Case (OBC) to DfT was confirmed in June 2021 and, following the procurement process through 2020/21, the Design and Build Contractor was appointed in July 2021. Necessary ongoing surveys were undertaken during 2021 and these are informing the scheme design.
- 2.4.8.6.3. Approval of the OBC is still awaited from DfT and the pre-application public consultation is now scheduled to be completed as soon as possible during 2022. Design development is ongoing in preparation for a planning application submission as soon as possible following the pre-application public consultation.
- 2.4.8.7. **Pullover A17/A47**
- 2.4.8.7.1. Work has now commenced on the production of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the A17/A47 Pullover Roundabout Improvement after discussions with the DfT and National Highways (NH) to seek their views on the

proposed methodology. National Highways has also agreed to contribute £50,000 to the total cost of this preliminary work which is estimated to be in the region of £200,000 to £250,000.

- 2.4.8.7.2. The SOBC work is expected to be completed by the end of July 2022. This then allows time for approvals before the SOBC can be submitted to DfT. The current overall programme for the scheme shows us submitting the SOBC by the end of December 2022, and, assuming successful scheme development, completion of the remaining business case stages and planning, a start of construction in spring 2025, subject to a funding announcement by government.

#### 2.4.9. **Traffic Management**

- 2.4.9.1. Minor traffic management issues (parking, waiting, speed, and weight limit restrictions) are generally funded via the Local Member Fund budget. Anything more significant will need to identify appropriate funding.

- 2.4.9.2. Speed limits are governed by the Council's speed management strategy and new limits introduced only where there is significant change in the environment (e.g., a village boundary has expanded) or there are compelling safety reasons.

#### 2.4.10. **Road Safety Community Fund**

- 2.4.11. The highest priority road safety schemes, which have targeted casualty reduction, have been delivered via the local safety scheme part of the highways capital programme.

- 2.4.12. Many of the smaller scale, locally identified concerns regarding road safety issues have not been advanced as the Council's resources has focused on directing the limited available funding to those locations where the greatest benefits on casualty reduction could be achieved. It was therefore recognised we had a growing need to work with County Councillors and local communities to provide small scale road safety schemes that could address more specific local issues.

- 2.4.13. The new £1m Road Safety Community Fund (RSCF) was approved by Cabinet on 6 September 2021. The aim of this fund is to give communities across Norfolk an opportunity to promote small scale, locally driven road safety improvements. The objective of the Fund will be to deliver 100 new county-wide road safety schemes over the next four years. We are particularly keen to encourage schemes which are likely to focus on casualty reduction, therefore these types of proposals will be given greater consideration when prioritising.

- 2.4.14. These schemes are restricted to maximum threshold of £10,000 each from this fund, for local highway safety improvements, which will help address local issues and concerns. However, where the scheme meets our criteria, but costs are estimated to be slightly above this figure, 'topping up' will be permitted if the community or Local Member are willing and able to fund the difference. Any such external funding needs to be clearly shown on the bid form. Larger schemes above £10,000 will still need to be considered as part of the wider Highways Capital Programme.

- 2.4.15. To maximise resources and deliver schemes efficiently, it is proposed that the RSCF will deliver 20 to 30 schemes per year focusing on geographical areas as detailed below:
- Year 1: King's Lynn & West Norfolk;
  - Year 2: North Norfolk, Broadland & Gt Yarmouth;
  - Year 3: South Norfolk & Breckland;
  - Year 4: Norwich & other subsequent requests.
- 2.4.16. Those schemes contained in Year 1 (2022/23) for approval in West Norfolk are shown in Appendix E and the proposed timescales for the delivery for the first two-years is shown on the programme in Appendix F.

### **3. Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) 2022-23**

- 3.1. The TAMP is updated annually, reported to Select Committee and approved by Cabinet, is available on [our website](#).
- 3.2. An annual "Highway & Transport Network Performance report" was presented to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee in September 2021. This report enables the Committee to understand network performance so that they can take this into account in considering policies and strategies.
- 3.3. Norfolk continues to review its maintenance and inspection policies for the network to ensure they deliver best practice, are value for money, and that actions align with Member's decisions on funding priorities. Any changes are presented to Members for approval.
- 3.4. The TAMP has been reviewed and no significant changes are proposed, and the provision in the TAMP is considered to continue to be appropriate. We would usually take a report on the TAMP to the Select Committee in November 2021; this is the regular annual update. In discussion with the Chairman, the TAMP was circulated by Select Committee Members to review by email instead of a discussion at a meeting. This was because there were no significant changes being proposed this year.

### **4. Impact of the Proposal**

- 4.1. The Highways Capital Programme represents a significant investment in the Norfolk economy.
- 4.2. It helps protect the investment already made in establishing the £15bn highway asset in Norfolk.
- 4.3. It supports the Council's business plan, Together, For Norfolk, and its strategy 'Better Together for Norfolk' 2021-25. The later contains a strategic priority of a "Vibrant and Sustainable Economy".

Our two key outcomes for the Highway Capital Programme are:-:

A well-managed highway network that enables everyone to travel the county freely and easily;

A strong infrastructure for our growing economy.

4.4. It helps implement our Strategic Delivery Infrastructure Plan.

## **5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

5.1. The Highway Capital Programme matches the Council's aspirations in the Council business plan to manage, maintain & develop Norfolk's highway network, facilitate major development and deliver effective services to support sustainable growth and quality of life to residents.

### **5.2. National Highways & Transport Network (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey 2021**

5.2.1. The National Highways and Transport (NHT) survey takes place annually during the summer. The survey sample size was 3,300 and boasted a response rate of 30%, a good response rate for surveys of this type.

5.2.2. The NHT Survey is referenced in the DfT's Incentive Fund self-assessment process and allows the Council to compare ourselves to our peers, monitor performance and help make efficiencies. It also forms part of our performance framework for our asset management strategy.

5.2.3. Norfolk County Council achieved an overall score of 52 and again achieved a ranking of 2nd (alongside Cornwall, Derbyshire and Worcestershire) out of 29 county councils that participated in this year's NHT survey. The average overall score amongst our peers this year was 50.

5.2.4. Norfolk also ranked first place overall when compared to the Eastern Region County Councils (Cambridge, Essex, Hertfordshire & Suffolk).

5.2.5. Out of the 29 county councils and larger unitary authorities in the peer group, Norfolk also ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the following areas:

- KBI 04 Ease of Access (disabilities);
- PTBI 07 Bus Fares (2nd year in a row);
- TCBI 14 The routes taken by heavy goods vehicles.

5.2.6. We report both the score and position in the Transport Asset Network Performance Report of several maintenance indicators, including:

- KBI 11 - Pavements & Footpaths (overall); Joint 6th (55);
- KBI 13 - Cycle routes and facilities (overall); Joint 3rd (51);
- KBI 15 - Rights of way (overall); Joint 17th (56);
- KBI 23 - Condition of highways; Joint 4th (36);
- KBI 24 - Highway maintenance; Joint 7th (42);

- KBI 25 - Street lighting; 16th (60).

5.2.7. The customer satisfaction results across a range of indicators, coupled with the asset performance framework gives the Council confidence that outcomes are being achieved.

## **6. Alternative Options**

6.1. Differing proposals could be put forward to utilise planned invest differently across the highway assets or provide additional investment from our Council. However, given the performance as detailed in section 5.2, this is not recommended.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1. The funding for highways schemes is included in the Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2022-23, presented to Full Council in February 2022. This included the overall County Council Capital Programme, and overall budgets contained within this report.

7.2. The Council is still awaiting full details of its Highway capital settlement for 2022/23. This and the details for the following 2-years is expected from the DfT imminently at the writing of the report. The Council will also look to maximise opportunities for bidding for other funding.

## **8. Resource Implications**

### **8.1. Staff:**

If the County Council is successful in its bid applications, the resource strategy will need to be reviewed to ensure delivery of the projects, although the current arrangements with the professional services provider, WSP, will be utilised in the first instance.

### **8.2. Property:**

There are no implications

### **8.3. IT:**

There are no implications

## **9. Other Implications**

### **9.1. Legal Implications**

The legal implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

### **9.2. Human Rights implications**

The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

### 9.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

An Equality Impact Assessment for the Highway Asset Management Strategy and Policy has been completed. There are no adverse impacts.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for our Transforming Cities programme. Should our funding application be successful, assessments will also be carried out as part of the development of individual schemes.

### 9.4. **Health and Safety implications**

The Health and Safety implications of individual schemes will be evaluated as part of the project delivery process.

### 9.5. **Sustainability implications**

The programme has been developed in accordance with the current LTP aims, which include delivering sustainable growth. This is considered further for each scheme during the detailed design phase.

### 9.6. **Any other implications - N/A**

## 10. **Risk Implications/Assessment**

10.1. Funding may be changed by Government (for example budget announcements, or bidding opportunities) or the Council.

10.2. Although an allowance for inflation is budgeted for, if inflation exceeds what is expected the programme may be adversely affected.

10.3. Damage to assets can be caused by adverse weather, winter, drought, wind and flood. The County's Fen roads are particularly susceptible to drought damage.

10.4. There is a risk with the larger, non-LTP funded schemes that if they overspend, any shortfall may need to be funded from the Highways Capital Programme. To accommodate this, programmed schemes may need to be deferred to prevent overspend on the overall Highways Capital Programme. The risk is mitigated by effective project and programme management.

10.5. The Council has underwritten a local contributions as part of the requirements of the funding opportunity, such as the 3rd River Crossing.

10.6. Any scheme specific risks and implications will be assessed and mitigated during the development of each scheme.

## 11. **Select Committee comments**

11.1. The Infrastructure & Development Select Committee endorsed the realignment of the Asset Management Policy with the Council Plan May 2019 and the enhanced detail in the Asset Management Strategy and the revised targets to 2020/21. This was as part of the Highway Asset Performance Report at its

meeting on 17 July 2019. Progress on the strategy together with its performance framework has been reviewed as part of the annual Highway and Transport Network Performance Reports to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee last in September 2021.

## 12. Recommendations

1. Approve the Highways Capital Programme including the proposed draft allocations and programme for 2022/23 and indicative allocations for 2023/24/25 (as set out in Appendices A, B and C).
2. Approve the proposals for the £10m Highway Maintenance Fund (as set out in Appendix D).
3. Approve the proposals for the Road Safety Community Fund (as set out in Appendices E and F).
4. Approve the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) for 2022/23 to 2026/27.

## 13. Background Papers

13.1. [Local Transport Plan 2011-2026](#)

13.2. At the Cabinet meeting on 3 March 2021 Members approved the Highway capital programme and Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) [Report](#) and [link to minutes](#)

### Officer Contact

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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.

## APPENDIX A: Norfolk County Council- Highways Capital Programme Summary

Scheme Type	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding
Major schemes	0	41,882	0	40,108	0	96,993
Bus infrastructure	20	5,273	20	3,118	20	0
Bus priority schemes	0	897	0	5,367	0	0
Public Transport Interchanges	145	2,962	145	0	145	0
Cycling schemes (County)	50	865	283	633	70	0
Walking schemes	640	240	365	300	365	300
Road crossings	0	75	0	0	0	0
Local road schemes	681	5,967	522	2,706	735	0
Traffic Management & Traffic Calming	115	5	0	0	0	0
Local Safety Schemes	326	0	317	0	317	0
Other Schemes, Future Fees & Carry Over Costs	0	840	0	840	0	0
<b>Integrated transport</b>	<b>1,977</b>	<b>59,007</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>53,072</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>97,293</b>
Structural/Routine/Bridge Maintenance	42,596		41,326		41,326	
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>44,573</b>	<b>59,007</b>	<b>42,978</b>	<b>53,072</b>	<b>42,978</b>	<b>97,293</b>

### Notes:

1. Above figures in £000's
2. DfT (Local Transport Plan) funding detailed under main year headings
3. Other Funding includes Section 106, Section 278, LGF, CIL, County Council & Major Scheme funding

Appendix B			
<b>Structural Maintenance Budget Proposed Allocations 2022/23/24/25 Draft</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)
<b>Funding</b>			
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (needs)	15,892,000	15,892,000	15,892,000
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (permanant pothole fund)	15,892,000	15,892,000	15,892,000
LTP Structural Maintenance Grant (incentive)	3,973,000	3,973,000	3,973,000
County Council funding to cover £1.065m capitalisation from 18-19	1,065,000	1,065,000	1,065,000
County Council funding to cover £1.599m capitalisation from 19-20	1,559,000	1,559,000	1,559,000
County Council funding to cover £722,708 capitalisation from 20-21	500,000	500,000	500,000
County Council funding to cover £93,000 capitalisation from 21-22	93,000	93,000	93,000
Capital Integrated Transport Contribution	2,517,000	2,873,000	2,873,000
NCC Pothole Fund	3,367,600	2,500,000	1,632,400
	<b>44,858,600</b>	<b>44,347,000</b>	<b>43,479,400</b>

Appendix B			
<b>Structural Maintenance Budget Proposed Allocations 2022/23/24/25 Draft</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)	(assumed same as 2021/22 pending spending review)
<b>Spending</b>			
<b>Countywide specialist</b>			
Bridges	2,007,363		
Bridges (small works)	720,000		
Bridges Inspections / feasibility studies	1,011,000		
Traffic Signal Replacement	525,000		
Traffic Signals (small works)	650,000		
Public Transport Disruption	5,000		
Park & Ride PM3030	40,000		
Asset Condition Surveys	160,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>5,118,363</b>		
<b>Roads</b>			
Principal Roads (Surfacing)	2,006,238		
Principal Roads (Surface Treatment)	1,800,000		
Principal Roads (SCRIM)	150,000		
Principal Roads (Reclamite)	213,009		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>4,169,247</b>		
B roads (surfacing)	538,875		
B roads (surface treatment)	1,060,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>1,598,875</b>		
C roads (surfacing and haunch) fen roads	500,000		
C roads (surfacing and haunch)	750,000		
C roads (surface dressing)	4,150,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>5,400,000</b>		
U roads (surfacing and haunch)	400,000		
U roads (surface dressing)	4,150,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>4,550,000</b>		
Layered Patching	4,212,772		
Chip Patching	1,969,000		
Permanent Pothole repair	900,000		
Road Markings	600,000		
Road Studs	101,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>7,782,772</b>		
Machine Patching	400,000		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>400,000</b>		
Bleeding Roads (PMA836, PMA837 and PMA838)	10,000		
Environmental Surveys	190,001		
<b>sub total</b>	<b>200,001</b>		
	<b>24,100,895</b>		
<b>Contract costs/Inflation/Pain &amp; Gain etc.</b>	<b>5,982,447</b>		
<b>Fencing Repairs</b>	<b>55,000</b>		
<b>Vehicle Restraint Systems</b>			
Condition inspections & retensioning	44,000		
Risk Assessment,	53,000		
Design & works	100,000		
VRS Repairs	75,000		
	<b>272,000</b>		
<b>Footways &amp; Drainage &amp; signs</b>			
Signs & post	600,000		
Signs - PROW finger Posts	40,000		
Area Managers Schemes	140,000		
Footways - Category 1 & 2	528,637		
Footways Category 3 & 4	1,808,587		
Footways Category 3 & 4 Slurry	558,303		
Footways & Kerbs repairs	800,000		
Footway layered patching	1,040,011		
Drainage Schemes	596,656		
Drainage ( as-built SWD capture)	5,000		
(Drainage Flood & Water Risk Match Pot)	75,000		
Drainage Capitalisation Area Delivery	876,000		
	<b>7,068,194</b>		
<b>Summary</b>			
<b>Total Structural Maintenance &amp; Bridges Spending</b>	<b>42,596,899</b>		
<b>Probable final budget</b>	<b>44,858,600</b>		

**APPENDIX C: Proposed Highways Capital Improvements Programme**

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Major schemes</b>										
DFT	Great Yarmouth	DFT	Great Yarmouth - Third River Crossing Scheme	£0	£16,280,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Construction work commenced on 4 January 2021 and the budget and programme remain on track, with the scheme due to be opened in the Spring 2023
NCC	Great Yarmouth	NCC	Great Yarmouth - Third River Crossing Scheme	£0	£9,671,000	£0	£519,000	£0	£0	
DfT	South Norfolk	DfT	Long Stratton Bypass (NCC Design)	£0	£3,191,000	£0	£7,787,000	£0	£13,481,000	
NCC	South Norfolk	NCC	Long Stratton Bypass (NCC Design)	£0	£1,367,000	£0	£3,337,000	£0	£2,027,000	Local Authorities' Intended Contribution
Developer	South Norfolk	Developer	Long Stratton Bypass (NCC Design)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,750,000	
NCC	Broadland	NCC	A47-A1067 (Wensum Valley) Western Link Road	£0	£2,206,000	£0	£2,269,000	£0	£2,857,000	this will be a further £3.315m funded by NCC Capital (Borrowing)
DfT	Broadland	DfT	A47-A1067 (Wensum Valley) Western Link Road	£0	£9,167,000	£0	£26,196,000	£0	£74,878,000	
<b>Bus infrastructure</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	County- DDA Bus stop upgrades	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	St Stephens Street	£0	£2,768,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Thickthorn Park and Ride Phase 1	£0	£2,200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road / Breckland Road with Costessey Bowthorpe Mobility Hub	£0	£305,000	£0	£3,118,000	£0	£0	
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Norwich - Bus Infrastructure Improvements (DDA)	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Bus Priority</b>										
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road/Longwater Lane Bus Lane (Longwater Lane - Wendene)	£0	£79,000	£0	£440,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Sprowston Road (Denmark Road - Outer Ring Road)	£0	£45,000	£0	£717,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Dereham Road/Old Palace Road/Heigham Road	£0	£359,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Dereham Road/Larkman Lane and Larkman Mobility Hub	£0	£171,400	£0	£556,500	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Heartsease Fiveways Junction	£0	£169,800	£0	£3,043,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Sprowston Road (Magdalen Road - Denmark Road)	£0	£73,000	£0	£610,000	£0	£0	
<b>Public Transport Interchanges</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Countywide Public Transport Interchanges	£145,000	£0	£145,000	£0	£145,000	£0	small measures across all inter changes
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Rail Station mobility hub	£0	£1,554,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital mobility hub	£0	£1,107,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Bus Station Mobility Hub	£0	£301,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
<b>Cycling</b>										
TFN	South Norfolk	TCF2	Dereham Road/Richmond Road	£0	£95,000	£0	£395,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Newmarket Road (Eaton Road - Christchurch Road)	£0	£770,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	South Norfolk	LTP	Colney Lane B1172 to B1108 Walking and Cycling Link	£0	£0	£213,000	£238,000	£0	£0	
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Vauxhall Rail bridge to North Quay	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	Partially S106 funded re-establish highway rights and implement cycle link to link north quay to rail station

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Cycling</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Future Cycling Schemes	£0	£0	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£0	Match funding to support other externally funded to schemes or early prioritisations and development
<b>Walking Schemes</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP/Parish	Delivering local highway improvements in partnership with Town and Parish Councils	£625,000	£0	£350,000	£300,000	£350,000	£300,000	"other funding" is 50% match funding from Town/Parish Councils.
NCC extra £20m/ Walking	Countywide	NCC Extra £20m	Delivering local highway improvements in partnership with Town and Parish Councils	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	other funding is contribution from NCC extra £20m
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Public Rights of Way in Towns & Villages - Urban Path Improvements	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	King Street	£0	£190,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
<b>Road Crossings</b>										
NCC extra £20m/ Ped Crossing	South Norfolk	NCC extra £20m	Colney - Contribution to Ped Crossing Hospital Roundabout	£0	£75,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Contribution to a Developer Scheme
<b>Local Road Schemes</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Unallocated Funding	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
NCC Pinch Point Grant (match)	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Pinch Point Grant	Stradsett - A1122 A134 Junction Improvements	£0	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Scheme preparation in expectation of DfT pinch point funding.
LTP	Breckland	LTP	Attleborough - Station Road, (Bus Layby / footway outside Railway Station (near level crossing))	£0	£0	£0	£0	£320,000	£0	
LTP	Broadland	LTP	Post NDR Environmental monitoring	£91,000	£0	£91,000	£0	£91,000	£0	Monitoring until 2033/34
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Unallocated local road scheme funding to cover unfinished scheme from the Additional £20m	£0	£0	£256,000	£0	£199,000	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Local Road Schemes</b>										
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Great Yarmouth Gorleston - White Lion Steps	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	LTP	Downham Market - A1122 railway crossing (continued maintenance costs) recurring annual spend to be covered by capital programme	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	recurring annual spend to be covered by capital programme
LTP	All	LTP	Unallocated	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	South Norfolk	LTP	Redenhall with Harleston - Town Centre Refurbishment	£145,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
SNDC	South Norfolk	SNDC	Redenhall with Harleston - Town Centre Refurbishment	£0	£505,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
NCC Extra £20m/ Junctions Imp	North Norfolk	NCC Extra £20m	Hempton B1146/C550 junction improvement	£0	£1,695,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	To be taken forward for Design and Construction
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	North Walsham Station Access Ramp	£0	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	Design and Construction
NNDC	North Norfolk	NNDC	Fakenham, A148 / Water Moor Lane Roundabout Scheme	£0	£1,400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
NCC Extra £20m/ Junctions Imp	South Norfolk	NCC Extra £20m	Diss- A1066 Vinces Road junction improvement	£0	£310,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	Subject to availability of land. Feasibility done
NCC Extra £20m/ Junctions Imp	South Norfolk	NCC Extra £20m	Diss- Station Road link	£0	£366,900	£0	£0	£0	£0	Feasibility done but private land required. Significant political support.
TFN	Norwich	TCF2	Norwich Airport Access – Industrial Estate Link	£0	£295,400	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Sustrans	Norwich	Sustrans	River Wensum- St Andrews Street Link	£0	£0	£0	£1,775,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Norwich	TFN	Connecting the Lanes – St Giles Street	£0	£820,000	£0	£931,000	£0	£0	
TFN	Countywide	TCF2	Transforming Cities Fund Tranche 2	£0	£375,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	

Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Local Road Schemes</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	VIVACITY Data analytics	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	INRIX Roadway Analytics	£45,000	£0	£45,000	£0	£45,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	VIDA Data analytics funding	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0	£30,000	£0	
<b>Traffic Management &amp; Traffic Calming</b>										
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	Wells-Next-the-Sea - Market Lane Parking Restrictions TRO	£0	£5,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	0
LTP	North Norfolk	LTP	Wells-Next-the-Sea - A149 SPEED LIMIT	£81,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	0
LTP	Broadland	LTP	Hockering - NDR Associated Schemes to be funded from LTP budget.	£34,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	0
<b>Local Safety Schemes</b>										
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Local safety schemes Feasibility / Preliminary Design	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	£15,000	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Safety Partnership Schemes / contribution to maintenance schemes	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	£10,000	£0	
LTP	Breckland	LTP	A1075 Route Safety Study	£45,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Broadland	LTP	Brundall Station Road	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	Road Widening study for CIL funding bid
LTP	Great Yarmouth	LTP	Fritton and St Olaves - A143 - Double White Line Assessment	£5,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Norwich A147 Ketts Hill Barrack Street LSS Roundabout Improvements	£64,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Surrey Street/All Saints Green AIP Study	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Sub-programme	District	Main funding source	Scheme	2022/ 23	Other Funding	2023/ 24	Other Funding	2024/ 25	Other Funding	Comments
<b>Local Safety Schemes</b>										
LTP	Norwich	LTP	Norwich - Hall Road Pedestrian Crossing	£70,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	

LTP	South Norfolk	LTP	Chedgrave A146/C554 Junction	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	LTP	Northwold - A134 Methwold Road Signing and Lining	£3,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
LTP	Countywide	LTP	Unallocated local road scheme funding	£9,000	£0	£292,000	£0	£292,000	£0	To be used as match funding on jointly funded schemes
<b>Other Schemes, Future Fees &amp; Carry Over Costs</b>										
NCC to be confirmed	Countywide	NCC to be confirmed	Members Fund	£0	£840,000	£0	£840,000	£0	£0	
<b>Totals:</b>				<b>£1,977,000</b>	<b>£59,006,500</b>	<b>£1,652,000</b>	<b>£53,071,500</b>	<b>£1,652,000</b>	<b>£97,293,000</b>	

**£10m NCC ADDITIONAL CAPITAL MAINTENANCE FUNDING 2022/23**

<b>Work Type</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>	<b>Total</b>
Resurfacing	£ 500,000	£ 1,681,600			£ 2,181,600
Resurfacing & drainage repairs	£ 400,000				£ 400,000
Surface Dressing	£ 1,100,000	£ 1,100,000			£ 2,200,000
Machine / Layered patching	£ 400,000	£ 400,000			£ 800,000
Bridge Maintenance	£ 100,000	£ 100,000			£ 200,000
Footways		£ 86,000			£ 86,000
To be determined			£ 2,500,000	£ 1,632,400	£ 4,132,400
	<u>£ 2,500,000</u>	<u>£ 3,367,600</u>	<u>£ 2,500,000</u>	<u>£ 1,632,400</u>	<u>£ 10,000,000</u>

## Appendix E

## Road Safety Community Fund Scheme Proposals 2022-23

Parish	Member	Scheme Type	Value of Works
West Winch	Alexandra Kemp	Ped Crossing Improvement	£8,050.00
West Lynn (ward)	Alexandra Kemp	Build Out (Give way, priority)	£6,440.00
Burnham Market	Andrew Jamieson	Village Gateways	£6,020.25
Burnham Market	Andrew Jamieson	SAM2	£4,025.00
North & South Creake	Andrew Jamieson	Speed Limit	£8,912.50
Old Hunstanton	Andrew Jamieson	Signs	£17,590.00
Terrington St John	Brian Long	Speed Limit	£9,004.50
Marshland St James	Chris Dawson	Speed Limit	£9,004.50
Middleton	Jim Moriarty	One Way	£10,005.00
Castle Acre	Jim Moriarty	Signs	£2,070.00
East Winch	Jim Moriarty	Trod	£10,062.50
Shouldham	Jim Moriarty	Signs	£1,955.00
Walpole St Peter	Julian Kirk	Speed Limit	£18,562.50
Kings Lynn (North & Central)	Lesley Bambridge	Road Markings	£2,530.00
Wretton	Martin Storey	Speed Limit	£9,200.00
Bircham	Michael J Baylis Chenery of Horsbrugh	SAM2	£4,600.00
Castle Rising	Nick Daubney	Signs	£3,162.50
Castle Rising	Nick Daubney	Road Markings	£2,587.50
South Wootton	Nick Daubney	Village Gateways	£12,017.50
Kings Lynn (Gaywood South)	Robert Colwell	Traffic Study	£5,060.00
Great Massingham	Stuart Dark	Speed Limit	£8,970.00
Great Massingham	Stuart Dark	Road Markings	£3,450.00
Great Massingham	Stuart Dark	Signs	£1,495.00
		Less External Contributions	£18,500.00
		<b>Total NCC budget</b>	<b>£146,274.25</b>

Road Safety Community Fund; Timescales First Two Years

Area	ACTIVITY	2021-22												2022-23											
		MONTH																							
		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Send out letters to Members explaining the RSCF and bidding process																								
	Members contact their parishes and discuss ideas with their local Highway Engineer. Then submit bids to HE/RSCF Team (ideally prioritise all bids).																								
	RSCF Team collates all bids & evaluates against funding criteria;once deadline for submissions has passed, produce summaries of all bids received; shortlist, prioritise and produce Design Briefs for the proposed successful bids.																								
	RSCF Team submit proposed schemes to Asset & Capital Programme Team for inclusion within the Capital ProgrammeReport for the March budget setting Committee meeting.																								
	Letters sent to all Members notifying outcome of bids.																								
	Scheme briefs handed over to Highways Design Team for resourcing and detailed design.																								
	Programme Meetings held (including Design & contractors) to discuss proposed schemes, delivery plan, design progress, start dates, scheme progress, completion & final accounts etc																								

Road Safety Community Fund; Timescales First Two Years

Area	2022-23												2023-24											
	MONTH																							
ACTIVITY	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Send out letters to Members explaining the RSCF and bidding process		█	█	█																				
Members contact their parishes and discuss ideas with their local Highway Engineer. Then submit bids to HE/RSCF Team (ideally prioritise all bids).		█	█	█	█	█	█	█																
RSCF Team collates all bids & evaluates against funding criteria;once deadline for submissions has passed, produce summaries of all bids received; shortlist, prioritise and produce Design Briefs for the proposed successful bids.					█	█	█	█	█															
RSCF Team submit proposed schemes to Asset & Capital Programme Team for inclusion within the Capital ProgrammeReport for the March budget setting Committee meeting.										█	█	█												
Letters sent to all Members notifying outcome of bids.													█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
Scheme briefs handed over to Highways Design Team for resourcing and detailed design.																								
Programme Meetings held (including Design & contractors) to discuss proposed schemes, delivery plan, design progress, start dates, scheme progress, completion & final accounts etc																								

# Cabinet

Item No: 11

**Report Title: Bus Back Better – Norfolk’s Enhanced Partnership with Bus Operators**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Wilby (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: 14 September 2021**

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

In March 2021, the government announced a new National Bus Strategy called [Bus Back Better](#). This sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services in England outside London through greater local leadership and joint working between local transport authorities (LTAs) and bus operators to make local bus transport a practical and attractive alternative to the car for more people. The strategy was announced with £3bn of new funding but this has since reduced to £1.2bn.

To receive any of this new funding and to continue to receive existing funding like Covid-related support, LTAs had to write a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by 31 October 2021 and form an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with their local bus operators by 31 March 2022.

Norfolk’s BSIP was published by the required deadline, with high level aims and objectives to improve public transport in Norfolk. It was not consulted on before publication due to the short timescales from the DfT, but it will be subject to a full consultation in March 2022. We asked DfT for £106m of funding to deliver the aspirations in the BSIP and the consultation will help to prioritise our deliverables should we not get all the funding requested.

The Enhanced Partnership (EP) is currently being formed with bus operators and to formalise this we need to have in place an EP Plan and Scheme. This paper sets out what that means, what initial commitments are being made by the County Council and bus operators to improve public transport, what the next steps are, and how we can increase our commitments once we know the level of funding we will receive.

Since the government's original announcement, they have extended the deadline to the end of April 2022 for a draft EP to be submitted for those LTAs who are not able to meet the 31 March deadline - as we are on track to meet the original deadline we propose to formally make our EP with bus operators by 31 March, subject to agreement by Cabinet, so that we can then get on with the real task of improving bus services.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. To agree the proposed EP Plan and the commitments in the initial EP Scheme, including the EP Board Terms of Reference as detailed in Appendix 3.**
- 2. To agree that this Plan and Scheme are adopted by 31 March 2022 as per the original deadline (noting that variations can be made once we know the actual funding levels).**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1 In March 2021 the government announced a new National Bus Strategy called Bus Back Better (BBB). This sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services in England outside London, through greater local leadership and joint working between local transport authorities (LTAs) and bus operators to make local bus transport a practical and attractive alternative to the car for more people. A fund of £1.2bn for local authorities is available for this transformative strategy.
- 1.2 What the government wants to see is buses that are more frequent, more reliable, easier to understand and use, better coordinated and cheaper – more like those in London. They want the same focus on bus priority, integration, multi-modal ticketing and information as there is in London so that buses are both tools of inclusion and the transport of choice.
- 1.3 Without the option of franchising, which there is in London and other Mayoral Combined Authorities, one way in which we have greater influence in the de-regulated bus market is to form an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators.
- 1.4 An Enhanced Partnership (EP) is a statutory arrangement under the 2017 Bus Services Act which defines what the County Council's and the bus operators' commitments are to improve public transport, for example the Council makes improvements to infrastructure or bus priority on a route and in turn the bus

operators commit to more frequent services or better buses on that route.

- 1.5 In June 2021 we committed to forming an Enhanced Partnership with operators as the government have made it clear that only Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and operators who have done so will continue to receive any financial support for local bus services in the future.
- 1.6 The next deadline as part of this process was to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by 31 October 2021. This is a high-level visionary document that describes in outline how LTAs and bus operators will seek to achieve the overarching goal of the national bus strategy – to grow bus patronage. We did this with full support of bus operators and it is published on our website at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/busstrategy](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/busstrategy) We also submitted it to DfT with a funding ask of £106m to achieve our aspirations for public transport improvements in Norfolk. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan is published on the Council's website at [Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan](#).
- 1.7 The Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan is formed from the BSIP, both of which outline what we would do if we were to receive the requested funding to meet our 4 key objectives of:
  - Rebuilding and increasing passenger confidence;
  - Having a green and sustainable transport offer;
  - Developing a public transport network that is the first-choice mode for most journeys;
  - Having a simple and affordable ticketing and fares offer.
- 1.8 Sitting underneath the Plan there is an EP Scheme, which is a detailed list of commitments from the Council and the bus operators. Because we did not know what funding we would receive from the government whilst pulling together the EP, this initial Scheme can only be minimal, with aspects that both the Council and bus operators can commit to within current funding levels and recognising the current much-reduced level of passenger numbers and therefore revenue due to the pandemic. However once we know the level of funding, this Scheme can be varied to include more aspirational and specific commitments.
- 1.9 Once the EP Plan and Scheme are made it is legally binding on all parties and an Enhanced Partnership is then in place. The EP Plan and Scheme are attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.10 The EP will be managed by an EP Management Board made up of representatives from local bus operators and the Council. The role of this Board is to oversee the EP and to ensure that all parties are meeting their commitments. The Board will also discuss prioritisation of any funding received, taking into account feedback from public consultation, the DfT and working groups, and will make recommendations for final approval by the Council. The

Terms of Reference for this Board are attached at Appendix 3.

- 1.11 The proposed EP Plan and Scheme were consulted on over December 2021 and January 2022 as per the required statutory process and no objections or comments were received that would have meant amending the proposed Plan and Scheme before formal adoption. The consultation process included a number of statutory consultees, namely:
- All local bus operators within Norfolk;
  - The Chief of Police;
  - The Competition and Markets Authority;
  - The Office of the Traffic Commissioners;
  - Transport Focus;
  - Other local councils (district, parish and neighbouring authorities);
  - Organisations that represent passengers.
- 1.12 The EP Plan and Scheme were presented to the Members of the Infrastructure & Development Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Comments were raised about:
- Considering reduced fares for those on low income;
  - Introducing family tickets and services/fares to promote tourism;
  - Ensuring there would be member involvement going forward;
  - The need to ensure rural issues are considered;
- These have been noted for consideration going forward.

## **2. Proposal**

- 2.1 That the proposed EP Plan and Scheme, and commitments therein, are agreed.
- 2.2 That the Plan and Scheme are adopted by 31 March 2022 as per the original deadline (noting that variations can be made once we know the actual funding level awarded by the DfT).

## **3. Impact of the Proposal**

- 3.1 The proposal will put a formal framework in place to improve public transport in Norfolk, with legally binding commitments on both sides, and will allow the Council and bus operators to continue to receive transport-related funding.
- 3.2 Subject to the level of funding received it will enable us to deliver the aims and aspirations set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan, to meet our 4 key objectives, and to develop the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan which is aligned to this.
- 3.3 It also has the potential to give the Council a greater say and influence over local bus services in the future, enabling us to determine things like service

levels, integration of timetables and ticketing, and to define what we would like bus operators to provide in return for investment in things like bus priority measures.

- 3.4 Ultimately it will provide a better deal for passengers and residents of Norfolk, encouraging modal shift, enabling people to get where they need to go using a sustainable form of transport, helping air quality and congestion and increasing access to jobs, education and essential services.
- 3.5 The public consultation will allow us to determine what is most important for people in terms of public transport and what barriers we need to address for more people to see it as a viable alternative to the car.

#### **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 4.1 If we do not commit to forming an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators, we will not be eligible to receive any further public transport related funding from the government. This in turn means that we will not be able to improve public transport in Norfolk and will not be able to meet our objectives in the Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 4.2 It will also mean that any Covid-related recovery funding in the future is withdrawn, leading to withdrawal of bus services as they would no longer be financially sustainable.
- 4.3 The Council has a good relationship with Norfolk's bus operators but the EP enables a more formal relationship with the establishment of the EP Management Board and puts legal commitments on both sides in place, which can only be good for public transport and both passengers and residents of Norfolk.

#### **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 We could not form an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators, but this was discounted as it means a loss of funding for the Council and public transport, and no chance to receive any of the £1.2bn allocated for public transport improvements as part of the national bus strategy.
- 5.2 We could list many more commitments in the EP Scheme, but this was discounted because we do not know what funding we will receive from the DfT for our intended public transport improvements, outlined in the BSIP, and so the commitments would be undeliverable. This would have a negative impact and not lead to any improvements, just withdrawal of services. Instead we have made provisions within the Scheme for it to be varied once we know the funding we will receive.

- 5.3 We could delay formally making the EP Plan and Scheme until after 31 March 2022, now that the DfT have amended the timescales, but we have discounted this as we have already undertaken the statutory consultation process and we have made sure that the Scheme can be easily varied to account for any funding that we receive, therefore there is no real reason to delay the process any further.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no other financial implications as the EP Plan and Scheme have been set out in such a way that the Council's commitments can be delivered within current resources and funding available.
- 6.2 There would be significant financial implications of not taking forward the EP Plan and Scheme as the Council would not be able to access any of the £1.2bn national budget to improve public transport in Norfolk, and our bus operators would no longer receive any Covid-19 recovery funding.

## **7. Resource Implications**

### **7.1 Staff:**

To enable LTAs to develop and deliver their BSIP and their EP, the government have allocated the Council £600,000 in capability and capacity funding. Therefore, there are no staff implications as the necessary resource can be funded from this and we have already recruited officers who are dedicated to this work.

### **7.2 Property: None**

### **7.3 IT: None**

## **8. Other Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

The EP Plan and Scheme will be legally binding documents. We have followed the DfT's statutory guidance in drawing up the Plan and Scheme and they have been signed off by nplaw.

### **8.2 Human Rights Implications: None**

### **8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):**

Supporting local bus services and improving public transport is key to supporting all residents, including those with protected characteristics. They are available to all and making them better and more accessible will benefit even more the most vulnerable and less able in our society. Any potential impacts

arising from delivery of individual measures and schemes will be considered as part of appraisal of the relevant scheme and an EqIA completed.

**8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): N/A**

**8.5 Health and Safety implications: None**

**8.6 Sustainability implications:**

Encouraging more sustainable transport options, such as increased public transport use, is a key goal for the County Council and forms part of our Local Transport Plan and is aligned to our Environmental Policy.

**8.7 Any Other Implications: None**

**9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

9.1 To meet the required deadline of 31 March 2022, and therefore access to any DfT funding, we needed this proposed EP Plan and Scheme to be uncontested by local bus operators and other consultees. This was the biggest risk and why the commitments have been set out as they are, and why the more comprehensive public consultation on the BSIP will be held afterwards when we know the funding allocation. However we have made sure that the commitments can be easily amended post April 2022, once we know the level of funding, if any.

9.2 We could receive no funding from the DfT for our BSIP and desired improvements in public transport, but we have allowed for this possibility by making sure the commitments in the EP Scheme are deliverable within current resources, for both the Council and the bus operators.

**10. Select Committee Comments**

10.1 Committee were asked to:

- Note and consider the aims and aspirations in the Bus Service Improvement Plan;
- Note the commitments in the initial Enhanced Partnership Scheme and agree that the Plan and Scheme should be formally adopted by the deadline of 31 March 2022;
- Note that there will be a public consultation on the Bus Service Improvement Plan in early 2022, so that feedback can help to prioritise where funding is spent once it is received and the Enhanced Partnership Scheme can then be varied.

10.2 It was noted that the BSIP was a good aspirational document that, assuming sufficient funding was received, would deliver much improved public transport for residents of Norfolk.

10.3 The targets and commitments in the EP Plan and Scheme were agreed, although it was requested that for future revisions we consider reduced fares for those on low income, family tickets and fares to promote tourism, and make sure that we don't just consider urban issues.

10.4 Future Member involvement was discussed and it was noted that Members would be invited to relevant working groups and agreed that the EP and BSIP would be brought back to Committee after the public consultation to discuss the results.

## 11. Recommendations

1. To agree the proposed EP Plan and the commitments in the initial EP Scheme, including the EP Board Terms of Reference as detailed in Appendix 3.
2. To agree that this Plan and Scheme are adopted by 31 March 2022 as per the original deadline (noting that variations can be made once we know the actual funding levels).

## 12. Background Papers

12.1 The proposed EP Plan and Scheme

[Appendix 1 - EP Plan and Scheme](#)

[Appendix 2 - Definitions, abbreviations and acronyms](#)

[Appendix 3 - Terms of Reference for the EP Management Board](#)

### Officer Contact

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**Email: [niki.park@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:niki.park@norfolk.gov.uk)**



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

**NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY  
TRANSPORT ACT 2000**

**NORFOLK ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME**

*March 2022*

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## Section 1 – Introduction

In June 2021 Norfolk County Council (NCC) published its intent to form an Enhanced Partnership with its local bus operators. This Enhanced Partnership is intended to deliver the aspirations and objectives set out in Norfolk’s Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which was published in October 2021.

The BSIP’s overall aim is to increase the number of journeys made by public transport in Norfolk and to therefore help us achieve the commitments in our recently published environmental policy. Crucially, we want to create an environment where the bus plays its full role in our communities’ journey to a Carbon Net Zero future - this will be achieved by getting more people on the bus and out of their cars, and by introducing a greener bus fleet.

The BSIP will also help to achieve NCC’s key priorities set out in the Together for Norfolk strategy 2021-25:

- 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

### BSIP Objectives and Enhanced Partnership approach

The BSIP has four key objectives that will lead to increased passenger numbers:

- Rebuild and increase passenger confidence
- Have a green and sustainable transport offer
- Develop a public transport network that is the first-choice mode for most journeys
- Have a simple and affordable ticketing and fares offer

Each of our aims in the BSIP, which will be part of the EP, contribute to at least one of these objectives. This is outlined in the table below:

<b>BSIP Objectives</b>	<b>EP Approach</b>
<i>1. Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</i>	<p><i>a) Produce and deliver a major marketing campaign to attract people back onto buses, or on for the first time</i></p> <p><i>b) Develop a single identity for public transport in Norfolk - Travel Norfolk – with a dedicated website</i></p> <p><i>c) Agree and publicise a single, county-wide customer charter</i></p> <p><i>d) Improve road network management – including better information about disruption, better management of car parking and pro-active tree management</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) <i>Deliver faster journey times and more reliable services by implementing bus priority measures such as bus lanes and traffic light priority</i></li> <li>f) <i>Agree consistent timetable change dates</i></li> <li>g) <i>Improve connectivity via interchange hubs for bus-bus, bus-rail and bus-other modes of transport</i></li> <li>h) <i>Improve facilities and information at all bus stops and interchanges</i></li> <li>i) <i>Increase the number of services with on-bus next stop announcements</i></li> </ul>
2. <i>Green and sustainable transport offer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>Encourage operators to invest in cleaner more modern buses</i></li> <li>b) <i>Deliver faster journey times and more reliable services by implementing bus priority measures such as bus lanes and traffic light priority</i></li> <li>c) <i>Use Zebra funding and operator investment to introduce zero emission buses and their infrastructure</i></li> <li>d) <i>Produce and deliver an imaginative marketing campaign to highlight environmental benefits of bus travel</i></li> <li>e) <i>Invest in 100 zero emission buses</i></li> </ul>
3. <i>Public transport network that is first choice mode for most journeys for existing and new customers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>Develop consistent network standards across urban and rural communities, e.g. regarding journey frequency</i></li> <li>b) <i>Introduce more services based on the new network standards, including DRT and socially necessary services</i></li> <li>c) <i>Implement an integrated journey planner</i></li> <li>d) <i>Deliver faster journey times and more reliable services by implementing bus priority measures such as bus lanes and traffic light priority</i></li> <li>e) <i>Improve connectivity via infrastructure that better integrates bus services with other bus services, rail services and other modes of transport</i></li> <li>f) <i>Improve facilities and information at all bus stops and interchanges, including real-time information</i></li> </ul>
4. <i>Simple and affordable ticketing and fares offer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>Develop and implement a county-wide fare offer for young people</i></li> <li>b) <i>Offer a short-term fares promotion to entice people back on the bus</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>c) Contactless payment systems available on all buses</i></li> <li><i>d) Introduce a range of multi-operator tickets with fare capping</i></li> <li><i>e) Investigate options to integrate multi operator tickets with other modes of transport, e.g. e-bike schemes</i></li> <li><i>f) Produce and deliver an imaginative marketing campaign to promote ticketing and fares offers</i></li> </ul>
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Norfolk County Council has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of the EP Plan and Scheme made on {date tbc} on competition and believes it will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000.

**Definitions**

This Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme document contains a number of abbreviations and acronyms - a glossary of these can be found in Appendix 1.

## PART A - EP PLAN

THE NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

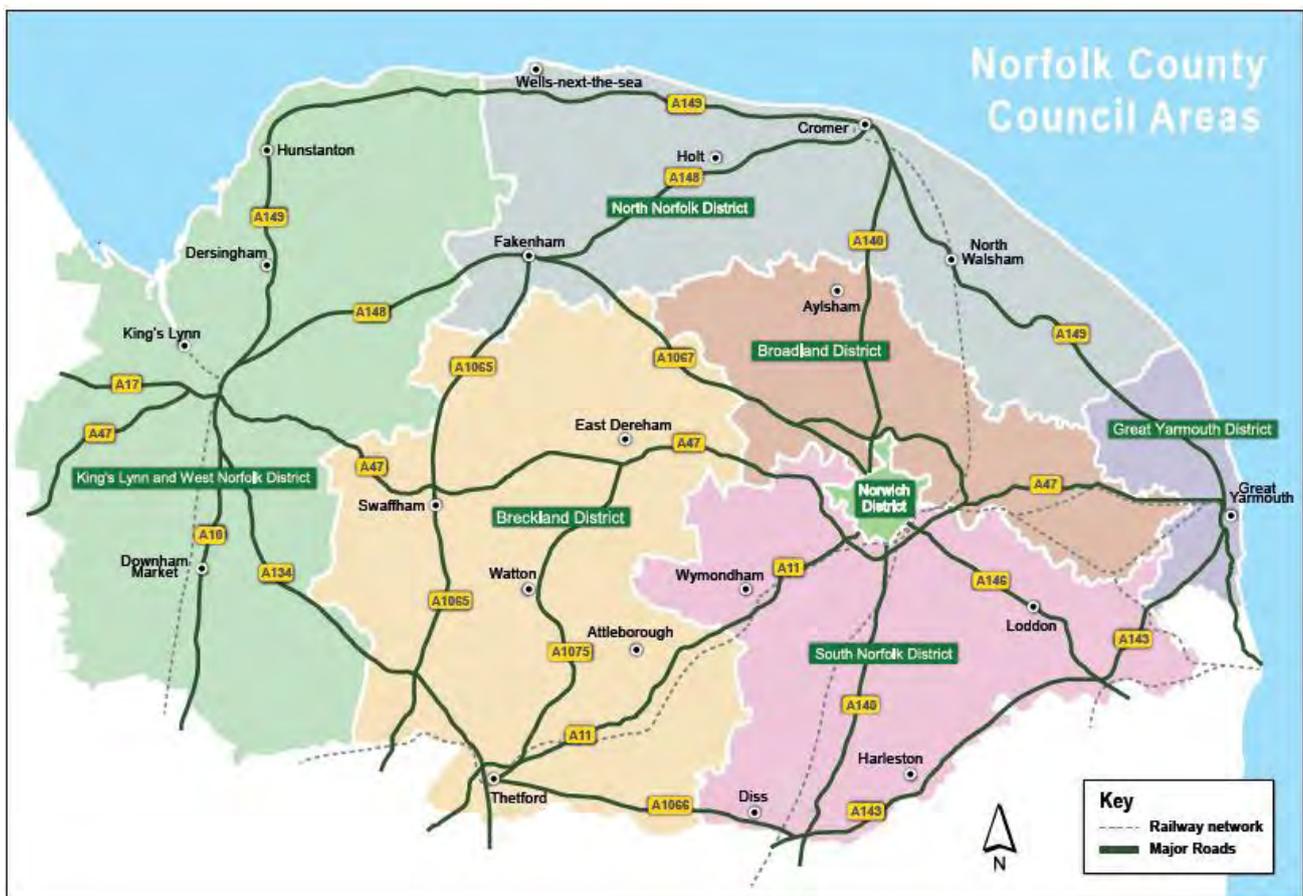
### Section 1 – Background, Scope and Context

Norfolk is a rural county in the east of England covering 2,074 square miles. It borders Lincolnshire to the north-west, Cambridgeshire to the west and south-west and Suffolk to the south. Its northern and eastern boundaries are the North Sea.

The total population of Norfolk is 915,000, and 34% live in the four built-up areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Thetford, with the remaining 66% living in smaller market towns and rural villages. The population is spread over the whole county - the only real area where there are no homes is Thetford forest.

### Section 2 – Geographical area

This Enhanced Partnership Plan covers the whole administrative county of Norfolk as shown in the map below:



### Section 3 – Temporal scope and longevity

This EP Plan will commence in April 2022 and will have no specific end date but will be reviewed alongside the BSIP which has an end date of April 2027.

## **Section 4 – Review and consultation**

The Plan will be reviewed every 6 months, to look at progress against targets, alongside the BSIP. We will measure how effective it is in achieving the objectives and growing passenger numbers by liaising at least quarterly with all bus operators and carrying out an annual passenger, resident and stakeholder survey that mirrors the initial one outlined below at section 5. If following review the Plan needs to be changed, we will follow the same statutory process as in making this Plan.

## **Section 5 – Passenger experience**

In September 2021 we commissioned a survey into the use of and satisfaction with bus services in Norfolk. The research showed that:

- 76% agree that the bus is easy and convenient to use
- 66% felt safe when using the bus
- 62% thought that bus travel was affordable
- 62% thought that the bus service was reliable
- The biggest reasons for not using the bus were:
  - (i) other modes are quicker than the bus,
  - (ii) buses don't go to the places that people are travelling,
  - (iii) buses aren't available the times people travel, and
  - (iv) journey times are not reliable

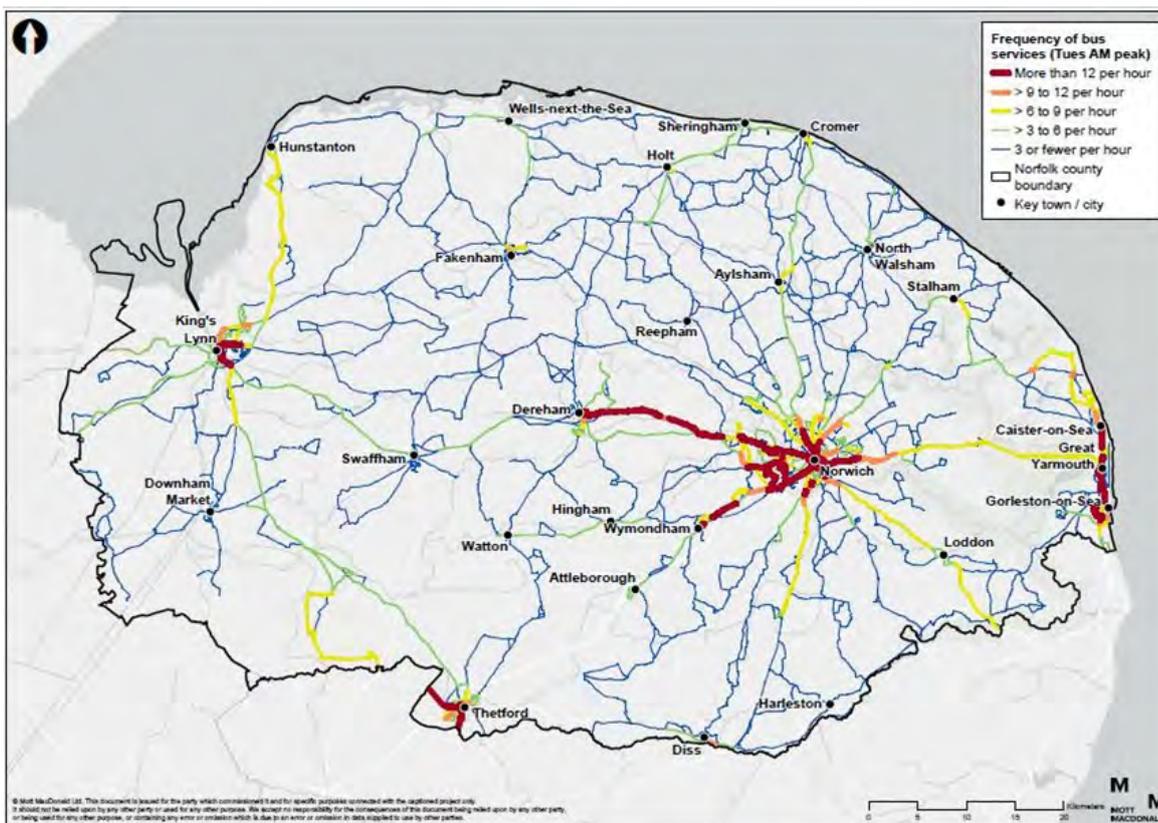
However,

- 34% said that they would use the bus more if they were more frequent
- 30% said they would if it was more reliable
- 27% said they wanted a direct bus service, and
- 27% said they would if there was a better range of good value tickets with a capped charge

## **Section 6 – Bus Service analysis**

In Norfolk 193 services are run by 15 operators totalling on average 75,200 kms per day. Some 89% of services are operated commercially (67,200 km) and 11% of services are subsidised (8,000 km). The frequency of these services varies, with the more concentrated frequencies being in and between the urban centres of Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and King's Lynn.

31% of daytime services operating Monday-Friday are hourly or better, but 14% of services operate only once a day. Service frequency on each corridor is shown below, as numbers of buses per hour in both directions:



The current bus service offer in Norfolk can therefore be summarised as follows:

- There is a good network of services but these vary considerably in terms of frequency, fares, availability of information and are not seen as a single transport system
- Services in Norwich and other urban areas are comprehensive and benefit from the highest levels of frequency
- There are good modern vehicles on high frequency routes, and these do attract passenger growth
- Rural services are available but are infrequent and often have to be booked in advance, which does not suit many people's lifestyle
- Fares vary across operators for similar length journeys, and can be seen as complicated for non-bus users
- Where infrastructure has recently been updated it is very good, but in rural areas in particular waiting facilities and information at stops could be better
- Our operators are very committed and have a strong ethos of partnership working with the County Council

## Section 7 – Factors affecting the bus market

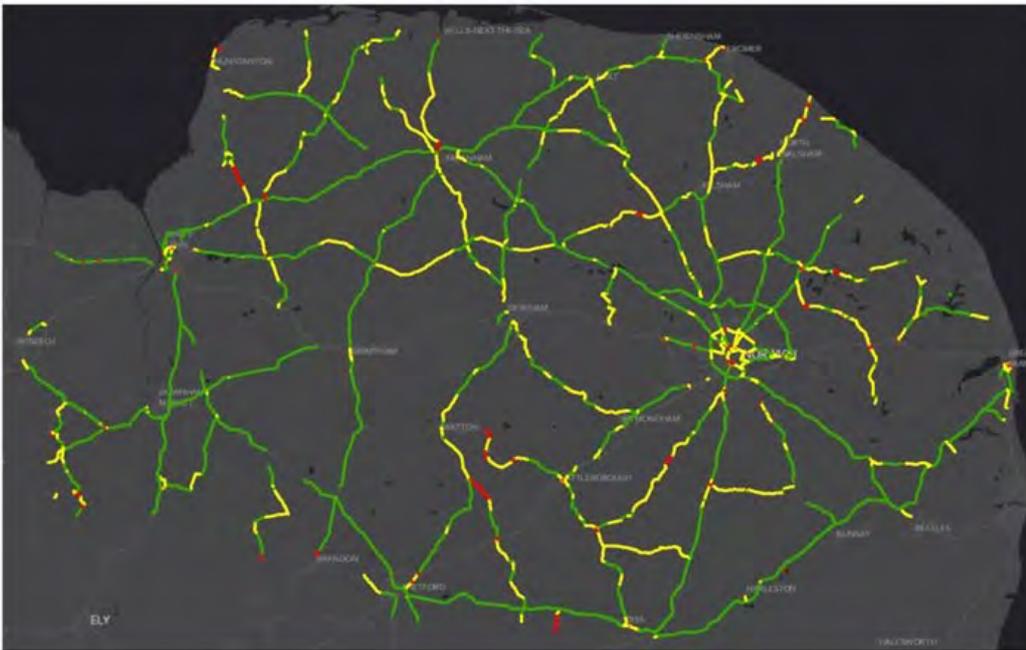
The following factors could well have an impact on the local bus market during the initial 5-year plan period:

- Changes to travel patterns, motivations and expectations following Covid and its subsequent socio-economic impacts, noting that these will be different among different user segments
- Commercial viability and sustainability of the network
- Bus driver recruitment, training and retention

- Highway network capacity, use and congestion
- Local authority resourcing pressures
- Environmental impacts and issues, such as severe weather, climate change and air quality

## Section 8 – Impacts of congestion

Network congestion is regularly measured by analysing millions of data points extracted from vehicle telematics data to determine levels of congestion at different time periods through the day compared to free-flowing conditions. This clearly has an impact on bus journey times and punctuality and reliability of services. The following map shows typical congestion levels Monday to Friday 7am to 9am across Norfolk:



Red lines indicate sections where congestion was above 40%, i.e. average traffic speeds were 40% or lower than free flow speeds for that section. Yellow lines show a level of congestion but less severe. This data is for general traffic and can be compared with bus performance data provided to us by operators in order to identify key areas where network improvements would deliver the most benefits to bus journey times and reliability.

## Section 9 - Outcomes

The success of this Plan and our BSIP will be measured by the following outcomes:

- **Grow annual bus patronage in Norfolk:** return to 2019/20 patronage levels by March 2023, then grow bus patronage by 1% per annum between 2023 and 2027. This target is lower than the target for growing bus patronage amongst young people in recognition of the fact that a slower Covid recovery may adversely impact other sectors of the population e.g. concessionary pass holders.
- **Grow bus patronage amongst young people in Norfolk:** grow bus patronage by 5% per annum for people under 25 years of age between 2023 and 2027

- **Improve bus passenger satisfaction:** grow bus passenger satisfaction with bus services in Norfolk to 95% by 2027
- **Increase bus passenger satisfaction with fares:** grow bus passenger satisfaction with the value for money offered for bus services in Norfolk to 80% by 2027
- **More buses with next stop announcements and displays:** increase the number of buses that offer next stop announcements (visible and audible) to 70% by 2025
- **More reliable bus services:** increase the reliability of bus services to 99.5% of all timetabled services starting their journeys, by 2027
- **More punctual bus services:** increase the punctuality of bus services starting their journeys on time to 95%, by 2027
- **Greener buses:** increase the proportion of buses operating registered bus services in Norfolk that are Euro VI or zero emission to 50% by 2027
- **Increase the bus mode share from cars:** in corridors where bus priority and bus vehicle investment is made during the lifetime of this BSIP, ensure that the number of bus passengers increases and the number of people travelling by car either reduces or remains the same
- **Reduce journey times for buses:** on specified corridors where bus priority and bus vehicle investment is made during the lifetime of this BSIP, ensure that average journey times for buses between specified points are decreased by at least 90 secs compared to before the measures were implemented, particularly during peak hours, ensuring that journey times are consistent at all times of the day
- **Increase the number of accessible bus stops:** increase the number of bus stops that are suitable for people using wheelchairs and people with other mobility issues to 95% by 2027
- **Increase rural accessibility:** using Norfolk's index of rural accessibility<sup>1</sup>, improve the measure to 85% by 2027

## Section 10 – Interventions & Policies

The partnership will have regard to all national and local policies and strategies that relate to transport, including but not limited to:

- Decarbonising Britain: A Better, Greener Britain
- Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking
- Norfolk's Local Transport Plan
- The Transport for Norwich Strategy
- The King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth Transport Strategies
- Market Town Improvement Strategies
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

The partnership believes the following key interventions and policies are required to deliver these outcomes:

- A clear single identity for public transport services in Norfolk which shows the services operating as a single system, with good and easy-to-access information, but without losing the individual bespoke characteristics of each local operator

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<sup>1</sup> We have defined a target level of service for each parish based on its population size, e.g. a parish with 1000-2000 people should be able to expect a journey to health services, a shopping service 5 days a week, a commuter journey at peak times and a Saturday service

- Seamless integrated local ticketing, with easy-to-understand fares that are good value for money
- An improved network of services, that are more frequent, more reliable and integrate with each other and with other modes
- Robust policies on car parking and planning, that put bus travel at the forefront and make bus journeys easier and more attractive
- Improved management of the road network and policies that minimise disruption on the highway

## Section 11 – Governance arrangements

The Plan will be managed by an EP Management Board that will comprise an equal representation from NCC (senior officers and elected Members) and bus operators (representing small, medium and large companies). It will meet at least quarterly and will:

- discuss and agree the facilities and measures from the BSIP which should be prioritised for funding and presented to NCC for formal sign-off
- agree how any existing EP Scheme(s) should be varied to account for any new facilities and measures that are introduced
- agree on proposed new Schemes for the EP Plan that would then need to be put through the formal consultation and adoption process, where varying an existing Scheme is not appropriate
- be responsible for setting KPIs and measuring the progress of the delivery of the objectives and targets in the BSIP and EP Plan and Scheme(s)
- monitor and manage the EP and adherence to it by the relevant parties, agreeing any necessary action to be taken
- discuss any key issues that arise that affect public transport services and put forward possible mitigating solutions.

It will be supported by topic or area-specific working groups, pulling in other key stakeholders such as district councils and businesses as required.

The Terms of Reference for the EP Management Board is at Appendix 2.

## Section 12 – EP Plan and relationship to Schemes

The objectives of this EP Plan are to:

- Rebuild and increase passenger confidence
- Have a green and sustainable transport offer
- Develop a public transport network that is the first-choice mode for most journeys
- Have a simple and affordable ticketing and fares offer

The first EP Scheme will help to deliver these objectives by:

<b><i>BSIP Objectives</i></b>	<b><i>EP Approach</i></b>
<i>1. Rebuild and increase passenger confidence</i>	<i>a) Produce and deliver a major marketing campaign to attract people back onto buses, or on for the first time</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) <i>Develop a single identity for public transport in Norfolk - Travel Norfolk – with a dedicated website</i></li> <li>c) <i>Agree and publicise a single, county-wide customer charter</i></li> <li>d) <i>Improve road network management – including better information about disruption, better management of car parking and pro-active tree management</i></li> <li>e) <i>Undertake bus priority studies on at least 6 corridors (2 Norwich, 2 King’s Lynn, 2 Great Yarmouth) and at least 4 hotspots, to identify where bus priority could be delivered and how</i></li> <li>f) <i>Introduce improvements to services following any bus priority measures that are introduced</i></li> <li>g) <i>Implement traffic light priority</i></li> <li>h) <i>Agree consistent timetable change dates</i></li> </ul>
<p><i>2. Green and sustainable transport offer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>Encourage operators to invest in cleaner more modern buses</i></li> <li>b) <i>Undertake bus priority studies on at least 6 corridors (2 Norwich, 2 King’s Lynn, 2 Great Yarmouth) and at least 4 hotspots, to identify where bus priority could be delivered and how and introduce improvements to services as a result</i></li> <li>c) <i>Use Zebra funding (if awarded) to introduce zero emission buses and their infrastructure</i></li> <li>d) <i>Produce and deliver an imaginative marketing campaign to highlight environmental benefits of bus travel</i></li> </ul>
<p><i>3. Public transport network that is first choice mode for most journeys for existing and new customers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <i>Conduct a county-wide network review of current services as a first step to delivering a consistent standard of bus service across urban and rural communities</i></li> <li>b) <i>Investigate options for an integrated journey planner</i></li> <li>e) <i>Undertake bus priority studies on at least 6 corridors (2 Norwich, 2 King’s Lynn, 2 Great Yarmouth) and at least 4 hotspots, to identify where bus priority could be delivered and how and introduce improvements to services as a result</i></li> <li>c) <i>Implement traffic light priority</i></li> <li>d) <i>Align policies for planning and new developments with the need to provide good public transport links</i></li> </ul>

<p><i>4. Simple and affordable ticketing and fares offer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Standardise the ages for free travel for children and young person fares across the county</i></li> <li><i>b) Offer a short-term fares promotion to entice people back on the bus</i></li> <li><i>c) Contactless payment systems available on 95% of services</i></li> <li><i>d) Instigate discussions about multi-operator tickets</i></li> <li><i>e) Investigate options to integrate bus tickets with other modes of transport, e.g. e-bike schemes</i></li> <li><i>f) Produce and deliver an imaginative marketing campaign to promote ticketing and fares offers</i></li> </ul>
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The measures and facilities to deliver these are set out in the Scheme below. The expectation is that the Scheme will be varied or new Schemes will be added as reviews are completed and funding is awarded.

We will work with our neighbouring authorities to ensure that where we can we will synchronise our offer, particularly where cross-boundary services are concerned, with the intention of ensuring that there are not significant differences in the public transport offer for people living and travelling across neighbouring Local Authority areas.

A county-wide customer charter would replace the existing voluntary Norwich Bus Passenger Charter. Likewise, any other voluntary and non-statutory arrangements otherwise duplicated by the implementation of any measures and facilities contained herein will be replaced by them.

## **PART B – EP SCHEME**

### **THE NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:**

#### **NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL**

##### **Section 1 – EP Scheme Content**

This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138 of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

##### **Section 2 – Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date**

##### **Section 3 – Obligations on the Local Authorities**

##### **Section 4 – Obligations on Bus Operators**

##### **Section 5 – Variation Mechanism**

##### **Section 6 – Governance Arrangements**

The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan.

The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Norfolk County Council, which is the local transport authority and the local highway authority, and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both the Local Authority and operators of local services in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of the associated EP Plan.

Lower tier authorities' contributions to the Scheme are to be fulfilled via existing service agreements between themselves and Norfolk County Council.

##### **Section 2 – Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date**

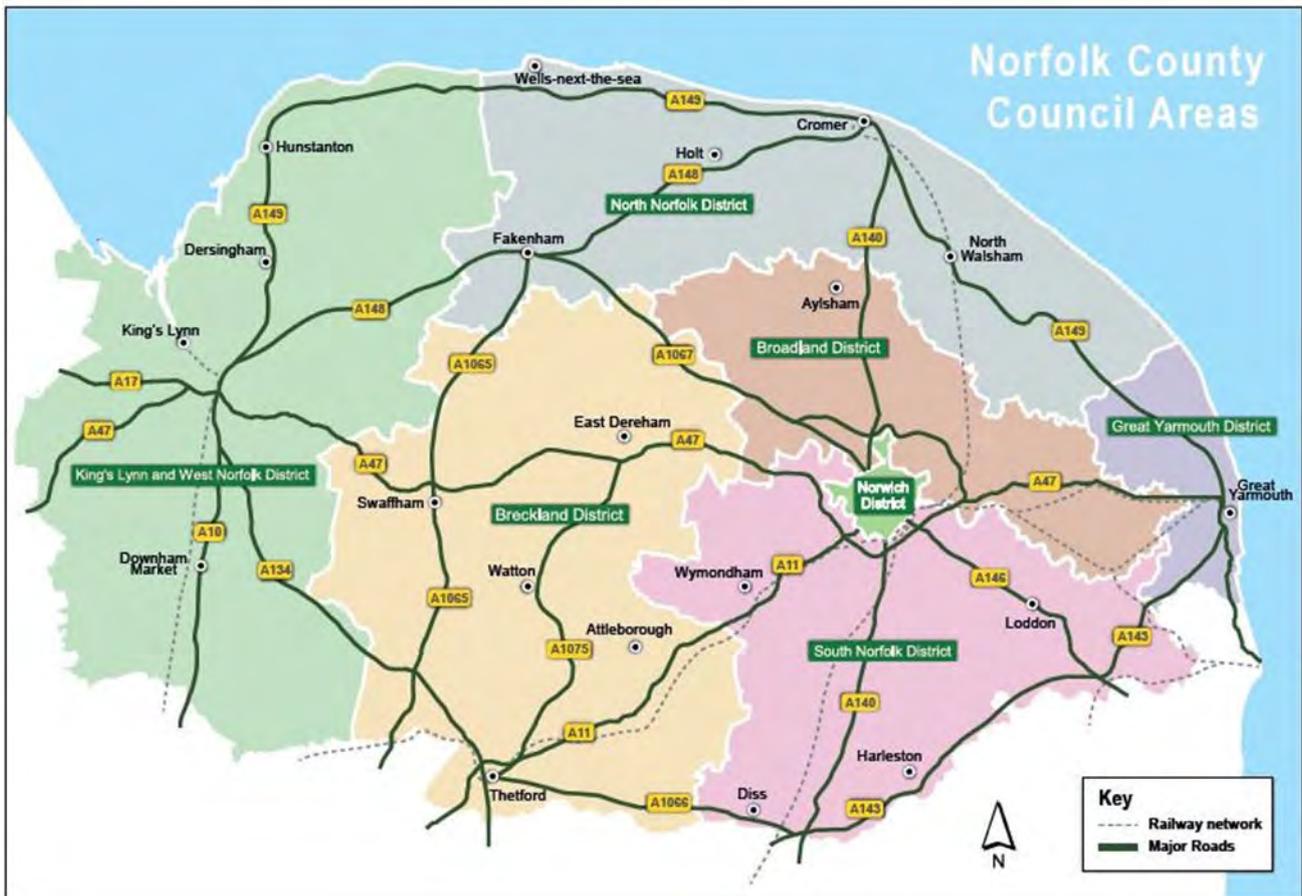
###### **Description of Geographical Coverage**

The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating in the whole administrative county of Norfolk, that have one or more stopping places in that area, even if their start and/or end point is within another local authority area. The county of Norfolk covers the following lower tier authorities:

- King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
- Breckland District Council
- North Norfolk District Council
- Broadland District Council
- Norwich City Council
- South Norfolk District Council
- Great Yarmouth Borough Council

## Map of EP Plan and EP Scheme Area

The EP Plan and Scheme occupy the same county-wide area, as indicated in the map below:



## Commencement Date

The EP Plan and Scheme are made on {date tbc}.

The EP Plan will have no end date but will be reviewed twice annually from the commencement date of 1 April 2022.

The EP Scheme will have no specific end date but will be reviewed at least twice annually as set out in section 5.

## Exempted Services

The following services are exempt from the requirements of the EP Scheme:

- Any cross-boundary registered local bus service with less than 10% of its route mileage within the EP area, e.g. a long-distance coach service, except where the EP Management Board agree that there are particular reasons why its inclusion in the EP would be to the benefit of the EP's objectives defined in the EP Plan;
- A service which is registered as a local service under section 6 of the Transport Act 1985 but which would otherwise be an excursion or tour within the meaning in section 137(1) of that Act, e.g. a hop-on, hop-off tour;

- Services that are registered as school-only services that operate only on dates when schools/colleges are open and subject to suspension if not so required;
- Any services operated under section 22 of the 1985 Act.

### Section 3 – Obligations on the Local Authority

The Scheme places the following obligations on Norfolk County Council:

Topic	Action	Who responsible	Delivery date
<b>Facilities</b>			
Traffic light priority	Introduce and maintain traffic light priority on agreed public transport corridors and develop a policy for its future deployment	Norfolk County Council	Norwich by March 2023, other areas by March 2026
Improve infrastructure	Spend at least £140k on new bus stops or to improve bus stops, in 2022/23, and review annually	Norfolk County Council	March 2023, and then on-going
Improve services and infrastructure	Deliver already-agreed and funded schemes, infrastructure and services, as approved and as per the original agreement and specification, e.g. those funded by the Transforming Cities Fund and the Rural Mobility Fund	Norfolk County Council	On-going
<b>Measures</b>			
Improve road network management	Fund a dedicated post in the transport team to deal with disruption information and act as a central point between highways and bus operators	Norfolk County Council	On-going
Provide services	Spend at least £3m on socially necessary services in the financial year 2022/23, and review annually	Norfolk County Council	March 2023, and then on-going
Customer charter	Coordinate and implement a county-wide Customer Charter	Norfolk County Council	June 2022
Major marketing campaign	Commission and undertake a major marketing campaign to get people back on the bus	Norfolk County Council	June 2022
Single system	Develop a single identity for all Norfolk's services – Travel Norfolk – and investigate the creation of a	Norfolk County Council	March 2023

	dedicated website and an integrated journey planner		
Fares promotion	Market and reimburse operators for a short-term discounted fares promotion for one week in May or October half-term 2022, to get people back on the bus	Norfolk County Council	October 2022
Improve road network management	Apply for powers to enforce moving traffic offences	Norfolk County Council	March 2023
Review of current services and network	Conduct a county-wide network review of current services as a first step to delivering a consistent standard of bus service across urban and rural communities	Norfolk County Council	June 2022
Bus priority	Undertake bus priority studies on at least 6 corridors (2 Norwich, 2 King's Lynn, 2 Great Yarmouth) and at least 4 hotspots, to identify where bus priority could be delivered and how	Norfolk County Council	End of April 2022
Improve road network management	Investigate innovative technology to assist with proactive network management e.g. sensors on buses to detect low-hanging trees	Norfolk County Council	March 2023
Planning policies	Ensure bus operators are engaged at an early stage, and throughout, with any discussions regarding significant planned growth to maximise opportunities for new and enhanced service provision	Norfolk County Council	On-going
Car parking enforcement	Prioritise enforcement that affects bus service reliability and undertake targeted enforcement following bus operator suggestions of key issues and locations	Norfolk County Council	On-going
Service provision	Integrate school movements with local bus services as much as possible (and affordable) to increase the sustainability of the service	Norfolk County Council	On-going
Ticketing	Broker negotiations regarding a Norfolk-wide multi-operator ticket and reimbursement mechanism	Norfolk County Council	March 2023

Ticketing	Investigate options for linking smart-enabled bus tickets with other modes of transport like bike share schemes	Norfolk County Council	March 2023
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#### Section 4 – Obligations on Bus Operators

The Scheme places the following obligations on operators:

Topic	Action	Who responsible	Delivery date
<b>Facilities</b>			
Improve services and infrastructure	Deliver already-agreed services, vehicle investments and service improvements, as per the original agreement and specification, e.g. those funded by the Transforming Cities Fund and the Rural Mobility Fund	Operators	On-going
Customer information	Provide road-side publicity and information about services, as per the NCC-operator information agreement	Operators	On-going
<b>Measures</b>			
Traffic light priority	Assist NCC with linking ETM technology with the traffic light priority system and ensuring it works	Operators	March 2026
Customer confidence	Agree and commit to common timetable change dates for significant changes in similar localities (e.g. the start of a school or college term in Norwich or King's Lynn)	Operators	May 2022
Customer Charter	Co-create, adhere to and publicise a county-wide Customer Charter	Operators	May 2022, and on-going
Major marketing campaign	Contribute time to the development of the campaign	Operators	June 2022
Single system	Include the new identity - Travel Norfolk - on vehicles and publicity, with a link to the new website on their own web pages	Operators	March 2023, and on-going
Fares promotion	Accept discounted fares for all journeys made during the week-	Operators	October 2022

	long promotion and assist with marketing and promotion		
Fares for young people	Agree a common age and the number of infants allowable to travel free with a fare paying adult and agree the age limit and discount for young person's fares	Operators	May 2022
Review of current services and network	Assist NCC with the county-wide network review of current services as a first step to delivering a consistent standard of bus service across urban and rural communities	Operators	June 2022
Bus priority	Assist NCC with the bus priority studies, to identify where bus priority could be delivered and how, and make suggestions	Operators	End of April 2022
Bus priority	Once any bus priority measures have been introduced, an overall improvement to the service will be provided along that corridor, that compliments the ambitions for passengers in the BSIP, e.g. later evening services, a Sunday service, improved frequency, better coordination of services.	Operators	On-going, as soon as any bus priority measures are introduced
Changes to timetables and services	Discuss any proposed changes to timetables, services and service frequencies with NCC in advance of making those changes or advertising to the public	Operators	On-going
Bus layover points	Identify points where longer layover/recovery time is required so that TROs can be changed	Operators	On-going
Ticketing	Accept PlusBus tickets for journeys within the defined area of participating rail stations	Operators	On-going
Ticketing	Take part in negotiations regarding a Norfolk-wide multi-operator ticket and reimbursement mechanism	Operators	March 2023
Ticketing	Assist with investigating options for linking smart-enabled bus tickets with other modes of transport like bike share schemes	Operators	March 2023

Planning policies	Input into discussions regarding significant planned growth to maximise opportunities for new and enhanced service provision	Operators	On-going
Car parking enforcement	Highlight to NCC locations where indiscriminate car parking is an issue so that they can prioritise enforcement in those areas	Operators	On-going

## Section 5 – Review and arrangements for revoking or varying the Scheme

Once the EP Scheme is made it will be reviewed by 30 September 2022 at the latest and then twice annually thereafter.

The review will be conducted via discussion amongst members of the EP Management Board (see section 6) and will include looking at data on progress towards targets. Any resulting variations will be subject to a bespoke agreement process, outlined below:

On receipt of a request for a variation of this EP Scheme, Norfolk County Council will reconvene the EP Management Board, giving at least 28 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by all / a simple majority of bus operators and Norfolk County Council representatives present, Norfolk County Council will make the EP Scheme variation within seven working days and publish the revised EP Scheme on its website. Operators not expressing a view at the meeting will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

Should unforeseen circumstances occur that mean that either the Local Authority and / or the Bus Operators cannot meet any or all of their commitments (e.g. a global pandemic) the Scheme may be postponed, using the bespoke agreement process detailed above.

At the time of making the EP this Scheme cannot be revoked unless the EP Plan is revoked, as it is the only Scheme attached to the Plan.

In some instances it may be more appropriate to make a new Scheme, for example if the measure or facility covers a different geographical area, in which case the Scheme will be added via the formal operator-objection and public consultation mechanism.

In the event that a number of Operators, which would trigger the default Operator objection mechanism (as set out in the Enhanced Partnerships and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 as may be varied from time to time), raise concerns in writing to a minimum of one subsequent Executive Board meeting about a previous decision of the Executive Board, the decision-making process for Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations will revert to the default Operator objection mechanism contained in those regulations to review that decision and as appropriate for future decision-making purposes.

## Section 6 – Governance arrangements

This Scheme will be managed by an EP Management Board that will comprise an equal representation from NCC (senior officers and elected Members) and bus operators (representing small, medium and large companies). It will meet at least quarterly and will:

- discuss and agree the facilities and measures from the BSIP which should be prioritised for funding and presented to NCC for formal sign-off
- agree how this Scheme should be varied to account for any new facilities and measures that are introduced
- agree if it is more appropriate for additional Schemes to be added to the Plan instead, subject to the formal consultation process
- be responsible for setting KPIs and measuring the progress of the delivery of the objectives and targets in the BSIP and EP Plan and Scheme(s)
- monitor and manage the EP and adherence to it by the relevant parties, agreeing any necessary action to be taken
- discuss any key issues that arise that affect public transport services and put forward possible mitigating solutions.

The Board will be supported by topic or area-specific working groups, pulling in other key stakeholders such as district councils and businesses as required. The Terms of Reference for the EP Management Board is at Appendix 2.

## Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms

BBB	Bus Back Better National Bus Strategy
BSIP	Bus Service Improvement Plan An ambitious plan drafted by local authorities (NCC) that sets out a series of objectives and actions to improve bus services in their area
DRT	Demand Responsive Transport An innovative approach to public transport that's more flexible than a scheduled fixed route service
EP	Enhanced Partnership A partnership between local authorities and bus operators to work together to improve bus services. Norfolk's EP covers the administrative area bound by Norfolk's county boundaries
EPP	Enhanced Partnership Plan Framework through which EP schemes can mandate improvements to bus services
EPS	Enhanced Partnership Scheme A series of commitments made by the EP, mandating them to improve bus services through facilities and measures
NBS	National Bus Strategy This government strategy was published in March 2021. It sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.
NCC	Norfolk County Council First tier local government covering the electoral and geographical extent of Norfolk
ZEBRA	Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas A central government funded scheme to help introduce zero emission buses in regional areas of England. Zero emission refers to tailpipe emissions only

## Glossary of terms

1985 Act	Transport Act 1985
2000 Act	Transport Act 2000
2017 Act	Bus Services Act 2017

Bus Operators (or Operators)	All operators of any size running Qualifying Bus Services taken collectively
County Council	Norfolk County Council
Enhanced Partnership	The Enhanced Partnership covering the geographic extent of the administrative boundary of the county of Norfolk
EP Management Board (or Board)	The committee of selected Norfolk Bus Operator representatives, County Council representatives and independent Chair responsible for drafting and/or considering recommendations to put forward to NCC so they can be enacted.
Facilities	Those facilities referred to in Part B, and its sections which shall be deemed such for the purposes of s.138D(1) of the 2000 Act.
Measures	Those measures referred to in Part B, sections 8 and/or 9 which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138D(2) of the 2000 Act.
Non-qualifying Bus Service	Services excluded from classification as Qualifying Bus Services.
Qualifying Bus Service	A registered local bus service with one or more stopping place within the geographical area of the Enhanced Partnership, with the exception of the exempted services outlined in the Scheme
Requirements	Those requirements placed upon Bus Operators identified as such within Part B, sections 8 and/or 9 which shall be deemed as such for the purposes of s.138C 2017 Act.

## Norfolk's Enhanced Partnership Management Board Terms of Reference

March 2022

### 1. Enhanced Partnership and its management

- a. The Enhanced Partnership ("EP") is the vehicle through which a Bus Service Improvement Plan ("BSIP") is delivered. The EP contains two key elements, the Plan ("EP Plan") and one or more Schemes ("EP Scheme"). It is governed by a management body known as the EP Board ("Board").

### 2. Purpose and function

- a. The Board's primary function is to advise and agree on, and manage, the delivery of the EP Plan and Scheme(s). The Terms of Reference contained herein outline governance and voting structures to assist with the efficient running of the Board and the effective management of the EP.
- b. The Board will:
  - discuss and agree the facilities and measures from the BSIP which should be prioritised for funding and presented to NCC for formal sign-off
  - agree how the EP Plan and Scheme(s) should be varied to account for any new facilities and measures that are introduced
  - be responsible for setting KPIs and measuring the progress of the delivery of the objectives and targets in the BSIP and EP Plan and Scheme(s)
  - monitor and manage the EP and adherence to it by the relevant parties, agreeing any necessary action to be taken
  - discuss any key issues that arise that affect public transport services and put forward possible mitigating solutions.
- c. The Board will not work entirely in isolation but will be supported by:
  - Topic or area specific working groups, which will include a range of representatives such as district council officers and elected members
  - An all-operator working group,
  - Passenger representative groups
  - Other key stakeholder groups as required.

### **3. Board Membership**

- a. The Board will have equal voting representation from NCC and from bus operators who run registered services within the local authority area. The chair will be independent of this.
- b. Pursuant to establishing the Board, the Confederation of Passenger Transport (“CPT”) will facilitate a meeting between operators, who will then agree the membership of the operator portion of the Board.
- c. Should one or more Operators opt to rescind their role as Board Members, the CPT will be asked to facilitate another meeting between operators to select any replacement representatives as required.
- d. The NCC representatives will be appointed internally and will include senior officers with responsibility for highways and public transport functions. Two of the representatives will be County Councillors:
  - i. the Cabinet member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport, and
  - ii. the Member Champion for Sustainable Transport
- e. Changes to Board membership will need to be notified to the Board at least 2 weeks before the date that the next meeting will be held.

### **4. Meeting arrangements**

- a. Board meeting business can only take place if the meeting is quorate.
- b. To be quorate, the following Board member attendance is required:
  - i. 3 Operator members, one each representing small, medium and large operators
  - ii. 2 NCC members
  - iii. 1 Councillor member
  - iv. 1 Independent Chair
- c. The EP Board will be scheduled to meet no less frequently than 4 times per year. In the early stages of the EP they are likely to be monthly
- d. Meeting dates will be set and notified to members at least a month in advance
- e. There will be provision for additional meetings as required to make decisions which cannot be deferred to a scheduled meeting, provided that a quorum can be achieved, with not less than two weeks’ notice being given
- f. Meetings will be arranged and serviced by NCC. They will be held in person when possible at County Hall or online via MS Teams
- g. Meeting length will vary according to agenda content but will ordinarily be up to 2 hours in length

- h. Agendas and meeting papers will be circulated to all Board members no less than one week in advance of each meeting date
- i. Draft minutes will be circulated no more than two weeks after each meeting. Copies will also be distributed to all other Operators.

## 5. Meeting Attendance and Board Member Conduct

- a. Each Board member is expected to act with due propriety. That means acting in the broader public interest and in the spirit of improving bus services, not narrowly furthering their own interests or those of their individual company or constituents. As such, they should canvass the opinion of the groups they represent before Board meetings (e.g. other operators), where reasonable.
- b. Board members will be responsible for ensuring attendance at all EP Board meetings they are invited to, and ensure they have:
  - i. fully reviewed and understood all meeting papers in advance of attendance
  - ii. the required mandate from whom they represent (e.g. other operators).
- c. If a Board member can't attend a particular meeting they can be substituted by another person of a similar level / role from the same organisation, apart from the representative for small operators, in which case someone from another small operator should be the substitute.
- d. Non-Board members, e.g. Members or Officers from lower tier authorities, will be able to attend the Board meetings as observers if invited to do so, but do not have the right to vote (see Decision Making). They may only offer input when invited to by the Chair.

## 6. Decision-making and voting mechanism

- a. Whilst the Board's role is advisory, the advice it issues is expected to represent a single, majority view of its members. Therefore there may be occasions where a majority view has to be sought via voting.
- b. The Board's membership and voting power is broken down as follows:

Member type	Votes
Independent chair (Transport Focus)	
Large Operators (First Bus)	3
Medium Operators (KonectBus, Lynx and Sanders)	3
Small Operators	1

(all other operators, represented by WNCT Ltd)	
Norfolk County Council (senior) officers	5
Norfolk County Council elected members	2

Operator size and voting rights are defined by the proportion of mileage operated on registered local bus services within Norfolk as follows:

over 40%	3 votes	First Bus
20-40%	2 votes	-
5-20%	1 vote each	KonectBus, Lynx and Sanders
< 5%	1 vote between them	All other operators

- c. Representatives not exercising their vote will be deemed to be abstaining and will not have their view counted
- d. In the event that votes are tied, the casting vote will be made by a simple majority of the operator representatives
- e. The County Council may, in exceptional circumstances, exercise a veto over EP Board decisions which it may reasonably believe or suspect as having anti-competitive implications or being otherwise significantly against the public interest or if a Board decision places a commitment on NCC that it cannot undertake
- f. If a veto is applied by NCC this won't be used in a way which either directly or indirectly results in an operator commitment

## 7. Working Groups

- a. The work of the Board will be assisted by relevant working groups. They will be formed based on the facility or measure that is being implemented or delivered, by topic or area
- b. Their purpose will be to add expertise and allow for wider stakeholder input and buy-in, for example such a working group could involve the police, local businesses or council representatives at district, borough or city level
- c. The deliberations of working groups will be fed into Board papers and meetings
- d. Working group representatives will also be invited to attend Board meetings where relevant to provide input and gain direction from the Board

# Cabinet

Item No: 12

**Report Title: Norwich Western Link Update**

**Date of Meeting: 7 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Martin Wilby (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)**

**Responsible Director: Tom McCabe (Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services)**

**Is this a Key Decision? ~~Yes~~/ No**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A**

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

In December 2016 the County Council agreed a motion which stated the ‘...Council recognises the vital importance of improving our road infrastructure and that this will help to deliver the new jobs and economic growth that is needed in the years ahead.’ The Norwich Western Link (NWL) was included as one of three priority infrastructure schemes and is highlighted in the Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2017-2027.

The NWL is a proposed new 3.8-mile-long dual carriageway between the western end of Broadland Northway and the A47. Traffic congestion, rat-running through local communities and delays to journeys are all significant issues on minor roads and within the local communities to the west of Norwich. Without intervention, these problems are expected to get worse with anticipated population and job growth in and around the city.

This report is an update on progress with the NWL, which will bring crucial benefits to the county as part of our wider transport plans. If completed and open for use it would:

- i. Significantly reduce many journey times to the west of Norwich, with some more than halving, and shortening response times for many ambulances travelling to the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital;

- ii. Lead to a reduction in carbon emissions from vehicles by making many journeys more efficient, which supports local and national carbon reduction targets;
- iii. Boost Norfolk's economy and support its businesses by reducing transport costs, opening up new markets and increasing productivity through quicker and more reliable journeys;
- iv. Improve road safety with 529 fewer accidents within west Norwich communities involving a motor vehicle over the next 60 years, an average of nine fewer accidents a year;
- v. Take traffic off unsuitable local roads through communities including Weston Longville, which will see a reduction of approximately 80% in through traffic, leading to an improved quality of life of local residents from an environmental and safety perspective and supporting people to walk, cycle and use public transport;
- vi. Create new habitats and improve existing ones across a wide area to the west of Norwich to support a range of wildlife and provide connectivity through green bridges and wildlife underpasses.

Complementary measures designed to maximise these benefits and support sustainable forms of transport are also intended to be delivered as part of the NWL project and also as part of the wider Transport for Norwich (TfN) Strategy. These include:

- A network of walking and cycling links that connect communities within local proximity to the NWL project, as part of the Sustainable Transport Strategy for the project
- Improvements to the Dereham Road corridor into Norwich with new bus lane proposals being developed as part of the Transforming Cities Fund project, which forms part of the longer term TfN Strategy

The benefits of the NWL project set out above are being carefully balanced against the potential environmental impacts and concerns that have been raised. The Council is taking its environmental responsibilities on this project very seriously and appropriate environmental mitigation measures are an essential part of the scheme design, and a significant proportion of the scheme cost is allocated to ensure their provision, together with the delivery of biodiversity net gain on all applicable habitats. The project will aim to minimise and mitigate adverse effects it may have on nature and wildlife and will seek to create new habitats for wildlife and improve existing ones across a wide area to the west of the city. The project team are continuing to take an evidence-based approach and receiving advice from experts and statutory bodies to develop the design proposals.

This report provides an update on work undertaken on the project since the 7 June 2021 Cabinet meeting, which includes the development of the scheme design and the need to complete this work before undertaking a pre-application consultation.

## **Recommendations:**

- 1. Cabinet to note the work undertaken to progress the NWL and the plan for a further update report to be presented to its meeting on 6 June 2022.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1** The County Council has continued to make significant investments in the 'Transport for Norwich' transport plans. This includes over £40m of investment currently being delivered as part of the 3-year programme of Transforming Cities Funding (TCF), which is seeing improvements in sustainable travel, more Active Travel investments and, in addition, an £18m commitment from First Bus to improve their fleet within the City. A report summarising the outcome of the consultation into the draft new Transport for Norwich (TfN) Strategy, the changes made to the strategy, and the final version of the strategy was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 6 December 2021. At this meeting Cabinet resolved to adopt the Transport for Norwich Strategy, which incorporates changes arising from the consultation feedback.

National Highways are also bringing forward major improvements to the A47, including a dual carriageway between North Tuddenham and Easton. The delivery of this improvement further highlights the need to deliver the NWL, to connect the A47 to the Major Road Network (Broadland Northway) to the west of Norwich.

In July 2019, the NWL project was confirmed as a regional priority by Transport East, and a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT). The SOBC was approved on 15 May 2020 by the DfT giving provisional entry into the DfT's Large Local Majors programme alongside funding to support the submission of the Outline Business Case (OBC). When the Government launched its National Infrastructure Strategy in November 2020, they set out that investment in infrastructure would be a crucial part of the country's economic recovery following the coronavirus pandemic.

- 1.2** On 7 June 2021, Cabinet received a report which provided an update on work completed on the delivery of the NWL project and sought agreement on a number of recommendations.

Cabinet resolved to:

- i.** Agree to the continued delivery of the project and to the submission of the Outline Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT), to secure a total of c.£169m of government funding for the project for Norfolk;
- ii.** Following the outcome of the procurement process for the project, to agree to award the contract to the bidder that has achieved the highest score in

- accordance with the evaluation criteria, and to delegate to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport, the authority to approve the finalisation and signing of the contract.
- iii. Agree to the commencement of the non-statutory pre-planning application consultation in the autumn of 2021 and to delegate to the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport in consultation with the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, the authority to approve the details for that consultation, which will be based on the design solution developed by the successful bidder (see item 3 above);
  - iv. Authorise the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services to take all appropriate actions necessary for the purpose of negotiating the terms and conditions to acquire by agreement (in advance of the CPO) the land and new rights over land which are needed to allow the construction, operation and maintenance of the NWL;
  - v. Agree to acquire land required for the delivery of the NWL project by negotiated agreement and if this is not achievable in the timescales required, to agree in principle to the Council's use of compulsory purchase powers, and for authority to be delegated to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services to proceed with preparatory work (including land referencing and requisitions for information) to facilitate the drafting of, and all necessary steps to prepare for the making, publication and submission to the DfT for confirmation, of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) in support of the NWL project (noting that a further Cabinet resolution will be sought in due course, to authorise the making, publication and submission of the CPO and confirming the final details therein);
  - vi. Agree in principle to the Council's making of a side roads order (SRO) under the Highways Act 1980 to authorise works necessary in connection with the delivery of the NWL project, and to the subsequent making, publication and submission of the SRO to DfT for confirmation, and for authority to be delegated to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services to proceed with preparatory work to facilitate the drafting of, and all necessary steps to prepare for the making, publication and submission of the SRO to the DfT for confirmation (noting that a further Cabinet resolution will be sought in due course, to authorise the making, publication and submission of the SRO and confirming the final details therein).
  - vii. Delegate to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, the authority to 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 budget.

- 1.3 At its meeting on 7 June 2021, held after the Cabinet meeting referred to above, the County Council also resolved:
- i. To endorse the decision taken by Cabinet to refer its decision made on 7 June 2021 to Full Council as required by the Council's Financial Regulations set out in its Constitution at App 15 para 3.6.1;
  - ii. To agree to include £186.836m in the forward capital programme, funded from £167.605m of DfT Grant and £19.231m local contribution, underwritten by the County Council which would be funded through additional prudential borrowing.
- 1.4 The decisions made at the 7 June 2021 Cabinet were called into Scrutiny Committee and at its meeting of 23 June 2021 the Scrutiny Committee noted the call-in request but decided that no action was required.
- 1.5 On 20 October 2021 a report presented to Scrutiny Committee outlined the work undertaken since the 7 June 2021 Cabinet meeting. The committee resolved that it place on record thanks to Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport, and David Allfrey, Infrastructure Delivery Manager, for attending the meeting and answering Councillors' detailed questions. The committee also resolved that it noted the report and asked to receive a further progress report in the new year after the timing of the planning application is known.
- 1.6 This latest Cabinet report outlines the work undertaken on the NWL since the 7 June 2021 Cabinet meeting.

## **2. Project Update**

### **2.1 Outline Business Case (OBC) Submission**

- 2.1.1 The County Council, with support from WSP, has produced the OBC for the Scheme and this was submitted to the DfT Large Local Majors programme on 25 June 2021. The OBC is the successive step following acceptance by DfT of the SOBC and sets out the case for the scheme in greater detail.
- 2.1.2 The DfT are continuing to evaluate the OBC submission and there is no prescribed timescale for this assessment process. At the time of writing a confirmed date for their decision on the OBC has not been provided by the DfT.

### **2.2 Design Development**

- 2.2.1 The contract between the County Council and Ferrovial Construction (UK) Limited was executed on 12 July 2021; it has 3 stages:
- Stage 1 – design and support through the statutory approvals process;

- Stage 2 – construction;
  - Stage 3 – initial maintenance, particularly in relation to the environmental measures.
- 2.2.2 Following award of the contract, a joint office has been set up to allow Council officers to work closely with Ferrovial Construction as the project moves forward.
- 2.2.3 The preferred route for the NWL was agreed in July 2019, and the award of the contract has allowed the design proposals to be developed further ahead of a pre-application consultation. Since the award of the contract, the Council has been working with Ferrovial Construction and WSP to continue to develop the design proposals and associated measures.
- 2.2.4 It is important that the design development is based on evidence and expert advice. This includes the considerable mitigation and enhancement measures that are being designed into the scheme to support local ecology, including bat populations.
- 2.2.5 The Council has commissioned expert advice and survey data, which is being used to inform the scheme design proposals and associated measures (and this includes the Council's most recent (2021) bat surveys). The surveys that have already been completed include:
- Ground investigation works;
  - Topographical surveys;
  - Utility apparatus surveys;
  - Drainage surveys;
  - Ecology surveys;
  - Vehicle speed and Non-Motorised User (NMU) surveys.
- 2.2.6 The NWL project aims to achieve biodiversity net gain on all applicable habitats. Extensive ecological surveys were undertaken in 2019 and 2020 and this information formed part of the ecological baseline data used to develop the scheme design. In the summer of 2021, a suite of further bat surveys was carried out to support the understanding of bat activity. All surveys have been carried out by accredited experts and have included bat trapping and radio-tracking fully agreed with and licenced by Natural England.
- 2.2.7 Following analysis of the data obtained from our 2021 surveys, it was determined that there is a roost location used by a maternity colony of barbastelle bats (that has a significant level of environmental protection) near to part of the proposed road alignment. Therefore, as part of the ongoing scheme design development, work is currently being undertaken to assess, refine and develop the relevant length of the route alignment of the scheme and to assess and address the need for mitigation to minimise the impact of the scheme on the relevant area of woodland.

- 2.2.8 An indication of the scope of the refinement to the alignment that is being assessed, taking into account all of the identified project constraints within the corridor of the preferred route, is shown as the dotted line on the plan in Appendix A of this report. It is important to note that this is not a change to the preferred route of the scheme (which is shown by a solid line on the plan in Appendix A); it is a refinement of a part of the design of that preferred route. This type of work to refine the proposals is not uncommon and is part of the normal process of a project's design development.
- 2.2.9 Whilst an indication of the refinement to the alignment is provided on the plan in Appendix A this will be subject to further assessment and development.
- 2.2.10 It has been a clear objective that the NWL scheme is developed so that it can be delivered in an environmentally responsible way and the responsible approach is to ensure that sufficient time is provided to complete all necessary assessment work. It is appropriate for a project as complex as the NWL to take the necessary time to ensure the best overall solution can be developed.
- 2.2.11 Therefore, the assessment and design work is ongoing and needs to be further progressed before any programme and cost implications can also be fully assessed. It is the project team's intention to progress the assessment and design work over the coming months to enable a further update to be reported to the June 2022 Cabinet meeting. By that time, it is anticipated that further work will have been carried out which will enable the Council to outline the scheme design to be taken forward to non-statutory pre-planning application consultation together with any updates to the project programme and budget.
- 2.2.12 Surveys will continue to be undertaken to inform the design development, and these include:
- Wind speed monitoring in the Wensum Valley;
  - Archaeological surveys - discussions with landowners regarding access arrangements for these surveys are ongoing;
  - Continued ground investigation and ecological surveys.

### 2.3 Pre-application Consultation

- 2.3.1 At its meeting on 7 June 2021 Cabinet agreed to the commencement of the non-statutory pre-planning application consultation. This consultation will be the fourth public consultation conducted on the NWL project.
- 2.3.2 The objectives for the consultation are to:
- Receive feedback on elements which will be included in the planning application, particularly:

- The design of the road, including its alignment and its structures, including the viaduct
  - Environmental mitigation and enhancement measures
  - Traffic mitigation measures;
- Understand any potential risks or objections so that these can be considered and acted upon as appropriate prior to the submission of the planning application;
- Update people on progress with the proposals that were consulted upon in the 2020 Local Access Consultation, namely the local roads that would be crossed by the NWL, the complementary measures set out in the Sustainable Transport Strategy, and the proposed changes to Public Rights of Way.

2.3.3 A pre-application consultation plan, that sets out the proposed format of the consultation, has been produced. In consultation with the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, this plan was approved by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport and Environmental Services on 14 October 2021, and was reported to the 8 November 2021 Cabinet meeting.

2.3.4 However, there is a need to complete the design development work in a fully robust manner, taking account of any new evidence, before the Council is in a position to share its proposals in the pre-application consultation. This has resulted in a delay to the pre-application consultation date. A detailed review of the programme, including consideration of the timescales required to enable further development of the scheme design, is currently being undertaken in order to determine the new consultation date.

2.3.5 It is intended that the updated programme, including the proposed dates for the pre-application consultation, will be presented in a report to Cabinet for the planned June 2022 Cabinet meeting.

2.3.6 Stakeholder engagement regarding the NWL project has been ongoing since the last report to Cabinet in June 2021 and positive discussions have helped to inform the development of the scheme, including introducing Ferrovia Construction to key stakeholders and developing the local traffic mitigation measures.

## 2.4 Land

2.4.1 Since the Cabinet report in June 2021, discussions with a number of directly affected landowners have continued. This has primarily been regarding access for surveys and ground investigations but also, in some cases, regarding design and access issues. No further land parcels have been acquired since the last Cabinet update. A discretionary purchase request was

received in February 2022, is being considered and will likely be the subject of a separate, future Cabinet report.

- 2.4.2 The potential refinement to the alignment described above could generate a change to the current footprint of the scheme and if so, we will engage further with the small number of affected landowners in due course.

## 2.5 A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Dualling Update

2.5.1 The public examination of National Highways' application for a development consent order (DCO) for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling scheme commenced on 12 August 2021 and finished on 12 February 2022. The Examining Authority (appointed by the Planning Inspectorate) is expected to present his report on the examination, together with recommendations, to the Secretary of State (SoS) on or before 12 May 2022. After this report has been submitted, the SoS has 3 months to determine whether to confirm development consent for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton project.

2.5.2 Therefore, confirmation of whether development consent for the A47 North Tuddenham to Easton dualling scheme has been granted should be known around August 2022. National Highways have advised that, based on the expected timescales detailed above, mobilisation of the contractor to commence the main construction works for the scheme is expected around Spring 2023.

2.5.3 The County Council has taken an active part in the public examination in both its role as the local highway authority and as the developer for the NWL. This has included attendance at examination hearings and providing responses to the Examining Authority where required.

2.5.4 A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) submitted to the Examining Authority before the closure of the examination has been produced to identify where agreement has been reached between the County Council and National Highways. With regard to the co-ordination of the NWL with the A47 dualling, both parties have committed to work together to ensure that the most appropriate solution is found to the delivery of both projects and to avoid any potential disruption to each of the respective works.

## 2.6 Next steps

2.6.1 The Council's work with Ferrovial Construction and WSP will continue in order to develop and refine the scheme so that the proposals to be taken forward for a planning application can be presented at a pre-application public consultation. This work will include further surveys, refinement of the scheme design (and its associated mitigation measures), and development of the consultation materials.

### **3. Impact of the Proposal**

- 3.1 The report planned for the June 2022 Cabinet meeting will outline the scheme design to be taken forward to the non-statutory pre-planning application consultation together with updates to the project programme and budget.

### **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 4.1 This report is intended to provide Cabinet with an update on the work undertaken to progress the NWL since the last report to its meeting on 7 June 2021 and to outline its planned intention to continue the necessary scheme development work and submit a further report to its meeting in June 2022.

### **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The preferred route decision on 15 July 2019 Cabinet was made as a result of extensive studies and consultation to deal with the transport issues in the area, whilst also having regard to environmental constraints.
- 5.2 Based on development of the design proposals to date, and on the basis of the information collected to date, it is not considered necessary for the Council to re-examine the options selection decision that it made in July 2019.

### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The report to Cabinet in June 2021 included project cost details in section 6.2. This showed costs up to the end of 20/21 were £11.5m and projected costs for the 21/22 financial year were £12.3m. To the end of January 2022, the total project liability is £19m, including allowances for all property purchases completed to date. It is intended that a report for the June 2022 Cabinet meeting will provide an update on the project programme and budget.

### **7. Resource Implications**

#### **7.1 Staff:**

None expected as a result of this report's recommendations.

#### **7.2 Property:**

See section 2.4 above.

#### **7.3 IT:**

None expected as a result of this report's recommendations.

## **8. Other Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

### **8.2 Human Rights Implications:**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

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

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

### **8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

### **8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

### **8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

### **8.7 Any Other Implications:**

In view of the content of this report, there are no changes to the details as reported in June 2021.

## **9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

- 9.1 Refer to the report presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 7 June 2021. It is intended that a further update on risk will be provided in a report for Cabinet in June 2022.

## **10. Select Committee Comments**

- 10.1 This report has not been considered by a Select Committee.

## **11. Recommendations**

- 1. Cabinet to note the work undertaken to progress the NWL and the plan for a further update report to be presented to its meeting on 6 June 2022.**

## 12. Background Papers

### 12.1 Links to previous committee papers:

- Scrutiny Committee 20 October 2021 – Follow this [link](#)
- Scrutiny Committee 23 June 2021 – Follow this [link](#)
- Cabinet 7 June 2021 – Follow this [link](#)
- Council Meeting 7 June 2021 – Follow this [link](#)
- Cabinet 3 February 2020 – Follow this [link](#)
- Cabinet 15 July 2019 Follow this [link](#)
- EDT Committee 8 March 2019 – Follow this [link](#)
- EDT Committee 09 November 2018 – Follow this [link](#)
- EDT Committee 12 October 2018 – Follow this [link](#)
- EDT Committee 20 October 2017 – Follow this [link](#) (Reports tab)
- EDT Committee 15 September 2017 – Follow this [link](#) (item 15, page 98)
- Business and Property Committee 08 September 2017 – Follow this [link](#) (see item 10)
- Council Meeting 12 December 2016 - Follow this [link](#) (see section 5.4)
- EDT Committee 08 July 2016 – Follow this [link](#) (see item 9, page 25)
- EDT Committee 18 September 2014 – Follow this [link](#) (see item 11, page 28)

### 12.2 Link to National Highways (formerly Highways England) Information:

- A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Improvement Scheme via this [link](#)
- DCO application for A47 North Tuddenham to Easton Improvement Scheme via this [link](#)

### Officer Contact

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

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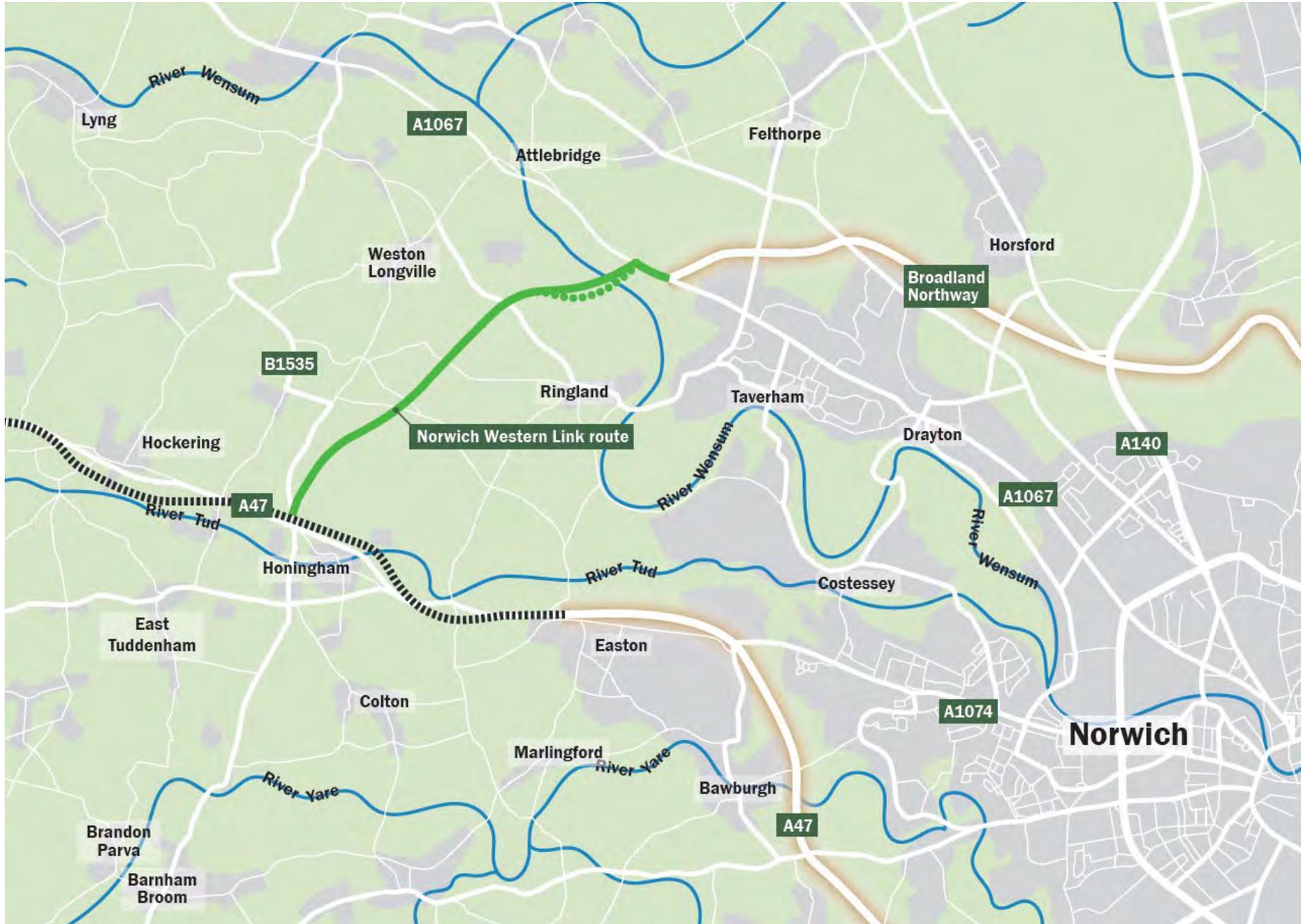
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# APPENDIX A



# Cabinet

Item No: 13

**Report Title: NCC Companies Business Plans**

**Date of Meeting: 7 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management**

**Responsible Director: Simon George  
Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services**

**Is this a Key Decision? No**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 26 January 2022**

## **Introduction from Cabinet Member**

The County Council has created several companies to assist in the delivery of the Council's aims and objectives.

This report seeks Cabinet approval for each of the four main companies to operate within their 2022/23 Business Plan as approved by their respective Boards.

The Business Plans have already been reviewed by the NCC Companies Governance Panel at their meetings in February and recommended for Cabinet consideration.

## **Executive Summary**

In order to aid good governance, Cabinet is tasked with reviewing and approving the 2022/23 Business Plans for Hethel Innovation Ltd, Independence Matters C.I.C, Norse Group Limited and Repton Property Developments Limited to ensure they reflect the aspirations of the shareholder.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Cabinet is asked to:**

1. Review and approve the Hethel Innovation Ltd 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix A.

2. Review and approve the Independence Matters C.I.C 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix B.
3. Review and approve the Norse Group Limited 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix C.
4. Review and approve the Repton Property Developments Limited 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix D.

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1 The 2022/23 Business Plans of the Council's four most significant companies have been approved by their respective Boards.
- 1.2 The newly created NCC Companies Governance Panel reviewed the four 2022/23 Business Plans at their meetings on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February and agreed that they should be recommended to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Financial Regulations, the Business Plans for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are presented to Cabinet for final approval.

## **2. Proposal**

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to review and approve the four 2022/23 Business Plans set out in Appendices A-D of this report.

## **3. Impact of the Proposal**

- 3.1 The directors of the four companies are clear on the shareholder's requirements, and Cabinet is fulfilling its responsibilities to monitor and receive reports on the Business Plan of a Norfolk County Council owned company.

## **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 4.1 Each company's board has approved a 2022/23 Business Plan and are seeking Cabinet's consent to operate the company in accordance with their Business Plan.

## **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 NCC, as shareholder, could set alternative objectives for the company and request a revised Business Plan.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 These are set in each attached Business Plan.

## **7. Resource Implications**

### **7.1 Staff:**

None. Each company employ their own staff apart from Repton Property Developments Limited. Repton Property Developments Limited utilises NCC staff and reimburses NCC for the cost of their time.

### **7.2 Property:**

None. Although the intention is for NCC to continue to sell surplus land at market value to Repton Property Developments Limited. The sites will then be developed, and the new homes sold to the public or a housing association.

### **7.3 IT:**

None for NCC.

## **8. Other Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

The approval of a company business case for new companies is required under the Local Government (Best Value Authorities) (Power to Trade) (England) Order 2009/2393. However, it is good practice to ensure that business plans are regularly received for approval by the Executive.

### **8.2 Human Rights Implications:**

No specific human rights have been identified.

### **8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):**

None. The directors of each company are responsible for ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

### **8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):**

None.

### **8.5 Health and Safety implications**

The directors of each company are responsible for discharging the health and safety duties of the company.

### **8.6 Sustainability implications:**

None.

### **8.7 Any Other Implications:**

None.

## 9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 If Cabinet decide not to approve the business plans it runs the risk of causing operational delay and additional costs for each company. Each company has its own comprehensive risk register which is monitored and managed by the company directors.

## 10. Select Committee Comments

10.1 None.

## 11. Recommendations

### Cabinet is asked to:

1. Review and approve the Hethel Innovation Ltd 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix A.
2. Review and approve the Independence Matters C.I.C 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix B.
3. Review and approve the Norse Group Limited 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix C.
4. Review and approve the Repton Property Developments Limited 2022/23 Business Plan in Appendix D.

### Officer Contact

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

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# Business Plan 2022 - 2023

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# 1

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We have an exciting year ahead of us at HIL. We will continue to manage the challenges and risks the pandemic and economy are presenting; however, we are in a fantastic position to develop and grow the businesses whilst delivering real economic growth.

The 2022-2023 business plan centres around extending our reach and building our reputation as the place for collaborative communities. We will diversify our offering which will provide development for our people; investing in our team is hugely important to us and we take pride in the career opportunities we can offer. Our focus is on making innovation accessible, supporting the post-Covid recovery effort and positively impacting local businesses through our supportive and flexible incubation.

Our three priority activities will capitalise on market development and penetration opportunities. These are the first phases of our 2021-2024 company strategy and allow us to deliver economic outputs - as such increasing the number of high value jobs, successful start-ups and businesses upskilled as well as new products, processes, and services launched. In turn, these will all increase the GVA in the region, having a wider positive impact on our county.



# 2

## OBJECTIVE FOR THE YEAR

To help businesses recover from the impacts of the pandemic and launch successful start-ups by fully integrating our three services and growing a community of growth-minded businesses.

This delivers against our two overarching business objectives as outlined in the 2021-2024 strategy of delivering economic growth and being self-sufficient. Our three services (Space to Grow, Business Insight, and Connected Communities) have all changed over the last two years due to internal direction and external pressures which all need to be fully implemented and commercialised over the next financial year. This means systemising and digitising our operations to suit these services and increase our productivity.

### 2.1. 2022-2023 Key Performance Indicators

To meet our shareholder set objectives of delivering economic growth and being self-sufficient, we have set a number of KPIs to motivate and guide our team. For 2022-2023 these are:

- Increase the number of:
  - jobs on site by 77
  - additional GVA by £3.7m
  - start-ups supported by 15
  - businesses upskilled by 71
  - NPPS supported by 30
- Maintain our current debtors below 10% of annual turnover
- Keep staff turnover below 20% across all HIL departments

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## 2.2. Main Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities that we will capitalise on in the 2022-2023 financial year in order to achieve our objective. These are outlined below:

### **Increased demand for flexible commercial space**

There is an increasingly popular trend and model within the commercial real estate sector of buildable membership options instead of traditional lease and tenancy agreements. The ability to grow and shrink following project and customer demand is a USP for our members and one we will continue to support throughout the coming year.

### **Increased demand for conferencing and site hire**

The enquiries for both conferencing space and site hire have increased over the past few months, and we predict this will continue as restrictions ease in 2022-2023.

### **Community turnover**

We have members across our sites who will be moving on this financial year, whether that's because they have outgrown our spaces or need to be part of a different community more aligned to their objectives and activities. We are comfortable with turnover; it is part of our business model. This turnover allows us to keep the community fresh, expand our reach, and keep our rental income at a market level.

### **Public sector focus on innovation and post-Covid recovery**

Many local councils are looking to provide support for innovation to help businesses recover. This gives us an opportunity to expand our physical reach and/or sector coverage to add value to our community. National Government are also increasing their investment in innovation support which we could utilise.

### **Commercialisation of business development**

The end of EU funding and uncertain UK Government replacements has pushed us to commercialise our support services which allows us to widen our remit, develop unique offerings, and provide exciting projects for our team to work on.

---

## 2.3. Top Risks

We will face some challenges this year, as every business does. The risks we will have to mitigate are outlined below:

### **Inflation and interest increases**

Whilst this will not directly impact our costs a concerning amount, it could increase costs for our members and their ability to pay for our services. This will be mitigated through regular communication with our customers and a negotiation approach to dealing with any payment issues.

### **Growth of the team as our sites grow**

Recruiting, inducting, and training new team members is time-intensive and will require management resourcing. This will be mitigated with standard operating procedures for recruitment and our new digital HR system.

### **Changing demands from members for our space**

The commercial real estate sector is changing, calling for more short-term, flexible dedicated spaces alongside communal and wellbeing facilities. The demand for hotdesking and pod facilities has evened out, despite the initial rise at the start of the pandemic. We are mitigating this through capital investment at both HEC and SEP, however these rely on capital funding through grant and NCC sources which will both require strong business and economic impact cases in order to secure the funding.

### **Cashflow and tax management**

In the coming year, our cashflow position is predicted to be below our working capital target due to outstanding invoices from the 2021-2022 financial year and capital costs of improving existing buildings. This cashflow position is also impacted by tax on our profits from the 2021-2022 financial year. This will be mitigated by undertaking tax planning with our accountants and regularly monitoring our cashflow and adjusting our payments and projects to ensure we stay in a positive cash position for as long as possible.

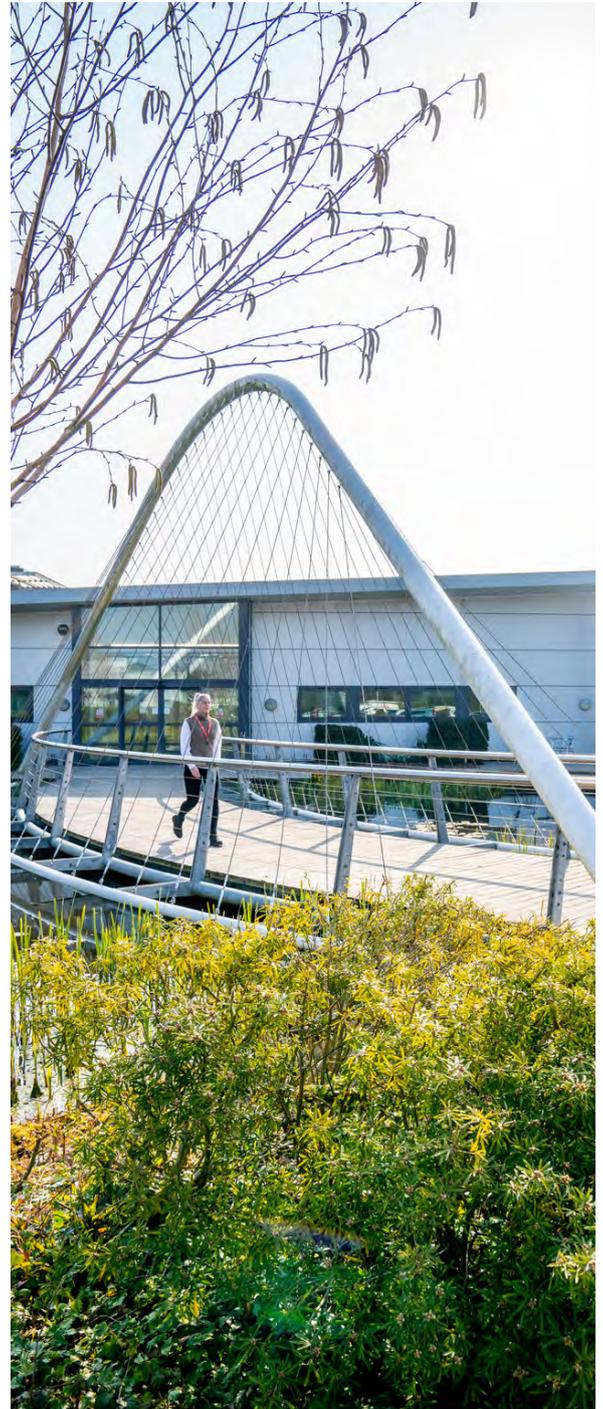
# 3

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The priority for Hethel Innovation in the coming year is to build our reputation within our existing market and customer base. This combines a couple of our critical success factors as outlined in the 2021 - 2024 company strategy:

- **Build a strong brand recognised for incubation and support as Hethel Innovation**
- **Create a stronger, more collaborative community across all our people, members and locations**

To build our reputation, we will focus on a handful of activities to ensure they are properly resourced and deliver the desired impact. These will exploit our Market Development and Market Penetration strategies. The following sections outline our plans for the year ahead, but even the best laid plans need to be able to change and adapt to ensure we are using resources as effectively as possible. We expect that these plans will flex but the end goals and objectives will remain the same.



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## 3.1. Priority 1: Business Development

Our approach to business development products is changing, as outlined in the 2021-2024 strategy, away from a split between associate consultancy and business development products to a range of products which will be delivered by a mixed team of external and internal expertise. Our approach, along with a reflection on how we have run the function commercially from July 2021, can be found below.

### 3.1.1. Reflection

The first eight months of commercial delivery of our Business Development function (July 2021-March 2022) has been positive. We have maintained our agile approach to business operations, adapting to our customers' needs in order to find the best suited business model for the department. The change from a fully funded department to one that accesses no external funding was significant, but we were confident that despite a change in fee structure felt by our clients, the value of our support would continue to be recognised. Our plan for business support delivery in 2021-2022 was built on our experience of successful 1-2-1 support and training delivery, as well as the customer research, customer feedback and competitor analysis of the market at the time.

However, we have acknowledged some key learnings:

- The training market is saturated. Despite the value of our training being recognised by hundreds of businesses when delivered through our funded projects, the current market for paid courses is not as open as we expected it to be.
- Businesses would rather do in-house training on specific topics, such as Agile Project Management, on their own and not with other companies.
- Mentoring services, where our advisors offer mentorship and accountability to individuals running their business, is a new product offering which was developed due to a customer demand we didn't expect to see.
- Our existing associate consultancy model does not work as it is currently set up. The financial return for Hethel Innovation is minimal compared to the bespoke innovation support we deliver, and the demand for the technical expertise from our members has been incredibly low.
- Our bespoke innovation support is popular, with innovation workshops and design sprints allowing us to work with members to support with problem solving and project planning.

- Member Perks has seen a slower than expected uptake from members, but we have a selection of suppliers on offer now that allows for greater uptake for the service.

Using the knowledge and experience of the initial months of commercialisation, we have pivoted our business model. With some products not being as successful as we expected, we are ensuring that our expertise and content isn't lost by rethinking the way that we deliver our support. Nevertheless, at the heart of our delivery model is the fact that we continue to offer support to businesses that can help them to problem solve and ideate.

## 3.1.2. Our vision in Business Development

### Our vision

The Business Development team at Hethel Innovation is the place to go for innovation support. We are experts in innovative thinking and supporting the acceleration of business growth. We are responsible for creating an innovative community across all our sites, which drives the value of these assets to our members.

### Why do we do what we do?

We want to make the difference to our members. Our focus is to feed into the economic development of our region by supporting the success of business owners and the creation of jobs, building a network of successful and growing businesses, and creating a more connected business community.

### How do we reach our vision?

We want to make innovation accessible. We believe any business can innovate, and that there is a current perception that only big, elite, resource rich companies have the time or need to think innovatively. Put simply, our team supports businesses to overcome challenges and to recognise alternative ways of approaching their growth. We create a space for good ideas and problem solving through our Innovation Workshops.

Our revised delivery model centres around our Hethel Innovation workshops. Based on the concept of the Design Sprint process used by Google Ventures, these workshops are time limited events which address a specific business challenge and create actionable solutions, quickly. The purpose of a Hethel Innovation workshop is to develop ideas in a short amount of time in order to solve a challenge.

This challenge may be a barrier that is preventing an organisation from achieving its goals (eg to help them improve growth, to reach more customers (or the right customers), to grow profits, and improve efficiency and teamwork). These workshops will include expertise from our internal team members as well as external experts who can provide technical advice to particular challenges.

The outcome of these time-efficient workshops is that not only have we upskilled a business, supporting them through the innovation process, but we also develop a delivery plan for our client. We help our customers to do something with their ideas, connecting them to future partners, providing in-house training on agile project management, and mentoring them through the application of their new processes or creation of their new products (see figure 1).

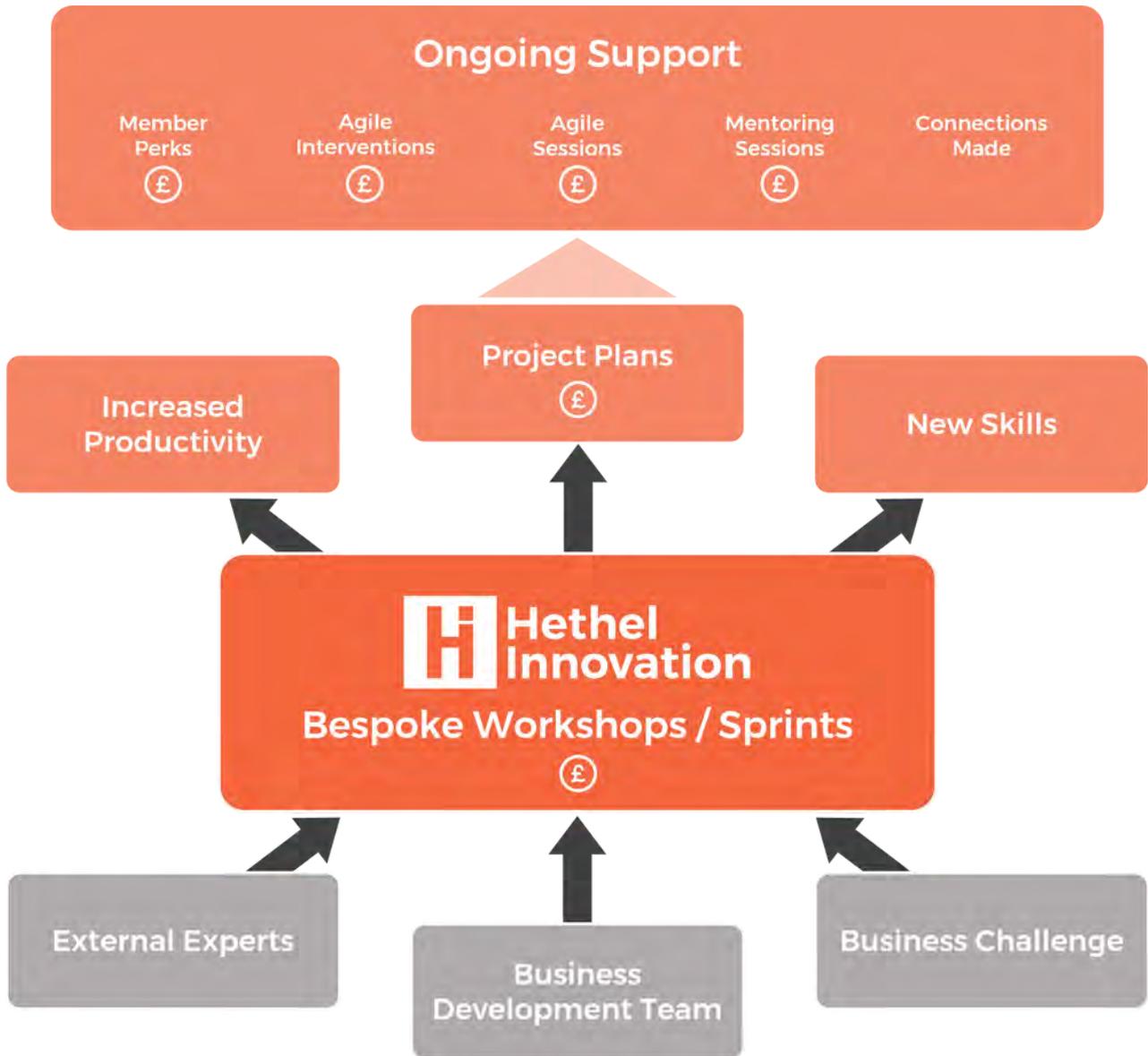


Figure 1: A diagram showing the process of delivering support through our Hethel Innovation Workshops

### 3.1.3. Our Commercialisation Delivery Plan

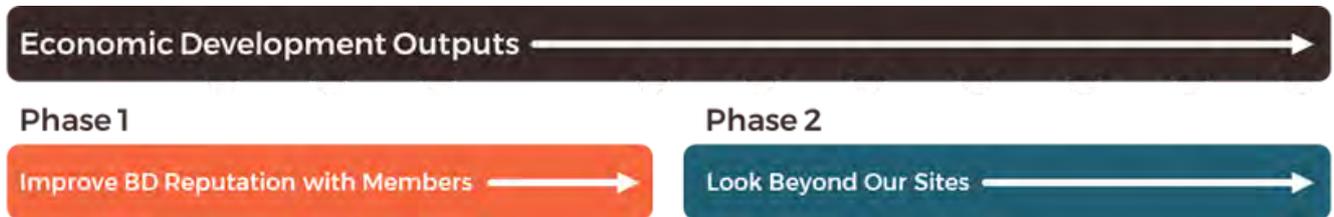


Figure 2: Our 2-phase delivery plan

There are two phases to the adoption of our new delivery model (see Figure 2). The first phase focuses on improving our reputation with members so that we are always recognised as the team to go to if they have any challenges within their business. In phase 1 of our plan, our target market will be our members. Building a reputation will take time, and as a company we recognise that the work that Business Development do is integral to the delivery of our company strategy. We will commit the resources needed to cement Business Development as a core offering, as without this team our value proposition falls apart. During phase 1, Business Development will not create a profit. The aim is to deliver value to our community – the success of our members demonstrates our own success and helps build our reputation.

We anticipate our ability to focus on external businesses who are not based on our sites to change over time, and we will look at expanding our target market once we have fully established our function as a key part of the tenancy offering for our members. It is in this phase, phase 2, in which Business Development will become a profit-making department. This focus on economic growth and supporting our businesses aligns strongly to the Shareholder direction and as long as we are able to sustain our usual operations across the business, we will invest into delivering business development services.

The delivery over the 2022-2023 financial year has been mapped out based on two fully operational team members and recruiting a new team member in April 2022. The delivery is reflected in the finances and reflects the updated model of Hethel Innovation Workshops as shown in figure 1.

<b>Q1</b>			
	<b>Apr-22</b>	<b>May-22</b>	<b>Jun-22</b>
	1x Marketing Sprint 1x Design Sprint 1x Mentoring Package	1x Agile Intervention 1x Agile Training	1x Mentoring Package
<b>Q2</b>	Review Point		
	<b>Jul-22</b>	<b>Aug-22</b>	<b>Sep-22</b>
	1x Marketing Sprint 1x Design Sprint 1x BABIAD Training	1x Agile Intervention 2x Mentoring Package	1x Design Sprint 1x BABIAD Training
<b>Q3</b>	Review Point		
	<b>Oct-22</b>	<b>Nov-22</b>	<b>Dec-22</b>
	2x Mentoring Package	1x Design Sprint 1x Agile Training	2x Mentoring Package
<b>Q4</b>	Review Point		
	<b>Jan-23</b>	<b>Feb-23</b>	<b>Mar-23</b>
	1x Marketing Sprint	1x Design Sprint 3x Mentoring Package	1x Marketing Sprint 1x Agile Intervention 1x Mentoring Package

Product	Avg. Hours for Activities
Design Sprint	26
Marketing Sprint	19
Agile Intervention	16
Mentoring	5
Agile Training	15
BABIAD Training	15

Average Time Split per Advisor	% of time	
<b>Total hrs per month</b>	<b>150</b>	
Max. Commercial delivery	27.5	18%
Site Support Work	45	30%
Sales and Enquiry Handling	77.5	52%

Figure 3: 2022-2023 delivery

### 3.2. Priority 2: Stakeholder Management

As part of our activities outlined above, we need to focus on managing our stakeholders to ensure they are effective advocates for Hethel Innovation, and we are utilising that resource as much as possible.

The HIL Board and Shareholder representatives have highlighted this as a priority area for HIL to focus on, and as such we are including in it our business plan as a priority activity. Our stakeholder map is outlined below.

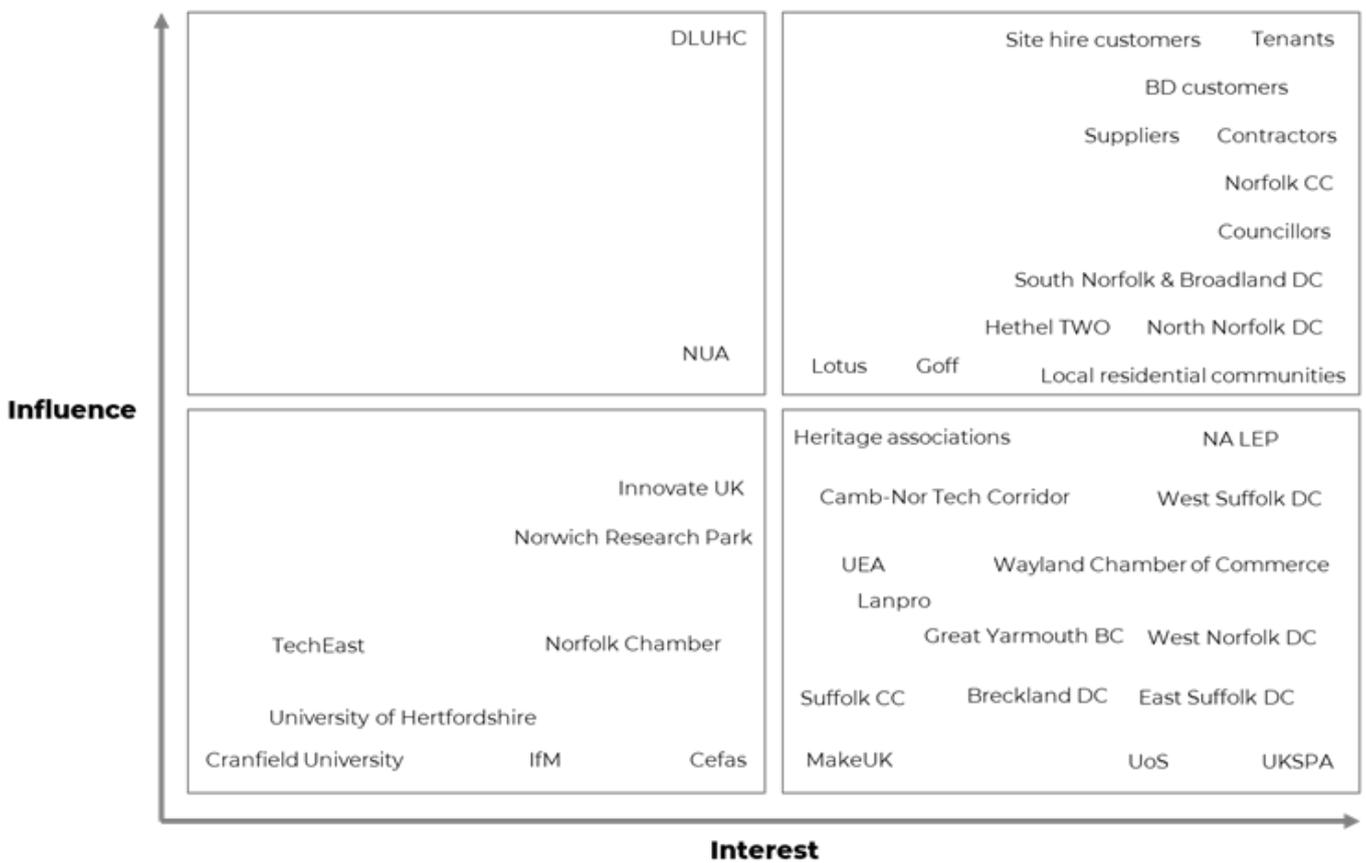


Figure 4: HIL stakeholder map

The top right box, where the interest and influence is high, demonstrates where the majority of the resource will be focused. In order to effectively manage these stakeholders, we will:

- **Contribute to and meet regularly with Parish Councils**
- **Host visits and provide updates to local Councillors**
- **Meet regularly with senior people from our District Councils**
- **Ensure contractors and suppliers are regularly reviewed and quality checked**
- **Engage our customers through regular community meetings and communications**
- **Build an open relationship with our neighbouring developments**

### **3.3. Priority 3: Expanding our Site Offering**

Our tertiary focus, as this is more business as usual, is to maintain and grow our physical incubation and conferencing incomes. These are the corner stone of our business and with the changing commercial environment will require attention over the next financial year.

Team training and marketing resource (internal and external) will be required to maintain and grow these incomes. The shift to the membership model from our current tenancy model will be implemented and launched in April 2022 ready for this financial year, meaning that our teams need to be fully able to sell this product and our systems and sites can handle the change.

Our activities within this priority are as follows:

### 3.3.1. Membership Model

We will implement the membership model across our sites for all new members and aim to increase the numbers of Virtual and Pod members (Figure 5). This will include modernising our conferencing facilities and expanding our hotdesking facilities at both HEC and SEP.

Hethel Innovation		VIRTUAL	POD	EXCLUSIVE
		£45 PCM	£199 PCM	POA
ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE MEMBER PERKS		✓	✓	✓
GET FEATURED ON OUR WEBSITE		✓	✓	✓
DISCOUNTED TRAINING WORKSHOPS*		✓	✓	✓
DISCOUNTED ROOM HIRE*		✓	✓	✓
DISCOUNTED FLEXIBLE DESK HIRE*		✓	✓	✓
REGISTERED BUSINESS ADDRESS AT ONE OF OUR SITES		✓	✓	✓
SITE ACCESS FOB		✓	✓	✓
DEDICATED DESK AND PHONE LINE			✓	✓
YOUR OWN DEDICATED SPACE - OFFICE OR WORKSHOP				✓
SIGNAGE ON SITE (SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS)				✓
<b>OPTIONAL EXTRAS</b>		<small>*ALL DISCOUNTS SUBJECT TO EXCLUSIONS. SEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR MORE INFORMATION</small>		
POSTAL SERVICES (VIRTUAL MEMBERS)*		PAY AS YOU GO	PAY AS YOU GO	PAY AS YOU GO
PHONE LINE AND RECEPTION SERVICE** (VIRTUAL MEMBERS)		£19.99 PCM (PER LINE)	£19.99 PCM (PER LINE)	£14.99 PCM (PER LINE)
<small>*OUTBOUND MAIL CHARGED BASED ON COST OF FRANKING, MEMBERS PAY BASED ON THEIR USE. USE OF POSTAL SERVICES SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY</small>				
<small>** RECEPTION SERVICES SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND AVAILABILITY</small>				

Figure 5: HIL stakeholder map

### 3.3.2. HEC Expansion

Construction of Phase 4 and refurbishment of the communal areas to provide growth on space and improved facilities for our members. Hethel Engineering Centre (HEC) continues to out-perform the market in terms of both occupancy rate (85% compared to 60% - 80% across other innovation locations in the East of England) and rental level for workshops and out of town offices (c. 30% higher rents across workshops and offices). It also continues to benefit from robust tenant retention; HEC has experienced no tenant failure due to Covid-19 with a total of three tenants on deferral plans during the pandemic.

The flexibility of our spaces has allowed businesses to pivot quickly, taking on new space for projects and changing their tenancy composition to make the most of their units and operations. This flexibility would not be found in a traditional commercial space. The success of the current facility means it is unable to meet demand for incubation and growth on space.

The theme for our development is Net Zero Innovation and Engineering, providing a place for innovation within emerging technologies such as advanced materials, energy technologies, and smart machines. Grant funding will be required to complete the capital funding and our team is focusing on sourcing, gaining support for, and applying for this grant funding.



HEC Ph 4 Programme	Q3 21	Q4 21	Q1 22	Q2 22	Q3 22	Q4 22	Q1 23	Q2 23	Q3 23	Q4 23
Development Team Assembly	Yellow									
Pre-planning consultation			Grey							
Design		Green								
Planning Application			Dark Green							
Contractor Tender/Appointment				Orange						
Site preparation			Blue							
Construction/fit out							Red			
Delivery/snagging										Dark Blue

### 3.3.3. SEP Masterplan

Strategically allocating our investment to get the best outcomes out of the site and ensuring it can continue to support our members for many years to come. This will see us build an investment plan for the remainder of our headlease terms, focusing attention on impactful asset refurb and diversifying the offer at Scottow to future proof the site.

## 3.4. Priority 4: New Site Management

The final area we will focus on this coming year is site management. There are a number of sites which we are currently working on developing into opportunities for HIL and there is a clear order of priority within those opportunities:

1. Broadland Food Innovation Centre
2. West Suffolk
3. Norwich Energy Innovation Park
4. Hethel TWO
5. Great Yarmouth
6. Kings Lynn
7. Watton

# 4

## FINANCIALS

The below budget allows us to meet our objectives and deliver upon the priority activities and KPIs outlined above. We have built our business plan on sensible, achievable, and rewarding growth.

	2022/2023 Budget	2021/2022 Forecast EoY
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Tenancy	2,940	2,700
Conferencing & Site Hire	83	57
Funded Projects	101	32
Business Development	28	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,151</b>	<b>2,805</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Staff	1,149	804
Premises	1,042	1,157
Conferencing & Site Hire	11	0
Operating Costs	407	451
SEP Rent	276	276
Pension Liability Reversal	0	(375)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,885</b>	<b>2,313</b>
<b>Finance Costs</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>Net Profit / Loss Before Tax</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>373</b>

# Independence Matters

*'the life you choose...'*

## **Independence Matters Group Business Plan 2022-23**



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# 1: Executive Summary

This document sets out the Business Plan for the Independence Matters Group (IMG) for the next twelve months to 31 March 2023. It provides the group's vision and purpose, an overview of the two care companies, ownership and governance arrangements, objectives, as well as the financial forecasts and risks that sit behind the plan.

The financial forecast for FY22-23 reflects a year of transition and consolidation for both Independence Matters CIC (IM) and Home Support Matters CIC (HSM). In respect of IM, a review of shareholder and contractual arrangements in conjunction with the county council, together with the transition from block contract to framework funding are the most significant issues and risks.

The key issue impacting the Group is the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the unprecedented challenge to a sector already beset by soaring demand for services and skills shortages which are having a detrimental effect on employee morale and resilience. This in turn is leading to higher salaries, especially within the home care market and one-off "golden-handshake" incentives previously not seen within the sector. Recruitment agencies acknowledge this is the toughest care sector market seen in recent times, the consensus is that the problem has not peaked but will do so as customer demand continues to rise within a sector of exhausted care workers which in turn will lead to further skills shortages, difficulties in meeting demand and financial cost.

IMG is set up to deliver the following key objectives:

- core care values in the existing services, meeting customer, carer, and parent-carer expectations for community living, fulfilled independent lives and employment opportunities.
- security and risk management of these services to ensure that customers have consistent quality and continuity of services.
- a strong partnership with the County Council, with governance and accountability arrangements which include NCC Officer representation
- support from the employees through the share ownership
- good relationships and partnerships with voluntary and community groups.

In addition to this the IM aims to:

- provide the commercial environment and infrastructure to develop and support new services and support with market failures. Home Support Matters is an example of this.

IM and the Council acting together:

- provide a development route for the Social Enterprise, which offers the Council a way to retain control through the Articles of Association.

## 2: Group Purpose

### Group Vision, Mission and Values



Our approach is based on three interdependent themes '**Social purpose, Inclusive Governance and Sustainability**'.

We want a future where people with learning or physical disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with dementia and their carers have equitable access to a mix of services to create a support package that suits their personal needs and aspirations, enabling them to remain as independent as they wish to within their own homes and communities.

The Purpose for our companies is based on: Enablement + Prevention = Independence, through providing community-based support and home solutions. By offering flexible packages of support we enable independent lifestyle choices, preventing people and their families/carers from becoming isolated, lonely, and dependent.

### 3: Operational Overview

#### Beneficiaries – Customer Groups



#### 3.1 Introducing Independence Matters (IM)

Independence Matters is a provider of support and enablement services for adults with learning disabilities, dementia and associated mental health problems who have a need for Day Opportunities, Personal Assistant Support, Replacement Care, Supported Living, Floating Support Services and Sheltered Employment. We are a community-based business, serving the whole of Norfolk. We support people to play an active part in their local communities and to access the wide range of opportunities and activities available to them.

#### Independence Matters Contracts

##### Strategic Partnership Agreement and Service Category Contracts



**Short Break Replacement Care Support:** CQC registered bed-based replacement care services provide support for family carers to enable them to have time away, so that they can continue with their caring responsibilities. Operating from three specially designed NCC premises, where we hold Tenancies at Will, in Sprowston, Kings Lynn and Repps with Bastwick. Replacement care support is also available to individuals and families in times of crisis such as illness or other emergency situations under Safeguarding and Adult Protection Placements. The Lodges also provide accommodation for people being discharged from hospital or transitioning to more independent living.

**Personal Assistant/Community Support:** CQC Registered 24/7 support packages to individuals enabling people to lead active lives in their own communities, promoting social inclusion and access to opportunities and facilities in the community, and supporting people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. This can include support to get out and about with friends, taking up hobbies, being a volunteer, going on holiday, transitioning to more independent living. The service can also offer practical support with daily tasks into the home such as assistance with personal care, shopping and preparing meals. Support includes responding to people in times of crisis and illness and end of life care.

**Community Hub Services:** Teams working across 12 building based NCC resources with Tenancies at Will, offer a range of day opportunity activities, opportunities for learning, information, and guidance to people and their families. Making links and partnerships with the community and local groups and businesses. This service provides daily replacement care and is also available to families in times of crisis such as illness or other emergency situations. There are 4 **dementia support** services.

**Supported Living and Floating Support Service:** CQC registered support for people living in several tenanted schemes across the County. In addition, support provides light touch 'floating support' to people in the community. This support is designed to enable people to live independently for as long as possible at home. We offer practical advice on matters such as paying bills, tenancy issues, staying safe and medication. This support can be on-going, in times of crisis or when there are difficulties with finances and other arrangements. Our services are flexible and tailored to the specific needs of the individual from an hour a week to round the clock support, seven days a week.

**Norfolk Industries for Disabled People:** The sheltered workshop/factory environment manufactures pet bedding. It is a small business with half the paid workforce comprising of employees with disabilities. The company manufactures pet bedding products by recycling waste material, selling to the British market and exporting products into Europe. Norfolk Industries offers work placement opportunities through its EVOLVE and Gateway Award programmes and offers volunteering opportunities, enabling people to gain skills towards employment.

**The Brewery;** We support a small social enterprise, which brews beer and bakes artisan bread through facilities at our Ipswich Road Community Hub. It is run by volunteers and offers our Gateway Award programme. The aim is ultimately to sell the beer and create paid jobs.

IM's focus is to provide services and support to FACS (fair access to care services) eligible people in Norfolk through the commissioned marketplace. All services are available to people who fund their own care alongside people who are eligible for social or health care on Personal Budgets or Continuing Health Care Budgets. There is very little opportunity for truly private business within this marketplace, from a commercial perspective.

Small additional income streams come from:

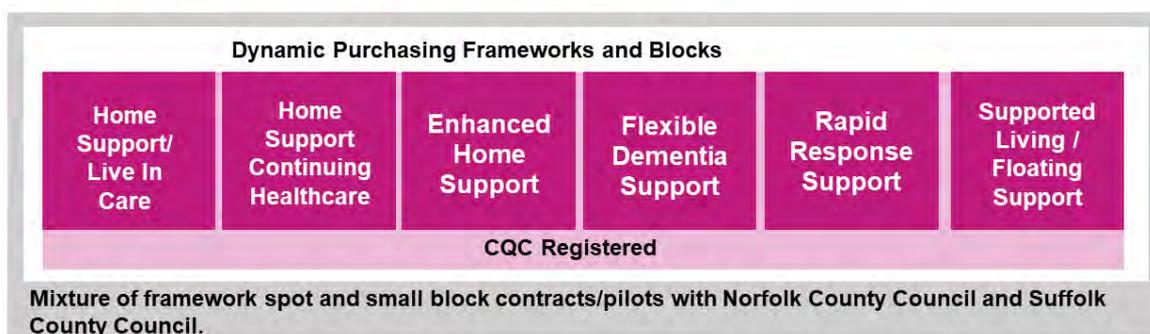
- The NHS via Continuing Health Care monies.
- Older people whose access to a day care service is self-funded.
- External income generated through other activities including Norfolk Industries, a sheltered workshop which manufactures pet bedding from wastepaper.
- Extended use of existing premises, such as sessional hire of rooms to community groups and like-minded organisations.

### 3.2 Introducing Home Support Matters (HSM)

Home Support Matters delivers a wide range of home and specialist care services across Norfolk and the Waveney Valley region of Suffolk. We provide, domiciliary care, live-in care, reablement care for those recovering from illness or injury, care for the elderly, expert clinical care with nurse oversight, crisis support, flexible support for people with dementia and supported living/floating support for people with disabilities. All services are CQC Registered.

## Home Support Matters Contracts

### Service Contracts – no large block agreement



**Home Care;** Provides ongoing support for individuals who want to remain in their own homes within their local community. Care provision is completely built around the persons needs and routines. Many people are opting for domiciliary care – otherwise known as care at home – because it puts them back in control of the support they receive. With one-to-one personal attention, from 30 minutes a week and up to several visits a day or overnight support, our care plans are completely built around the individual. Individuals can even opt for a live-in care worker living with you at home. Our **live-in, domiciliary care** offers a valuable source of companionship. Seeing a familiar face every day, or a couple of times a week, brings comfort, a feeling of safety and friendship.

**Continuing Health Care;** Offering continuing health care home support to provide care for patients with a primary health care need who are eligible for NHS CHC. This includes enabling patients to achieve the best possible quality of life whatever their disease or disability, ethnic background, or sexual orientation. This is achieved through working with other health services, especially GP primary medical services, specialist palliative care services, mental health, learning disabilities and community social care. Our continuing health care patients are case managed by a Registered Nurse.

**Enhanced Home Support Service;** Provides, unplanned, short term, same day home support for a limited duration across Great Yarmouth and Waveney, Norwich and South Norfolk, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week home support with access to the service for new referrals between 8am-8pm. Person-centred, enabling support in the person's home, which is focused on stabilising and supporting the individual, so they can live safely and independently at home.

**Flexible Dementia Service;** Provides support to enable people with dementia in a crisis or an apparent or predicted deteriorating situation to remain living independently at home. The service provides a specialist intermediate care and support service for people with dementia that is focussed on reablement and sustaining people's capacity to maintain their independence. The support can offer same day, short-term reablement support, working closely with Dementia Intensive Support services, other reablement and other Admission Prevention services. Consideration of needs and potential for Assistive Technology/Telecare, are a central part of the service to support the person/Family Carer.

**Rapid Response;** This service delivers an unplanned rapid response night sitting service that supports customers to remain in their own home and reduces the need for admissions to hospital or a care home while the individuals normal care is unavailable. The unplanned night sitting service is arranged by the Emergency Duty Team daily in accordance with the customer's needs. Deployment of the team is across the entire county of Norfolk.

**Supported living** offers an alternative to residential care and empowers individuals to choose the right amount of support - how and when they need it - so they can lead an enriching and fulfilling life. **Independent living** – Individuals can choose to live independently in their own home with as much or as little support as they need **Shared living** – We support individuals who might want to live independently too but aren't yet ready to live alone. Individuals have their own space but benefit from socialising with other like-minded people, sharing the communal spaces and sharing the costs of household bills.

HSM's key focus is to provide services and support to FACS eligible people through the commissioned marketplace. Our Domiciliary Home Care services are available to people who fund their own care privately, however, this makes up a small percentage of HSM business.

## 3.2 Introducing Norfolk Industries (NIDP)

**Ethos and description;** ‘Think workability, not disability’. Norfolk Industries for Disabled People is a commercial organisation providing two workstreams; the first a range of products for the pet and small animal industry and the second being work experience and employability programmes for those who have employment as their goal.

**Products;** NIDP continue to produce the traditional animal bedding products as it has done for many years. In the past 3 years, new, award winning, products have been introduced to the range which are focussed on enrichment activity for animals and engaging children with small animals.

In production are:

- Pet bedding – paper flakes
- Pet bedding – cotton
- Pet bedding – recycled paper
- Pet bedding – recycled cloth
- Snooze tubes

The new enrichment products are:

- Nibble and Nest (Industry Award winning)
- Animal Houses (Industry Award winning)
- Plastic free ranges of pet bedding (Industry Award winning)
- Furry Friends Farewell (launch date in 2022)
- Compressed bales (launch date in 2022)

All products are subject to ethical audit and share the following environmental credentials:

- ✓ All recycled
- ✓ Plastic free ranges
- ✓ Biodegradable
- ✓ Socially responsible

**Work experience Service;** Linking to the ASSD Learning Disability Strategy and building on the work experience offer which has been provided as a community service for many years, the new Employment Pathway (3) offer will comprise of:

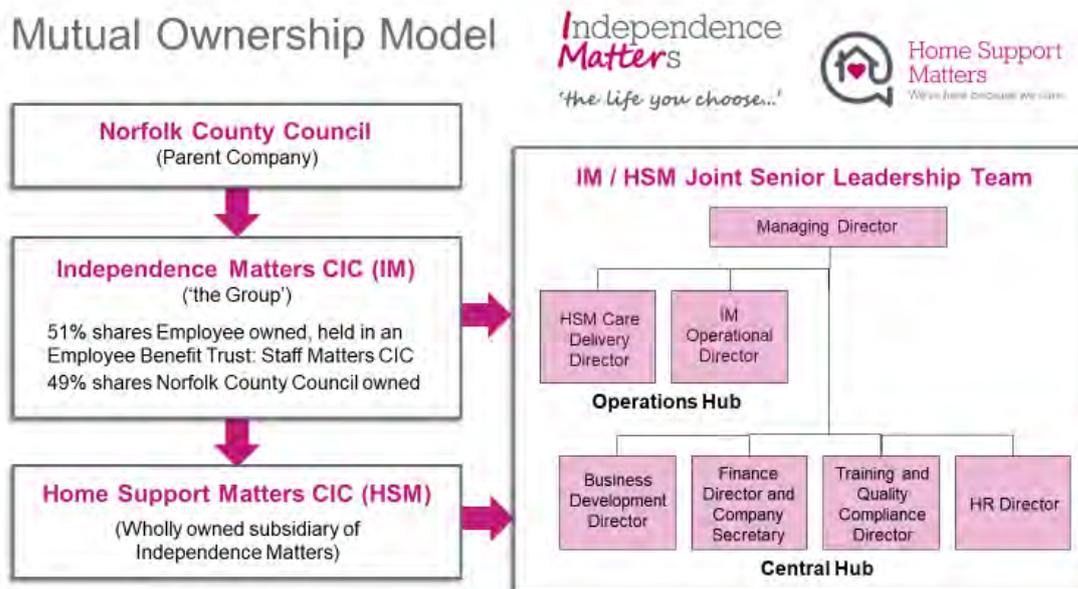
- 12 weeks work experience

With the EVOLVE programme, comprising:

- Gateway Accredited Learning Scheme Units Skills and Employment
- Training – Manual and Handling, Health and Safety at Work, CV Building, Interview Skills and Fire Training

## 4: Group Ownership

### Mutual Ownership Model



Independence Matters is a **Community Interest Company (CIC)** limited by shares. The CIC ensures that assets are kept within the company and any profits (surplus) are retained by the CIC and reinvested in community benefits and the people that matter.

Employees own 51% and the council 49%, all colleague shares are held in an Employee Benefit Trust set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by Guarantee called **Independence Staff Matters Limited** and administered by the main CIC and there can be no trading of those shares. The colleague shares represent the democratic process of engagement and the link between employees and the business.

**Home Support Matters (HSM).** On 5 November 2018 the Care Quality Commission issued a notice under section 56 of the Care Act requiring 84 councils (of which the Council was one) to “take immediate steps to plan for the protection of people receiving care” from Allied Health Care. The Council was faced with the need to urgently rearrange the care of over 350 people. Its contingency was to repurpose Breckland Care at Home CIC as Home Support Matters CIC. Independence Matters acquired Breckland Care at Home CIC in April 2017 to be able to continue much needed home care services in rural Norfolk which were at risk of market failure. IM managed the continued delivery of services until September 2018 at which time the care was transferred to the market which had stabilised. All the Allied Health Care contracts, employees and leases were transferred to HSM, which was successfully completed on 10 December 2018. **Home Support Matters** is a wholly owned subsidiary of Independence Matters.

**Norfolk Industries** is a Social Business within IM providing proper paid employment for people with disabilities and supporting employment and work preparedness opportunities to hard-to-reach groups.

The ten-year **Partnership Agreement** signed in 2019, established a contractual framework to

- a. Manage the additional cost incurred by the Enterprise because of TUPE'd colleagues from the Council.
- b. Manage how both Parties will work together collaboratively to achieve the desired transformation of the estate and deliver good services for the future which meet Norfolk's changing need.
- c. Manage the transition of the block contract to frameworks and spot funding.

Under the Partnership Agreement both Parties will need to determine the future ownership status of IM. Work is currently underway to determine the optimum ownership and governance structure for IM.

It is an appropriate time to review the Business Form, as Independence Matters CIC will be ten years old in 2023 and with Home Support Matters moving into its fourth trading year, there is a need to ensure that the model is right, aligns to the shared purpose for the citizens of Norfolk, upholds values, cements the collaborative working, supports the ASSD strategies and develops pathways to grow for both partners.

NCC and IM have jointly agreed to commission (funded by IM) the necessary expert advice to establish the financial, material, and legal considerations, concerning shareholding and contractual arrangements. Legal advice will be jointly commissioned and procured via NPLAW and a joint Task and Finish Group has been stood up, led by NCC as the Parent Company, which has short-term and medium-term objectives, detailed below;

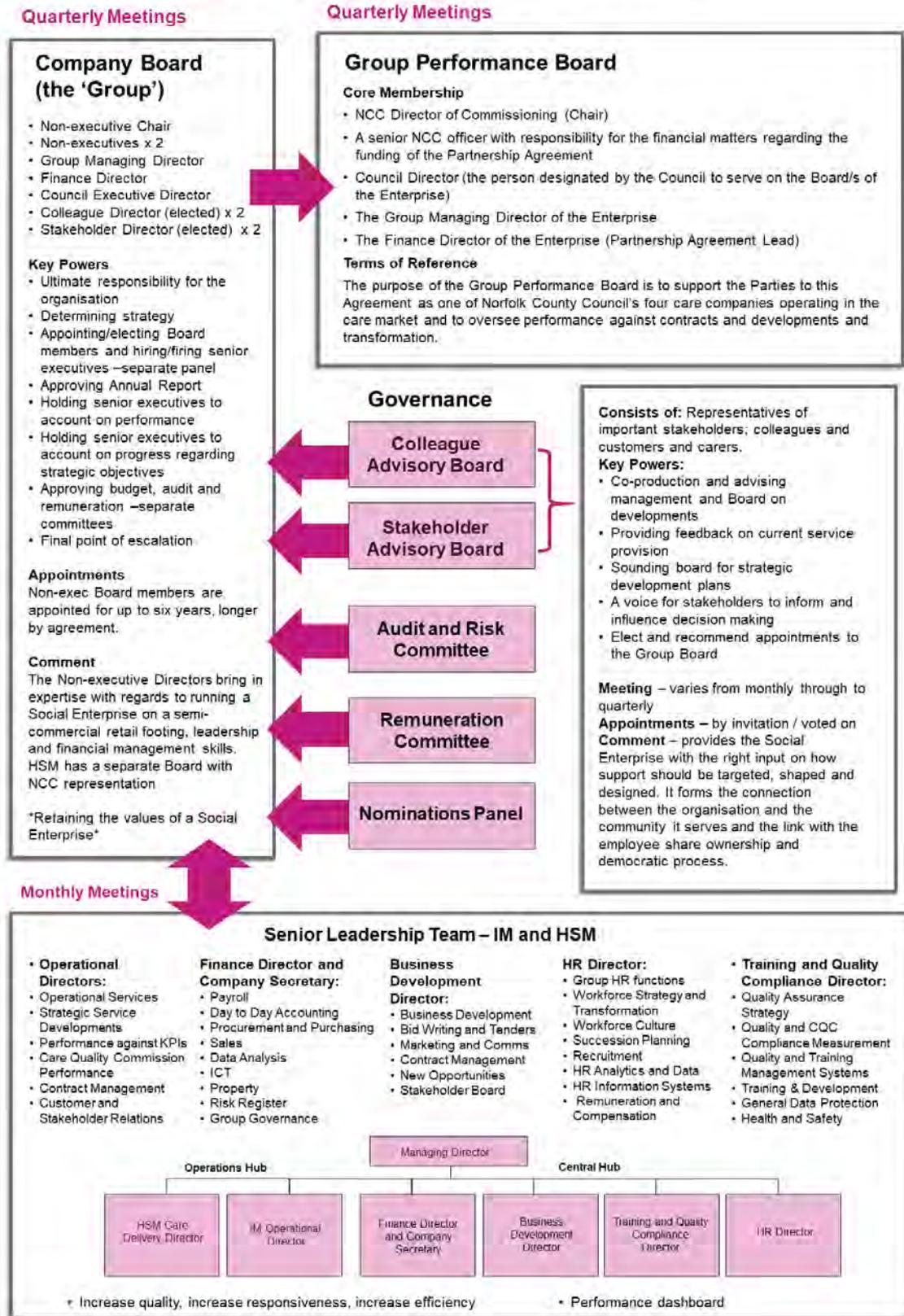
- Short-term (by March 22) – Seek advice to inform decision making about any changes that could be implemented in the next three months.
- Medium-term (by Oct 22) – Review the company structure and all available options for change.

This options appraisal is intended to include all aspects of the IM Group (including Norfolk Industries and Home Support Matters). This work is expected to include the following elements;

- Ownership share structure
- Legal group/company status of IM and HSM
- VAT group status
- Governance arrangements and accountability
- Advice on the Employee Benefit Trust and employee engagement

# 5: Group Governance

## Governance Reporting Structure



Leadership and governance are through a formal **Group Board** of Directors with a mix of social care, commercial business, social enterprise, legal, clinical expertise, and networking links and an NCC **Performance Board** comprising Council and Social Enterprise representatives, which oversee the performance of the contract and the development of the Enterprise. **HSM has a separate Board.**

Sitting underneath the Company Board are the newly formed Audit and Risk Committee, the Remuneration Committee, and a Nominations Panel.

**Colleague** and **Stakeholder Advisory Boards** ensure customers, carers and colleagues have a voice and influence in the **democratic** governance of the Social Enterprise and co-production. These Boards provide the Social Enterprise with the right input on how current and new services should be targeted, shaped, and extended. Two elected Colleague and Stakeholder Directors have seats on the Company Board. These Boards and Directors form the connection between the company and the community it serves and are an important part of the governance structure.

IM and HSM work in a collaborative partnership with NCC commissioners through a monthly **Transformation Board** with NCC to ensure that we maximise the impacts for the communities we serve and explore gaps in the care market and support delivery of the strategic intentions of NCC.

# 6. Business Objectives

## 6.1 Group Objectives 2020-2025

### The Future Matters: Group Strategic Ambitions 2020-2025

Supporting independence and to *'live the life you choose...'* through reliable and innovative support, which is: well led, safe, caring, effective and responsive

#### Our Priorities



**Quality Matters**



**Money Matters**



**Technology and Working SMARTER Matters**



**Co-Production and Outcomes Matter**



**Colleagues Matter**



**Growth and Innovation Matters**

#### Quality Matters

**This means:**

- Being a safe social care provider.
- Achieving CQC rating of 'Good' or 'Outstanding'
- Being a reflective and learning organisation.
- Responding to changing regulations.
- Measuring our social impact and customer outcomes.

**To achieve this we will:**

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to implement our ten point Quality Assurance Framework.
- Deliver service improvement plans to support CQC actions and requirements.
- Embed the Access Quality Compliance Tool.
- Monitor trends across the Group and be proactive in responding and sharing learning.
- Collect and collate qualitative data, asking customers how they feel about our support to monitor impact and outcomes.

#### Colleagues Matter

**This means:**

- More people will recommend us a 'Place to work' and a 'Place for care' each year.
- Supporting colleagues to have rewarding, productive and fulfilling careers
- Recruiting and retaining talented people
- Deliver blended training, coaching and talent development plans

**To achieve this we will:**

- Focus on wellbeing; mental and physical health.
- Celebrate and implement a Reward and Recognition Strategy.
- Implement a Leadership Behaviours Framework.
- Promote the Colleague Advisory Board and Colleague Director roles.
- Upskill colleagues to work SMARTER and be confident to use Information Management Technology.
- Celebrate and encourage diversity.

#### Co-Production and Outcomes Matter

**This means:**

- Co-Production and stakeholders are at the heart of everything we do.
- Listening to our customers and families and responding to their needs.
- Measuring and improving customer and carer experience and satisfaction.

**To achieve this we will:**

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement.
- Ensure that customers and families are central to support planning and reviews.
- Co-design an Involvement and Participation Strategy.
- Develop a 'Working Together Matters' booklet about involvement opportunities.
- Develop support and services based upon customer behaviours after the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### Technology and Working SMARTER Matter

**This means:**

- Process efficiency, reducing costs and overheads.
- Developing and implementing standard operating models to eliminate unwarranted variation.
- Only doing what adds value to the customer journey and Group mission and purpose
- Not allowing data to manage us.

**To achieve this we will:**

- Invest in IMT equipment, software, systems and infrastructure; mobile, social and cloud.
- Deliver meaningful and accurate data to drive outcomes and decision making.
- Review and implement a streamlined Group Risk Matrix.
- Standardise our suite of reporting documents across the Group and make use of InfoGraph software.
- Maximise use of existing systems, review and/or update/replace.

#### Money Matters

**This means:**

- Improved financial performance year on year and cashflow monitoring.
- Operational efficiency and workforce productivity to reduce cost base.
- Working with Norfolk County Council Transformation and Performance Boards.

**To achieve this we will:**

- Provide clear leadership at all levels to ensure the delivery of the Finance Business Plan.
- Continue SMARTER ways of working post Covid-19 with investment into technology and flexible workspaces.
- Review Legal and Governance Structures to ensure they are 'fit for purpose'.
- Deliver under the joint NCC/IM Finance workstream as part of the Transformation Plan.

#### Growth and Innovation Matters

**This means:**

- Organic growth.
- Scaling up business; growth and market penetration.
- Takeovers and mergers.
- Innovation and product development.

**To achieve this we will:**

- Monitor the marketplace we operate in.
- Do more of what we are good at.
- Avoid 'Mission Creep'; doing what we are not good at.
- Work with NCC and SCC Commissioners to align growth with commissioning ambitions.
- Scale up both care companies to take on new business.
- Grow Norfolk Industries employment and work placement opportunities.
- Invest in services, buildings and infrastructure.

#### Our services will be:

- **Evidence-based** and of the highest quality.
- **Highly reliable:** high quality whatever the day of the week or hour of the day.
- **At scale:** creating benefits for people through best practice.
- **Trusted:** providing safe, effective and compassionate support.
- **Connected:** seamlessly delivering what matters most to people and communities.
- **Creative:** continuously innovating and improving support and services.

As a Group the overarching Business Objectives for the next 5 years cover;

**Quality and Co-production Matters;** to improve customer and carer experience and satisfaction through ensuring that services and support are of a high quality with a minimum of 'Good' for all Care Quality Commissioned (CQC) Services. Working transparently with NCC Integrated Quality Team colleagues to ensure we deliver safe services and support. Strive for 'Outstanding' rated services.

**Money Matters;** to ensure that our income covers all overhead costs and to make a surplus to reinvest back into the business and communities we serve with the sole purpose of improving the customer offer. Short term this is about financial sustainability, especially for Independence Matters where the market is finite and changing. For HSM there is more potential opportunity for growth, as often demand outstrips capacity to deliver.

**Colleagues Matter;** to ensure that employees feel valued and supported through paying competitive market salaries and rates providing a good remuneration and recognition package. Offer fair and anti-discriminatory employment practices, flexible working arrangements, safe and healthy working environments and opportunities for personal growth and career development.

**Technology and working SMARTER;** recognising that the world is becoming much more digitalised and ensuring that the Group keeps up to date and invests in ICT equipment for employees and customers. Ensuring that data and data production does not become an unnecessary internal industry and distraction. Be clear about what data the group is producing/collating, why and who for to ensure that it is necessary.

**Growth and Innovation Matters;** to use any surplus to strength the businesses and reinvest into current service offers and the care estate to keep improving the brand and reputation with our existing customer base. To grow current capacity and develop new service offers to meet customer and market demand, working in partnership with NCC colleagues.

In the diagrams below, we have mapped for both care companies where we see the opportunities, ensuring that they support the ASSD strategic objectives.

# Independence Matters; Origins of Growth 2020-2025

## Take overs / mergers (unknown)

- Joint working with NCC Care Companies to improve market resilience – strategic and operational emergency/crisis cover. Home Support Matters C.I.C. came from a take over of Allied Healthcare contracts in 2018

## Scaling Up Business (adjacent)

### IM Objectives: potential strategic, supporting the Learning Disability & Autism strategy

- Life Opportunities; Transformation and Technology; Promoting Independence and Wellbeing pilots; delivering to outcomes
- NCC intentions for Residential/SL, rescope business size
- Enablement Floating Support Service – we have skillset for this
- Norfolk Industries and The Brewery; Skills and Employment Offer; Employment Agencies
- Supported Living Accommodation; care estate development to support LD accommodation strategy for enabling supportive housing; is this possible, do NCC want this? Locations?
- Replacement Care Offer - review and transform the Lodges with NCC, emergencies/moving on.

## Organic Growth Stage (existing)

### IM Objective: Increase uptake of customers

- Community Hubs; keep and attract new customers (refurbishments/ICT/Wi-Fi)
- Dynamic Purchasing Frameworks (DPF); Day Ops and Supported Living
- Independence Pathways and Dementia Specialist Offer; consolidating capability to align with commissioning intentions
- Private paying customers with dementia, limited but there
- Refining marketing and comms to wider customer base recognising DPF
- Market competitive products and pricing – market alignment for all traded services.

# W A R M I N G U P

Leads to networking and raising the profile of Core Offer

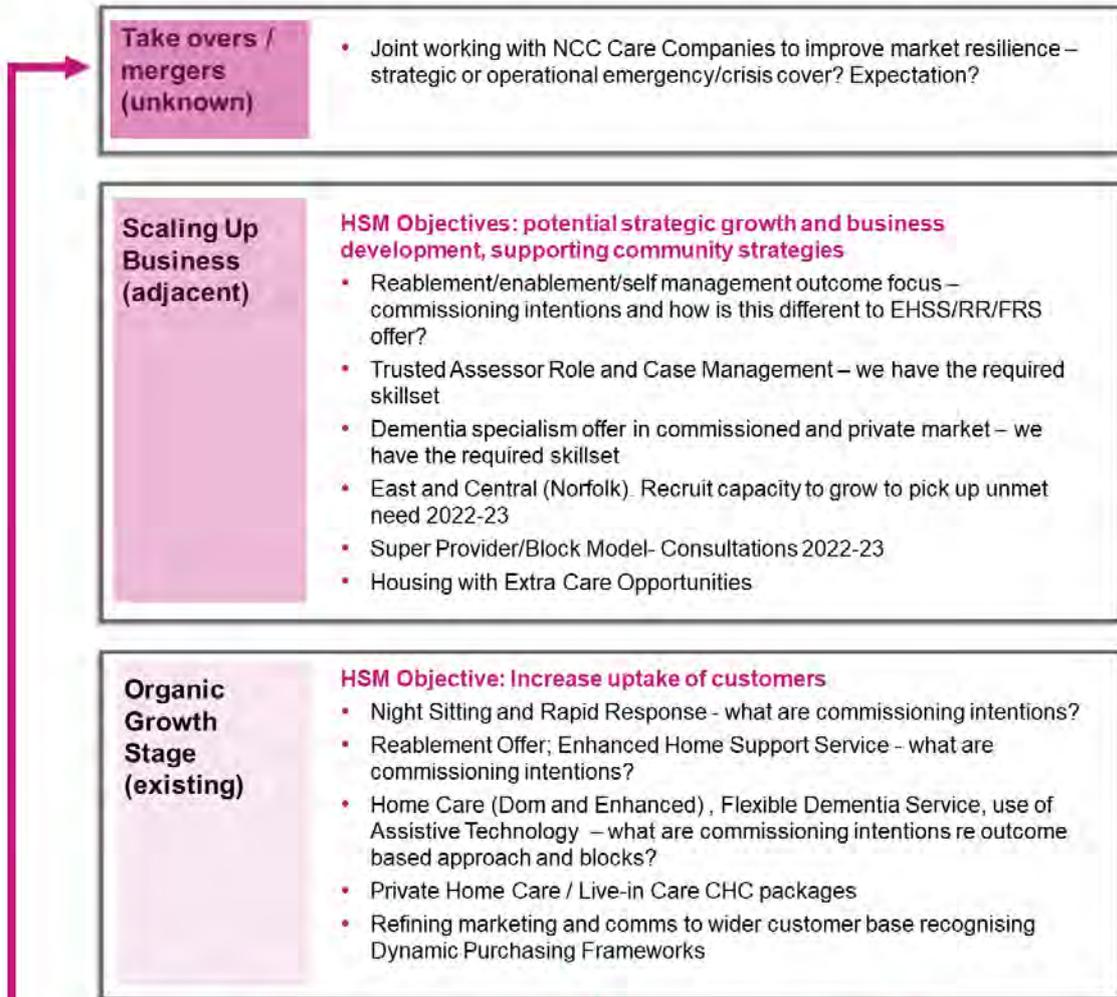
NCC Strategic & Local Commissioners / Providers Forums and Networks / Social Media and Brand Awareness



### IM Objective: Community-based Support and Home Solutions

Transformed services, operational efficiencies and continual business development

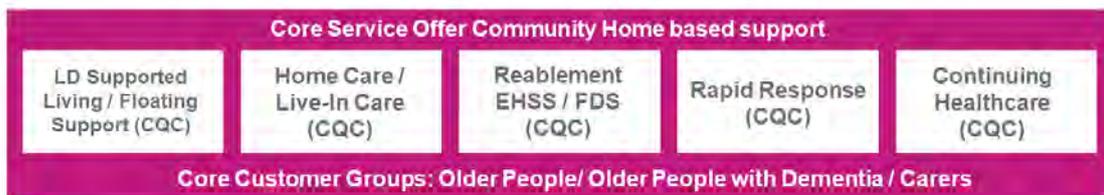
# Home Support Matters; Origins of Growth 2020-2025



## W A R M I N G U P

Leads to networking and raising the profile of Core Offer

NCC & SCC Strategic & Local Commissioners / Care Providers Forums and Networks / Social Media and Brand Awareness



**HSM Objective: Home Solutions and Community Based Support**  
Operational efficiencies and continual business process improvements

## 6.2 Objectives 2022-23

### Quality and Co-production Matters;

- Quality Compliance Business Partner; additional post for our non-CQC Registered Services (IM)
- Health and Safety Officer, additional post to support with compliance and care estate matters (IM)
- Stakeholder Engagement, additional post to ensure delivery of 5-year Co-Production Strategy and support Board Non-Executive Director (IM)
- Easy Read documents to be produced with Stakeholder Board (IM)
- Government Regulations ensure that IM is compliant with Government guidance and regulations relating to Covid (IMG)
- Requires Improvement CQC ratings to be moved to Good if inspected in 2022
- Audit and Risk Committee to be established to oversee the maintenance of sound internal compliance control and risk management systems (IMG)

### Money Matters;

- Joint work with NCC to review shareholding and contractual arrangements; key dates March and October (IM)
- Business Form; review with NCC to include Group VAT status; key date October (IM)
- Managed replacement of the block contract to frameworks and spot funding and managing costs; two stages to this, unit costings and contractual terms and conditions (IM)
- Balance the budget (IMG)
- Procure central administration site (IM)
- Explore Branch Office, north of Norwich (HSM)
- Risk; Implement a group risk matrix, risk profiles and overview (IMG)
- Audit and Risk Committee to be established to ensure the integrity of the financial reporting and audit process (IMG)

### Colleagues Matter;

- Employee Benefit Package and Retention; salary and reward review to retain and reward our colleagues for their successes and effort, we will undertake a salary and reward review. These will be benchmarked against comparable roles in our sector and region to ensure our benefits are at the same level as our competitors in the market (IMG)
- Organisational Transformation, support required workforce transformation as IM moves from block contract to service category frameworks (IM)
- Learning and Development; ensure that training is developed to reflect the new Service Specifications under the frameworks and embed Positive Behaviour Training throughout (IM)
- SMARTER ways of working; support colleagues through flexible working policies (IMG)

- Career Pathways and Succession Planning; review of career pathways and development of a Leadership Matters programme to support rising stars and succession planning (IMG)
- Wellbeing; to further strengthen our culture through our Wellbeing Lead (IMG)

### **Technology and working SMARTER;**

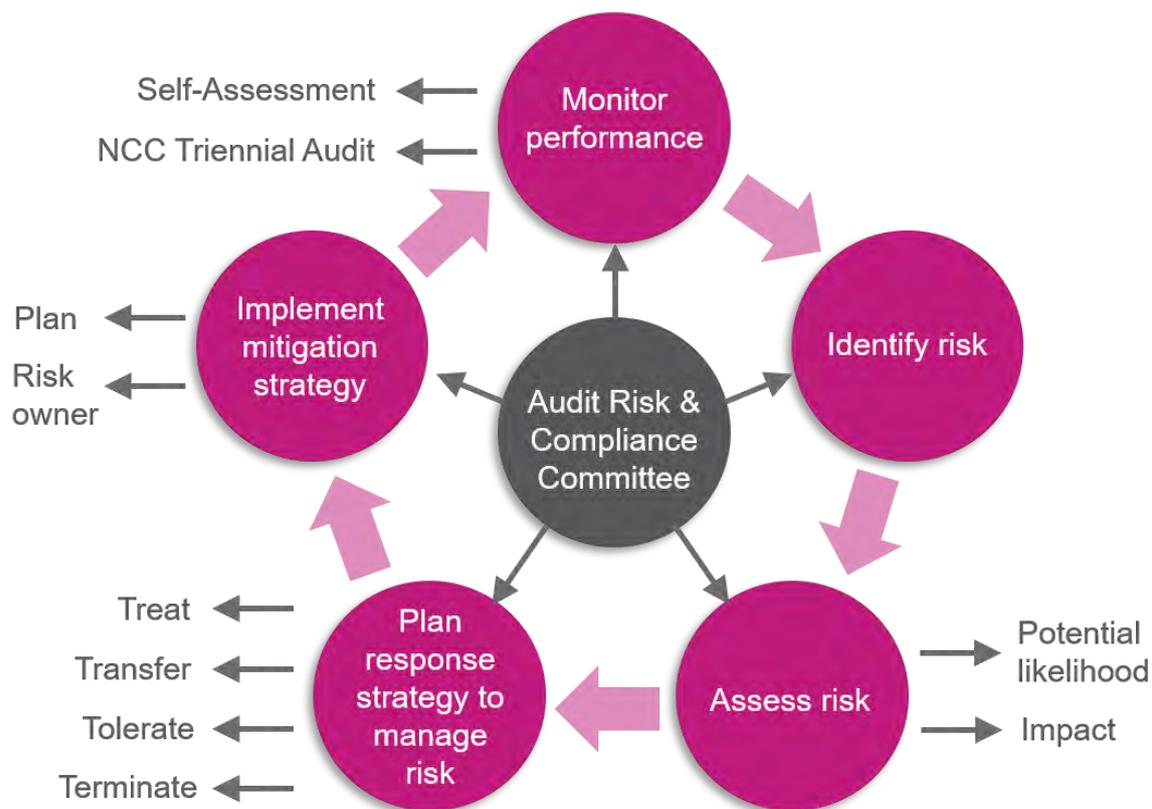
- Discovery session to map existing systems and software leading to recommendations to avoid duplicate of data inputting plus ensuring accurate data collation and reporting for different audiences (IMG)
- Standardise systems and software across the group where possible (IMG)
- Data Analysis Role to be recruited to ensure accurate and meaningful suite of reports for Senior Leadership Team, Company and NCC Boards to ensure good, informed decisions are made. Data reporting against KPIs for category service specifications with the proposed move from block contract to frameworks (IM)
- HR Group Applicant Tracking System to support with recruitment (IMG)
- Payroll System; improved system goes live in 2022 (IMG)
- Access Care Compliance Tool: transfer HSM from CM Electronic Monitoring System and review IM (IMG)
- Transfer of eLFY to LMS e-learning platform (HSM)
- Colleagues Intranet: review and re-launch, the intranet needs to become much more of an interactive communication tool for colleagues (IM)

### **Growth and Innovation Matters**

- SWOT and PESTLE analysis; review for 2022 to understand the internal and external environments we operate within. Much has changed due to the pandemic (IMG)
- Market Penetration; stabilise and increase our customer uptake following Covid years to support our growth from core activities (IMG)
- Website; update Norfolk Industries and HSM
- Tenders; Pathway 3 Employment; Norfolk Industries and Equal Brewkery (IM)
- Replacement Care Review; NCC to review and co-produce new service proposition during 2022. Three Lodges to be part of this (IM)
- Day Opportunities Framework; support the smooth service transition from block contract to framework, ensuring all building blocks are in place (IM)
- Complex Care Pilot; lead on this market development with NCC colleagues (IM)
- Norfolk Industries; to continue to develop products and increase market penetration to remain sustainable; following Covid move from a loss to breakeven in 2022
- Business Size; rescope and right size the business according to market forces
- Dementia Support; Awaiting NCC Dementia Strategy to be reviewed (IM)
- Norwich Rapid Response contract extended until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022. Agree with Commissioners beyond this and the future of the service (HSM)

- Enhanced Home Support, uncertainty over future of this service beyond June 2022 as an NCC commissioned service. Exploring alternative models with commissioners to continue to support discharges from hospitals and admission avoidance and grow our domiciliary support capacity in the East/North Norfolk villages. It requires a customer volume to make the margins work, which we think is there if we can recruit enough new capacity. This work would be taken via the Norfolk Home Care Framework via spot packages. (HSM)
- Market Development: Prime Provider/Super Block Provider, consultations paused in 2021, however we are sighted on this (HSM)

## 7: Risks and Risk Mitigation



IM Group has a robust Risk Management Policy and Risk is managed at all levels:

- Board
- Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee
- Senior Leadership Team
- NCC Internal Audit
- By every colleague

IM Board determine the Risk Appetite annually referencing 7 risk categories; Financial, People, Operational, Regulatory Compliance, Legal Compliance, Health and Safety, and Strategy. The newly formed Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee (AR&CC) will provide assurances to the Board regarding the operations of the whole system of internal control, including governance, compliance, and systems in place to ensure that key risks are identified, monitored, and addressed.

The AR&CC will meet quarterly and makes recommendations upon its findings to Board.

All risks are risk scored and assessed and a response strategy determined; Treat, Transfer, Tolerate or Terminate, following which a mitigation strategy is implemented and reviewed.

## IM Key risks / challenges

There are several risks associated with the delivery of the business plan including:

- Share-ownership / governance structure review in conjunction with the Council
- Movement from Block to Spot/Framework funding
- Delivery of shared Transformation vision
- Employee Absence. This is a significant issue in the Covid / post-Covid era as infection instances continue to occur and front-facing colleagues are exhausted from last two years and frontline colleagues must be backfilled to ensure capacity
- Maintaining / achieving Good CQC ratings for all registered services
- Cash flow forecasting and monitoring

## HSM Key risks / challenges

There are several risks associated with the delivery of the business plan including:

- Care market pressures
- Development of new service with NCC following cessation of EHSS
- Recruitment and retention to support growth
- Cash flow forecasting and monitoring. Over FY23 and FY24 HSM will repay the outstanding balance of the Start-up advance to NCC in 2 equal instalments following approval of subsequent year's accounts
- Maintaining Good CQC rating

## 8: Financial Forecasts

### Group Financial Headlines

The Financial Business Plan for FY23 reflects a year of transition and consolidation for both Independence Matters CIC (IM) and Home Support Matters CIC (HSM). In respect of IM, changes in share ownership and governance, together with the transition from Block to Spot funding are the most significant issues.

The IM budget has been predicated on several key assumptions, the most significant of which is that Block income from Norfolk County Council (NCC) will be received with an inflationary uplift of 6%. Discussions are ongoing with NCC to determine the exact funding model, but until concluded this is the best current assumption. Based upon this gross Group income, before any Block Refund is £18.969M (FY22 – est. £18,944M), a marginal increase of £25,000 or 0.2%.

After the agreed transfer from reserves, this will enable IM to refund £950,000 from the Block to NCC and both IM and HSM will generate essentially balanced budgets, with a wafer-thin margin.

This position is in line with financial projections and expectations when setting the reserves policy, as approved by the Board on 18th November 2021.

The Group's position is shown within the table below.

#### INDEPENDENCE MATTERS GROUP FY23 BUDGET AND FY22 OUTTURN FORECAST

	FY23			FY22		
	IM £000's	HSM £000's	GROUP £000's	IM £000's	HSM £000's	GROUP £000's
Income	15,110	3,859	18,969	14,753	4,109	18,862
Expenditure	(14,971)	(3,921)	(18,892)	(12,357)	(4,019)	(16,376)
Surplus/(Deficit) before transfer from reserves	139	(62)	77	2,396	90	2,486
Refund to NCC	(950)	0	(950)	(1,400)	0	(1,400)
Transfer from reserves	838	75	913	0	0	0
Surplus/(Deficit) after transfer from reserves	27	13	40	996	90	1,086

# STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN 2022.23

**norse**  
GROUP

IMPROVING PEOPLE'S LIVES



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**“We are one of the country’s fastest growing service providers, with a broad range of services including facilities management, property services and specialist care facilities. Providing commercial solutions which address current and future built environment challenges, we have 36 partnerships across England and Wales...”**

Justin Galliford  
Interim CEO, Norse Group

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## OUR PURPOSE

**Our aim is to improve people’s lives.**

As the largest local authority trading company (LATCO) in Britain, ensuring we put people at the heart of what we do is integral to the ethical value proposition for our stakeholders and shareholder.

Our current Group business activity, and our growth over the next five years, will centre on the provision of services in support of communities across England, Scotland, and Wales. Our staff are from these communities and will be based within them, working as part of Norse Group to help improve people’s lives.

We will seek to work with unitary, county, and district councils along with clients from the education, care, NHS, and charitable sectors.

Providing employment and career opportunities in the locations we operate in is a key element of what Norse Group does; and in this way adding to local investment in local economies.

Through the three main trading divisions of the Group, Norse delivers a wide range of services.

## norse CARE

**NORSE CARE** has 21 residential homes and supports a further 15 housing with care schemes, with more than 1,500 beds throughout Norfolk and into Suffolk.

**Its services incorporate:**

- Residential and enhanced care
- Dementia care
- Nursing with care
- Housing with care support

Our Group service portfolio and public sector ethos allows us to focus upon ensuring the safety of the people who live within the communities we serve.

We do this through the delivery of high quality and regulated statutory building maintenance tests across housing and local authority portfolios; CCTV monitoring services; static guarding; and by providing essential maintenance services for the NHS and fire and rescue services.

We will continue to demand the highest safety standards are met within our own operations, protecting the health and wellbeing of our dedicated staff.

Our aim is to continue to offer our services in an increasingly integrated delivery model, underpinned by a culture of long-term partnership working and ethical profitability for local communities.

**These priorities will build durability into our services in three ways:**

- 1) Providing services of consistently high standards, monitoring customer satisfaction
- 2) Generating ethical returns for partnering customers and our shareholder. Margins may be lower than market on an annual basis, but we will seek longer-term relationships which benefit us over time as we further embed our services in the location in which we operate
- 3) We will seek to invest in our people. They will continue to be our biggest market differentiator. By ensuring our staff feel valued and engaged we will retain them in the longer-term. This will drive service standards and facilitate professional development and increase the skills base of those living within local communities.

## norse COMMERCIAL

**NORSE COMMERCIAL** provides essential frontline (including statutory) services for councils which include:

- **Environmental Services**, such as domestic refuse collection and street cleansing
- **Facilities Management**, incorporating building maintenance of estates and public spaces or cleaning, catering and grounds maintenance
- **Highways’ maintenance**

## norse CONSULTING

**NORSE CONSULTING**, our property management company, provides services focused on:

- Estate Management
- Surveying
- Architecture and Design
- Project advisory and management services

## OUR VALUES

Our Group values are **QUALITY, INNOVATION, RESPECT and TRUST.**

They have served us well and will continue to do so over the next five years. We will work with our staff to ensure our values remain relevant and translatable to all parts of the Group, regardless of changes within our operating markets or service mix.



### QUALITY

**Quality must be built in to all that we intend to do. Whilst our customer base is sensitive to price, high quality services will remain a pre-requisite requirement.**

This is an important differentiator for our Group; we will not sacrifice quality due to a short-term view on contract terms, an approach commonly seen within the marketplace, taken by larger competitors who operate traditional transactional contracting business models.

We will continue to build quality into our services with a deep understanding of our customer's requirements, having the right knowledge and skills mix to discuss and negotiate contracts, and maturing our integrated management systems (including quality management system elements) across our Group and its processes.



### INNOVATION

**Innovation will be key to our growth plans over the next five years. Our customers and staff will drive this and listening to them will help shape our innovative approach.**

Flexibility in working arrangements, alternative service delivery models, solutions to net zero carbon goals, and an increased demand for data driven decision making, are likely to be the drivers for our innovative approach.



### RESPECT AND TRUST

**As part of our five-year plan, we will challenge the way we work**

Ensuring that our staff respect and trust each other and demonstrate this every day, in how they behave towards colleagues and our clients, is an essential to forming teams that perform at their optimum.

It is a clear indication of a positive and sustainable organisational culture, which is imperative in ensuring we retain the right staff and that we attract the best talent as we grow. By ensuring trust and respect

are 'lived' values demonstrated by all our staff, our business will continue to grow and succeed.

Long-term partnering arrangements, alternative models of delivery, and high-quality frontline services managed on behalf of councils, requires strong organisational relationships based upon respect and trust. Embedding these values in what we do will ensure our wider culture positively aligns with that of our customers.

## OUR APPROACH

**The wider group approach to delivering services for customers will become increasingly important, and thus valuable, as we seek to differentiate our offering in the marketplace.**

As the largest LATCO in Britain, sound governance, corporate social responsibility (with an increasing focus on environmental performance) and clear communication with our stakeholders regarding the value we generate for them is essential in ensuring we are trusted and respected by our customers.

Improving the lives of those living where we operate means we must seek to engage and support communities. We will do this through our Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy (CSR) which aims to create social value in addition to profit.

A particular focus of our CSR Strategy will be the continued drive towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Reducing the impact of our services on the environment means we will positively support similar actions of those living in the communities we serve. The next five years will see us develop further our CSR Strategy and continue our net zero journey.

To support this, we will monitor and report our CSR activities, reporting back to stakeholders on a triple bottom line basis providing data transparently to facilitate independent review and scrutiny of our performance.

Good governance and a strong CSR Strategy will complement our approach to enduring relationships with customers, built on our values to generate and share ethical profits.



# 8,750

**staff whose stated mission is to improve people's lives**

## 2. CLIENTS AND MARKETS

We will continue to operate and grow within our current markets over the next five years.

We will also look to expand into Tier one government markets - central government departments such as the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice - as part of our long-term growth strategy.

We will continue to use our three main trading areas to deliver services but will increasingly market and sell services as “Norse Group” to offer a more integrated single service offering.

Our main markets and customers are:

### LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

We will continue to work with district and county councils. Historically, our clients have been primarily district councils, but in more recent years we have begun to attract more unitary councils. We will use our unique and successful Teckal compliant, joint venture, service delivery model within the local authority market.

### CARE SECTOR:

This remains a key marketplace, and we must continue to adapt to meet the evolving demands of changing demographics and clients, as well as bringing together a wider set of solutions across the care lifecycle.

### EDUCATION SECTOR:

Our main customers will continue to be junior, primary, secondary, and high schools. These will be under the control of either local authorities or Academy Trusts. We will also look to provide more services to both higher and further education markets, that is, colleges and universities.

### HEALTHCARE SECTOR:

The Group currently provides services to a small number of NHS community hospitals, GP practices, and NHS Trusts. Customer numbers are small, and the range of services is limited by type and contract length. Our aim over the next five years is to grow into this market, identifying relevant segments as the right opportunities to develop long-term relationships.

### SOCIAL HOUSING:

Current clients include Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Housing Associations. This market is complimentary to the housing stock services we provide on behalf of several of our joint venture council partners. We will continue to work in this market as the national demand for social housing continues.

### CHARITABLE SECTOR:

Over the next five years we will seek to work with large charities (financially sound), preferably of national scale, allowing us to deliver services across the geographical spread of our Group. This market is seen as largely unattractive to our competitors but is a good fit for Norse Group as it aligns with our aims, values, and ethical philosophy on profitability.

### PRIVATE SECTOR:

We will continue to work within the private sector on an opportunistic basis where we see a specific fit for our services, values, and culture. We will work with those who want to work with us in a long-term strategic, partnering model. We will only take transactional work if entry costs are low, and margins are strong. We will not bid for work where we compromise our values or standards to achieve the right tender price.

The table in Appendix one reflects a high-level summary of Norse Group services / client fit.

## 3. DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

The business plan will be delivered as a product of successfully implementing the Norse Group Strategy.

Implementation will depend upon three key elements:

- 1) Clear, simple, goals
- 2) A deep understanding of our markets and customers
- 3) An objective appraisal of Norse Group resources

### CLEAR, SIMPLE, GOALS

**It will be essential to communicate our strategy to staff and our stakeholders clearly and simply, setting measurable goals.**

This requires a Communications Strategy to ensure our messaging is consistent, clear, pertinent to the target audience(s), and timely. In doing this, we will align with our People Strategy – engaging and motivating our staff to help deliver common, defined, goals for a clear purpose. These will tie-back to Norse Group’s overall aim - **improving people’s lives.**

### UNDERSTANDING OUR MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS

**Our markets will remain broadly similar over the next five years.**

We will continue to work in the local authority market, education sector, healthcare, and charitable sectors.

We intend to expand into the central government marketplace in the latter part of our implementation plan, that is in year four.

As we currently do, we will be opportunistic in the private sector as the right opportunities present themselves.

Norse Care will continue to offer its services to individual private clients as well as providing statutory care provision for Norfolk County Council.

We are confident that customers within our core markets will identify with our Group’s aims, and with our ethical values and ethos.

Our customers will respond well to high-quality professional relationships centred upon notions of long-term partnering, transparency, and ethical profitability - sharing this profit with our partners over a certain size / commitment threshold.

Staying informed about emerging market trends will be essential in delivering the strategy. The public sector market is likely to remain in flux over the next five years from both a policy and funding perspective.

The long-awaited ‘levelling-up’ agenda from central government, the Environment Bill, and social care reforms are three examples of significant change and challenge to which we will respond.

Staying abreast of how the challenges will impact our existing and potential customers will ensure our services remain relevant.

In support of the strategic prospects pipeline, we will continue to identify short-term, lower value, contract opportunities through our traditional Bid Team function. Careful selection of potential tender opportunities will remain a distinguishing characteristic of our approach.

We will continue to focus on opportunities for customers for whom we can deliver a quality solution, and who want to work with us. This approach will give us the best opportunity to seek contract extensions and variant bid models centred around long-term partnerships.

## AN OBJECTIVE APPRAISAL OF RESOURCES

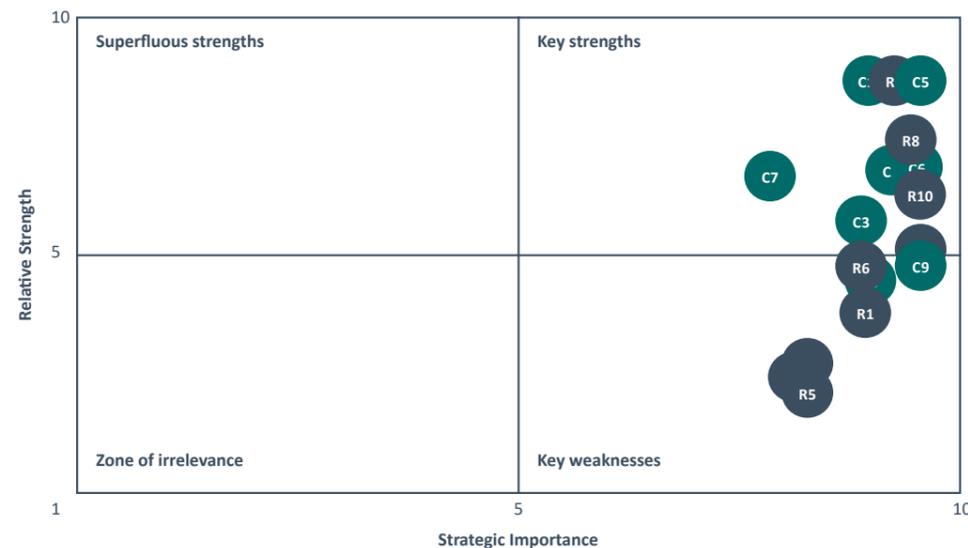
To deliver our business plan and Norse Group Strategy we must ensure we have an appropriate mix of resources and capabilities.

An initial analysis demonstrates that elements of the business will need to be improved to strengthen the Group value chain and optimise the strategy moving forward.

Appendix two includes an initial Norse Group resource and capability assessment. Resources and capabilities have been evaluated against a very broad comparison with other organisations competing in the same markets.

The strength and importance of each resource or capability has been ranked on a scale of 1-10. A score of five is broadly comparable to market. The results are presented diagrammatically in figure two.

Figure two: Norse Group resource and capability matrix



Key areas which are a focus for development:

### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

Appoint a Business Development Director to enable strategic development of relationships with long-term, higher value customers. At the same time, ensure the traditional sales and bid team grow contractual sales based on a customer experience which lays the foundation for longer-term, partnering arrangements.

### SUPPORT SERVICE PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS:

HR, Payroll and Finance services currently operate non-scalable processes and systems which the Group has outgrown in recent years. A review, re-design, and the subsequent implementation of a digital strategy is needed to create more efficient ways of working. These will offer improved and more consistent levels of support, with the flex to better support business growth.

### HR:

A People Strategy has been developed. Successful implementation will be key to ensuring that we retain valued employees and attract the best new talent as we grow.

### FINANCIAL STANDING:

To meet pre-qualification criteria for our longer-term strategic aims (partnership working with central government departments such as FM work with the MOJ, and partnership working with NHS Trusts, etc) it is likely that we will need to strengthen our financial position and balance sheet to ensure we are viewed as a financially safe partner. We will need to design and implement a Strategic Financial Plan over the next five years to ensure we can enter these markets and strategic relationships without undue concern regarding our financial standing.

## PEOPLE

The Norse Group has a workforce of approximately 9,000 people whose stated mission is to improve people's lives.

Combined these people are the Norse Group's asset.

This strategy focuses on simple principles around how the Norse Group behaves, recruits, makes decisions, and operates through the actions of our leaders and managers.

Through this, we make the Norse Group a better place to work, where employees are engaged and not only able to do their job well but want to do their job well.

At Norse, like many other businesses, FY22 has been another tough, turbulent year. Unlike many others, we have not only been affected by Covid-19, but we have also been working throughout the pandemic.

Furthermore, we have seen significant change within our senior leadership team, and like many other large organisations, our staff turnover and vacancy figures have reached high levels. This, coupled with ongoing budget cuts against a background of salary wars, has placed our operations under pressure.

Despite these challenges we have seen extraordinary resilience from our people.

It is imperative that we can demonstrate to our staff that we will do all that we can to support and encourage them, improve their lives at work, building an organisation and culture that they are proud to be part of.

How different elements of the plan are implemented will vary cross the businesses, but there are several core areas of focus as part of the People strategy.

### MANAGERS:

An employee's relationship with his or her direct manager is the most important single factor in employee engagement. But currently there is no agreed skillset for management and there is a need to offer managers better development and support programmes.

The basics of sound management are clear; objective setting, structured performance reviews, honest and open feedback and communication. Respected well-trained managers boost morale. Improved morale aids retention, and ultimately the performance of our business.

The short-term plan is therefore to improve the consistency of our managers' skillsets.

We want our managers to inspire employees, create trust and lead by example in line with the company's mission, vision and values.

### VALUES AND CULTURE:

Belonging to the Norse Group and believing in its values is the long-term objective to that ensures the culture and engagement of staff is that which the group is aiming for.

Our values define our organisation, but these needs to be led from the top and owned by our employees.

We need our employees to translate and understand what the values mean to them both personally and professionally, turning them from mere words into actions and behaviours that they believe in.

Ultimately our values should be the touchstone of everything we do, and our employees should recognise this and are the building blocks that create the pathway for the culture and any changes to this.

### COMMUNICATION:

Our strategic communications approach will ensure that we celebrate our successes, we promote and highlight our dedicated workforce, we message our ethical ethos and values-based approach, and, essentially, that we communicate our Norse Group Strategy.

Strategic communication within Norse has been recognised as needing development and resource.

A Communications Director will be appointed to devise, implement, and manage the Group's Communication Strategy which will be key in successfully engaging staff and wider stakeholders.

We will do this through clear, timely, concise, pertinent communications using various communication channels – to communicate with staff more readily across the Group.

## SYSTEMS:

Systems underpin our processes and play an important role in the progress of this strategy.

Our current processes can still be improved significantly, and through further investment in systems can be made more efficient.

A project (Project Viking) has been commissioned to provide an improved system solution in respect of People and Financial processes, that aims to maximise service delivery and enable managers to have ready access to their people data, with increasing automation of processes as well as providing a single point of entry/action for users.

This will then allow these systems to drive optimization of the business needs and support data-driven people decisions.

Further detail regarding Project Viking is within the Systems, Processes and Technology section.

## RECRUITMENT:

Since the pandemic, what employees seek and how they want to work has changed, and the UK employment market has become increasingly competitive as a result.

Now more than ever we must attract and retain individuals who will believe in the Group's values, who will work towards these and will embrace our mission to improve people's lives.

Improving every aspect of Norse's appeal to candidates, ensuring their experience of Norse from the outset is what they experience when they arrive, as well as ensuring that staff are developed to continue their journey with Norse, is key.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Our strategic communications approach will ensure that we celebrate our successes, we promote and highlight our dedicated workforce, we message our ethical ethos and values-based approach, and, essentially, that we communicate our Norse Group Strategy.

Strategic communication within Norse has been recognised as needing development and resource.

A Communications Director will be appointed to devise, implement, and manage the Group's Communication Strategy which will be key in successfully engaging staff and wider stakeholders.

We will do this through clear, timely, concise, pertinent communications using various communication channels – to communicate with staff more readily across the Group.

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

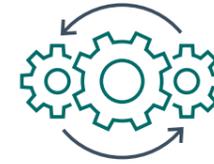
Norse is committed to ensuring that we keep our employees safe and well, physically, and emotionally.

One of our commitments to wellbeing is that we are looking to achieve accreditation to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter which provides a national accreditation for organisations which are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

The Charter is built on a solid framework which will drive us to have every aspect of the workplace wellbeing covered.

## SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND TECHNOLOGY

Over the term of this business plan, the focus is on three key areas:



### 1. BACK OFFICE SOLUTIONS

Maximise integration, automation and the value of information captured with a single point of entry/action for users that drives efficiency across the business.



### 2. INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure robust, secure, but flexible working solutions that can adapt to the requirements of the business over time.



### 3. OPERATIONAL SOLUTIONS

Develop a suite of preferred solutions that maximise service delivery and the latest developments - integrated into the wider system landscape.

## 1. BACK OFFICE SOLUTIONS

One of our commitments to wellbeing is that we are looking to achieve accreditation to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter which provides a national accreditation for organisations which are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of their workforce.

The Charter is built on a solid framework which will drive us to have every aspect of the workplace wellbeing covered.



These are the 'core' of Norse systems that cover all People and Finance related processes and the basic requirements of the Group.

A project has commenced called Project Viking to review the many processes and platforms with the aim of selecting a preferred system(s) by the end of May 2022. Implementation will then be via at least two phases, with the first phase running from June 2022 until April 2023.

The primary project aim is to leverage best practice processes within modern platforms and adopt the most suitable of these as the preferred 'Norse Way'. This approach will be supported by the selected systems that enable access to information in a highly accessible way.

Whilst a single solution to any process is not expected to fit all the needs of the Group, it will improve current performance considerably by removing manual inefficiencies but also seek to consolidate as many of the existing systems as possible, maximising the benefits of automation and workflow but also ensuring that the value of information can be used by the business for operational / management decisions.

Project Viking will be a significant investment in the business and whilst significant longer-term back-office efficiencies are expected, there are wider more indirect efficiencies expected in terms of staff engagement, retention, and development as well as improved operational efficiencies.

## 2. INFRASTRUCTURE

**The primary focus is to ensure robust and secure solutions that continue to support the changing (and flexible working) solutions needed by the business that can adapt to the requirements of the business over time.**

### Security

As the business increasingly moves towards digital systems, including its core systems, the potential impact of a successful attack is increased. Contingency planning and disaster recovery has been a focus throughout 2021-22 to bring in new hardware to support this.

The Group has secured Cyber Essentials Plus security rating and continues to review its security arrangements. Penetration testing is part of this, but in a world where technology and ways of working continually change, this is a moving target which remains a priority focus.

### Ways of Working

The group has until recently operated a predominantly office based, desktop environment.

As the needs of the business increasingly move to mobile access, flexible working from different devices / access points and cloud based platforms, a review of hardware requirements is already underway.

Increasingly options outside of the traditional model are being assessed, along with the security implications, to ensure they can match the business needs and employee's desire for different ways of working.

## 3. OPERATIONAL SOLUTIONS

**Outside of the 'core' systems, these are the largest and most diverse set of systems which given the diverse nature of the Group's services, require a wide range of solutions to support them. Noted as 'Secondary' in the overall strategy they are critical for operational management of our services.**

Historically the Group has taken on client systems which has resulted in a broad landscape of systems, often with different systems of similar capability, but which may not be fully integrated with the Core Systems and thus of limited benefit. Broadly 80% of the business operates on c.10 key operational platforms, with a significant tail of smaller systems.

The primary focus is to develop this suite of preferred solutions to maximise their value and use the latest developments from platforms – but ensure these integrate into the wider system landscape to leverage the full benefits.

### Changing our ways of working

Changes to the platforms used in operations requires consideration of how operations are managed.

Digitalisation of services requires different skills and managing this change is often more challenging than implementing the system.

Resource has been brought into the IT team to enable greater business partnering to help identify the processes and needs for change alongside the business, but also the benefits of platforms and ensure that the most appropriate are selected.

The training and focus on learning and development noted within the People strategy supports the changing skill needs of the business.

## 4. KEY STRATEGIC RISKS



### THE PEOPLE CHALLENGE

**The current environment has created real pressure recruiting and retaining the resources the business needs.**

Ensuring that the Group can adapt to the changing expectations, be it from flexible or other ways of working to the work environment itself, rewards and benefits, and the culture and approach of managers are all key to ensuring that the Group can secure the resources it needs to deliver its frontline services and to develop and grow.



### CYBER SECURITY

**The ever-present threat of hacking and potential introduction of viruses, when the business is increasingly moving to a digital model means that the impact of such an attack, if successful, is ever increasing.**

Whilst Cyber Essentials has been obtained, and external security advice and penetration testing is undertaken, this remains a priority due to the severity of any successful attack. Disaster Recovery and the Group's defences against attack are a constant area of review as a result.



### CONSULTING

**The property consultancy business of Norse has seen notable change in client expectations in recent years, but also more recently caused by the volatility of capital projects driven by the challenges of the pandemic.**

With an increasing focus on carbon neutral, Net Zero is an opportunity, but while also being a risk if the business doesn't ensure that it adapts to the changing needs of clients.



### DEFINED BENEFIT PENSIONS

**The group continues to accommodate defined benefit pensions because of its commitments to date. These pensions incur significant additional costs and the liabilities in respect of these can move significantly.**

Ensuring these are appropriately managed to reduce the risk of any adverse impact is a key priority. While these commitments remain however, there will continue to be a significant financial risk as a result.

## 5. THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

### The Board is responsible for:

- creating and delivering sustainable shareholder value through the management of the Group's businesses
- determining the strategic objectives and policies of the Group to deliver such long-term value, providing overall strategic direction within a framework of risk appetite and controls
- ensuring that management strikes an appropriate balance between promoting long-term growth and delivering short-term objectives
- demonstrating ethical leadership and promoting the company's values, culture and behaviours and acting in a way that promotes the success of the company for the benefit of our shareholder
- ensuring management maintains systems of internal control that provide assurance of effective and efficient operations, internal financial controls and compliance with laws and regulations
- ensuring management maintains an effective risk management and oversight process at the highest level across the Group

- having regard for what is appropriate for the Group's business and reputation, the materiality of the financial and other risks inherent in the business and the relative costs and benefits of implementing specific controls
- deciding other matters of importance which would be of significance to the Group as a whole because of their strategic, financial or reputational implications or consequences.

Specific key decisions and matters have been reserved for approval by the Board. These include decisions on the Group's strategy, approval of risk appetite, capital and liquidity matters, major acquisitions, mergers or disposals, Board membership, financial results and governance issues, including the corporate governance framework

### THE VOTING RIGHTS OF DIRECTORS

- Non-executive Directors (NCC Officer or Member) - seven votes each
- Independent Non-Executive Directors - one vote each
- Executive Directors - one vote each

Whoever chairs the Board has a casting vote.

### OUR BOARD MEMBERS



**Andy Wood**  
Chair



**Justin Galliford**  
Interim Chief Executive Officer



**Nick Frogbrook**  
Chief Financial Officer



**Andrew Proctor**  
Non-Executive Director



**Brian McCarthy**  
Non-Executive Director and Audit Committee Chair



**Simon Hardwick**  
Non-Executive Director and Investment Committee and Remuneration Committee Chair



**Lord Gary Porter**  
Non-Executive Director

### BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Particular Board responsibilities are referred to the following Board advisory committees:

- Investment Committee
- Audit Committee
- Remuneration and Nomination committee

This structure allows particularly detailed or complex matters to be given special scrutiny and oversight.

Except where decisions are specifically delegated, each committee reports and submits recommendations back to the Board for its review and, where necessary, decision.

Each committee operates within clearly defined terms of reference, which are reviewed annually by the relevant committee, and, if necessary, approved by the Board to ensure they remain appropriate and reflect any changes in good practice and governance.

The **Investment Committee** recommends and provides advice to the Board on the development of the Group's Investment Strategy and investment priorities.

The committee takes an active role in reviewing previous investments and also provides constructive challenge and support to the Group executive team in relation to significant investment decisions.

The Group's **Audit Committee** provides effective governance over the appropriateness of the Group's financial reporting, and the performance of both the internal and external audit functions. The committee also oversees the Group's internal control systems, business risks management and related compliance activities.

The **Remuneration and Nomination Committee** evaluates the composition, diversity, experience, knowledge, skills and independence of the Board and its committees. This allows the appropriate balance to be maintained and ensures the continued effectiveness of the Board.

The committee also ensures that appropriate succession plans for the Non-Executive Directors, Executive Directors and the Group's senior management are also kept under review, taking into account the challenges and opportunities facing the Group, and the diversity, skills and expertise that are therefore required in the future.

The Group's committees are chaired by a Non-Executive Director and directly report back to the Norse Group Board.

### SHAREHOLDER'S COMMITTEE

As part of its governance of the Norse Group, Norfolk County Council appoints a member to represent its interest as shareholder. The Shareholder Representative is invited to all company board meetings and the company's annual general meeting.

In addition, the Group is monitored by a County Council Shareholder Committee, which supports the development of the Group and provides feedback to the council on decisions made by the Board.

The Shareholder Committee considers all the matters reserved for shareholder approval and the Shareholder Representative then takes the committee's recommendations to the shareholder for final agreement.

The Shareholder Committee meets quarterly and regularly receives updates on financial performance and business development opportunities.

### KEY PERSONNEL

To direct and support the day to day activities of the Group, the Senior Executive Team is responsible for executing the Group's objectives, strategies, tactics and activities along with upholding the Group's values and strong culture and ethos.



# £2.65m

return to our shareholder

## 6. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The projected Profit and Loss (P&L) for the group for the year ending 31 March 2023 can be summarised as shown in the following table and chart:

£m	Commercial	Consulting	Care	Holdings	Other	Total
Revenues	268.1	33.4	47.1	4.3	(12.9)	339.9
Operating Costs	(258.9)	(31.4)	(46.6)	(4.6)	11.0	(330.6)
<b>Trading Profit</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>	<b>(2.0)</b>	<b>9.4</b>
Margin	3.4%	6.0%	1.0%	(6.9%)	15.1%	2.8%
Exceptional items	-	-	-	-	(0.7)	(0.7)
JV Rebates	(3.1)	(0.4)	-	-	-	(3.5)
NCC Rebates	(2.0)	(0.3)	(0.4)	-	-	(2.7)
Taxation	(0.7)	(0.2)	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.5)	(0.5)
IAS19 Pensions	(1.3)	(0.3)	-	-	-	(1.6)
<b>Retained Profit</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>(2.2)</b>	<b>0.5</b>
	0.8%	2.6%	0.0%	(5.2%)	16.9%	0.1%

The Holdings business division was created in the year ending 31 March 2021 to retain the legacy investments made across Norse Group, so that each trading area is not distorted by these assets and more fully reflects operating margins.

The 'Exceptional items' noted reflect some of the investment in systems that is being made regarding Project Viking, with the balance being capital in nature.

## APPENDIX ONE - NORSE GROUP SERVICES AND CLIENT FIT

Service	LOCAL AUTHORITIES										EDUCATION				HEALTHCARE			
	Parish Councils	District Councils	County Councils	Unitary Councils	Social Housing	Schools	Colleges	Universities	Community Hospitals	NHS Trusts	Charitable Sector	Private Sector	Central Govt. Depts.					
Cleaning																		
Catering																		
Portering																		
Grounds																		
Transport																		
Building Maintenance																		
Printing																		
Security, Fire and Alarms																		
Assistive Technologies																		
Environmental Services																		
Highways Maintenance																		
Housing Repairs																		
Advisory Services																		
Building Design Services																		
Estates Management																		
Adult Care																		

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CONSULTING

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CARE

# APPENDIX TWO

## - RESOURCE AND CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

		Importance <sup>1</sup>	Relative strength <sup>2</sup>	Comments
<b>RESOURCES</b>				
R1	Finance	8	4	Norse Group retained profit margin of approx. 2%. This is below market average – strategy is to target minimum 3%.
R2	Assets	7	3	Balance sheet strength is considerably less than competitors due to private ownership. Accordingly, accessing capital is not as quick to achieve as competitors. Current balance sheet strength restricts Tier 1 (Central Gov.), NHS trusts, and larger charity opportunities (albeit these are not envisaged within the Group's strategy for three to four years)
R3	Support Service Processes and systems	7	3	HR, Payroll and Finance currently operate non-scalable processes and systems which the Group has outgrown in recent years. These are facilitated by various applications with several bespoke integrations.
R4	HR	7	4	People Strategy has been developed and must now be implemented to ensure Norse Group retains talent, attracts new talent, and delivers overall Norse Group Strategy.
R5	Line of Service Technology	7	4	Increasingly complex variety of applications, individual to joint ventures, businesses, and operating divisions. Hard to achieve full integration with core business applications and easily produce integrated management information. Varying adoption of mobile workflow applications and hardware across Norse Group.
R6	Location	8	4	Norse Group has operations across England. Limited presence in Wales and no presence in Scotland.
R7	Reputation	9	8	Norse Group reputation is strong within the joint venture market (local authorities). Well-known for collaborative partnership working. Whilst also established in private sector, much less so than key competitors.
R8	Brand	9	7	Brand affirmation across market sectors through soft marketing approaches. Norse Group branding is complex (multiple brands) and not as visible as competitors. Customer advocacy within market sectors due to careful selection of work which Norse Group can deliver sustainable margin and positive outcomes for partners.
R9	Culture	9	5	Norse Group's historic roots and local authority ownership enable it to be a knowledgeable, open and honest partner alongside its operational expertise and capability.
R10	Skills	9	7	Broad range of service specific skills, at varying management levels retained within Norse Group. Strong focus on staff retention, and internal "upskilling" via dedicated Skills Hub.

		Importance <sup>3</sup>	Relative strength <sup>4</sup>	Comments
<b>CAPABILITIES</b>				
C1	Financial Management	9	8	Strong reliance on traditional management accounting principles. Robust and prudent assessment of all new business opportunities (joint ventures and contracts). Strong governance controls in place to ensure approval is obtained from shareholder for key investment / borrowing requirements.
C2	Management Development	9	6	Strong ethos of internal recruitment and progression through management positions. Experience valued at equal parity with management qualifications. Staff retention closely monitored – monitored as a business KPI.
C3	Strategic Innovation	8	6	Successful use of Teckal compliant joint venture model with local authorities. Sometimes conservative in innovating through new ways of working / technical solutions.
C4	Comprehensive Integrated Management Information Systems	8	4	Management information produced varies in detail, quality, and ease of reproduction between joint ventures and operating divisions. Production of some Management Information can require considerable manual processing. This can impact on ability to produce information in a timely fashion, as well as on consistency of quality.
C5	Volume Driven Efficiency Generation	9	8	Cultural business approach centres upon volume driven efficiencies and savings as key unique service offering. Key business ethos used to establish long-term partnering relationships. Long-term relationships preferable to short-term, high margin work.
C6	Continuous Improvement in Operations	9	6	Improvements can be deemed as efficiency saving, due to strong business ethos (as C5). Not as quick as major competitors to identify capital dependant service improvements.
C7	Flexibility / Speed of Response	7	7	Norse Group approach to partnering requires strong level of flexibility. Sometimes this requires input / validation from multiple parties depending upon specific joint venture's / operating division's requirements). Decisions generally apace with response required by partners.
C8	Marketing: Brand Management	9	4	No defined Marketing Strategy. Consistent, subtle, brand affirmation through limited, marketing channels. Numerous Group brands – can be confusing for customers. No hard selling philosophy. Enduring relationships built gradually.
C9	Business Development	9	5	Business Development Director to be appointed, to develop relationships with potential customers for long-term, strategic value, and motivate sales team.

<sup>1</sup> Scales for importance and relative strength: 1 = very low, 10 = very high

<sup>2</sup> Resources and capabilities are compared with broad overview of competitors. 5 equals parity of strength

<sup>3</sup> Scales for importance and relative strength: 1 = very low, 10 = very high

<sup>4</sup> Resources and capabilities are compared with broad overview of competitors. 5 equals parity of strength

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IMPROVING PEOPLE'S LIVES

Registered office address:  
 County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich,  
 Norfolk, United Kingdom, NR1 2DW  
 Company number: 10887284



## Final 1.0

# Business Plan

## 2022/23

<b>Author:</b>	Repton Property Developments Ltd Board
<b>Version:</b>	Draft 12
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Pipeline of Completions by Financial Year

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. Repton Property Developments Ltd was established in 2017 with the primary objective of undertaking direct property development to maximise the financial returns (capital receipts and revenue income) to Norfolk County Council. This will support service delivery, with a dividend payable once the company has distributable profits - currently projected to be 2023/24.
- 1.2. In addition, the Council is seeking wider social, economic, and environmental outcomes and the following secondary objectives were also established:
  - Contributing to meeting Norfolk’s growing housing demand.
  - Provision of quality homes to raise design and performance standards.
  - Providing economic stimulus by increasing overall capacity for property development and by taking control of developing specific sites, preventing land banking.
  - Supporting creation of quality jobs and economic growth.
- 1.3. At its Cabinet of 8 November 2021, the council resolved to “commission the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services to report to Cabinet about the options for setting formal low carbon objectives in relation to companies where the County Council is the majority shareholder”. The shareholder will need to formalise objectives for Repton in this respect – these might include targets for both the energy performance of completed dwellings and for the carbon performance of the supply chain.
- 1.4. Initially the company is developing land that is surplus to Norfolk County Council use. This land is sold by the County Council to Repton at a fair value based on the status of the land - whether it has a suitable planning permission - and following a viability assessment.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1. Repton is performing well against its objectives and providing a range of environmental and social benefits. The company has developed a firm pipeline of projects and is now seeing substantial progress on a number of sites. The company is developing much-needed affordable housing – going beyond the ‘policy compliant’ level on the first three of its consented schemes (Acle, Hopton, and Attleborough)
- 2.2. The first residents have now moved in to a ‘Repton home’ whilst Norfolk residents benefit from apprenticeships and the use of a local supply chain.
- 2.3. The nature of development is that, due to working capital requirements utilising early revenue, income is returned near the end of the scheme, but Repton is well on the way to delivering this. So far, the company is exceeding the targets for private sale receipts and has entered into major contracts with registered providers who are purchasing the affordable housing element.



- 24. This document sets out the Business Plan for Repton Property Developments Ltd for the immediate future with an emphasis on the next four years and covers the four sites being managed by Lovells, the six smaller sites managed by Torrington and one site managed by Norse Consulting. It provides the company’s vision and broad strategic objectives, as well as the financial forecasts that sit behind the Business Plan.
- 25. Broadly, the Business Plan sets out the context and background to the Company.
- 26. The Company has identified opportunities to develop existing Council owned assets with the potential to create more than 650 residential properties, including 238 affordable dwellings. We expect that ten homes will have been completed within the current financial year. Current estimates show 144 completions in 2022/23, rising to a peak of 300 completions in 2023/24.
- 27. A timeline and cash flow of the sites is regularly updated to show profitability and timings, based on site appraisals as we progress through the lifecycle of each site.
- 28. A pipeline of potential additional NCC sites is currently being reviewed and may come forward in this financial year subject to the company’s financial capacity and the Shareholder’s dividend expectations.
- 29. The Shareholder has informally suggested that Repton should plan to deliver a dividend from the financial year ending March 2024.

**3. OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS TO DATE**

<b>Primary Objectives</b>	
To maximise financial return to the shareholder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land payments to NCC – c£5.1m</li> <li>• Interest paid and due to NCC - £0.4m</li> <li>• Sales to date - £1.5m</li> <li>• Affordable Homes income to date - £5.2m</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary Objectives</b>	
Contributing to meeting Norfolk’s growing housing demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Houses Started:</b> Private 209 Affordable 128</li> <li>• <b>Houses completed:</b> Private 9 Affordable 0</li> </ul>
Provision of quality homes to raise design and performance standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All homes to Nationally Described Space Standard</li> <li>• Smaller-sites programme targeting 15% energy efficiency improvement on Building Regulations.</li> </ul>



<p>Provide economic stimulus by increasing overall capacity for property development and by taking control for developing specific sites preventing land banking.</p>	<p>Repton has increased available capacity for property development by achieving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Planning achieved on 4 sites (Acle, Hopton, Lingwood and Caister).</li> <li>• Planning expected imminently on a further 2 (Attleborough and Hunstanton)</li> </ul>
<p>Support creation of quality jobs and economic growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 110 jobs supported on Acle and Hopton so far</li> <li>• Eight apprentices</li> <li>• c.60% local supply chain</li> <li>• £1.99 spend in the local economy for every £1 contract spend with Lovell. This equates to a c.£30m local spend to date.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional benefits</b></p>	
<p>Environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Space 400m<sup>2</sup> play areas - Acle 8,582m<sup>2</sup> open space - Acle 1-hectare informal open space + footpath to Jubilee Wood - Acle</li> <li>• Community infrastructure 355m footpaths/ cycleways (non-adopted) - Acle 2,074m footpaths (adopted) - Hopton</li> <li>• Hopton also includes Electric Vehicle infrastructure to all 200 properties</li> <li>• 77 solar systems to be installed</li> <li>• Small sites programme designed around fabric-first approach with air source heat pumps</li> <li>• Reuse of existing buildings where possible to save embodied carbon</li> </ul>
<p>Educational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 engagement events for c. 380 students.</li> <li>• 110 hours volunteering with local Academy</li> </ul>

**4. PRODUCT**

- 4.1. The main product is residential dwellings for market sale. The site layout and home types will be designed to meet the requirement of maximising return from the developments subject to planning policy compliance and, where applicable, Repton secondary objectives.
- 4.2. The affordable housing elements to meet or exceed planning policy compliance, where viability allows, will be acquired by registered providers procured through tender. The affordable element could include social rent, affordable rent and shared equity offers – as informed by the Local Planning Authority.
- 4.3. The management and maintenance of the public realm elements will either be

offered to the Parish Council or a management company will be established for each development.

- 4.4. Repton's homes will respond to evolving energy efficiency standards in future building regulations. Subject to agreement by the Shareholder and maintaining forecast profitability, Repton has aspirations to:
- Achieve 15% above current building regulations environmental performance on the smaller sites;
  - Futureproof homes for new heat sources on the larger sites;
  - Provide facilitating infrastructure for electric vehicle charging on all homes with parking spaces, whilst also designing public realm for active travel to create modal shifts;
  - Retain and improve biodiversity and existing natural features on its sites wherever possible
  - Work with its supply chain to minimise supply chain emissions in accordance with developing good practice.
- 4.5. There will be a particular focus on ensuring that non-latent home defects are eliminated by the point of sale and that Repton maintains high standards of customer service and aftercare through its contractual relationships with its development partners.
- 4.6. Repton will provide a high-quality product in all its homes. Particularly through the small sites programme, Repton will seek to distinguish itself and its product through good design.
- 4.7. All roads on development sites, where adoption is the best option, will be constructed to a standard to be adopted by the local highway authority.

## **5. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL PARAMETERS**

- 5.1. Each site is appraised on its individual merits and a balanced portfolio approach is taken with regards to primary and secondary objectives.
- 5.2. To assess the viability of individual scheme, on the larger sites contracted with Lovell, the company uses:
1. Profit as a percentage of income is the measure used within the Business Plans - presented at viability and also to ascertain profit share within the business relationship. Each site has an approved return which is set at the post-planning appraisal stage;
  2. Return on Capital Employed (ROCE\*) is required by the shareholder as a viability measure and will be tracked as a post-completion measure.

\*ROCE is normally calculated before corporate overheads. This is a typically used housebuilding industry measures as a means of appraising schemes. Repton has set itself a target of 25%.

- 5.3. The smaller sites programme, with Torrington and Norse Consulting, uses a measure of 'profit on-cost'. Typically, schemes must make a profit of 15% -20%



included within the Gross Development Costs. The residual balance of the scheme’s income is the value Repton can offer for the land.

**6. LAND ACQUISITION**

6.1. Repton’s current approach is to acquire bare land or brownfield sites from Norfolk County Council with, as a minimum, an extant outline planning permission for residential development that has at least 2 years to run. The sites at Acle and Hopton have been acquired by Repton for £2.2m and £2.85m respectively. Construction is now under way.

6.2. The four sites listed below (plans in Appendix 2) have outline planning permission and at the appropriate point will move into contract, subject to formal development appraisal and associated viability conditions being met:

- Attleborough, Land West of Hargham Road.
- Attleborough, Land East of Hargham Road
- Caister on Sea, Land West of St Nicholas Drive
- Lingwood, Former Lingwood First School

A further phase of five sites listed below (plans in Appendix 2) are also being appraised to assess viability.

6.3. The estimate programme of completions for the previous and next financial years is outlined in the table below. Dates are target and subject to change:

	2021/22	2022/23
Market	10	80
Affordable	0	64
Total	10	144

6.4. Norfolk County Council also has sites available that have not yet been allocated for residential use in the relevant local plan. NCC is likely to offer Repton the opportunity to promote some of these opportunities and it is likely be at the company’s risk, however Repton anticipates this will be on the basis of a greater return for the company.

6.5. A pipeline of potential additional NCC sites is currently being reviewed and may come forward in this financial year subject to the company’s financial capacity and the Shareholder’s dividend expectations.

**7. MODUS OPERANDI**

7.1. A comprehensive procurement exercise was undertaken in 2018 which culminated in the appointment of Lovell Partnerships Ltd as a single supplier with the full range of development and construction services required to deliver new dwellings to the market and subsequently sell them, for the first four Repton

- sites. This arrangement with Lovell Partnerships Ltd has allowed Repton to acquire an off the shelf development structure without the need to appoint staff to carry out these roles. This will enable delivery to be brought forward quickly in the short to medium term. This arrangement will be regularly reviewed and is designed to cover the first four sites.
- 7.2. Each of the four sites has outline planning consents; the sites at Acle and Hopton now have full reserved matters consent (June 2020 and December 2020 respectively). Lovell have provided fully costed viability proposals with approval to progress to the next appropriate stage in the development process. Acle and Hopton are under construction, with Acle having achieved its first completed sale. For Attleborough (west of Hargham Road), a reserved matters planning application is within the final review period, whilst Attleborough (east of Hargham Road) is in pre-planning application stage.
  - 7.3. An overarching Development Services Agreement was negotiated and signed with Lovell in October 2019. Each development site will then be individually contracted using, normally, a PPC2000 partnering contract or, alternatively, a traditional JCT Design and Build contract where appropriate.
  - 7.4. A further procurement exercise took place in October 2019 which resulted in the appointment of Torrington Properties Ltd as a Development Manager for six smaller sites. Torrington Properties Ltd will lead and manage the full range of professional, technical, construction and support service to deliver each site design until the conclusion of after-sales support.
  - 7.5. Two of the smaller sites (Caister and Lingwood) have full reserved matters permission and Hunstanton is well advanced in the application process. There is an ambition to also bring forward the Trowse, Attleborough (Chapel Rd), South Walsham and Station Road Lingwood sites for planning application submissions during this timeframe.
  - 7.6. An agreement is in place with Torrington Properties Ltd, with an 'Appointment of Development Manager' contract, to be signed per site at the appropriate point.
  - 7.7. Norse Consulting have been appointed along similar lines for Development Management services at Station Road, Lingwood.
  - 7.8. Employer's Agent services, providing an extra layer of high level, client-side, cost and design oversight, have also been contracted following a procurement exercise undertaken early in 2019. The supplier is Richard Utting Associates from Norwich.
  - 7.9. Legal services advising on contracts and company governance is currently provided by Mills and Reeve LLP based in Norwich.
  - 7.10. For auditing and tax advice Larking Gowen have been appointed. Barclays Bank has been appointed as the company's banker and NHBC registration has been secured.



- 7.11. Board monitors and oversees risk and progress. The Board has overall responsibility for authorising spend and progress on schemes. Officers and the Development Managers present reports and data for questioning and approval. Board meetings are held on an approximately bi-monthly cycle.
- 7.12. The Board has challenged and is content that the highest levels of corporate governance are adhered to, but it recognises the need to learn from other housing companies across the country. The Board has particularly looked at other, Local Authority owned, housing development companies to identify any further lessons.
- 7.13. The Board has looked at the wider macro-economic factors (for example, the potential for any slowdown in the housing market and cost increases in the construction sector) and in addition to the extant robust financial governance, will focus on four key questions:
  - The importance of liquidity – modelled against a number of scenarios;
  - Stress testing project appraisals;
  - Counter-party risk - to ensure robust counter-party viability checks particularly with contractors on smaller sites;
  - Energy efficiency, sustainability and the strategy for net zero carbon.
- 7.14. Board has approved an Environmental Strategy as a critical step toward, amongst other key metrics, reducing Carbon emissions created by Repton activities. This will be monitored through the supply chain and managed via contractual requirements.

**8. COMPANY STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 8.1. Repton Property Developments Ltd (Repton) is a private company limited by shares wholly owned by Norfolk County Council (NCC) which has ultimate control of its business activities.
- 8.2. The Company has been established in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 including the appointment of a Board of Directors for the Company and the adoption of Articles of Association.
- 8.3. All board directors are approved by the shareholder (NCC) and comprise the following:

• Two Councillors	Representatives of the County Council’s Cabinet	Cllr A Proctor Cllr G Peck
• Two Officers	Selected from with County Council teams as having the appropriate experience	Mr. H Bullen Mr. A Collier
• Two independents	Appointed following a competitive process	Mr. S Hardwick Mr. M Spry

- 8.4. The County Council’s shareholder function is discharged through its Cabinet with the actual work delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and

## Commercial Services.

85. Numerous Norfolk County Council staff perform services for Repton and their time is recharged. These services include:

- Development Management services
- Supporting the Board and ensuring governance procedures are carried out.
- Providing insurance.
- Providing financial advice.
- Undertaking procurement
- Providing audit services.

## 9. FUNDING

9.1. The County Council as shareholder is the key funder for the company. The County Council has established, through its own governance arrangements, the principle of providing loans to Repton. Repton currently has a £25m loan facility with the shareholder which is drawn down upon Board approval or when authority is delegated to specific board members. A further £10m facility has been requested from Cabinet to allow a commercially sensible headroom.

## 10. MARKET ANALYSIS

10.1. The housebuilding market in Norfolk is dominated by national and larger regional housebuilders primarily developing along the A11 corridor and within the Greater Norwich sub-region.

10.2. Significant development has occurred over the last 5 years, but the slowdown in the housing market over late 2018 and early 2019, the Covid 19 pandemic, the stamp duty holiday and Brexit have all contributed to an uncertain economic climate. A long-sustained period of house price growth is foreseeably coming to an end and means that the market in the short to medium term is unlikely to see the same growth of prices or delivery. The next 5-year period could see cost inflation outstripping sales price inflation with a consequent effect on margins. The glut of house sales associated with the recent stamp duty holiday has depleted housebuilders' stocks of land and new homes and competition for land replenishment is likely to be a feature of the 2022 market.

10.3. Housebuilders have been factoring higher build costs into land bids, in anticipation of the higher energy efficiencies that have been signalled as part of new building regulations coming forwards.

10.4. The construction trade is reporting shortages of building materials (and labour) as a Covid and Brexit consequence and early procurement has been used to mitigate this risk.

10.5. Repton will take a conservative view of market risk and regular reviews of the current market conditions are undertaken, utilising recent UK housing market updates published by Savills, local intelligence, and the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS).

10.6 In terms of the competition in Norfolk, Persimmon and Taylor Wimpey are the national housebuilders with the largest programs, whilst Barratts, Kier, Hill and Lovells all have sites in the County. Hopkins Homes is the largest of the regional housebuilders, has seen a large expansion in their turnover and were subject to a recent private equity buyout. Smaller regionals in Norfolk, more on a scale with Repton's aspirations, are Norfolk Homes, Badger Homes and Able Homes. Housing Associations are relatively recent entrants into the open-market sale sector with Orbit Housing, Clarion, Flagship Housing and Saffron all having significant developments in the region. Eastlight are a new entrant to the market. Housing Associations have recently taken on a relatively higher proportion of private sale risk and some are now starting to reduce their programmes in light of new market uncertainties and competition for land and S106 requirements driving costs up. Additionally, new Local Authority backed housing development companies, such as Big Sky Living in South Norfolk, are providing much needed housing in key locations.

10.7. In respect of target market: early research for the St Edmund's Park, Acle site has shown demand is likely to be from local people wishing to upsize; and people from the surrounding rural area wishing to move from their larger but older property to newer properties that are easier to look after. The research for the Land East of Lowestoft Road, Hopton site shows that demand there is likely to be from incomers to Norfolk. Each site in the Repton programme is subject to specific market research from stage 0 and this informs how the site is designed, appraised and taken forward. Some sites may be better suited to an all-affordable product, others may be a high-end sales product. Sensitivity analysis is undertaken for each site to show the effects of changes within the housing market on financial outturns.

## **11. TAX**

11.1. VAT and corporation tax have been registered with HMRC and monthly VAT returns are completed. Repton has also registered for the Construction Industry Scheme.

## **12. DIVIDENDS**

12.1. It is envisaged that any surplus funds/profits will be returned to the shareholder using dividends to the extent it is prudent and legal to do so and consistent with any additions to the development pipeline in terms of future sites that NCC wishes Repton to consider. The Shareholder has informally suggested that Repton should plan to deliver a dividend of at least £1m p.a. from the financial year ending March 2024.

12.2. When viewing the company's overall financial benefit to the Council and the County of Norfolk, it should also be noted that the Shareholder receives both a land payment and a return from the interest charged on borrowing as part of the arrangement.

### **13. SWOT ANALYSIS**

13.1. The following is a summary of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Repton Property Development Ltd:

**Strengths:**

- Ability to secure funding at competitive rates.
- Council support.
- Initial funding available.
- Several Council owned sites available for redevelopment.

**Weaknesses:**

- Timescales for planning, development and construction before significant number of homes become available for sale and produce income.

**Opportunities:**

- Increase of affordable housing within the County.
- Income generation for the Council, arising from profit.
- Support for local people to buy a home (or rent from the affordable housing provider).

**Threats:**

- Any future government change in the view of council companies/prudential borrowing.
- Downturn in economy leading to a fall in house prices.
- Increase in interest rates.
- Materials and labour cost inflation
- Supply chain failure

### **14. TARGETS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

14.1. The proposed targets and key performance indicators are tabled out in Appendix 1 and at this point in the programme reflect priorities of obtaining planning permission, de-risking the affordable homes sales and starting on site. As Repton moves into a delivery and handover stage, KPIs will inevitably change to reflect new priorities.

14.2. Key performance indicators for health and safety will be identified for each development site. Identification will be undertaken in co-operation with Lovell Partnership Ltd & Torrington Properties Ltd & Norse Consulting immediately after each site is transferred to Repton and prior to commencement of site operations.

14.3. Moving forward additional targets could be considered as the business matures, but only if the return warrants it. For example:

- Increase in energy performance measured using the SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) system comparing like-for-like dwellings.
- Number of dwellings constructed on any one development to a “lifetime”



- standard (following adoption of a defined standard).
- Number of defects reported within one year of Practical Completion
- Customer satisfaction surveys

**15. Financial business plan – 2022/23**

- 15.1. Appendix 3 includes financial business plan statements for the period up to and including 2022/23: an operating statement and balance sheet are included along with a monthly cash-flow graph.
- 15.2. The information is based upon the latest cash flow forecasts received from Lovells, Torrington and Norse Consulting, covering all eleven sites listed in paragraphs 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3. The forecasts include plans to sell parts of each site to Affordable Housing operators as planning permissions, viability and individual site risk profiles require.
- 15.3. Sales of £7.3m are anticipated in the year to 31 March 2022 as the first houses at Acle are sold, increasing to £37m in 2022-23 which reflects increased development activity anticipated in the forthcoming financial year.
- 15.4. The sales of £37m anticipated in 2022-23 can be analysed as follows:

Developer	Sales £m	Category	Sales £m
Lovells	34	Open market	24
Torrington	3	Affordable	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>37</b>

- 15.5. Cumulative profits after overheads, interest and tax are estimated to become positive in 2023-24. The financial statements in Appendix 3 are based on a prudent assumption that profit on each scheme will only be recognised when there is certainty that a surplus will be realised after accounting for interest and contractual profit shares.
- 15.6. It is possible that profits will be realised earlier on some schemes, depending on actual patterns of income and expenditure on each scheme, and discussions with the company’s external auditors.
- 15.7. Appendix 1 shows the status each of the current Lovells and Torrington site programmes based on the latest forecasts. Forecasts are revised regularly, and subject to change as additional sites are added or market conditions change.
- 15.8. Borrowing is expected to peak at £24m between December 2022 and March 2023 prior to which building of the properties gathers pace across several sites and there is a time delay until private sales are achieved. After March 2023 cash flows turn positive as total sales income is forecast to exceed development and overhead costs. Positive net cash flows will allow loan to be repaid or enable new sites to be added to the programme. Cashflow is a key indicator for the company and reports are presented to each Board meeting. The shareholder has approved a total loan facility of £25m, anticipated to increase to £35m following the County Council meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022. To date £12.1m of

Registered office address:  
County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich,  
Norfolk, United Kingdom, NR1 2DW  
Company number: 10887284

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the facility has been utilised.

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## Appendix 1

### Business Plan proposed targets and key performance indicators

	Item	Profit Target	01/02/22
1.	<b>Financial parameters (can only be measured once the land price has been fixed):</b>		
	a) Lovell - Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) for each development:	25%	Acle – 43% Hopton - 25%
	b) Torrington – Profit as an on-cost on each scheme	15%-20%	-
	c) Norse/NORSE CONSULTING – Profit as an on-cost on each scheme	15%-20%	-
	Item	Target Date approved	10/02/21
2.	<b>St Edmund’s Park, Acle site:</b>		
	<b>a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Jun-20	<b>Jun-20</b>
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Mar-20	<b>Mar-20</b>
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Jul-20	<b>Nov-20</b>
	Finish on site	Jun-24	Jan-24
	Sale of the first unit by:	Jun-21	<b>Jan-22</b>
	Final dwelling sold by:	Sept-24	Jan-24
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Sept-20	<b>Jan- 21</b>
3.	<b>Land East of Lowestoft Road, Hopton site:</b>		
	<b>Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Oct-20	-

	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Mar-21	July-21
<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>			
	Start on site	Apr-21	Mar -21 (enabling works)
	Finish on site	Nov-25	Jan -26
	Sale of the first unit by:	Apr-22	Jun-22
	Final dwelling sold by:	Feb-26	Mar-26
<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>			
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Nov-21	Feb-22
<b>4. Land South of New Road, Attleborough 1 site:</b>			
<b>Land Purchase and planning</b>			
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Mar-21	Feb-22
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Mar-21	Mar-22
<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>			
	Start on site	Aug-21	Apr-22
	Finish on site	Jan-23	Dec-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	N/A	N/A
	Final dwelling sold by:	N/A	N/A
<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>			
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Apr-21	Mar-22
<b>5. Land East of Hargham Road, Attleborough 2 site:</b>			
<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>			
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Feb-22	New Business Plan forthcoming with new dates
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	May-22	-
<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>			
	Start on site	Jun-22	-
	Finish on site	Oct-25	-
	Sale of the first unit by:	May-23	-
	Final dwelling sold by:	Jan-26	-
<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>			
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Jan-23	-

6.	<b>Former Lingwood First School, Lingwood site:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Jul-21	<b>Jan-22</b>
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Sep-21	Mar-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Oct-21	Apr-22
	Finish on site	Sep-22	Mar-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	Sep-22	Feb-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	May-23	Oct-23
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Apr-21	May-22
7.	<b>St Nicholas' Drive Caister:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Feb-21	<b>Feb-21</b>
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Jun-21	Mar-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Jul-21	Apr-22
	Finish on site	May-22	Feb-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	May-22	Jan-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	Nov-22	Jul-23
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Apr-21	Oct-21
8.	<b>Former School Site, Hunstanton:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Jun-21	Feb-22
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Aug-21	Apr-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Sep-21	May-22
	Finish on site	Jun-22	Feb-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	May-22	Feb-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	Oct-22	Jul-23
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing	N/A	N/A

	provider to be completed by:		
9.	<b>Former School Site, Attleborough:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Nov-21	-
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Jan-22	Jul-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Feb-22	Aug-22
	Finish on site	Oct-22	Apr-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	Oct-22	Apr-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	Feb-23	Aug-23
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	N/A	-
10	<b>Former School Site, Trowse:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Aug-21	Aug-22
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Oct-21	Sept-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Nov-21	Oct-22
	Finish on site	Aug-22	Jul-23
	Sale of the first unit by:	Jun-22	Jun-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	Oct-22	Oct-23
	<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>		
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	N/A	N/A
8.	<b>Chameryhall Lane, South Walsham:</b>		
	<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>		
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Mar-22	Jun-22
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Apr-22	Jul-22
	<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>		
	Start on site	Apr-22	Oct-22
	Finish on site	Jul-23	Jan-24
	Sale of the first unit by:	Jun-23	Dec-23
	Final dwelling sold by:	Aug-24	Feb-25

<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>			
	Procurement of affordable housing provider to be completed by:	Feb-22	Dec-22
<b>9. Station Road, Lingwood:</b>			
<b>(a) Land Purchase and planning</b>			
	Reserved Matters approved by:	Feb-23	-
	Agreement of value and completion of acquisition of site by:	Mar-23	-
<b>(b) Market sales element:</b>			
	Start on site	Apr-23	-
	Finish on site	Jul-24	-
	Sale of the first unit by:	Oct-23	-
	Final dwelling sold by:	Jun-24	-
<b>(c) Affordable housing element:</b>			
	Procurement of affordable housing	Apr-23	-
<b>6. Future pipeline of sites:</b>			
	(a) Agreement with Norfolk County Council on pipeline of additional sites to be made available for the next five years by:	Board discussion held Oct 2019.	Will be an ongoing activity

**Appendix 2**

**St Edmunds Acle - Land north of Norwich Road**

**Site plan**





**Attleborough 1 - Land South of New Road**  
Site location plan



**Nicholas Drive Caister:**  
Site plan



**Former Lingwood First School, Lingwood site:**  
Site plan





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**Land at former school, Hunstanton:**

Site location plan



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## **Appendix 3**

### Financial business plan statements

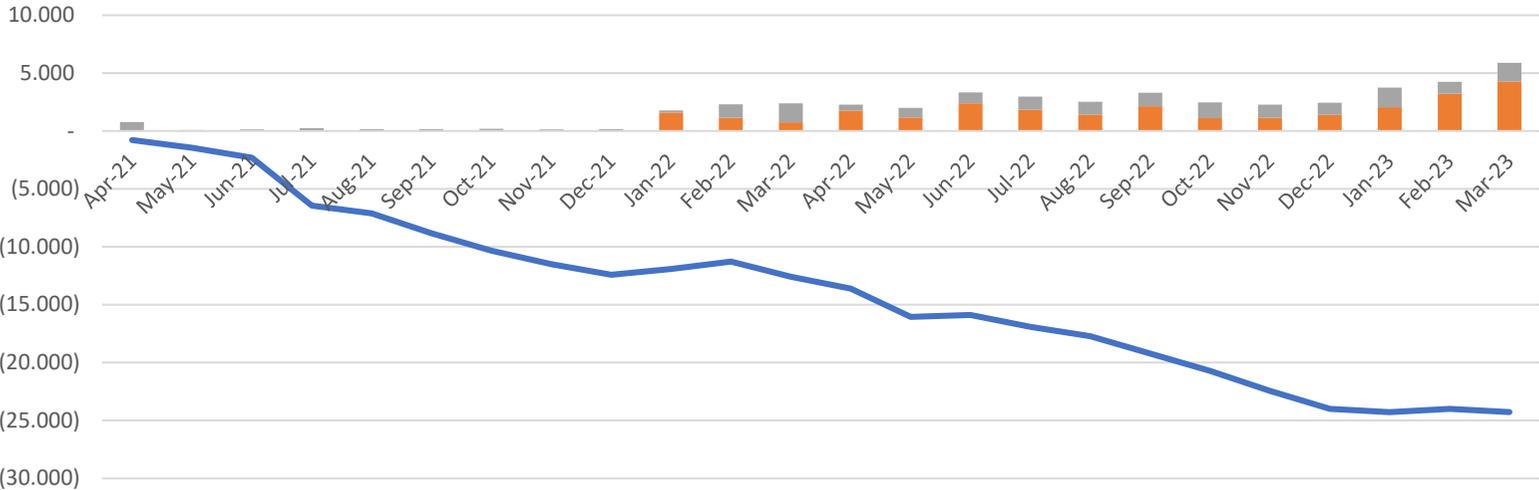
Repton Property Developments Ltd				
Forecast profit and loss				
		March 2021	Mar 2022	Mar 2023
		£m	£m	£m
		actual	forecast	forecast
<b>Income</b>				
Sales		3.827	7.282	37.312
Cost of sales		4.214	7.282	36.453
		-		
<b>Gross Profit</b>		<b>(0.387)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.860</b>
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>				
NCC support / directors		0.286	0.423	0.435
Professional and other fees		0.015	0.177	0.236
Interest not allocated to WIP		0.020	0.158	0.100
Consultancy adjustment		(0.035)		
Cromer - site costs (site not proceeding)		0.061		
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.758</b>	<b>0.771</b>
<b>Net Profit before tax</b>		<b>(0.734)</b>	<b>(0.758)</b>	<b>0.089</b>
Tax				
Profit after tax		<b>(0.734)</b>	<b>(0.758)</b>	<b>0.089</b>
<b>Cumulative</b>	<b>(0.382)</b>	<b>(1.116)</b>	<b>(1.874)</b>	<b>(1.785)</b>

Repton Property Developments Ltd				
Forecast balance sheet				
	31 Mar 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	
	£m	£m	£m	
Assets		forecast	forecast	
<b>Bank</b>				
Current Account (balancing figure, assumes loan drawn down March to cover accounts payables and interest paid April	0.967	1.423	1.668	
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>0.967</b>	<b>1.423</b>	<b>1.668</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Acle - build costs	1.584	3.609	-	
Acle - land purchase - wip	1.724	1.379	0.690	
Clarion retention Acle	0.742	0.742	0.742	
Attleborough 1 - West of Hargham Rd - build costs	0.123	0.444	0.277	
Att West deposit		(0.900)	(0.400)	
Attleborough 2 - East of Hargham Rd - build costs	0.080	0.312	4.191	
Attleborough Chapel Road - build costs	0.013	0.131	2.351	
Caister - build costs	0.248	0.515	1.664	
Cromer - build costs	-	-	-	
Hopton - build costs	0.484	8.639	8.175	
Hopton - Flagship deposit		-	-	
Hunstanton - build costs	0.083	0.220	1.276	
Lingwood - build costs	0.366	0.876	2.930	
South Walsham - build costs	0.023	0.255	3.619	
Trowse - build costs	0.015	0.196	1.836	
Vauxhall Centre - build costs - WIP	0.021	0.021	-	
Lingwood Station Road - build costs		0.054	0.848	
Other debtors	0.721	1.636	1.599	
Refundable deposits held by third parties (inc NHBC)	0.137	0.300	0.600	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>6.362</b>	<b>18.428</b>	<b>30.396</b>	
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>7.329</b>	<b>19.851</b>	<b>32.064</b>	

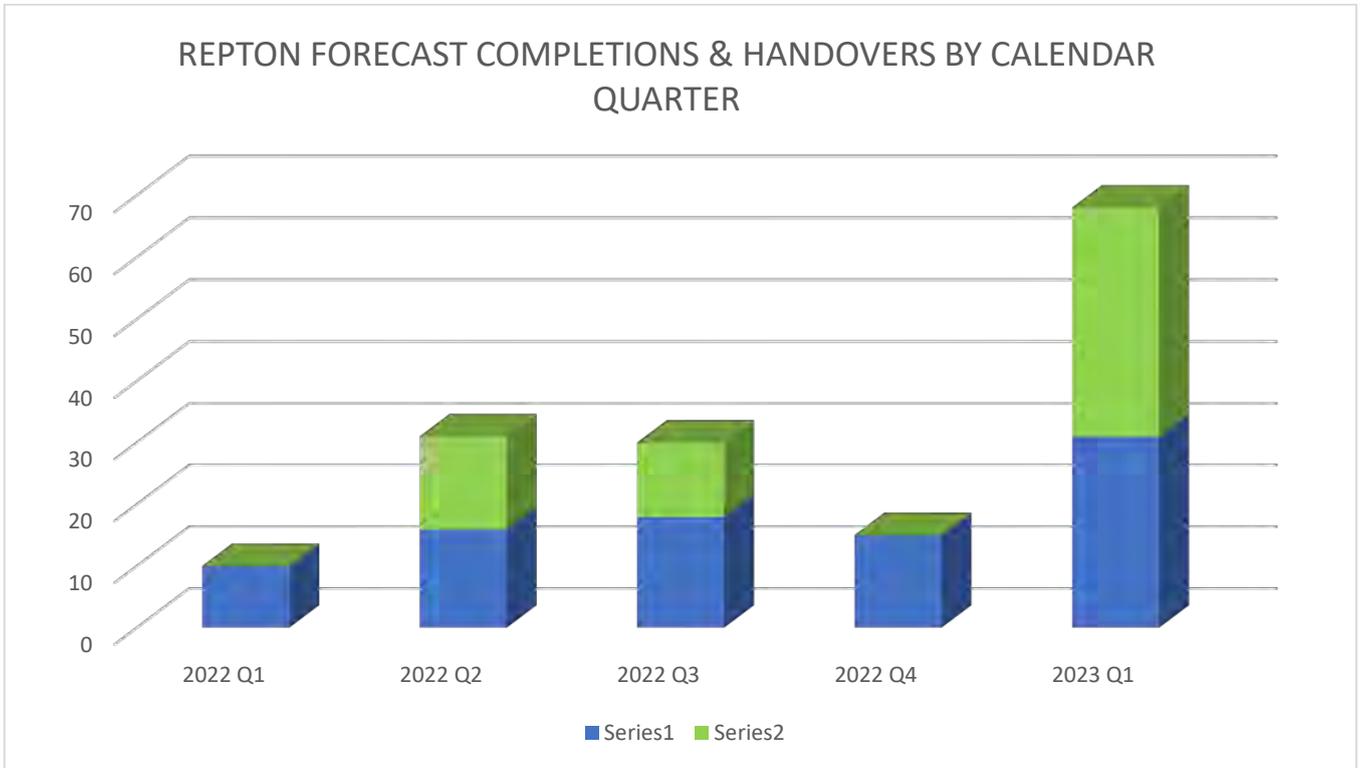
Liabilities	31 Mar 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m	£m
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		<b>forecast</b>	<b>forecast</b>
Accounts Payable	0.735	3.004	4.572
Accruals inc tax	0.007	0.010	0.010
Acle - prov'n for loss on Clarion sales (to balance profit on land)	2.473	1.973	-
Amount due to Parent	0.003	0.675	1.500
CIS Deducted	0.001	-	-
Rounding	0.000	-	-
VAT	(0.073)	(0.037)	(0.033)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>3.145</b>	<b>5.625</b>	<b>6.049</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Loan	1.800	12.600	24.300
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1.800</b>	<b>12.600</b>	<b>24.300</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>4.945</b>	<b>18.225</b>	<b>30.349</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2.384</b>	<b>1.626</b>	<b>1.715</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Capital - Ordinary Shares	3.500	3.500	3.500
Current Year Earnings	(0.733)	(0.758)	0.089
Retained Earnings	(0.383)	(1.116)	(1.874)
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>2.384</b>	<b>1.626</b>	<b>1.715</b>

### Repton loan based on developer cashflows / monthly open market sales

Open market revenue   Affordable revenue   Net loan/cash balance



Appendix – Pipeline of Completions



# Cabinet

Item No: 14

**Report Title: Fostering Review**

**Date of Meeting: 07/03/2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr John Fisher** (Cabinet Member for Children's Services)

**Responsible Director: Sara Tough, Executive Director Children's Services**

**Is this a Key Decision? Yes**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions:** [Please see general exception to 28 days notice on 22 February 2022](#)

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

We are seeking to change the way we remunerate in-house foster carers. This is in response to the current care market, challenges locally and nationally with sufficiency, and our commitment to children being placed in family-based care whenever they are unable to live within their own network.

The proposed changes are within the context of and aligned to the wider fostering transformation work which focuses a new service delivery model alongside a practice development and training framework for all Fostering Service staff and foster carers.

The key aims will be to:

- a) Provide foster placements to children and young people that are consistent in quality and expectations
- b) Positively impact on sufficiency, increasing in-house capacity as more carers seek to take on second and subsequent child

- c) Bring the focus back to the needs of the child, providing adequate remuneration for carers who look after our more complex children and young people, regardless of who provides the placement

The proposal sets out the new suggested fee structure for in-house placements, based on Valuing Care scores (a codified way to measure a child's needs) and regular review. It suggests a new way to pay Linked Families (providing short breaks for children with disabilities) and proposes a recognition scheme that supports the placement of 'harder to place' young people.

We also propose to bring into policy the best practice guidance we have provided to Foster Carers in respect of savings for Looked After Children in their care.

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. That Cabinet approves the proposal for fostering allowances and fees paid to foster carers, including the increased fee for placements for enhanced needs**
- 2. That Cabinet approves the savings scheme**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1 In December 2020 and January 2021, papers were considered in respect of changing our fee framework for our in-house Fostering Service. It was not, however, considered appropriate to continue with changes at that time, so the project was placed on hold.
- 1.2 In the interim period, our fostering fees structure has been reconsidered and a new approach proposed which places the child at the centre of decision making and enhances the resilience of our foster carers.
- 1.3 The proposed approach is for the cost of each placement to be dictated by the Valuing Care score of the young person, and therefore based on the needs of child, rather than on the carer's perceived skills. It will bring greater clarity and equity to payment for foster placements, reward and incentivise the meeting of more complex needs, and release capacity, which is essential in addressing the current sufficiency challenges.

#### 1.4 Rationale for the changes:

- We want to shift to basing payments on the needs of child (as denoted by their Valuing Care score) rather than the skills and experience of the carer, aligning with our wider transformation strategic approach to the care market
- We want to develop a fee system that reflects the changing needs of children in care, with increasing remuneration paid to carers when they care for more complex children
- There is a desire to create consistency across payments, expectations, quality and stability for in-house carers, given that this is essential to our sufficiency strategy
- There are currently multiple different placement categories which need greater transparency and simplification to enable a clear and consistent strategy
- A significant number of foster placements break down for young people around the age of 14, resulting in multiple placements and non-family-based care, and there is a need to ensure carers are appropriately remunerated for the more complex needs of this age group
- In-house fees have not been updated since 1993, when they were designed to encourage take up of skills training
- Many carers are currently paid the maximum fee that does not reflect their skills or placement choices with lower paid carers caring for some of our most complex children which is neither equitable nor incentivising
- Fairly remunerating in-house foster carers is a key factor in our ability to recruit and retain them (alongside providing appropriate support and training which we will address further through our wider fostering transformation programme)
- In-house and IFA fees are not currently in-line meaning in-house carers will sometimes transfer to IFAs in order to earn more
- There is currently unused capacity in the system as the reduction in fee for second and subsequent children discourages carers from looking after multiple children

- The current payment system for Linked Families is expensive and encourages carers to take children on short break basis only, with children with disabilities (CWD) respite carers often choosing Linked Family placements as remuneration is not in line with other fostering fees. As a result of this we are not utilising capacity effectively, with some children attending residential short breaks and respite unnecessarily.
- We want to develop a responsive system where fees change every 6 months in line with Looked After Children Review process and children's changing needs
- We need to create incentive for carers to consider providing specialist placements for PACE (alternative to police custody), emergencies, CWD and New Roads young people
- In respect of the savings policy, we received feedback from both foster carers and older Looked After Children that it is important to ensure all children have savings and know how to save money prior to reaching independence

## 2. Proposal

The key changes proposed to in-house fostering fees are:

### 2.1 **Altering payment categories from levels 1-5 (based on accreditation level of the carer) to fee structure based on the young person's Valuing Care score**

2.1.1 Currently there is no clear definition for each of the different categories 1-5 and the majority of our carers sit at level 5 without clear justification as to why. In late 2020, it was therefore proposed that fees were updated to be based on the young person's Valuing Care Score and on a Foster Carer skills score. Recent work, however, identified that a key risk of this approach was that carers would see it as a progression scheme and over time would migrate towards the higher categories of payments without any incentive to widen their offer to children with more complex needs. This would therefore not support our strategy to support more young people in family-based care.

2.1.2 The model proposed today therefore aims to distance itself from payment linked to carer training and skills, but rather focuses on payment defined by the need of the child as set out by their Valuing Care score and on the carer's capacity to meet that individual children's needs.

2.1.3 The proposed new categories for fees are as follows:

Category	Valuing Care score and comments
<b>Standard Fee</b>	Band A and B, no more than 2 areas in Band C, nothing in Band D
<b>Enhanced</b>	Band C – 3 areas or more in Band C <u>and/or</u> no more than one band D
<b>Complex</b>	Band D – 2 or more scores in Band D
<b>Parent/Child</b>	Where parent is over 18, flat rate paid. Where parent is under 18 and is a Looked After Child in their own right, 2 placement fees will be paid based on VC score of parent and child
<b>Connected Carers</b>	Temporarily approved connected carers will be paid the child Basic Maintenance Allowance only, regardless of length of placement. Fully approved connected carers will be paid according to Valuing Care Score of the child(ren)
<b>Linked Families</b>	Move to simplified payment system with flat overnight rate based on Enhanced fee and flat rate for day care and additional night carer payment (max 7 hours in 24 hour period)

## 2.2 Moving from four to two age categories

2.2.1 In January 2020, a proposal to move to two age categories was agreed by Children's Services Leadership Team. The proposal aimed to achieve a simplified pricing structure and to maintain parity with IFA fees frameworks which had also proposed to move to two age categories. The two age bands are maintained in the framework proposed today.

### 2.2.2 Current and proposed fees

The current fee structure is as follows:

Accreditation Level	1 (Temporarily Approved)	2	3	4	5 - First Child	5- Further Children
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	<b>Connected Carers)</b>					
<b>Fee</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£34</b>	<b>£61</b>	<b>£106</b>	<b>£336</b>	<b>£223</b>

<b>Age of Child</b>	<b>Basic Maintenance Allowance</b>	<b>Combined totals</b>				
<b>0 – 4</b>	<b>£143</b>	<b>£177</b>	<b>£204</b>	<b>£249</b>	<b>£479</b>	<b>£366</b>
<b>5 – 10</b>	<b>£158</b>	<b>£192</b>	<b>£219</b>	<b>£264</b>	<b>£494</b>	<b>£381</b>
<b>11 – 15</b>	<b>£180</b>	<b>£214</b>	<b>£241</b>	<b>£286</b>	<b>£516</b>	<b>£403</b>
<b>16 – 17</b>	<b>£210</b>	<b>£244</b>	<b>£271</b>	<b>£316</b>	<b>£546</b>	<b>£433</b>

2.2.3 The proposed future fee structure is as follows:

	<b>Temporarily Approved Connected Carers</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Enhanced</b>	<b>Complex</b>	<b>Parent and child</b>
<b>Fee</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£223</b>	<b>£336</b>	<b>£602</b>	<b>£707</b>

<b>Age of Child</b>	<b>Basic Maintenance Allowance</b>	<b>Combined totals</b>			
<b>0 – 10</b>	<b>£152</b>	<b>£375</b>	<b>£488</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>11 – 17</b>	<b>£202</b>	<b>£425</b>	<b>£538</b>	<b>£804</b>	<b>£909</b>

### 2.3 Alternative discounted options

2.3.1 As we are aware that the preferred proposal has cost implications, we have also considered alternative arrangements to either reduce or remove the potential cost increases:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Other implications (strengths and weaknesses)</b>
<b>Option 1 – Continue with current fees, do not implement new approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No need for any system change or change to foster carer development</li> <li>• Allows carers to receive same payments as now</li> <li>• Placement sufficiency will continue to deteriorate</li> <li>• Capacity within fostering service not effectively utilised as there is little incentive for carers to take second and subsequent placements</li> <li>• Carers will continue to decline placements for adolescents and complex children</li> <li>• Expensive scheme that does not effectively utilise VC scores</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some carers currently paid low fees for some of the most complex children</li> <li>• Continues to impact on PACE Bed, Emergency placement and New Roads carers capacity and sufficiency</li> <li>• Will prevent us from increasing CWD beds, both long term and emergency/task centred</li> <li>• Continued agency ‘hopping’ by carers – they leave NCC knowing that when they return they will automatically be paid at level 5</li> <li>• Does not place focus on needs of the child and so out of step with the fostering transformation which focuses on the needs of the child at the centre of practice and care</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2 – Reduce all new proposed fees to deliver a cost neutral position</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases the reduction in fees for level 5 carers who have children with low VC scores in placement - risk of resignation from many Level 5 carers</li> <li>• Does not make us as competitive and does not fully future proof fees</li> <li>• Brings fees down to cost neutral position</li> <li>• Brings greatest risk to sufficiency, and likely will impact on our ability to transition current placements to new fees</li> <li>• We would not be as competitive as IFAs and risk losing in-house carers to alternative providers</li> <li>• Carers are not encouraged to care for most complex young people</li> <li>• Carers less likely to accept increased expectations leading to further resignations</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Implementation Options

2.4.1 There are multiple ways that we could move to the new in-house fees; their impacts are analysed below. Calculations below assume a turnover of 95 cases per year.

Option	Predicted cost implication	Other implications (strengths and weaknesses)
<b>Option 1 (Preferred option) – keep all current placements on existing fees for 18 months and put</b>	£110k pa more than current cohort at current rates (i.e. £165k one-off cost over the 18 month period), increasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would provide time for Supervising SWs to work with carers to allow them to accept changes</li> <li>• Gives carers good time to review finances</li> </ul>

<p><b>new placements onto new fees from April 2022</b></p>	<p>to £513k after 18 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would encourage carers to consider additional placements they have been reticent to consider</li> <li>• Allows us to promote new culture of focusing on needs of child</li> <li>• Allows Support for Success to work with carers where placements are more challenging to promote stability</li> <li>• Reduces cost of change significantly, whilst still allowing us to begin culture change within foster carer cohort</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 2 – move all placements to new fees from April 2022</b></p>	<p>£513k more than current cohort at current rates (as per financial modelling above)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk carers giving notice on placements causing instability to children</li> <li>• No current sufficiency so would likely see numerous children escalate into IFA or Children’s Home care with significant increased cost to LA</li> <li>• Some children may not be able to be matched/placed</li> <li>• Many carers may resign, complain and potentially try to instigate legal challenge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Option 3 – protect the current fee for existing placements for the longevity of the placement; all new placements made from April 2022 attract new fee</b></p>	<p>£110k more than current cohort at current rates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced costs as more carers on current lower rates for longer</li> <li>• Does not allow us to promote positive change in culture</li> <li>• Carers may be reluctant to accept new placements when current placements come to an end</li> <li>• Still promotes an increase in sufficiency as new placement fee will promote second and subsequent placements</li> </ul>

## 2.5 Financial Implications

2.5.1 The following assumptions have been used to cost the new model:

- Assumes that new placements will move to the new fees from April 2022 (go-live)
- Existing placements will only be moved to the new framework until after 18 months
- Assumes that number and complexity of placements remains as now in future years

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
<b>Current spend assuming current cohort at current rates</b>	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m
<b>Predicted Future spend assuming current cohort at new rate and existing placements remain at current rates for 18 months</b>	£9.724m	£9.926m	£10.127m	£10.127m	£10.127m
<b>Predicted Additional Spend</b>	£0.279m	£0.463m	£0.664m	£0.664m	£0.664m

2.5.2 The improved outcomes from this proposal are:

1. Improved stability of placement for children as carers feel more valued and less likely to give notice
2. Use capacity efficiently where carers are approved for more than one placement as carers will now be properly recognised for the impact of caring for two or more Looked After Children
3. Reduced escalation to residential placements when carers are struggling
4. Carers will be more willing to support adolescents, maintaining current and accepting new placements
5. We will be applying similar principles to Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs), which will reduce the cost of agency placements, also preventing breakdown of children placed with IFA carers
6. Children will experience family-based care with foster carers who commit to them until they reach independence and beyond
7. Children will experience better stability in education and can remain in local placements close to their own families and community networks

## **2.6 Mitigation for increased cost**

2.6.1 Whilst this proposal suggests there will be additional costs incurred for the Local Authority, it is expected that the overall impact will not create a cost pressure in future years:

- > The costings above are based on the current cohort of children in care, which includes a significant percentage of adolescents and children with complex needs.
- > By optimising the foster beds available through this proposal, particularly for adolescents and other complex cohorts, we would not require as many children's home placements.
- > Children's home placements are costing on average £4,200pw (although this figure continues to rapidly increase due to the national sufficiency challenges) so the increased cost of this proposal would likely be covered by only 2 or 3 placements changing from children's home placements to foster placements.
- > The data shows us that at least 10 children this year have been placed in a children's home where the required placement was a foster bed – based on 10 children being placed in foster care rather than children's homes, the reduction in cost would be in excess of £2m per year
- > The plan to approach Independent Fostering Agency placements in the same way as this proposal will likely promote many more children remaining in foster care rather than moving to children's home placements
- > More carers from agencies may choose to move to our In-House fostering service due to the improved offer to our carers, not just with this proposal but also the wider fostering transformation which provides a much improved package of support and training
- > We expect to see the number of indigenous CLA reduce as the pressures of the Pandemic recede, with the percentage of older young people in care expected to reduce year on year

## **2.7 Linked Family Scheme**

### **2.7.1 *Why do we need to change Linked Family scheme?***

The current system has a number of complexities that need to be addressed:

1. The payments for contracted carers are significantly higher than for non-contracted carers

2. The payments to Linked Families are not in line with fostering fees, causing carers, particularly CWD carers, to choose to look after Linked Family children as they are paid more
3. There is significant capacity within the Linked Family scheme, however this is currently underutilised, with a number of linked families providing care to the same children
4. The Linked Family scheme is out of step with the fostering service, having been attached to Marshfields Short Breaks residential provision until October 2021

### **2.7.2 Key changes**

The key changes proposed to linked family fees are:

- Remove contracted carer option
- Regularise payments for Link Families with Complex Category of fostering fees
- Provide simplified payment scheme with simplified expectations, aligned with other in-house fostering rates

#### **Current and proposed fees**

	<b>Contracted carers</b>	<b>Non contracted carers</b>
<b>Current payment and expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £16K per year retainer paid per household</li> <li>• Available 48 weeks per year</li> <li>• Minimum provision 4 nights per year</li> <li>• Additional nightly fee of £84</li> <li>• If 2:1 care required, £84 pn paid to second carer (even if same household)</li> <li>• Additional payments of £6 per hour for reviews, Network meetings etc</li> <li>• Day care fee of £9.20 per hour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No retainer paid</li> <li>• No availability expectation</li> <li>• No minimum provision expectation</li> <li>• Nightly fee of £73.57</li> <li>• If 2:1 care required, flat rate of £9.20 paid to second carer</li> <li>• Day care fee of £9.20 per hour</li> </ul>
<b>Proposed payment and expectations</b>	No contracted carers – current ‘contract’ is actually non legally binding agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat rate of £115 per night for all carers (in line with new-in</li> </ul>

		<p>house Complex Placement fee)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat rate of £75 per night if 2:1 care is needed (i.e. approximately equivalent to 8 hours @£9.20 per hour)</li> <li>• One hourly rate of £10 per hour for day care</li> <li>• Day care provision limited to 10 hours per day</li> </ul>
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## 2.8 Recognition Scheme

### *Why is a recognition scheme needed?*

- 2.8.1 Almost all foster carers provide placements to children not because of the financial reward but because they want to offer children a safe and loving home when they are unable to live with their families. However, we know that carers respond well to being recognised and valued, particularly when they are experiencing challenging situations. Financial incentives would also allow us to celebrate their commitment to building relationships with young people that others do not want to care for.
- 2.8.2 We have a number of harder to place young people, particularly 14 years and above and children with disabilities, and Valuing Care data shows that many foster placements, even those that have been stable for many years, tend to break down when children reach this age.
- 2.8.3 Whilst we have plans to support carers to provide trauma informed, effective care to teenagers (discussed in more detail in the fostering transformation business case), and further development for those who seek to care for children with disabilities, it is important to provide further incentive to encourage carers to accept placements within this cohort. This will prevent escalation to more expensive placements, reduce the number of placement moves for children and prevent unnecessary escalation into children's home placements because foster carers have not come forward.

2.8.4 A good example of this is a 14-year-old young man who has only ever been placed in children's homes with a number of placement breakdowns, despite them being solo placements at significant cost. An in-house emergency carer agreed to take him for a couple of nights when his placement gave immediate notice, however this extended to a week, then a month – he has now been with the carer since July. Both he and the carer are fully committed to him remaining there until independence. To celebrate the carer's commitment and the much-improved outcome for this young man, we paid the carer a small thank you payment. She was overwhelmed and so pleased, it gave her renewed energy and positivity despite caring for him being hard work sometimes.

#### **2.8.5 Proposed recognition scheme**

Some initiatives are already in place for in-house foster carers. These would be maintained going forward. These are:

- Annual birthday voucher for carers' own children - £10
- Every 5 years of service – certificate of thanks + £10 Amazon voucher
- 25 years of service – celebratory hamper

Additionally, we could provide extra payments to support carers, as set out above.

#### **2.8.6 Proposed payments**

- 3 months of placement – voucher for family activity, max. value £100 to recognise the new and positive relationship they have built as a family unit
- 1 year of placement -- £500
- Annual going forward -- £500

#### **2.8.7 Costs**

Looking at new entrants in 2020/21, 63 new placements can be identified in the 14+ age group (including both in-house and IFA), of which:

1. 16 ended in under 13 weeks
2. 19 ended between 13 weeks and 1 year
3. 5 ended after 1 year

4. 23 remain ongoing (ranging from 7 months to just under 18 months).

2.8.8 An estimate of cost based on the 2020/21 entrants is c. £27k, presuming that all 'ongoing' placements remain for 2 years (average age of placement start was 15.4 years); this is likely to be an overestimate of the cost of the scheme.

2.8.9 One consideration is whether the recognition payments are made for existing placements once they enter the 14+ age group, where it can often be difficult to maintain stability. A review of the entrants to placements age 12 and 13 (where experience shows that there may be a risk of de-stabilisation around the age of 14), shows that if children remained with their foster carers for an average of 3 years then the cost would build up to c. £50k pa. Again, this is likely to be an overestimate of the cost of the scheme.

2.8.10 Whilst the proposal of recognition payments does incur additional cost, this is relatively low per placement and will only be incurred if placements remain stable. The mitigated costs (both staff time and placement costs) of sourcing new placements will be far greater so this should be financially beneficial.

## **2.9 Looked After Children Savings Scheme**

2.9.1 This scheme is designed to ensure that all Looked After Children are in receipt of savings when they leave a Norfolk Fostering Service placement. This will provide them with a sum to support them when they are setting up their first independent tenancy, when they commence a Further or Higher Education course at College or University, or to help them with their first big purchase such as a car or bike. This scheme is needed to bring Norfolk Fostering Service in line with all Independent Fostering Agencies and other Local Authority Fostering Services. We are one of the last fostering services to introduce an expectation of savings for our Foster Carers.

2.9.2 There is no cost implication to this policy – all fostering fees comprise of a Basic Maintenance Allowance and a fee for the foster carer. We are proposing that every child should receive a minimum of £5 savings per week to be saved

from the Basic Maintenance Allowance. We already have a process in place, supported by our Looked After Child Quality Assurance Hub, to ensure that savings for children are 'joined up' should the placement for the child or young person end.

2.9.3 We strongly encouraged Foster Carers to begin saving in this way in June 2021, and the response has been good. The best practice guidance has been incredibly well received with only one fostering household raising concerns regarding this scheme.

### **3. Impact of the Proposal**

#### **3.1 Consultation with foster carers**

3.1.1 We made the decision to consult with Foster Carers for a formal period of two weeks as this is a significant change including a reduction in weekly payments for some carers, and we wanted to know what our carers thought, both positive and negative views. However, given the level of feeling regarding the proposal, we have continued to take into account the views of all foster carers past the original end date, as such the consultation was for a total of four weeks in total, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. We had sought to work more collaboratively with Foster Carers, seeking to design the new fee structure together. However, they were clear in their feedback in a number of forums over the past few months that they wanted the department to develop a proposal which Foster Carers could then review and give their view, stating it is for the Council to decide what they want to do.

3.1.2 We received a range of feedback, and the key themes were:

- a) Many carers support the increase in fees they will receive for every placement, irrespective of the needs of the child
- b) Many carers have had conversations with their Supervising Social Workers about how they can develop further to offer more specialist placements such as PACE beds and parent/child placements

- c) Carers are united in their view that they have felt supported by Norfolk Fostering Service and their Supervising Social Workers
- d) The increased support to Foster Carers is well received, and carers are in favour of maintaining the relationship between the Supervising Social Worker and the carer no matter what placement they take
- e) The increased financial reward for those looking after children with the most complex needs is welcomed by all
- f) Carers welcome the introduction of paying the same fee for second and subsequent children, rather than receiving a reduced fee as they do now
- g) Many are of the view that the new proposal is a fairer system and reflects the impact on foster carers of caring for children of differing needs; some acknowledge that there are carers that are both underpaid and overpaid
- h) Carers recognise the benefit of using the Valuing Care tool to define the care needs of children, but worry that the assessment will not always be accurate
- i) Connected Carers welcome the change to the fees, particularly when caring for children with complex needs
- j) Carers worry that some carers will move to Independent Fostering Agencies due to the reduction in the fees paid to them
- k) Carers welcome the aspirations and aims of the new structure, although some worry about the timing of this change due to the changes we are seeing within the economy as a result of the pandemic
- l) Carers who will receive a higher fee in the proposed structure want to move to that higher fee sooner than 18 months' time, with the majority wanting to move to higher fees from April 2022
- m) Carers are worried that if children stabilise over time, the fee will reduce as they believe the needs of the children will reduce when stability in placement is achieved
- n) Level 5 accredited carers (highest level of accreditation in current fee model) foster carers support the increase in fees for those who are currently paid less, but believe this is 'at their expense' where they choose to look after children who do not have additional needs; some, who are approved for two or more placements, are unwilling to consider caring for more than one child
- o) Some Level 5 accredited carers think that they should receive a higher payment regardless of the needs of the child because they have completed

more training and development or have moved to Norfolk Fostering Service from an Independent Fostering Agency due to the higher fee paid by Norfolk County Council

3.1.3 Some of the highest paid carers feel they are not valued by Norfolk County Council due to the proposed changes to fees. Many of these are clear that they expected to receive a pay rise with the new proposal.

3.1.4 Foster carers have resoundingly welcomed the savings scheme we are proposing.

## **3.2 Response to feedback received**

3.2.1 We have carefully considered the responses received from carers, and we are disappointed that some carers perceive that they are not valued by Norfolk Fostering Service, as this is not the case and is not the intention. We greatly value the care our Foster Carers provide to Norfolk children and we recognise the very precious gift of a family that they offer to the children they care for. Whilst we would want to maintain all payments at least at their current level, financially this would place significant pressure on public funds (given the very high level of fees paid for Level 5 accredited carers) and undermine the child-based incentives inherent in the new payment structure in the longer term.

3.2.2 The proposal already represents a significant investment in our in-house foster carers as it provides a higher rate of pay for the vast majority of carers when compared with Independent Fostering Agencies, whilst also investing in the support, training and development of all in-house Foster Carers. It is important to say that whilst the fees could reduce for a minority of carers, Norfolk Fostering Service remains highly competitive, and opportunities to increase income will be all the greater for all through willingness to take children with greater needs, fill bed spaces they are approved for and longevity of placement.

3.2.3 Some Level 5 carers are understandably worried about a reduction in payments, however this will not affect a significant proportion of Level 5 carers who will see their payments either remain the same or increase. We recognise

that for this minority of carers, they will feel they are unable to effectively 'choose' who they care for due to their personal circumstances. For those carers, we will offer additional support and will consider the situation on a case by case basis to support those who may experience hardship should their payments drop. Foster carers are also able to claim benefits alongside their fostering work.

3.2.4 We have calculated that those who may receive a reduction in payments are likely to experience up to 20% reduction in payments.

3.2.5 An example of this is a Level 5 carer looking after one 11 yr old child with no additional needs. Currently they receive £516 per week, or £26,832 per annum, although it is important to note that foster carers receive significant tax and national insurance relief whilst they are approved as foster carers. As such, £26,832 annual fostering allowance would equate to approx. £31,200 annual salary for someone who is not a foster carer.

3.2.6 With the reduction in allowances as proposed, the foster carer would receive £22100 per annum fostering allowance, which is an 18% reduction in income. The reduction in fostering allowances will also mean that the foster carer would no longer be required to pay any income tax as their earnings will be below the £25000 threshold for foster carers.

### 3.3 Possible changes to the original proposal

3.3.1 However, there are key elements of the feedback that we have considered at length, along with the cost implications of both proposals:

1. Those receiving a lower payment currently would like to move to the new higher rate for fees in April 2022 should the proposal be agreed

We had considered this approach when we designed the above proposal, however it incurs substantial additional costs for the Local Authority, and as such, we made the decision to move all existing placements onto the new fee structure 18 months after implementation.

2. Level 5 carers are telling us that the reduction in fees for placements attracting the standard fee is too great. They are also telling us that they would want the enhanced fee to match the current Level 5 fee

3.3.2 In light of this, we have explored a small increase in the standard fee to at least ensure it is in line with the fees paid by the higher paying Independent Fostering Agencies. The suggested increased fees are demonstrated below:

	Temporarily Approved Connected Carers	Standard	Enhanced	Complex	Parent and child
Fee	£0	£223	£336	£602	£707
Rate following feedback		£247	£344	n/a	n/a

Age of Child	Basic Maintenance Allowance	Combined totals			
0 – 10	£152	£375	£488	n/a	n/a
After feedback		£399	£494	n/a	n/a
11 – 17	£202	£425	£538	£804	£909
After feedback		£451	£546	n/a	n/a

### 3.4 Financial implications

3.4.1 The below table evidences the additional costs should either or both of the changes above be incorporated:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Predicted Additional Spend of proposal prior to feedback	£0.279m	£0.463m	£0.664m	£0.664m	£0.664m

<b>Predicted Additional Spend if new fees are introduced at April 2022 for those who will receive more</b>	£1.5m	£0.75m	£0	£0	£0
<b>Predicted Additional Spend for increases in fees for standard and enhanced placements</b>	£0.43m (Standard) £0.032m (Enhanced) Total: £0.462m	£0.462m	£0.462m	£0.462m	£0.462m
<b>Predicted Additional Spend for increased in fees for standard and enhanced and introducing new fees in April 2022 for those who would receive more</b>	£1.962m	£1.212m	£0.462m	£0.462m	£0.462m
<b>Current spend assuming current cohort at current rates</b>	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m	£9.463m
<b>Predicted Future spend assuming current cohort at original proposal rate and existing placements remain at current rates for 18 months</b>	£9.724m	£9.926m	£10.127m	£10.127m	£10.127m
<b>Total predicted spend</b>	£10.186m	£10.388m	£10.589m	£10.589m	£10.589m

<b>incorporating new fee rates following feedback</b>					
<b>Total predicted spend</b>	£11.224m	£10.676m	£10.127m	£10.127m	£10.127m
<b>Incorporating increased fees for existing placements at April 2022</b>					
<b>Total predicted spend incorporating both changes to the original proposal</b>	£11.686m	£11.138m	£10.589m	£10.589m	£10.589m

In the above table, the green highlighted rows demonstrate the cost of the original proposal and the total cost of incorporating the two changes based on the feedback from carers.

The orange row is the cost of introducing a higher fee for standard and enhanced placements.

The yellow row is the cost of introducing increased fees for existing placements in April 2022.

3.4.2 We recognise the benefits that both these changes will bring to carers, however we cannot be as confident that we will be able to account for these costs through cost avoidance routes when compared with the costs already factored into the proposal. However, we do know that avoiding a residential placement for one child brings avoided costs of approximately £0.15m - £0.2m per annum.

### 3.5 Increased support for Foster Carers

3.5.1 The change in fostering fees is being introduced at the same time as the Fostering Service is being transformed. The Transformation programme incorporates additional support for Foster Carers:

a) Therapeutic support for all carers

As part of the changes to the service, we are planning to set up a Supporting Resilience Team which is overseen by a Clinical Psychologist. The team includes Supporting Resilience Practitioners as well as the Enhanced Fostering Practitioner. The Supporting Resilience Practitioners will be available to any Foster Carer requiring additional support, either due to their own circumstances or in caring for the child(ren) in their care. The Supporting Resilience Team will work closely with the Support for Success Service to ensure that placements receive wrap around support when needed.

b) CWD Intensive Outreach

Currently the CWD Intensive Outreach Service has only been available to families to support them whilst a placement is found for their child or to prevent a young person from becoming Looked After. However, we recognise that foster placements also need additional support when looking after children with a disability. As such, we will be making the CWD Intensive Outreach Service available to all in-house foster carers to promote stability of placement. The service works with families to develop new strategies and interventions to effectively and safely manage challenging behaviour.

c) Occupational Therapist Assistant Practitioner

In addition to the support that can be offered by the CWD Intensive Outreach Service, we know that carers may require advice and guidance on a range of challenges faced by disabled children and those who care for them. The Occupational Therapist Assistant Practitioner will work closely with the Occupational Therapists in the Children with Disabilities Service and the Adoption Service to provide a range of support to foster carers.

d) Prioritising relationships

The changes in the Fostering Service include the plan for all Foster Carers to be held within the Fostering Supervision Teams. This is to ensure that carers and their Supervising Social Workers can build long-lasting, safe and resilient relationships. Additional support will still be available for all carers who are providing specialist care, for example, step down or PACE, but this support will be provided on a 'call-in' basis, enabling all carers to access specialist advice when they need it.

e) Enhanced offer

The enhanced offer will continue as it does now for carers who accept children who are stepping down from Children's Home care. The main difference will be that this will be provided on a call-in basis to protect the carer's relationship with their Supervising Social Worker. What this means is that rather than the Foster Carer having to move from team to team, the right support is offered to them from the enhanced service, but they continue to be supervised by the same Supervising Social Worker. Support will be provided by the Enhanced Team Manager, Social Worker and Enhanced Fostering Practitioner.

f) Duty Team

There will be a dedicated team who will provide support to Foster Carers at the point that they take on new placements, as well as overseeing on call support to carers outside of normal office hours when their Supervising Social Worker may not be available.

g) Training and development

We continue to develop our training and development programme for carers and have plans to strengthen the offer from April 2022. This will continue include a Mandatory, Core and Specialist offer, although all courses will be available to all carers. There will be a particular focus on training to support carers to develop new strategies to care for more complex and harder to place young people, and will draw upon expertise across Children's Social Care to promote relationships between carers and different parts of the service.

## **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

- 4.1 We have considered at length the feedback from carers, and we recognise their commitment to children and the excellent care they provide. Carers are clear that they welcome the new proposals in principle but remain worried about the reduction in fees. For some, this is due to concerns regarding their own financial need, for others, they feel that the care they provide is not valued.

4.2 We have explored financial modelling for the original proposal we consulted on, which, whilst increases the total amount paid to Norfolk foster carers each year, will be balanced by the likely savings in our new approach to Independent Fostering Agencies; it is important to ensure we continue to recognise the great work our foster carers do and investing a further £0.696m directly into our payments to them.

4.3 We have also explored modelling to make changes based on the feedback provided by foster carers, focusing on increasing the minimum payment paid to carers for standard and enhanced placement and introducing the increased fees immediately, whilst continuing to protect the pay of those whose fees will reduce.

## 5. Alternative Options

Due to the complexity of the proposal, alternative options have been included within the proposal section (section 2)

## 6. Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications have been discussed in the proposal and implications sections (Sections 2 and 3) due to the complexity of the proposal.

The financial implications of the original proposal are reflected in the 2022-23 Budget.

6.2 The tables evidence the likely impact for carers on their annual fostering income, based on 52 weeks' payments:

### Current annual payments

<b>Current Accreditation</b>	<b>One child</b>	<b>Two Children</b>	<b>Three Children</b>

Level 3	£10,608 - £14,092	£21,216 – £28,184	£31,824 £42,276
Level 4	£12,948 – £16,432	£25,896 – £32,864	£38,844 – £49,296
Level 5	£24,908 - £28,392	£43,940 – £50,908	£62,972 – £73,424

**Future annual payments including difference between old payments and new**

	One child	Two children	Three children
<b>Standard</b>	£19,500 – £22,100	£39,000 - £44,200	£58,500 – £66,300
<b>Enhanced</b>	£25,688 - £28,392	£51,376 - £56,784	
<b>Complex</b>	£41,808		
<b>STANDARD</b>			
<b>Increase/Decrease</b>			
Level 3	£8,008 - £8,892	£16,016 - £17,784	£24,024 - £26,676
Level 4	£5,668 - £6,188	£11,336 – 13,104	£17,004 - £19,656
Level 5	<b>£5408 - £6292</b>	<b>£4,940 - £6,708</b>	<b>£4,472 - £7,124</b>
<b>ENHANCED</b>			
<b>Increase/Decrease</b>			
Level 3	£14,300 - £15,080	£28,600 - £30,160	
Level 4	£11,960 - £12,740	£23,920 - £25,480	
Level 5	£0 - £780	£5,876 - £7,436	
<b>COMPLEX</b>			
<b>Increase/Decrease</b>			
Level 3	£27,716 - £31,200		
Level 4	£25,376 - £28,860		
Level 5	£13,416 - £16,900		

6.3 Whilst this shows that some carers may lose up to £7,124 per annum, in reality we do not expect any carers to lose more than £6,300 per annum if they

continue with the same placements as they had in January 2022. However, the new fee structure will provide, and incentivises, opportunities for all to maximise their income. We only have one level of allowance for complex children irrespective of age. It is unlikely that carers would look after more than one or two children with an enhanced level of need, however they may care for a combination, such as one child with a standard level of need and one or two children with an enhanced level of need. Whilst it is unlikely that a carer would look after more than one child with complex needs, if the children are siblings (particularly identical twins) carers may still care for more than one.

## **7. Resource Implications**

**7.1 Staff:** There are no staffing implications within Children's Services over and above usual duties.

**7.2 Property:** There are no implications

**7.3 IT:** We have been working with the wider team to ensure all IT and associated systems work has been anticipated and accounted for; we are on track for all IT work to be completed ready for implementation on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## **8. Other Implications**

**8.1 Legal Implications:** Fostering payments are regulated by the:

- i. Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2010
- ii. National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011
- iii. Fostering Services Regulations 2011
- iv. Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance 2015
- v. Fostering Regulations 2013
- vi. Children Act 1989 and 2004
- vii. Children and Families Act 2014

Full regard has been had to all guidance and legislation, and the minimum payments

as published by the government have been considered in the development of this scheme.

**8.2 Human Rights Implications:** There are no Human Rights implications

**8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** This has been completed. The outcome of this assessment is that there is no obvious legal impediment to making this decision. Please see assessment submitted with this paper

**8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** There is no need to complete a DPIA as this has no data protection implications

**8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** There are no health and safety implications

**8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** There are no sustainability implications

**8.7 Any Other Implications:** There are no other implications identified

## **9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

**9.1 Foster carers may resign as a result of the changes.** This is mitigated by the 18 month lead in, the development of additional support, training and development for carers and the review of fees every 6 months. This is further mitigated by the consultation, the support of supervising social workers and managers and the review of individuals' circumstances to ensure they are able to manage financially. Some carers who will see a decreased payment were expected to retire in the coming years.

**9.2 Carers may choose to move to IFAs.** Whilst it is not ideal, the primary strategy is to increase the availability and flexibility of family based placements

provided by carers. To mitigate, we have ensured that IFAs will be required to work to the new fees structure, reducing the risk of carers moving to agencies and to ensure family based placements remain available. We also believe that once the new fees are launched and widely publicised, we will see an increase in the number of new potential foster carers coming forward

- 9.3 **Carers may be disincentivised to support young people to have stable placements.** It is a common misconception that should children experience stability, that their needs will reduce. Through studying the data, we have established that for many children, their needs increase as they get older; others' needs do not decrease when the placement stabilises, however the improved opportunities and outcomes for children do. We do not believe that our foster carers will jeopardise improving outcomes for children despite the change in fees.

## 10. Select Committee Comments

- 10.1 We had hoped to present the Paper to Select Committee but due to the timings of meetings over the Christmas period, this was not possible. It has been considered at Corporate Board

## 11. Recommendations

- 1) **We propose that Cabinet approves the original proposal** as cost can be managed through reductions in spending on external foster placements and the new payments represent a generous, fair and consistent approach. The fees proposed are in step and compare well to fees paid by other Local Authorities and Independent Fostering Agencies. The payments reflect an increase of up to £26,000 per year more for some carers, and less than £7000 reduction for those carers most affected. The reduction in payments to some carers can be mitigated by supporting them to take a second placement or care for children with some additional needs.

- 2) **We propose that Cabinet approves the Savings scheme** as this brings us in line with other fostering agencies and Local Authorities and represents best practice
- 3) **We propose that Cabinet approves the increase in fees for enhanced placements only** to bring them in line with current Level 5 payments. The cost is small (£32k per year) but recognises the synergy between Level 5 accreditation and the skills needed to provide care to children with enhanced needs.
- 4) **We do not recommend that Cabinet approves the increase in the proposed standard fee payment.** Whilst the gap in reduction for some carers will be reduced by approx. £1,500 per year, the cost to the Local Authority is prohibitive as we are unable to confidently mitigate the cost of £430,000 per year in addition to the expected cost of the new model of approx. £0.664m
- 5) **We do not propose that we increase fees at April 22 to those who will receive more** as this will create a new cost pressure for 2022/23 of £1.5m and £0.75m for 2023/24. We recognise that those who will receive more will be very disappointed that they have to wait for 18 months, this is the only option to ensure we can protect the income for 18 months of those who will experience a decrease in fees.

## 12. Background Papers

- 12.1 Feedback to foster carers document which was sent to foster carers following the close of the consultation.

### Officer Contact

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

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**Norfolk** County Council

# **Fostering Review**

## **Equality Impact Assessment – Findings and Recommendations**

**15<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**Kate Dexter**  
**Assistant Director Children's Social Care**

Equality impact assessments enable decision-makers to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics.

See Annex 1 for information about the different protected characteristics.

An assessment can be updated at any time to inform service planning and commissioning. For help or information please contact [equalities@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@norfolk.gov.uk)

## Overview

1. This proposal seeks to change the way we remunerate in-house foster carers.
2. Norfolk foster carers are exceptional people who support children and young people in Norfolk and really make a difference to their lives. Foster care requires skill, patience and understanding, and each case is different because each child who requires care is unique.
3. Our foster carers are a valuable asset, because children in home-based placements benefit from a wide range of support and advantages. However, some of our children looked after with protected characteristics, particularly teenagers, some disabled children and children with complex needs, are less likely than others to secure an in-house foster placement. 20% of all current children looked after have been identified by Children's Services as having some form of disability need.
4. In view of this, careful consideration has been given to developing a remuneration proposal for our in-house foster carers that takes every opportunity to maximise the opportunities for as many children as possible to secure placements.
5. This equality impact assessment sets out the positive and adverse impacts arising from this proposal for people with protected characteristics and the mitigating actions in place to address any adverse impacts.

## About the Fostering Review

6. The technical detail of the proposal is set out in the report to Cabinet, and therefore is not replicated again here.
7. In summary, the proposal aims to change the way we calculate the fees paid to in-house foster carers, basing payments on the needs of the child rather than on the skills and experience of foster carers. The proposal includes new fees based on categories of need which will represent an increase in fees paid to the majority of carers and a reduction for some; increased fees where foster carers have two or more children in placement; a recognition scheme for those looked after harder to place young people; and simplification of the Linked Family Scheme to bring it in line with the new fee structure.
8. The proposal also includes an expectation that foster carers provide modest savings for children in their care of £5pw.

## Legal context

9. Public authorities are required by the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to equality when exercising public functions<sup>1</sup>. This is called the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'.
10. The purpose of an equality impact assessment is to consider the potential impact of a proposed change or issue on people with protected characteristics.
11. If the assessment identifies any detrimental impact, this enables mitigating actions to be developed.

12. It is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the interests of people with protected characteristics. However, equality assessments enable informed decisions to be made that take every opportunity to minimise disadvantage.

### **Information about the people affected by the proposal**

13. This proposal will impact on all foster carers working with Norfolk County Council (they are not employees), and all children looked after. There are approximately 360 fostering households supported. Not all Norfolk County Council foster carers live in Norfolk. They care predominantly for Norfolk Looked After Children.
14. This includes foster carers and children with a range of protected characteristics, in relation to disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, age and sexual orientation.
15. According to the most recent data (23/02/22) the Council currently supports more than 600 foster carers, of whom 53% are primary carers (working within a joint fostering arrangement). 13% are single carers.
16. 96% of primary carers are female. 91.5% of foster carers self-define as White British with 4% defining as White Other. 2% self-define as being from another ethnic background, with 1.3% as being from a Black African / Black Caribbean background. The data shows that Black and Asian foster carers are most likely under-represented in Norfolk, as is likely the case elsewhere across the UK.
17. The largest proportion of primary carers (joint and single) are aged between 50-59 years, accounting for 35% of all foster carers. There are slightly more single carers aged 60 to 64 years (24%) than joint carers (19%) but similar proportions of carers aged 65+ years (12-15%). 20- to 29-year-olds make up 3.5% of single carers and less than 2% of joint carers and are the smallest age cohort overall.
18. The Council is currently the corporate parent to 1081 Looked After Children (CLA). 39% of this group are aged between 14-17 years old and 24% are aged 10-13 years. Children aged 0-5 make up 14% of all LAC. 57% of all LAC are male.
19. 76% of these children and young people are defined as being White British, and 7.1% White Other. 4.5% of CLA are from Mixed / Multiple heritage backgrounds; 4% are from Black backgrounds; 4% are from Other ethnic minority backgrounds, and 2.5% are from Asian backgrounds. Gypsy Roma & Traveller children make up 0.7% of the cohort. Taking into consideration that the 2018 Norfolk School Census found between 14-15% of primary & secondary school pupils were from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds, it is important to reflect that children from Black, Mixed / Multiple, and Asian backgrounds are all likely significantly disproportionately represented within the cohort. This is the case elsewhere across the UK and this pattern has been seen for many years. Unaccompanied asylum seeker children account for around 7% of the whole CLA cohort so this cohort would not fully account for this disproportionality.
20. Of the 1081 children and young people, 427 are currently being cared for in-house (39%). Of these 25.5% are aged 14-17 years and 24% are aged 10-13 years. 15% of these young people are 14 years and are the group at highest risk of placement break down in Norfolk. Of the 14-year-olds, 41% are placed with in-house foster carers while the rest are in private provision, including some in residential settings.

21. Of the UASC, only 7% have been placed with in-house carers and it should be noted that a significant proportion of this group are considered the most difficult to place due to their age / complex needs.

## Potential impact

22. Based on the evidence available, there will be a range of significant **positive** impacts for foster carers and children looked after with protected characteristics. This particularly relates to:

### The protected characteristic of age:

- Support as many children looked after as possible to benefit from the support and advantages of placement in family-based care. Increase capacity to enable the right support to be provided to as many young people as possible.
- Focus resources and support on the needs of young people around the age of 14, to address the fact that a significant number of foster placements break down for young people at this age.
- Enable foster carers to care for multiple children, where this is in the best interests of the children.
- Encourage placements for the correct length of time in accordance with the needs of the child - because some children are currently attending residential short breaks and respite unnecessarily.

### The protected characteristic of disability:

- Incentivising foster carers to care for children who have complex needs, particularly disabled young people, to maximise the chances of disabled young people to find a successful foster placement. This is a particularly important point to note, as a significant number of existing and potential foster carers do not feel confident to foster a disabled child or a child with complex needs, and these children miss out on the opportunity, security and support that a foster placement brings. Caring and supporting a disabled child is often more expensive than caring for and supporting children who are not disabled. Increasing remuneration paid to carers when they care for more complex children recognises this issue.
  - Creating capacity for young people requiring specialist placements for PACE (alternative to police custody), emergencies, CWD and New Roads young people. Mental health disability or other complex needs may be a factor in the need for some placements.
23. Inevitably, any changes to a long-standing remuneration process will potentially trigger some potentially adverse impacts to mitigate – so it is important to keep a clear focus on the fundamental goals - **the imperative to ensure that as many young people as possible, and disabled young people with complex needs, are able to benefit from family-based foster placements in the same way that other young people can.**
24. The section below seeks to examine in detail the different ways in which the proposal may impact on foster carers and children looked after, based on the available data:

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
<p>That the Valuing Care scoring matrix may not recognise the needs of children and young people with protected characteristics including those with multiple protected characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That a monetary value is being attached to disabled and non-disabled children.</li> <li>• That some disabled children may be advantaged at the expense/detriment of others or the scoring matrix creates an unfair hierarchy valuing some aspects of disability over another.</li> <li>• Whether the matrix and / or the assessors could be subjective or influenced by other bias. For example, could judgements be made about the needs of ethnically diverse, disabled or LGBTQ+ young people that doesn't fully take account of their needs based on a lack of knowledge or understanding of diverse needs</li> </ul>	<p>The Valuing Care Score (VCS) matrix has been developed to take account and balance the holistic needs of children and young people. This approach has been fully adopted and embedded by several local authorities to robustly assess the needs of children and young people. Foster carers are also assessed using the VCS.</p> <p>The VCS takes account of a broad range of factors including physical / learning disabilities and organic (basic physical, social and environmental) needs. These organic needs do not tend to change significantly over time when assessed with respect to disability.</p> <p>A higher VCS is not solely dependent on whether a child or young person has a particular disability. It also considers needs in terms of; risk of exploitation; education and learning, risk of drug and alcohol misuse; managing and self-regulating emotions; setting boundaries; personal self-care; independent living; developing self-identity; maintaining and developing safe relationships; and support to verbalise emotions.</p> <p>In principle children and young people with the highest level of need, including because of a physical or learning disability will likely retain a higher VCS. Foster carers supporting these children will also be able to access additional financial support for any adjustments required for day-to-day activities and will be supported by a number of professionals including Occupational Therapy Assistant Practitioners, Occupational Therapists and others.</p> <p>All qualified social workers working with CLA are fully conversant with the VCS and are skilled at undertaking assessments to determine an appropriate score. All social workers are bound by stringent professional standards and a code of ethics. Assessments are completed in collaboration with supervising social workers and scrutinised and signed off by Team</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
	<p>Managers. VCS scores are regularly reviewed through the LAC review process by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) with input from the whole professional team working around the child, including the foster carer, and their supervising social worker. At each LAC review the IRO is responsible for ensuring that the voice of the child / young person is also taken into consideration. This process recognises that diverse holistic needs may rise or fall over time.</p>
<p>That potential or existing foster carers with protected characteristics may be more likely to be on a lower income (e.g., older, disabled or diverse ethnic minority) and could experience greater uncertainty with respect to changes to their fostering income as a result of the proposal.</p>	<p>The data currently shows that most primary in-house foster carers are female and more foster carers are in a joint arrangement than single carers. There are more older carers (50+) in this group. There are several diverse ethnic minority and LGBT foster carers, and there will be some foster carers who are disabled.</p> <p>Once approved, foster carers will choose if they wish to accept a placement, depending on their own circumstances and wishes, taking into account they understand the financial implications of the placement.</p> <p>Financially, Norfolk continues to be highly competitive with respect fostering allowances, providing one of the highest rates of pay made to Local Authority foster carers in England and Wales (to the best of our knowledge). The rates of pay are also competitive when compared with Independent Fostering Agencies across the UK.</p> <p>Where foster carers experience any financial difficulties because of the placement, they will continue to be able to access support from their supervising social worker, including, if necessary, ad-hoc payments to alleviate any pressing difficulty. This is the case in other authorities as well.</p> <p>The latest modelling data (Jan 22) shows that of the 388 children in placements in Norfolk at this time, 74% were deemed to be on standard rate, 21% were on the enhanced rate and 5% were deemed to</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
	<p>be complex rate. The evidence does not currently indicate that there is likely to be a substantial change in the size of these cohorts.</p> <p>If the proposed change is implemented, the % of CLA cohorts by need will continue to be closely monitored, and changes proposed to Cabinet if needed.</p>
<p>Given that foster carers must register to be self-employed to declare their fostering income and claim tax allowances they are not legally employees.</p> <p>Taking account of the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity in principle, does the VCS demonstrate that caring for a child with a higher score will require substantially more work for a foster carer.</p>	<p>Overwhelmingly primary foster carers are female and therefore are unlikely to experience a substantial disadvantage in comparison to male foster carers.</p> <p>The underpinning principle of the VCS is to match the child or young person, based on their level of need, with a foster carer who has the right skills and experience. This process recognises that children and young people with the most complex needs will most likely require more time attention and support from their foster carer. It should be considered that a foster carer's skills and knowledge are not necessarily related to their length of fostering experience. For example, a new foster care with previous experience of working with children with disabilities may be a more suitable long-term placement for a child with a disability.</p> <p>There is no evidence at present to show that joint foster carers (where they have two incomes to rely on and greater flexibility) may be at greater advantage than single parent foster carers (including LGBTQ+ carers). This is because matching is done based on both the child and foster carer's VCS. In some circumstances, a single foster carer may be able to give more time and attention to a child or young person where they do not have their own children or other familial / work commitments.</p> <p>There is likely a small cohort of fosters carers who due to their age and personal circumstances will likely not be able to care for children and young people with specific needs, but their placements will continue to be monitored to ensure that</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
	they continue to be supported with suitable placements and opportunities to continue to foster children as before.
<p>Foster carers with protected characteristics may terminate a placement or decide to no longer foster on the basis that they are unwilling or unable to accept the new payment terms.</p>	<p>Foster carers are not motivated to care for children and young people based on the financial incentive, however the Council recognises and respects that foster carers will always have a choice with regards whether they wish to continue to foster children and young people.</p> <p>The proposal recognises that the existing fee structure may be unfair and seeks to provide a robust financial structure to address this and aims to ensure that foster carers supporting the most vulnerable and complex children and young people are compensated appropriately.</p> <p>The proposal has taken account of measures already in place to ensure that where possible individual foster carers and their families do not suffer a financial detriment.</p> <p>All in-house foster carers have been consulted about the proposal and their views and wishes will be considered with respect to any decisions taken.</p> <p>Placements with foster carers are never terminated without good reason and must follow due process. Children and young people will only be removed from a foster carer if this is the express wish of the foster carer or if there is evidence of immediate/imminent risk of harm. As with all processes the wishes and feelings of both the child / young person and the foster carer are carefully considered. Placements may also come to an end in a planned way if the care plan changes, this will be discussed and agreed with all in the child's network, including the foster carer</p>
<p>Are some foster carers with protected characteristics likely to be disadvantaged if they are deemed unsuitable to match with higher needs</p>	<p>The current payment structure does not recognise the skills and experiences of diverse foster carers</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
<p>children because they are unable to access the training available</p>	<p>Every foster carer has their own supervising social worker within the Fostering Service who they meet with regularly for supervision and support.</p> <p>A significant amount of work has been undertaken to ensure that every foster carer is able to access training and support to develop their resilience and upskill. This process also recognises that individual foster carers will continue to have preferences with respect which children and young people they will be able to support.</p>
<p>If scores change at every LAC review does that mean greater income uncertainty for some foster carers with protected characteristics thus de-incentivising the desire for longer term / stable placements. This could be an issue for single, older, disabled or diverse ethnic minority foster carers, who may be more likely to be on a lower income and may have greater reliance on the foster carer income to plan ahead.</p>	<p>The VCS would be reviewed on a six-monthly basis at each LAC review, and the foster carer will input into this process. Foster carers may perceive that the VCS reflects a child or young person's behaviour at the time of the review, but this is not the case. It should also be considered that it is unlikely that a child or young person's organic needs will substantially reduce in period between review.</p> <p>There is evidence to show that as children develop their needs many become increasing complex (which is why many placements break down at age 14). Children with SEN, learning disabilities, physical disabilities and neurodiverse conditions are likely to always score more highly and, in some cases, may be at greater risk of exploitation or have increased emotional / social support needs.</p> <p>In exceptional cases, where the VCS falls but the foster carer is struggling financially a case can be made by their supervising social worker for additional financial support on an ad-hoc basis.</p> <p>Again, the Council recognises and respects that fostering is a personal choice that each foster carer must make, based on their own circumstances (including their understanding of the financial implications).</p> <p>There is a recognised shortage of foster carers from some diverse backgrounds</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
	<p>which is one reason why rates have been set competitively in Norfolk, and why significant investment has been made into transforming the fostering service to ensure existing foster carers feel valued and supported, and new foster carers can be recruited.</p> <p>It is recognised that many foster carers chose to take breaks from fostering for different reasons and as a result there is often unused capacity in the in-house service. There is an opportunity to explore this capacity with foster carers to identify how they can maximise their opportunities to take on new placements.</p>
<p>Additional “expense” payments may not take account of the current financial climate and “hardship” – including the rising cost of living and the associated impacts (e.g., escalation of mental health issues)</p>	<p>All expense payments are linked to HMRC so are automatically adjusted to take account of the current financial situation.</p> <p>As above, supervising social workers will continue to take account of the foster carer’s individual circumstances and provide tailored support to ensure that foster carers are able to continue to provide high quality care and support, including to children who are extremely vulnerable and have a high level of need.</p>
<p>Payments may not take account of the cost implications for having a disabled child in the household, where we know costs are likely to be significantly higher (e.g., travel, accessing local leisure, lack of changing places toilets etc) which makes it more expensive to engage in day-to-day activities</p>	<p>As above, in addition to raising the level of payment in accordance with the VCS, foster carers can access additional support through the Children with Disabilities Team (including a new specialist OT Assistant Practitioner) to advise them on making reasonable adjustments and adaptations for disabled children and young people.</p> <p>Disabled children and young people may also be eligible for DLA and their foster carers may qualify for Carer’s Allowance as well (where they are looking after a child or young person for more than 35 hours per week).</p>
<p>Evidence shows that placements are most likely to break down at age 14. The risk is that some young people’s needs may go unrecognised at this time or earlier (e.g., due to bias in system)</p>	<p>This has been a recognised issue for some time across children’s social care which the proposal is seeking to help address.</p> <p>The VCS takes account of the emerging needs of young people at this life-stage through the holistic assessment process</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
<p>There may be higher proportions of children in this cohort from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds, including UASC or neurodiverse children with SEN.</p>	<p>and directly links needs with the payment framework to ensure an appropriate level of financial support for young people and their foster carers.</p> <p>In Norfolk, as is the case across the UK, young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, (and specifically those from Black and Mixed / Multiple heritage backgrounds) are over-represented within the system and generally experience poorer outcomes. The Children's Services Anti-Racist Practice group is exploring this to identify what further steps can be taken to address this. The Service recognises that all vulnerable children and young people must be safeguarded and supported in accordance with legal obligations, and every at-risk child or young person is carefully assessed by qualified professionals. Ensuring long-term stable placements for these young people is essential to improve outcomes.</p> <p>While there is currently not specific evidence to show that young people with mental health difficulties, SEN or neurodiverse young people are reflected in this cohort, it should be considered possible that this may be another contributing factor to placement breakdown at this age.</p> <p>There are fewer UASC in this cohort as most of these young people in Norfolk are post 16, however this group are amongst the most difficult to place with only 6 UASC currently placed in-house.</p> <p>In addition to the other support available, these young people and their carers also have access to the Targeted Youth Support Service which offers direct support to young people where there is a concern or risk which is predominantly extra familial and where the young person would benefit from developing a trusted relationship with a youth support worker to achieve safety and wellbeing outcome.</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
	A new Missing from Care strategy, which looks at early intervention and support can be effectively utilised will go live from April 2022.
<p>There may be evidence to show that some children and young people with protected characteristics may be subject to Provision of specialist placements for PACE (alternative to police custody), emergency placements, CWD and New Roads young people.</p>	<p>See above – it is recognised that diverse ethnic minority children and young people are over-represented in all LAC cohorts and is a focus for the Anti-Racist Practice group.</p> <p>It should be considered that foster carers providing emergency placements will not see a reduction in payments as a result of this proposal. VCS cannot be provided for these placements for obvious reasons. Foster carers who provide emergency placements do not routinely take on longer term foster placements on the basis that they have a very specific set of skills and expertise.</p>
<p>Incentivisation payments and awards may not reflect the diverse needs of foster carers with protected characteristics and their families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If foster carers don't have children</li> <li>• If foster carers of diverse faiths do not celebrate birthdays and Christmas</li> <li>• Do hampers cater for all needs</li> <li>• Will vouchers cover the costs for disabled children to participate in family activities</li> <li>• Payment of £500 may disadvantage people who can only foster for a short term.</li> </ul>	<p>Some of the incentives and recognition awards (the first three) are already on offer to all foster carers and their families and are in-line with those offered by other authorities and IFAs.</p> <p>The aim of the additional awards is not to enhance payment rates, but rather to demonstrate that the contribution of foster carers and their families, particularly the children of foster carers are valued and appreciated. Feedback from foster carers and their families is sought on a regular basis to ensure that all needs are catered for</p> <p>Supervising social workers work closely with the foster carer and their family to ensure that awards are appropriate to the family and where necessary culturally sensitive.</p> <p>Again, where there may be a specific hardship because of fostering, the supervising social worker can access a range of support, including where necessary ad-hoc financial support.</p>
<p>Norfolk's drive is to have more children fostered within their networks by Connected Carers. This is recognised to particularly benefit children from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds. Consultation feedback</p>	<p>Connected Carers are always approved based on the understanding of their assessed suitability to care in the longer term for a child in their network. They are not approved as foster carers for all CLA children, although once approved many</p>

Potential Impact	Potential mitigation
<p>shows that Connected carers welcome the change to recognise the impact of taking into their home children or young people with higher / more complex needs but there is a long period for them to become approved and more may be likely to become Special Guardians in which case they may not benefit financially from the proposal.</p>	<p>do choose to become approved as foster carers, based on their own experiences.</p> <p>Connected Carers will receive the payment rate determined by the connected child's VCS, so where the child has significant complex disabilities or other needs, they will receive the highest rate of payment (which has not previously been the case). If Connected Carers wish to then be approved as foster carers, they will undertake the same assessment and training to become fully approved. Connected Carers are supported in the same way as other foster carers and have the same access to a supervising social worker.</p> <p>All foster carers have the same opportunities to become Special Guardians on the understanding that they will become responsible for a child / young person until they reach 18 years. Special Guardians for CLA will be supported with a support plan for the child, and which considers financial implications for this arrangement.</p>

## Conclusion

Currently, we believe there is **no obvious legal impediment** to going ahead with the proposal. It would be implemented in full accordance with due process, national guidance and policy. Other local authorities set fostering fees based on needs of the children so there is a precedent for this.

It is possible to conclude that the proposal may have a positive impact on some people with protected characteristics, for the reasons set out in this assessment. It may also have some detrimental impacts, also set out in the assessment.

Decision-makers are therefore advised to take these impacts into account when deciding whether the proposal should go ahead, in addition to the mitigating actions recommended below.

Some of the actions will address the potential detrimental impacts identified in this assessment, but it is not possible to address all the potential impacts. Ultimately, the task for decision-makers is to balance these impacts alongside the need to manage resources and target support to enable as many children as possible, including those with protected characteristics, to benefit from home-based foster care.

## Recommended actions

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.	We have put in place a process to ensure that any carer who is affected is able to speak to their supervising social worker regarding their individual needs. The social worker will be able to support them with additional training, development and support to build their own network of support and in exceptional cases, a case can be made for additional financial support.	Head of Fostering	Jan 2022
2.	Carers are aware that they can speak with their supervising social workers, the team managers and senior managers about any worries. Supervising social workers know their carers well, they will be able to reach out and connect with carers they may be worried about to support them to consider their personal situations. The policies and procedures within the fostering service are inclusive.	Head of Fostering	Jan 2022
3.	The cohorts of LAC children and young people by level of need will continue to be monitored to ensure that the proposal (if implemented) is fair and foster carers with protected characteristics are not being disadvantaged by changes to payment structures. This monitoring should include short and longer term placements by foster carer's protected characteristics.	Assistant Director CSC – Corporate Parenting	Review every 3 months commencing April 2022
4.	Further targeted work is required to understand the experiences of young diverse ethnic minority people and disabled young people who may be at greater risk of placement breakdowns and may require specific interventions.	Participation Service and EDI workstream	Ongoing
5.	This EqlA will remain open as a live document to ensure that if any further impacts are identified on the basis of new evidence not currently available, this will be subject to an equality assessment/development of mitigating actions and reported to decision makers for determination. Any new impacts to emerge will be documented in this assessment and kept under review, to ensure that individuals with protected characteristics are not disproportionately adversely affected.	Assistant Director CSC – Corporate Parenting	Ongoing

## Evidence used to inform this assessment

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- Demographic factors set out in [Norfolk's Story 2021](#)
- [Digital Inclusion and COVID-19](#) equality impact assessments
- Norfolk County Council [Area Reports](#) on Norfolk's JSNA relating to protected characteristics
- Business intelligence and management data, as quoted in this report
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty codes of practice

## Further information

For further information about this equality impact assessment contact:

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If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 01603 973232 or 18001 0344 800 8020 (Text relay).

## Annex 1 – table of protected characteristics

The following table sets out details of each protected characteristic. Remember that people with multiple characteristics may face the most barriers:

Characteristic	Who this covers
Age	Adults and children etc, or specific/different age groups
Disability	<p>A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mobility issues (eg wheelchair or cane users, people of short stature, people who do not have mobility in a limb etc)</li> <li>• Blind and partially sighted people</li> <li>• People who are D/deaf or hearing impaired</li> <li>• People with learning disabilities</li> <li>• People who have mental health issues</li> <li>• People who identify as neurodiverse (this refers to neurological differences including, for example, dyspraxia, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, the autistic spectrum and others)</li> <li>• People with some long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.</li> </ul>
People with a long-term health condition	People with long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
Gender reassignment	<p>People who identify as transgender (defined as someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process or part of a process to reassign their sex. It is not necessary for the person to be under medical supervision or undergoing surgery).</p> <p>You may want to consider the needs of people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Marriage/civil partnerships	People who are married or in a civil partnership. They may be of the opposite or same sex.
Pregnancy and maternity	Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination

Characteristic	Who this covers
	is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	<p>Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.</p> <p>A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example a person may identify as Black British, British Asian, British Sikh, British Jew, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller.</p>
Religion/belief	<p>Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.</p>
Sex	<p>This covers men and women. Also consider the needs of people who identify as intersex (people who have variations in sex characteristics) and non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>People who identify as straight/heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic<sup>1</sup> and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

[The Equality Act 2010 is available on legislation.gov.uk.](http://legislation.gov.uk)



# Implementing our Vital Signs for Children Vision in Social Care: Fostering Fees

Our response to your feedback

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February 2022

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# Feedback & Responses

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## Summary

Firstly, we would like to thank you again for taking the time to respond to the engagement document. We know the original timeframe for responses was short, so we have continued to collate all feedback received up to 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. We were very pleased to have received responses from over 100 fostering households. We also know that many of you contacted your Supervising Social Workers and their Team Managers to have follow up conversations on what the proposals might mean for you and we hope that these were helpful in giving you as much clarity as we can at this time.

We were pleased to see that there was lots of positivity for elements of the new approach in your responses. Many carers told us that they were supportive of the changes in principle and could fully understand the reasons behind the proposals. People liked the fact that the model was very focused on children and that it looks to place more complex young people with local authority carers wherever possible. There was lots of support for kinship and connected carers being paid in the same way as other carers, with many people feeling this had previously been unfair. People also liked the idea of ceasing reduced rates for further children.

Additionally, we received positive comments on the increased support that will be available to carers. The introduction of the clinical psychologist post for all carers and the Supporting Resilience Team were welcomed, as were the CWD Intensive Outreach Service and the Occupational Therapist Assistant Practitioner for those who are supporting children with disabilities. There was also positivity around the enhanced training offer that will be available moving forward.

That said, we also recognise that the engagement document has raised a number of questions and concerns for carers and that many are feeling worried as a result of the proposals. The remainder of this document aims to alleviate some of the worries by answering your questions where we are able, correcting some misunderstandings around the proposal and responding to some of the key themes that have emerged. We have not sought to respond to individual circumstances, but we hope the themes we have pulled out reflect the main concerns we have heard.

Now as much as ever, we encourage you to keep speaking to your Supervising Social Worker or to contact us for a one-to-one conversation with a Team Manager if this document raises any further questions for you.

## Your Responses

Feedback has been grouped into themes and key points where possible. Where feedback has been received that relates to someone's personal situation, this has been discussed separately with the person who raised the question(s).

	You said ...	Our response ...
General responses to the model		
1.1	<p>I am delighted that the focus will be on the children, looking to avoid, wherever possible, placement breakdowns and placing the more complex young people with local authority carers.</p> <p>I believe the concept will work and agree with many of the aspirations of the new framework.</p> <p>We agree that children should be placed on the basis of their needs and that the remuneration should reflect this.</p> <p>We agree that many aspects of the current system are unfair; I feel confident the new system will work and will be much fairer.</p> <p>We agree there should be no difference between payments to first and second children in placements.</p> <p>We fully agree there is a need for additional payments for the highest need cases and for kinship carers.</p> <p>I welcome the proposal of ensuring connected carers are paid in line with mainstream carers, similarly the simplified and fairer system of payments to linked family carers is a great improvement.</p> <p>The sections showing all the fantastic support and valuing of carers was encouraging. The idea of a Supporting Resilience Team sounds</p>	<p>We were so pleased to receive many positive comments on the new model, such as those listed here. It was great to hear that many people are in agreement with the principles of the model and moving towards a fairer payment system. It was also great to hear that you believe the additional support and training we will be putting in place as part of the model will support you and the young people you care for.</p>

	You said ...	Our response ...
	<p>very positive and something that will be very helpful to anyone going through the difficulties of looking after teens. The CWD Intensive Outreach Service sounds great The Occupational Therapist AP will surely be helpful also to those carers with disabled children. The possibility of support by a psychologist for carers will be very good.</p> <p>We see that you are considering improved training for harder to care for children so that is really good to see.</p>	
1.2	<p>As carers we feel saddened and undervalued after seeing the new proposal. We do not feel that it recognises all the hard work and dedication that we put in. It has had a drastic impact on our morale.</p>	<p>This was definitely not our intention! We really value the excellent care you provide! We know you all work hard and care about Norfolk children.</p>
1.3	<p>The proposed changes do not take account of the skills, experience and training that Foster Carers have. They do not incentivise carers to embark on further training to further their skills and knowledge.</p>	<p>The new proposed allowances are designed very much to recognise the skills and knowledge you develop as Foster Carers, ensuring that you are paid an allowance that reflects the care you provide. Your skills, knowledge and experience will help you to provide excellent care to children.</p>
1.4	<p>The review feels poorly timed. The last two years of the pandemic have been very difficult for Foster Carers, with home schooling and the risk of loved ones becoming ill. Additionally, household costs such as energy, food and petrol are all rapidly increasing for Foster Carers. The proposals do not reflect this these challenging times.</p>	<p>We recognise that there are worries regarding the financial situation, however, planning for this proposal has been ongoing for many months prior to the recent increase in costs. We are committed to working with individuals who are worried that they will experience financial hardship as a result of these changes to support them. The changes, if approved, would not take effect for 18 months, allowing time for us to work with carers to find appropriate solutions.</p>
1.5	<p>We agree that improving outcomes for children needs to be at the heart of what we do. We are unsure how the proposals will achieve this.</p>	<p>We know that children have improved outcomes when they experience family-based care, this is the same for Looked After Children who cannot live with their families.</p> <p>At present, we are unable to find family-based placements for a number of children, particularly children with additional and complex needs. We need to support and encourage Foster Carers to consider caring for children with additional needs, utilising the support, training and development available.</p>

	You said ...	Our response ...
		<p>Our current system does not encourage this approach as carers deemed to be the most skilled and experienced are choosing to care for children with few additional needs as they receive the same allowance. Other carers who may be willing to care for children with additional needs do not receive the right payments because of their accreditation meaning they are put off.</p> <p>Our current system provides a lower rate of pay for second and subsequent children in placement. At this time, we have more than 300 approved placements that are not being used. By paying the same amount for second and subsequent placements, Foster Carers will no longer be disincentivised to care for more than one child.</p>
1.6	We are concerned that the proposals will result in a loss of good Foster Carers with a wealth of experience.	So far this has not happened, and current placement payments are protected for 18 months, giving us, and carers, time to work through individual situations and provide additional support, training and development.
1.7	We have found it difficult to properly comment on the proposal as we have not seen the full schedule of rates with the exact amounts. The table of examples does not give sufficient detail and so the process does not feel transparent.	We have focused on giving lots of detail about the ethos of the proposal, the impact of the proposal and the foundation on which allowances will be made. Foster carers have also been able to speak to their Supervising Social Workers in respect of their individual circumstances.
<a href="#">Changes to the payment structure</a>		
2.1	Currently carers are paid a maintenance payment and a fostering allowance – will both payments exist in future? Which part of the payment will be changing?	Maintenance payments will remain as they are now, including an uprate each year which is built into the new structure. The allowance for Foster Carers (also known as their fees) will change.
2.2	The document states that the maintenance allowance will be that recommended by the Fostering Network. However, their website says they have stopped doing this. Could you clarify what the basic maintenance allowance will be for 0-11 and 11-17?	At the time of developing this proposal, the Fostering Network were still recommending what the maintenance allowance should be for each age group and this is what we have based the payments on. For 0 – 10 years, this would be £152 per week and for 11 – 17 years this would be £202 per week

	You said ...	Our response ...
2.3	Under the new proposal would holiday, birthday and Christmas monies still be paid in addition to the allowances?	Yes, these will continue.
2.4	How will those on SGO no detriment will be impacted?	We are working through SGO support plans now. Where the payments were stipulated within the plan, these will not change. Where they were not, the Special
2.5	How will staying put and adoption payments be impacted?	Staying put payments will not be impacted – there is separate national guidance on staying put. Adoption payments will not be affected by this proposal
2.6	Is the proposed £100pw reduction a total amount, not affecting additional children in placement, or per child in placement?	The reduction will only relate to the ‘first’ child in placement. We have proposed that Foster Carers who have second and subsequent children in placement should receive the full fee. In reality, this means that carers will receive slightly more than they do now for additional children they care for.
2.7	Could all existing carers remain on the current fee structure until their placements end, rather than for only 18 months? It would seem fairer to uphold the current fees agreed to when children were placed.	This is not possible due to the financial constraints. We are asking the Council to agree to an additional £700,000 in payments to be made to carers and in the current financial climate it would be very difficult to ask them to agree to further costs.
2.8	Could the new payment structure be brought in earlier for those whose payments will increase? It does not seem fair that they have to wait, particularly with a freeze on changes to accreditation rate.	We recognise that carers who would receive more in proposed fee structure would want their fees to increase in April 2022, however, the cost of this would be more than £2.25million in addition to the current proposal, which, in the current financial climate, is not possible.
2.9	Could you consider a remuneration structure that reflects both the needs of the child and the skills of carers? Having a combination of both child's needs and Foster Carers skillset would be a more balanced approach.	We did explore whether it would be possible to consider both, but unfortunately, we could not find a model that worked. Part of the purpose of the proposed restructure of fostering allowances is to streamline payments, making it clearer for carers, but considering both created significant complexities.
2.10	We are not in control of which children are placed with us, we are called and sent a form about them and say yes or no. This means we are not able to easily influence which young people we are matched with or the payments we receive.	We have been reviewing our processes as part of the wider transformation of the Norfolk Fostering Service. We are creating a dedicated Duty Team who will be responsible for supporting placements, working alongside Foster Carers and their Supervising Social Workers when seeking placements.

	You said ...	Our response ...
2.11	The retention payments and voucher for keeping a child in placement when aged 14 or over feel insulting – these small gestures will not prevent placement breakdown.	We recognise that the gestures suggested within the proposal would not prevent placement breakdown. We also recognise that money is seldom a factor in a successful placement. However, we believe it is so important to recognise the efforts of carers and to say thank you. The family activity voucher is designed to celebrate the family unit– this includes the carers, their children (if they have children) and the Looked After Children they are caring for.
Valuing Care and payment bands		
3.1	Could we see the Valuing Care score criteria on which the structure is based? We need a clearer understanding of the domains of need.	<p>For those who have not yet seen it, please see the below document which gives additional information on the Valuing Care tool, domains of need and scoring. This was also shared with carers via email on 28 January 2022.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Valuing Care Needs measurement tool g</p> </div>
3.2	How was the Valuing Care tool created?	The Valuing Care tool was developed in 2019 in order to give social work teams a methodology for understanding levels of needs in key areas for children and young people. It also allows us to track over time whether these needs are being met. There are a number of local authorities nationally using this tool and NCC were supported to implement this tool by the developers. Social Workers, Team Managers, Access to Resources Team and the IRO Team worked collaboratively with the developers to test the tool in Norfolk and to integrate it into our processes.
3.3	<p>Who will be responsible for completing the Valuing Care tool?</p> <p>We are worried that Children’s Social Workers change too frequently and do not see young people often enough to score them accurately.</p> <p>Will the Foster Carer be involved in the completing of the tool as we spend most time with them?</p>	Whilst the Social Worker for the child is responsible for completing the Valuing Care assessment, we have been clear that we expect the child’s Social Worker and the Supervising Social Worker to work together to ensure the assessment accurately reflects the child’s needs. We would expect that the Social Workers from both services consider the input from Foster Carers, their own observations and the Foster Carers’ log when completing the tool.

	You said ...	Our response ...
	<p>How can we be sure the tool is being completed consistently across the service?</p> <p>The Valuing Care tool will need to be embedded in practice and training provided for carers and social work staff on how to use the tool.</p>	<p>All assessments are overseen by the Team Manager who will review the assessment to ensure quality. Social workers have been working with the Valuing Care tool for a number of years now and it has embedded well. For new staff, Valuing Care is part of their initial training and will take place within the first few months of them joining NCC.</p>
3.4	<p>Will there be a way to appeal the score if the Foster Carer does not agree?</p>	<p>The Foster Carer will be able to discuss their view with their Supervising Social Worker who can work with the child's Social Worker to ensure the assessment is accurate.</p>
3.5	<p>We feel that the reduction in payments when a Valuing Care score reduces creates a perverse incentive in which carers are penalised for being more effective and supporting a young person's needs to reduce</p>	<p>We know that most children do not experience a significant reduction in Valuing Care scoring. Whilst many children will settle and begin to see positive outcomes as a result of the care afforded to them by their Foster Carer, this does not mean that needs will significantly change. For many children, their needs increase as they grow and develop, we also know that even if children present with less challenging behaviour, their needs do not necessarily change.</p>
3.6	<p>Is it planned that the Valuing Care score and subsequent banding will be discussed in the young person's LAC review? If so, it likely to be difficult to have these conversations in front of the young person and their family, as the Foster Carer will need to highlight the young person's needs, rather than their strengths, in order to continue to receive the same level of payment. The relationship between Social Workers and Foster Carers is also likely to be negatively affected if connected to pay.</p>	<p>There is no plan for this to be discussed at the child's review, it would not be appropriate. We would expect that the Social Workers from both services consider the input from Foster Carers, their own observations and the Foster Carers' log when completing the Valuing Care tool prior to each LAC Review. The Foster Carer will be able to discuss their view with their Supervising Social Worker who can work with the child's Social Worker to ensure the assessment is accurate.</p> <p>Foster Carers should always have seen the previous Valuing Care assessment as it is included in the Combined Assessment and Progress Report for Reviews and also within the placement matching paperwork.</p>
3.7	<p>When children enter the care system there may be limited information to identify any immediate, ongoing or future needs. How will these young people be assessed using the Valuing Care tool?</p>	<p>Children who are placed in care for the first time will have a placement matching form which includes an assessment of need using the Valuing Care tool. For UASC and emergency placements, payments will be made at</p>

	You said ...	Our response ...
	What will happen in the case of emergency placements, or unaccompanied asylum-seeking children?	the enhanced rate (equivalent to current level 5 payments) until the Social Worker has been able to assess the child's level of need.
3.8	The child we see on paper is quite often different to the one who comes through the door and additional needs often become evident quickly. Will there be mechanism to change scores quickly when this is the case?	Yes, children will have a review within 20 works days of their placement, the Valuing Care assessment will be considered at that point via the Combined Assessment and Progress Report.
3.9	Carers could be tempted to exaggerate difficulties which in turn would impact on the perceived adoptability of children	This is unlikely as Foster Carers are great advocates for children and want the best outcomes for them. The Social Worker for the child and the Supervising Social Worker will have observed the child when visiting and considered all information available when completing their assessments, providing a helpful balance to any assessment. In addition, the Supervising Social Worker will be exploring with Foster Carers why they view the situation as they do as part of their regular supervision.
3.10	Every child coming into care has experienced some degree of trauma, even if only being moved to a totally alien environment. How do you propose to overcome this issue when using the Valuing Care tool?	This is specifically assessed within the Valuing Care tool and will therefore be considered.
<b>Rationale for changing the model</b>		
4.1	Could you explain what research you undertook when designing the model? Has a similar structure been tried successfully elsewhere in the country?	We looked at many different Local Authority fostering services as well as many independent fostering agencies. We have also discussed our thoughts with a number of leaders across the country. We know, for example, that the new proposed allowances at every level represent some of the highest in England and Wales.
4.2	Is the change in fees to enable the Council to save money? It feels like a cost saving exercise.	The change in fees represents an investment of approximately £700,000 in the amount we pay carers overall per annum. Whilst some carers will receive less, we will be paying more to carers who look after young people with additional and complex needs as recognition of their hard work and we will also be removing the reduced fee for second children.
4.3	You state that IFAs care for more children with complex needs than Norfolk Fostering Service Foster Carers. How do you know this?	We review our Valuing Care assessments for all looked after Norfolk children on a routine basis. This identifies that the total score of children cared for by in house carers is much lower than for children cared for by IFAs. For example, in January 2022, the average Valuing Care score for

	You said ...	Our response ...
		children placed with Norfolk Fostering Service Foster Carers was 20, it was 31 for IFAs.
4.4	Based on your current cohort of children in foster care, what are your estimated numbers of children in each of the 3 levels (Standard, Enhanced and Complex)?	When modelling for the proposal, we determined that approximately 75% of children fall within the standard category, 20% within the enhanced category and 5% within the complex category.
4.5	Please provide your modelling for the anticipated costs of the proposed new regime and how they compare to the existing one.	The modelling will be included in the cabinet paper which will be published 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2022. Please let us know if you have not been able to access the Cabinet report and we can send it to you
4.6	What local research has been undertaken into why placement breakdown at age 14? Have steps been put in place to respond to this research?	<p>We completed a survey in 2021 to understand better why placements break down at 14, which has identified some key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers feel unprepared to manage adolescents, both in terms of training and support</li> <li>• Both carers and young people sometimes have unrealistic expectations regarding behaviour, in particular regarding family time, free time without supervision and routines</li> <li>• Matching information is not always fully shared with carers prior to placement</li> <li>• Young people sometimes experience escalating mental health difficulties</li> <li>• Exploitation and other situations where young people present as a risk to themselves or others</li> <li>• Carers often take on adolescents in an emergency and so both carers and young people struggle to invest in the placement</li> </ul> <p>We have put steps in place to try to resolve this which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional support, including therapeutic support will be available to all carers</li> <li>• Significantly improved training offer in respect of trauma informed foster care, caring for adolescents and other more specialist training</li> </ul>

	You said ...	Our response ...
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for Success Service to support both young people and carers more effectively, including supporting their mental health and emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• Introduction of placement planning review meetings in between Reviews, to support carers and young people and identify any new or emerging needs early</li> <li>• Targeted Youth Support Service, supporting young people who may be experiencing exploitation or where the risk that they might has been identified.</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts of the changes</b>		
<b>5.1</b>	We are worried that a reduction of this scale each month may send some carers and their young people into poverty.	Where there is genuine risk of hardship, we will work with Carers to ensure they do not experience hardship, also offering advice on benefits claims and tax relief to maximise income. Due to the tax and NI relief available to Carers, we think the standard fee for one child under the age of 10 would equate to a salary of approx. £27,000 per year, which is just below the average salary in Norfolk.
<b>5.2</b>	As a result of the reduction in fees, we would need to make cutbacks in daily life, activities for young people, holidays and other expenses. It feels unfair that the changes to fees would negatively impact on the day-to-day life of the child.	As Carers, you will receive additional allowances for holidays, birthdays and Christmas/religious festival for looked after children, as well as some financial support in respect of activities for children. The maintenance allowance paid in respect of children is remaining the same for some children in placement and increasing for others, dependent on their age. We hope that Foster Carers will continue to maximise the maintenance allowance in meeting the needs of the looked after children they care for.
<b>5.3</b>	It is unrealistic to expect a carer to provide appropriate care with the possibility of income fluctuating. For example, it will make it very difficult for carers to know if they can take on purchases such as a larger car, or improvements to their homes (to support young people in their care) without a stable income.	We recognise that this can be a challenge. Currently a number of Foster Carers experience a reduction in allowances for the children they care for once children settle. Carers also experience fluctuating income as placements are never guaranteed and many choose to take breaks, particularly if they have had to give notice on a placement. This would be no different. However, if a Carer is experiencing financial hardship as a result of a change in allowance, we will work with them on a case-by-case basis to ensure they will not experience significant difficulty.

	You said ...	Our response ...
5.4	<p>We are concerned that moving forward, Foster Carers will only be financially rewarded if they accept the most challenging cases. This does not reflect the fact that there are many reasons that Foster Carers do not fill their spare beds, often because introducing an additional young person into the family would be detrimental to existing placements or birth children.</p> <p>We are worried that people will feel pressured to accept cases of higher need than they can realistically manage and that this will lead to an increase in placement breakdowns.</p>	<p>We want to support carers to make positive choices that work for them and their family. The relationship between carers and their Supervising Social Workers is critical – both can be wholly honest and open when considering placement choices.</p>
5.6	<p>Have you considered the fact that in-house carers may move to agencies as a result of the proposal as they will receive much higher payment there?</p>	<p>We do not believe the fees will be higher in IFAs as they will pay in accordance with child's need in the same way that we are proposing. The fees set are deliberately competitive with IFA payments.</p>
5.7	<p>In the current accreditation matrix, there is an expectation that level 5 carers make an active contribution to supporting development of other carers and are ambassadors for fostering. Who will undertake tasks such as buddies, FAP, task and finish groups in future as current level 5 carers who will be paid less may no longer be inclined to undertake these roles?</p>	<p>We will be encouraging and supporting all carers to consider these roles.</p>
<p>The engagement process</p>		
6.1	<p>Why were no Foster Carers involved in the development of the proposal or task and finish groups set up to work on it?</p>	<p>The idea of changes to the accreditation matrix and related fees was raised with the task and finish group throughout 2021. However, the steer from the group, captured in the meeting minutes, was that this should be a task for Children's Services as a department, rather than the group. We have therefore worked up a proposal for comment by carers.</p>
6.2	<p>How were you able to include an FAQs section when Foster Carers had not seen the document prior to its publication?</p>	<p>The FAQs section was added based on questions received when presenting the proposals to our staff and to the Fostering Advisory Partnership in the few days before the document was shared with all Foster Carers.</p>
6.3	<p>Why were group zoom meetings not offered where we could ask questions on the proposal? It is surely more time consuming to only offer 1:1 meetings, answering the same questions multiple times.</p>	<p>Whilst it is more time consuming to offer one-to-one meetings, we felt this was more appropriate on this occasion. Every Foster Carer's situation is different, and we felt that people may not be comfortable sharing their</p>

	You said ...	Our response ...
		<p>personal situation in a larger forum. We thought that individual conversations would be more effective in alleviating people’s worries and helping people to understand what the changes might mean for them personally. It was important to us that carers felt able to share their views in full.</p>
6.4	<p>Have you consulted with young people on how they feel about the banding process?</p>	<p>We have not consulted children and young people as it would be inappropriate to do so. In consultation with the Head of the Participation service, we concluded it would be very upsetting to ask children what we should be paying their carers.</p> <p>Children and young people have been involved in the development of the Valuing Care tool, they welcomed it as they hoped it would more accurately reflect their situation, their needs and ensure that carers would be able to meet their needs.</p>
Support and training for Foster Carers		
7.1	<p>We feel that the reason Foster Carers often turn down more complex placements is that they don’t feel they would get sufficient support. There should be extra support for families taking these types of placements, so they feel more able to take them on. It would be particularly useful to have training and support for PACE, Asylum, disabilities etc.</p>	<p>We have developed a significant support offer to Foster Carers which will be implemented in April 2022. We have also strengthened our training and development offer. A number of changes have been made which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the Support for Success service (went live April 2021)</li> <li>• Development of the Targeted Youth Support Service (went live February 2021)</li> <li>• Development of the Supporting Resilience Team in the fostering service – goes live April 2022</li> <li>• Enhanced support for children who ‘step-down’ from a children’s home to foster care – this has been in place since 2019 and will be retained</li> <li>• Creation of the Children With Disability Outreach service which from April 2022 will be available to carers</li> <li>• Creation of an Occupational Therapist Assistant Practitioner role</li> </ul>

	You said ...	Our response ...
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritising relationships by ensuring Foster Carers retain their Supervising Social Worker irrespective of the type of placement – specialist support will be available on a ‘call-in’ basis</li> <li>• Development of a duty team to support the setting up of a new placement, ensuring needs are clearly identified and support to manage those needs put in place</li> <li>• Improved training and development package for Supervising Social Workers so they are better able to support carers</li> <li>• Improved training and development package for Foster Carers that draws upon the best knowledge within Children’s Services to support carers</li> </ul>
7.2	You mention placement breakdowns for age 14+. Could training have an emphasis on attachment theory and the teenage brain so Foster Carers understand more of what is going on for these children at this age?	This is one of the improved training offers for Foster Carers, with a focus on development, attachment, trauma and adolescence.
7.3	Have you considered standby payment for short-term carers to provide them security between placements?	This is already in place, there is no plan to change this.
7.4	How will the new Duty Team differ from the existing Duty Team?	We currently do not have a standalone duty team – we wanted to create a new team so that the manager can focus fully on planning and support for new placements.
7.5	We are concerned about the possibility of not having the consistent support from the Enhanced Fostering Team as it currently is.	The support will be more consistent. Currently, the Foster Carer has to move to a different Supervising Social Worker a year after the placement is made, whereas in the new model, carers will remain with their long-term Supervising Social Worker. All other aspects of support will remain as now, but with improved support available throughout the placement, rather than just for the first year.
7.6	Other Local Authorities offer paid annual respite, is this something you are able to offer?	We are not aware of this offer, however, we support Carers with respite when it is deemed to be in the best interests of the child and Carers
Other questions and comments		
8.1	Is there a planned timescale for when the new model will be reviewed? How do you plan to measure if it has been successful?	We will be regularly reviewing the new model for some time. We have identified a number of key areas that we must focus on to ensure the model is successful, which will be reviewed in detail every three months.

	You said ...	Our response ...
		Should it become clear that the new model is not quite right, we will consider the best way to address any concerns, including seeking a change at Cabinet should that be needed.
8.2	Were consultants engaged to design the new model and how much have they been paid?	Consultants were not engaged to design the new model. It has been designed by members of the service with support from our internal transformation team.
8.3	This consultation is open from 17 <sup>th</sup> January until 8 <sup>th</sup> February. The consultation was only shared with all Norfolk Carers as a finalised document on 26 <sup>th</sup> January.	We have not been able to find a date of 17 <sup>th</sup> January in any documents, the consultation was published on 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2021
8.4	Are NCC looking at recruiting carers for specific shortfall areas; older, more complex children, CWD, specialist placements etc.?	We have a fostering recruitment strategy which focuses on a number of different areas including these.

## Next Steps

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The consultation period closed on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022. We have incorporated your feedback and some of your suggestions into the final paper which is due to be presented to Norfolk County Council Cabinet on 7 March 2022. We will write to you again in week commencing 14 March to notify you of the decision made by Cabinet. If the proposal is approved by Cabinet, the changes to fees would be introduced from 6 April 2022.

# Cabinet

Item No: 15

**Report Title: Impact of winter and Covid on social care - planning for recovery**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Bill Borrett (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention)**

**Responsible Director: James Bullion (Executive Director of Adult Social 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**

The latest wave of Covid-19 has fuelled unprecedented pressures within the health and social care system in Norfolk & Waveney this winter.

Prior to the emergence of the Omicron wave, Adult Social Services was already planning for a very challenging winter. The Winter Plan was presented to Cabinet on 6 December 2021 and has formed a central part of the response from the health and social care system to the current crisis.

Although the Critical Incident declared on 30 December 2021 was de-escalated on 26 January 2022, social care is still reporting its highest alert level at SCOPEL 4 in line with the health system's OPEL 4 rating.

The winter crisis is by no means over and whilst we continue to support our frontline teams and partners in health through the rest of winter, it is equally important to plan for our recovery from the winter crisis and start to take measures now that will ensure we can stabilise services as quickly as possible as the pressures ease.

This report sets out our proposed approach to recovery and the short to medium-term actions that are being considered. These actions will stabilise our services and lay the platform for our longer-term recovery aligned to our ongoing transformation goals.

Our approach to recovery will be underpinned by the following principles.

- a) **Safe** – the actions we take will always prioritise the delivery of safe care

- b) **Sustainable** – we will ensure that any revised arrangements are sustainable so that we are well prepared for any further variant waves and potential pressures next winter and that we have a stable platform upon which to continue the transformation of our services
- c) **Living Well** – we will use the opportunities within this plan to further embed our Living Well approach, to keep people independent, resilient and well
- d) **Keeping what's worked** – where we have successfully trialled new ways of working through the pandemic we will seek to embed and stabilise these; by the same token, we will decommission any arrangements that are no longer needed or have not delivered as expected to ensure all our efforts are focussed on what works well
- e) **Designed by the front line** – we have worked with our staff and managers to develop this plan and will continue to do so as we implement the proposed actions
- f) **Listening to people who use our services** – we will continue to engage with people so that we can be sure that the actions we take and the changes we implement are based on the needs of the people we serve

Recovery actions will be taking place alongside continued business as usual, so we are realistic about the pace at which we can expect to see a significant impact on backlogs of work. At the time of writing this report we are assessing what resources it would take, and how long it would take, to restore the position to the opening position of 2021/22 and we will be completing appropriate modelling work to determine this.

Oversight of progress against key indicators will fall to the existing Performance Review Panel, chaired by the Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

We provide many of the most vulnerable individuals in Norfolk with care and support and a managed approach to recovery will help us prioritise the focus of our limited resources on providing high quality, safe and timely care to all those that need it.

## Recommendations:

**Cabinet is recommended to:**

- a) **Agree the Adult Social Services approach to recovery planning as set out in section 2**
- b) **Agree that on-going review and monitoring of recovery planning continues through the Performance Review Panel and People Select Committee**

## 1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Towards the end of summer 2021 we began to prepare for what we anticipated would be a very challenging winter. Our Winter Plan built upon the strong contingency processes developed during the earlier stages of the Covid pandemic and was based on continued strong collaborative working with our partners and providers.
- 1.2 The Winter Plan set out practical solutions that have now been put in place to mitigate the worst impacts of the winter pressures. Nevertheless, with the emergence of the Omicron variant and its impact on both health and social care services, managing through this wave in the middle of winter has been exceptionally challenging. Key challenges have included:

- a) Managing Covid response alongside other respiratory illness
- b) Capacity in health setting and in the care market
- c) An increase in complexity of cases
- d) Recruitment and retention in the care workforce

- 1.3 From the beginning of September until the end of December 2021, Adult Social Care has supported 2,667 people to leave hospital on discharge pathways with 67% returning home with a package of reablement provided by Norfolk First Response Service (NFRS) or a Framework homecare provider; 30% going to a short term bedded discharge option and the remaining identified at the point of discharge needing a long-term placement.
- 1.4 While the majority of people are supported to return home, the numbers who have been discharged from hospital into another formal care setting has been high. This is due to a number of factors, including the difficulties home care, Norfolk First Support and other community-based services have faced.
- 1.5 Since the beginning of the pandemic response, Norfolk Adult Social Care supported over a 100% increase in activity in discharge pathways requiring a social care service and assessment post discharge.
- 1.6 The significance of the recruitment challenge in the care market cannot be underestimated. We know that care providers are in direct competition with the hospitality and service industries in attracting and retaining staff. This is a growing issue and will continue to be a challenge, until the fundamental issue of pay within the care sector can be addressed.
- 1.7 This report sets out the initiatives that the department has implemented with partners to tackle the winter crisis, the extent of the impact the crisis has had on our services and our approach to recovery.

## 2. Proposal

- 2.1 Our approach to recovery will be underpinned by the following principles.
- a) **Safe** – the actions we take will always prioritise the delivery of safe care
  - b) **Sustainable** – we will ensure that any revised arrangements are sustainable so that we are well prepared for any further variant waves and potential pressures next winter and that we have a stable platform upon which to continue the transformation of our services
  - c) **Living Well** – we will use the opportunities within this plan to further embed our Living Well approach, to keep people independent, resilient and well
  - d) **Keeping what’s worked** – where we have successfully trialled new ways of working through the pandemic we will seek to embed and stabilise these; by the same token, we will decommission any arrangements that are no longer needed or have not delivered as expected to ensure all our efforts are focussed on what works well
  - e) **Designed by the front line** – we have worked with our staff and managers to develop this plan and will continue to do so as we implement the proposed actions

- f) **Listening to people who use our services** – we will continue to engage with people so that we can be sure that the actions we take and the changes we implement are based on the needs of the people we serve
- 2.2 There are a number of immediate priorities that require targeted and urgent action to help stabilise the service. Some of these will require longer to implement but it is essential that we start to deliver on these immediately.
- 2.3 Recovery actions will be taking place alongside continued business as usual, so we are realistic about the pace at which we can expect to see a significant impact on backlogs of work. At the time of writing this report, we are assessing what resources it would take, and how long it would take to restore the position to the opening position of 2021/22 and we will be completing appropriate modelling work to determine this.
- 2.4 We have consulted with the chair of the People and Communities Select Committee in drawing up our approach but have not been able to take this report to the Committee ahead of Cabinet due to the urgency.
- 2.5 Through engagement with staff, we have drawn up a long list of potential short to medium-term actions. These will need further work and not all of these will be taken forward. Clearly there will be a need to ensure actions we do put in place are in line with Care Act legislation and guidance. This will take place on a case-by-case basis. We will need to carefully prioritise actions to optimise the deployment of our finite resources and to avoid over-burdening our frontline teams as they continue to tackle the winter pressures.

**Actions currently under consideration include:**

- a) An audit of 100 cases from the holding list to identify cohorts and types of cases for whom we might take a different approach. We could potentially engage the voluntary sector to provide direct support such as wellbeing calls for some people on these lists to meet their needs in a timelier manner
- b) A “point prevalence event” similar to those conducted by the NHS to develop a snapshot of who is placed where, how many placements are inappropriate and how to reduce the number of inappropriate placements. This would provide a shared understanding of challenges, issues and options to inform our recovery plans
- c) Engaging with people to keep them informed about timescales we are working to and considering how we can easily help people to request an update from us
- d) Bringing forward as a small pilot, on-line self-assessment or review. As part of the implementation of the White Paper, Putting People at the Heart of Care, we anticipate introducing the option for some people for on-line self-assessment or review
- e) Develop a set of criteria for cases where telephone reviews would be acceptable for this year. This would bring down the review backlog list as it would mean more reviews could be done without the need for travel time. The criteria will need careful thought to ensure those cases are appropriate and reviews are still carefully planned
- f) Develop a trusted reviewer approach whereby providers – in certain circumstances – can carry out reviews on our behalf
- g) Work with our health partners to proactively reduce the number of people discharged on Pathway 1 into non-therapeutic spot-purchased beds and increase

the number of people returning home after their hospital discharge. We have already signalled our intentions on this to health partners

- h) Support our staff to re-focus on a strengths-based approach when determining care decisions. This would be enabled by a review of some of our internal processes and would support the Living Well approach of self-determination and promoting independence
- i) Continued care market incentives to support discharge which would release Norfolk First Response capacity to support hospital discharge demand and provide more reablement. This would also enable providers to sustainably grow their workforce and realise business development opportunities
- j) Re-assign staff and extend temporary and agency staff to increase our capacity to complete Care Act assessments, meet the demand on the discharge pathways and support staff and team resilience. Staff will have the skills required for any reassignment or will have appropriate training.
- k) Enhance our staff wellbeing offer to support the resilience of staff and leaders, reduce absence and turnover and increase productivity. We have already invested in a 6-month fixed term contract for a wellbeing facilitator to champion wellbeing approaches. A key factor to help improve staff wellbeing will be to clearly describe the roadmap to recovery and engage staff in this vision
- l) An enhanced focus on recruitment to address vacancy gaps and the high turnover rate. We are currently running an extensive Norfolk First Support (NFS) recruitment campaign to help address the vacancy gap in this area and will be relaunching our national social worker recruitment campaign later this year

2.6 In addition to these short to medium-term activities, there are a range of longer-term projects and programmes that ultimately form part of our transformation plans for 2022/23 and will ensure we are prepared for next winter. These longer-term plans will be adjusted to reflect the current position, the need to secure time and space to manage the recovery and the impact that the winter crisis has already had on our ability to deliver to our ongoing transformation goals.

2.7 Our longer-term transformation plans include programmes focussed on prevention and early help with a re-purposed 'front door', integration with health, embedding Living Well, developing a stable and modern care market, harnessing technology and developing our workforce. These are set out in the Transformation and Prevention in Adult Social Care report presented to Cabinet on 12 January 2022 and we will be developing these into detailed delivery plans alongside our strategic partner, Newton Europe.

2.8 The intention is to use a self-assessment to take stock of the impact of recovery planning and actions as part of preparation for winter 2023. This will include a review of the impact of the current winter on our services and the wider health and care system as well as the effectiveness of the mitigating actions that we have taken. This is summarised in the next two sections.

### **3. The impact of the Omicron wave this winter**

3.1 Despite the significant investment in creating capacity to support the discharge pathways, and the innovations that have been trialled, the Norfolk & Waveney urgent care system has continued to remain under significant pressure.

- 3.2 The winter period is historically challenging for supporting people to leave hospital in a safe and timely way. In accordance with current national policy, Adult Social Care has a key role to play in multidisciplinary decision making to ensure the safe discharge of people to the right care setting, usually a person's own home; assessing for longer term care needs following a period of recovery support; and taking the lead on local care market shaping.
- 3.3 The challenges during this winter have been exacerbated by the Omicron emergence including the impact of staff absence throughout the health and care system and capacity of the care market to respond further to the demand, which had already doubled since the Covid-19 pandemic began.
- 3.4 The Norfolk & Waveney system declared a critical incident on 30 December 2021 lasting a month due to four critical issues that required our system to work collaboratively, at pace, to save lives and reduce harm:
- a) Ambulance handover delays to hospitals
  - b) Reduced bed capacity in the acute hospitals and care home
  - c) Increased workforce gaps through Covid-19 and other absences
  - d) Rising Covid-19 numbers in the general population possibly requiring hospital care
- 3.5 Adult Social Care responded as a strong system partner by prioritising and re-focusing our department's resources including:
- a) Redeployed social work staff from community care teams to support the hospital discharge pathways
  - b) Daily engagement with the care market to understand capacity issues and seek resolutions to release capacity for hospital discharges
  - c) Implemented several initiatives at pace to stimulate the care market including enhanced payments
  - d) Trialled innovation throughout the hospital discharge pathways including sourcing placements differently and making assistive technology readily available at the point of discharge
- 3.6 The sustained and escalating critical incident required further action to be taken by system partners to help balance the risk and contribute to saving lives and reducing harm to people needing hospital care or to leave the hospital. As a result, Adult Social Care implemented temporary care pathways that prioritised the release of acute hospital beds.
- 3.7 Our response to the critical incident came at a time when social care was already facing challenges, and so the overall situation worsened while the critical incident response was prioritised. At its peak, the crisis has reached unprecedented levels as summarised in the following paragraphs.
- a) **2,538 people on our holding list** which means they remain unallocated to a social services worker with risk management provided by small Duty teams
  - b) **261 people remain in a short-term bed in a non-therapeutic Care Home** following their hospital discharge
  - c) **243 people are being provided with support** by NFRS whilst waiting for a Care Act assessment for long-term service. This also means that NFRS are unable to sufficiently focus on their core reablement function
  - d) **4,703 people receiving care and support have a statutory outstanding Annual Review**

- e) **781 people are on the Interim Care List** (which means they are not being provided with right care, based on their identified care and support) and require social care resource to review and ensure the right care arrangements are in place
- f) **Our front door service, SCCE, has been unable to manage the referrals rates** and has had to operate on a priority call basis most days of the week as they cannot operate a holding list due to risk. This workload has seen an increase of 20% staff turnover in SCCE, although typically the staff are moving to other roles within ASC
- g) **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs)**– in common with the national picture there was a high backlog of DoLs going into the winter period. This has been exacerbated and the backlog stands currently at 2,675
- h) **Our Commissioning team remains in Business Continuity** to ensure capacity is focused on the priority delivery of the Winter Plan
- i) **Social worker vacancies in the department are at 18%** and within our Norfolk First Response Service at 23%
- j) **Staff turnover is higher at between 12-13.5%** and increasing in recent months for social services assessor roles. Ongoing recruitment has not closed the vacancy gap and the skills gap is also increasing in some teams, where experienced staff are leaving and are replaced by newly qualified practitioners
- k) **Increased sickness absence averaging 8% for frontline teams** compared to pre-pandemic levels. Our position is favourable compared to NHS system partners, but higher than the wider council average. Some frontline teams are seeing sickness levels up to 25% of available capacity on a short-term basis due to isolation or ill health as a result of Covid
- l) **A high percentage (35%) of reported sickness relates to mental health**, and staff wellbeing is significantly affected by workload pressures in addition to other causes

3.8 Daily escalation meetings were put in place, chaired by the Executive Director, to instigate and monitor actions to address the issues outlined above, and to mitigate risk. At the time of writing these are now taking place twice a week.

3.9 The step down of the system critical incident on 26 January 2022 was in response to a material change in the system capacity and performance when measured against the four critical factors. However, the system still continues to be at a high escalation level.

3.10 For Adult Social Care we have also remained at the highest escalation level OPEL level 4 through this period. However, we have now signalled to system partners the need to prioritise a social care recovery plan in line with actions being taken by NHS providers to adjust their bed base and increase their elective programmes amongst other priorities.

3.11 Our capacity to plan and deliver transformation activity has been severely impeded as our internal change capacity has been called upon to support with managing the crisis. Our engagement with our strategic partner, Newton Europe will enable us to make up for some lost time on some transformation goals.

## 4. Delivering on Our Winter Plan

4.1 Actions to deliver the Adult Social Care Winter Action Plan continue. The plan contains six workstreams with over 70 initiatives aimed at shaping and stimulating the Care Market response, improving capacity and better connecting people leaving hospital to discharge recovery care and support. Some of the key areas of focus and achievement listed below demonstrate the breadth and extent of actions undertaken and in progress.

## **Domiciliary Care (Home Support)**

- a) Extending the time someone's care package is held open if they go into hospital to 14 days
- b) Additional payment made to providers amounting to an uplift payment of 2.5% for a 16-week period
- c) Incentive payments to providers of £1,000 to pick up care packages
- d) Review of packages held by Enhanced Home Support Service to maximise capacity
- e) New providers added to the Home Support Framework
- f) Review of packages currently held by providers and development of a Trusted Assessor model
- g) Enhanced rate of £25 per hour available for providers who can take on appropriate work from Norfolk First Response Services (NFRS)
- h) Arrangements to make it more viable for home care providers to be able to support people who need two carers (known as 'double assist')
- i) Intelligence gathering of market issues and capacity implemented through weekly phone calls to 80 providers
- j) Additional commissioner resource deployed to support with targeted sourcing work using non-framework providers and focussing on geographical areas identified as having the most significant care market capacity issues
- k) Development of Interim Care List dashboard to support with data and sourcing work

## **Residential Care**

- a) Residential beds used to support discharges where home-based care cannot be arranged
- b) Managed (block) beds to support with discharges where people need further recovery time in a formal setting
- c) Implemented expanded Short Term Beds team to help manage the increased demand in sourcing short term beds
- d) Dedicated Provider Support team to provide enhanced leadership support for identified issues
- e) iStumble equipment deployed to care homes to safely lift residents who have fallen

## **Workforce**

- a) Social care staff deployed to hospital sites to support timely discharges
- b) Workforce Recruitment and Retention grant distributed to providers
- c) Winter Recognition (Retention) payment to NFS staff to be made in March
- d) A range of workforce initiatives including:
  - i. Well-being programme
  - ii. Extended Call to Arms recruitment campaign including letters sent to retired staff and leavers
  - iii. Earn while you learn approach
  - iv. Care Academy
  - v. Overseas recruitment

## **Norfolk First Response (NFRS)**

- a) Deployment of Video Care Phones (Alcove) into NFRS
- b) Additional workforce to support with NFRS vacancies with staff sourced from a variety of areas including NHS reservists and NCC staff
- c) Additional management capacity to support NFRS to step in and provide home care where it is not available elsewhere
- d) Additional Home Link capacity which allows patients to leave hospital sooner as they receive care at home from community-based nurses and carers
- e) Use of Swifts and Night Owls to support with providing care and support

- f) Access to peripheral stores for urgent equipment delivery
- g) Use of Occupational Therapists to review people's ongoing care needs
- h) Checklist implemented to ensure alternative options are explored to meet a person's identified needs
- i) Delivery of NFRS Multi Agency Discharge Event to review packages held to identify alternative support options
- j) Contact people on Personal Assistant register to identify people who could work in NFRS on fixed short-term contracts

### **Wider Care Market actions**

- a) Focus on Direct Payments and use of Personal Assistants
- b) Use of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector to support with welfare checks and non-personal care tasks
- c) Multi-Disciplinary Team approach to people who require care to ensure alternative options explored to meet their needs if they are currently on the Interim Care List
- d) Increase capacity in the team which sources care and alignment with Home First Hubs
- e) Changes made to sourcing process to support Home First Hubs
- f) Review of business support capacity and prioritisation to support delivery of Winter Plan
- g) Development of live-in care options
- h) Additional Mental Health capacity which includes
  - i. Funding that can be accessed to support with practical barriers to hospital discharge
  - ii. Extend District Direct, working with district councils to prevent unnecessary hospital stays and re-admission
  - iii. Additional Social Work roles
  - iv. Additional Mental Health Practitioner capacity
- i) Omicron funding distributed to care providers
- j) Overtime offered to staff to complete Care Act assessments
- k) Assistive technology made available to support hospital discharge

## **5. Alternative Options**

5.1 None identified.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 The national Hospital Discharge Pathway fund (HDP) provided by government has been extended for the second half of 2021/2022 financial year. The funding is to help cover some of the cost of new and additional post-discharge recovery and support services / rehabilitation and reablement care following discharge from hospital. The national discharge fund is available to fund the additional costs of:

- a) Services that support the new or additional needs of an individual on discharge from hospital. This will include recovery and support services, such as rehabilitation and reablement to help people return to the quality of life they had prior to their most recent admission
- b) Designated care settings for those discharged from acute care who are COVID-positive and cannot return directly to their own care home until 14 days of isolation has been undertaken

- 6.2 The HDP funding allocation to Norfolk & Waveney is £11,169,000 for the second half of 2021/22 and the financial cap was subsequently removed.
- 6.3 To date, the spend of the HDP funding has been driven by the need to increase care capacity at short notice and heavily influenced by the limitations of short-term funding settlement periods.
- 6.4 The current indication is that no further central Government monies will be available in the next financial year and local systems will need to become self-sustainable. Efficiencies in the discharge to assess pathways and processes will only partially mitigate the increase demand for discharge services and the loss of the central government funding in the next financial year.
- 6.5 In line with section 2.3, we have yet to fully define all the actions, and quantify the full resource requirements, to restore our delivery levels back to the opening position of 2021/22. In doing so we recognise the financial constraints of the Council and will initially utilise the funding already available to the department within its reserves or the recently agreed 2022/23 budget. Should it become apparent that these resources are insufficient to manage the underlying risk to the Council, an additional report will be taken through the appropriate governance for further consideration.

## **7. Resource Implications**

### **7.1 Staff:**

- 7.1.1 Since 2020 Adult Social Care has received additional funding related to increased hospital discharge activity to support transformation of the discharge process. The system has not fully implemented the expected discharge to assess model, including the provision of NHS funded intermediate care for the first four weeks post discharge where appropriate.
- 7.1.2 As a result it is likely that we will continue to need staff resource in these key areas supporting the discharge pathways until system transformation is complete. Dialogue is taking place with the CCG/ICS to agree funding for these posts. At the same time, work is being undertaken to identify opportunities to redeploy staff on fixed term contracts into existing vacancies elsewhere within the wider ASSD structure where this can be achieved without detriment to operational priorities.

7.2 **Property:** None identified at this stage.

7.3 **IT:** None identified at this stage.

## **8. Other Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

- 8.1.1 Adult Social Services operates under the legal framework of the Care Act and under relevant guidance. The impact of recent months may lead to increased formal complaints about delays to assessment or reviews, and there is potential for individual legal challenges. The department will continue to put in place robust measures to mitigate the impact of the current pressures and prioritise the most urgent cases. Recovery actions will need to be in line with the Care Act and guidance.

- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** None identified at this stage.
- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** An EqIA has been developed and is attached as a Appendix A. Further and more detailed assessment work will be completed as and when specific recovery actions are more clearly defined.
- 8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):**
- 8.4.1 None identified at this stage but this will be considered if, for example, we are able to call on the third sector to provide additional support directly to our residents.
- 8.5 **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** None identified at this stage.
- 8.6 **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** None identified at this stage.
- 8.7 **Any Other Implications:**
- 8.7.1 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 Our recovery plans will be measured using a robust performance management framework with regular reporting to the Departmental Leadership Team and ongoing daily monitoring of the SCOPEL (Social Care Operational Pressures Escalation Level) reporting system for adult social care. This is based on a similar model to the NHS OPEL system. SCOPEL provides a single daily view of the pressures on our social care teams and the care market using a simple 1 to 4 scoring system. It is used to assess and report on the pressures at any given time and provides an evidence base to inform senior management decisions if the pressures escalate up through the levels.
- 9.2 While our planning for recovery is a robust and considered approach to managing our service as we emerge from the most severely challenging winter months, success remains subject to a number of risks.
- 9.2.1 **Risk 1 – Staff morale and burn-out**  
NCC staff and care market staff have been working through the pandemic for nearly two years and this will inevitably have had an impact on their resilience and the risk of further staff turnover, sickness and low morale remains very high.
- 9.2.2 **Risk 2 – Higher on-going costs**  
At times of pressure, there is a risk that through winter, more intensive packages of support are put in place for people. There is a risk that we build in greater dependency for care which may impact on our ability to make savings.
- 9.2.3 **Risk 3 – Poor customer experience and complaints due to long waits and delays to needs assessments**  
Our holding lists and review backlogs are at high levels and it will take time to bring these down. In the meantime customers are likely to become frustrated and impatient and complaint levels may also rise as a result.

#### 9.2.4 **Risk 4** – NHS expectations

The NHS also remains under extreme pressures and may now have become dependent on social care taking certain actions to support discharge and help protect our hospitals as described in this report. It will be important to continue to collaborate at a senior level with system leaders to ensure focus on to the stabilisation of our own services.

#### 9.2.5 **Risk 5** – Further waves of Covid

Our current approach to recovery is based on the premise that we are now on a steady upward trajectory with the pressure on our health system receding into the future. This would be called into doubt should a new variant emerge or the course of the pandemic take a significantly negative turn.

## 10. **Select Committee Comments**

10.1 We have consulted with the Chair of the People and Select Committee when drawing up this plan but have brought this plan directly to Cabinet due to the urgency. We will continue to involve the committee in the ongoing recovery planning, particularly as it relates to medium and long-term transformation. In addition, the Performance Review Panel oversees departmental performance and improvement, and recovery against key recovery indicators will form part of ongoing monitoring.

## 11. **Recommendations**

### 11.1 **Cabinet is recommended to:**

- a) **Agree the Adult Social Services approach to recovery planning as set out in section 2**
- b) **Agree that on-going review and monitoring of recovery planning continues through the Performance Review Panel and People Select Committee**

## 12. **Background Papers**

12.1 [Adult Social Care Winter Plan for 2021/22](#) page 115

[ASSD Service Review – Transformation and Prevention in Adult Social Care](#) page 45

### **Officer Contact**

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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.



## Impact of winter and Covid on social care - planning for recovery

[Guidance is available here.](#)

### Working Draft: Equality Impact Assessment Findings and Recommendations

February 2022

**Claire Charlwood – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer**

Equality impact assessments enable decision-makers to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics.

You can update an assessment at any time to inform service planning and commissioning. For help or information please contact [equalities@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@norfolk.gov.uk)

#### 1. Impact of winter and Covid on social care - planning for recovery

- 1.1 The social care sector nationally is currently facing unprecedented pressures because of the Covid pandemic and a challenging winter, alongside increased service user case complexity, a reducing workforce and a lack of capacity in health settings and the care market.
- 1.2 The Winter Plan for Norfolk & Waveney was presented to Cabinet on the **6 December 2021**. This outlined Adult Social Services (ASSD) actions to mitigate the impact of these pressures on staff and service users over the winter period. The associated [EgIA](#) (pg 124) outlined the potential impacts on people with protected characteristics and identified how these would be monitored and / or mitigated where possible.

### 1.3 Key challenges identified for the Winter Plan included:

- Managing Covid response alongside other respiratory illness
- Capacity in health setting and in the care market
- An increase in complexity of cases
- Recruitment and retention in the care workforce

1.4 While the Winter Plan continues to be delivered, ASSD are now planning for recovery to ensure a robust plan is in place to stabilise services as some shorter-term pressures ease. The Recovery Plan report sets out a proposed approach; including short and medium terms actions which are being considered as options. While the Plan is still in development, the over-arching aim is to establish a framework for long-term recovery and respond to the existing ongoing pressures on the system.

1.5 Recovery action-planning will be taking place alongside business as usual. At the time of writing this EqiA, ASSD are in the process of assessing what resources will be required, and how long it will likely take to restore the position to the opening of 2021/22.

1.6 Through engagement with staff, ASSD have developed a list of potential short to medium-term actions. These actions all require further development and not all will be taken forward. Longer-term transformation plans include programmes focussed on prevention and early help with a re-purposed 'front door', integration with health, embedding Living Well, developing a stable and modern care market, harnessing technology and developing our workforce. These are set out in the Transformation and Prevention in Adult Social Care report presented to Cabinet on **12 January 2022**

1.7 ASSD recognises that there are broad principles which must underpin the approach to recovery to mitigate potential risks, this includes responding to the risks identified below for residents, service users and employees with protected characteristics.

## 2. Legal context

2.1 Public authorities are required by the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to equality when exercising public functions<sup>1</sup>. This is called the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'.

2.2 The purpose of this equality impact assessment (EqIA) is to consider, based on the available evidence, whether any future changes to the way adult social care is delivered in Norfolk & Waveney may likely disproportionately or adversely impact on people with protected characteristics (see Annex 1 for information about the different protected characteristics).

2.3 Where possible the Recovery Plan will seek to mitigate any identified detrimental impact as the Plan develops.

2.4 This EqIA recognises that it is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the interests of people with protected characteristics as there may be other considerations which must take precedent. This EqiA aims to enable decision-makers of the opportunities to minimise disadvantage.

2.5 This EqIA will be a live document for the duration of the Plan and will be updated as required as and when any proposed changes are implemented.

2.6 ASSD operates under the legal framework of the Care Act so the Recovery Plan will also need to meet obligations under the Care Act and any statutory guidance.

### 3. Information about the people affected by the proposal

3.1 The Recovery Plan will impact on anyone living in Norfolk & Waveney who is currently receiving social and health care or who is seeking to access social and health care in future. The Plan will also impact on anyone who currently works within social care and health settings or provides related services. This includes Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations and other care providers.

3.2 Therefore, the Plan will affect residents, service users and employees with a range of protected characteristics, in relation to disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, age and sexual orientation.

3.3 As of February 2022, ASSD data shows 13,212 active service users. More than 50% of these service users are older people and 30% are known to have either a learning or physical disability. In the last year ASSD received more than 109,000 contacts for social care. Between April and October 2021 there were 32,500 Care Act Assessments carried out, and 4852 referrals for reablement services.

3.4 Given ASSD provides services and support for the most vulnerable people in Norfolk it can be assumed that individuals with a range of protected characteristics make up a significant percentage of all service users. Some service users may likely experience multiple disadvantages due to systemic barriers and inequalities. The below potential impacts should be considered as the plan develops.

#### 3.5 Potential impacts: Age (older and younger people)

3.6 Norfolk has an aging population. Around 25% of the population is aged 65+ years and 4% is 85 years or older.

3.7 In February 2022, 28.5% of ASSD active service users were 85 years or older. Between April and October 2021, 45% of reablement referrals were for 80 to 90-year-olds.

3.8 There is a strong correlation between long-term health conditions and aging. Across the UK the number of older people with multiple (2 or more) long-term conditions continues to rise. A 2019 literature review for the BMC found that people aged 65+ years were expected to live almost 50% of their remaining life with *at least* one limiting long-term physical or mental health condition. Around 20% of men and 30% of women in this age group currently need help with at least one "*Activity of Daily Living*".

3.9 The review highlighted that older people desire to cope with illness and maintain independence, however, environmental factors interfere with these efforts including: a lack of professional advice on self-care strategies; poor communication and coordination of services; and a lack of information on services such as care pathways.

3.10 As life expectancy increases, the number of people in Norfolk living with dementia is predicted to increase to 21,400 by 2030.

3.11 People aged 65+ years are also at increased risk of falling, with falls being the most common cause of injury related deaths in people over 75. Falls requiring assistance are most likely to occur in residential settings.

- 3.12 The oldest people in Norfolk were most likely to experience the poorest health outcomes due to COVID-19 and had the highest proportions of hospital admissions during the height of the pandemic, although rates of COVID-19 were lower in residential settings in Norfolk than elsewhere in the UK.
- 3.13 Older people are most likely to experience hearing and sight loss. More than 40% of people over 50 years old have hearing loss, rising to more than 70% of people over the age of 70. In Norfolk around 200,000 people have some degree of hearing loss according to the RNID. Vision Norfolk estimates there are over 36000 people living with some degree of sight loss.
- 3.14 Increasing living costs (including fuel and food poverty) are also likely to disproportionately affect some older people in Norfolk, which may contribute to worsening health outcomes. This is particularly true pensioners who may be unable to access pension relief to increase their household income.
- 3.15 Rural isolation is also likely to impact on some older people who may be reliant on limited local community services, a less effective digital infrastructure, and limited public transport.
- 3.16 Older (informal) carers are also an at-risk group. Over 50% of carers over 65 are estimated to also have a long-standing illness or disability according to Age UK. This group is particularly likely to experience greater social isolation and worsening mental health, because of the impact of providing care to a family member or loved one.
- 3.17 Any move towards more online service provision, self-service provision and care at home is likely to have a significant impact on older service users, particularly those who have limited informal support networks, as they may find it increasingly difficult to navigate pathways into services or access support available through their local communities, because of a combination of social, environmental and health factors. The Council provides a range of support for carers [click here](#).
- 3.18 Younger adults (aged 18–64) are a growing part of the adult social care system, making up around a third of care users accessing long-term support in England (50% in Norfolk). They account for over half of local authority spending on social care. While research shows that most younger adults are happy with the care they receive, unpaid carers of younger adults are likely to experience worse outcomes in some areas than carers of older people. This group is less likely to be satisfied with services and are more likely to develop health conditions and/ or experience financial difficulties because of their caring role. The Council provides a range of support for young carers [click here](#).
- 3.19 The transition for young people to adult social care is recognised to be an area of risk, given there is the potential for young people with ongoing needs to disengage where there is an absence of a coordinated approach to providing services across health, education, and social care.
- 3.20 With respect to the workforce, in 2021, a higher proportion of younger staff (24 years or younger) and of staff with 1-2 years' service voluntarily left employment with the Council. The largest proportion of voluntary leavers were from Social Care. Employees in lower pay grades (A-I) were also more identified as being more likely to leave.

### 3.21 Potential impacts: Disability, long-term health conditions & mental health

3.22 Around 20% of Norfolk's population has a long-term limiting health condition. This figure increases to around 45% of people aged 65+ years. Due to the higher prevalence of people with long term/limiting conditions in the county, Norfolk's clinically extremely vulnerable population was 4.5% (higher than in England). People with certain pre-existing health conditions were found to be at greater risk of death involving COVID-19 (particularly chronic heart disease and uncomplicated diabetes). There has been a range of research which shows that the prevalence of such conditions directly correlates to certain groups by age, disability, gender and ethnicity [click here](#).

3.23 Around 50% of households living in poverty in the UK include a disabled person and working-age disabled people are most likely to be at risk of living in poverty. It is recognised that disabled people generally face far higher costs of living (including heating and transportation); are less likely to be able to access sustained employment, and when they are employed, are more likely to work fewer hours and receive lower pay.

3.24 Disabled people are generally far more likely to experience significant barriers to accessing services. The move towards the provision of digital services may present a significant challenge to some disabled people, particularly when online services are not developed to be compatible with assistive technology (e.g., screen readers), or meet Accessibility Standards, or are not accessible for people who are, Blind, Deaf, wheelchair users, on the autism spectrum, who have learning disabilities or a wide range of other disabilities. The Council's Digital Inclusion EqIA sets out how the Council is working to address these barriers.

3.25 The evidence in Norfolk shows that Deaf people and Blind / partially sighted people were hard hit by the temporary closures / reductions in face-to-face services. Older BSL speakers and those recently diagnosed with sight loss were particularly hard hit, due to the loss of services and support. INTRAN bookings for BSL interpreters fell from 78 bookings (all face-to-face) in 2019/20 to 33 (21 face to face and 12 telephone/video) in 2020/21.

3.26 There have been multiple studies showing deteriorations in mental health and wellbeing across all age groups because of the pandemic. The Health Foundation reported with regards the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, the most reported issues were worry about the future (63%) and stress and anxiety (56%). Young adults and women, both groups with worse mental health pre-pandemic, were found to have been hit hardest. Mental health impacts on people who were unemployed were deemed widespread and severe with almost 50% of this group worrying about not having enough food to meet basic needs, and one in five experiencing suicidal thoughts.

### 3.27 Potential impacts: Sex / marriage & civil partnerships / pregnancy & maternity

3.28 In Norfolk, women aged 16-64 are more likely to be economically inactive, or work in lower paid, part-time employment. In 2020, 20% of women in employment in Norfolk worked in caring, leisure and other service occupations in comparison to just 3% of men. Women in Norfolk are significantly more likely to be paid and unpaid carers in than men and as a result are substantially more likely to be impacted by any changes in ASSD provision. The 2020 NHS SALT dataset showed that females accounted for 75% of social care employees in Norfolk.

3.29 In 2021, across the UK, more women than men were furloughed with a 20% loss of income, and most furloughed employees were in the lowest paying jobs. This may have

compounded systemic issues with respect to the gender pay gap. It has been reported that women experienced particular impacts during the pandemic in terms of the disruption to their employment, primarily because of their family and/or caring responsibilities. Generally, men experienced worse health outcomes because of COVID-19, including higher mortality rates, although in Norfolk women were more likely to test positive, particularly younger female health & social care staff.

- 3.30 In Norfolk, life expectancy for women is estimated to be likely to be around five years longer than for men, and therefore it is likely that of the older adult social care users, there are more females than males. It is also likely that men of working age are less likely to access health and social care services, particularly preventative and early help services.
- 3.31 Research conducted by the UCL in 2021 found that one fifth of adults reported a complete breakdown of a close relationship in the pandemic, with 35% of adults aged 18-29 reporting a worsening of their relationships with the spouse or partner. The UK Crime Survey for 2020 showed 7% growth in police recorded domestic abuse crimes, and 12% increase in referrals to victim support. Relationship break-down is likely to have an impact on informal support networks for older people.
- 3.32 Older data from 2017 in Norfolk, showed that women were more likely to be at risk of self-harm while the suicide rate for men was far higher.
- 3.33 **Potential impacts: Sexual orientation and gender identity**
- 3.34 There is currently limited data available nationally or locally with respect the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in adult social care. There is none for people who identify as non-binary or gender fluid. Monitoring data of service users' sexual orientation or gender identity (including non-binary / gender fluid identities) is not currently routinely collected and there is no baseline for comparison at present. It should be noted that work is underway to review this. It is recognised that many central government systems do not collect or collate information on sexual orientation / gender identity for financial / statutory reporting and this has an impact on how data can be captured and managed locally.
- 3.35 The 2017 national LGBT survey and action plan reported:
- 16% of survey respondents who accessed or tried to access public health services had a negative experience because of their sexual orientation, and at least 38% had a negative experience because of their gender identity
  - 51% of survey respondents who accessed or tried to access mental health services said they had to wait too long
  - 27% were worried, anxious or embarrassed about asking for advice and support
  - 16% said their GP was not supportive
- 3.36 Research conducted by Anglia Ruskin in 2014, highlighted growing concerns around prejudice, safety and poverty, with four in ten LGBT people surveyed stating they had experienced prejudice on a regular basis. The research also found that LGBT specialist service provision was deemed to be unavailable for many people in need and concluded that *"LGBT service users are presenting increasingly complex and multi-layered issues to providers, including problems regarding mental health, primary healthcare, housing, substance abuse, safety and violence. These needs are set against a backdrop of inadequate targeted service provision."*
- 3.37 The pandemic may have compounded these issues, particularly with respect LGBTQ+ people not being able to access targeted services and support. This should be

considered alongside findings with respect relationship breakdowns, increasing poor mental health and domestic abuse.

3.38 A small study of LGBTQ+ people's experiences in residential care conducted in 2021 by the University of Strathclyde, found:

- Low levels of knowledge and awareness of LGBTQ+ people in care homes
- Resistance to the topic - covert (forgetting meetings; not responding to communication) and overt (including unintended homophobic statements)
- Religious beliefs of other service users and staff identified as a major barrier
- Staff have low confidence to sensitively enquire about sexual/gender difference.
- This may be because of institutionalised ageism in relation to sexuality and intimacy in later life

### 3.39 Potential impacts: race / religion and belief

3.40 Norfolk has a significant population of diverse ethnic minority people and people of diverse faiths and beliefs. The 2011 Census showed that 96.5% of Norfolk's population self-classified as "White-British", however more recent data suggests this figure may now be higher. The 2018 Norfolk School Census identified that 15.6% of pupils in primary schools were from an ethnic minority background. This population is not a homogenous group and there is evidence to show that these communities in Norfolk have distinctly different lived experiences and outcomes with respect employment, health and access to services, although there are also likely to be some commonalities with regards experiences of racism and prejudice.

3.41 Since 2018, recording of ethnicity for Norfolk adults (aged 18+) in receipt of long-term support has declined. In 2021, 93.4% of service users were recorded as being "White British", with 2.4% defined as "any other White Background" and 3.5% "undeclared / unknown". Given it is understood that there are now likely significantly more diverse ethnic minority people living in Norfolk, it is likely that all diverse ethnic minorities are under-represented as service users. Gypsy/Irish Traveller service user numbers remain extremely low at around 0.1% (under 10 service users).

3.42 In 2021, of adults in receipt of short-term support, none were recorded from Mixed / Multiple, Asian / Asian British or Black / Black British backgrounds. Around 22% of short-term service users ethnicity was undeclared / unknown. The data suggests there *may* be a greater reliance on family and community networks for support in some ethnic minority communities. Across Norfolk, all the major faiths are represented, and diverse faith organisations offer a valuable conduit into some diverse ethnic minority communities.

3.43 There is evidence to suggest that ethnicity monitoring in ASSD may not be comprehensive or accurate, particularly given the low numbers of asylum seekers and refugees recorded within the datasets, which does not tally with the numbers of service users who have been supported by the People from Abroad Team. This group of service users may have particularly complex care and support needs because of trauma, language and a lack of access to health care in their countries of origins. Very little is understood nationally about their experiences of accessing services and/or health and social care outcomes. There is also anecdotal evidence that amongst some newer migrant communities in Norfolk, particularly the Portuguese community, there are increasing numbers of people reaching retirement age who may never have previously accessed social care, but who may have worsening health or long-term conditions which will mean they will require support in future.

- 3.44 Research undertaken by the Kings Fund in 2021 identified that diverse ethnic minority groups (especially Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups) in the UK are more likely to report limiting long-term illness and poor health, with those identifying as White Gypsy and Irish Traveller reporting the poorest health. Health-related quality of life scores at older ages, based on responses to the GP patient survey, are lower than average among some ethnic minority groups, especially the Gypsy and Irish Traveller, Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups, but not among others (Black Caribbean, Black African and Mixed groups). Some diverse ethnic minority groups also have an increased prevalence of some long-term conditions (e.g., diabetes), but not of some other common conditions (e.g., arthritis).
- 3.45 Norfolk data shows that, as across the UK, people from Asian / Asian British and Black / Black British backgrounds were more likely to test positive during the height of the pandemic. Across the UK all ethnic minority groups (male and female) had a higher rate of mortality because of COVID-19. This may be in part due to the employment and housing experiences of these groups.
- 3.46 Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) people in Norfolk continue to experience some of the poorest lifelong outcomes. GRT people are significantly less likely to access services through traditional routes, partly due to having lower trust and confidence generally in public services. They often seek support from within their own community and family networks. GRT people living on sites in Norfolk may not have access to the internet and many families are not registered with GPs so have limited access to services including health care. Many men within the community are self-employed, and report that the national restrictions have led to loss of income. Due to strong cultural norms about GRT men as 'providers', coupled with a high suicide rate for GRT men, this could trigger mental health issues. There are high levels of domestic abuse in the community. Increased stress on families may trigger safeguarding issues.
- 3.47 Regional data shows that Black/Black British people are more likely to work in human health and social work activities than any other group. Similar proportions of people from Black/Black British, Mixed-heritage and Asian-other groups are working in hospitality and food service activities, and more recently arrived migrants are more likely to work in the gig economy or be employed on zero-hour contracts.
- 3.48 NHS SALT data from 2020 showed a higher proportion of diverse ethnic minority employees in social care in Norfolk, including a higher % of Black British/African/Caribbean people than in the general population. Diverse ethnic minority employees in social care (all groups excluding the "White" group) make up around 42% of all employees whose ethnicity was known/declared to the Council in 2020.
- 3.49 There is national research supported by local reports from employees to suggest that racism is a significant issue for diverse ethnic minority social care staff. New research published by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2021 shows that diverse ethnic minority care-home workers are more likely to report discrimination at work, with 40% of diverse ethnic minority workers experiencing patient abuse in comparison to 24% White British workers. The research identifies a direct correlation between ethnic minority workers experiencing abuse (including bullying) and burnout and an indirect relationship with patient safety. The research also states that workers experiences of racism is likely to be a barrier to providing care, and that it has an impact on the retention and progression of employees, leading to individual unfavourable outcomes such as deskilling, resignations and worsening health and wellbeing

3.50 2020/21 INTRAN data showed a 63% increase in the use of interpreting services across the Council from the previous year. The most requested language was Arabic (30% of all bookings), followed by Lithuanian (19%), Polish (10%), Portuguese (5.6%) and Kurdish-Sorani (4%). Adult Services experienced less % change in usage than other areas across the pandemic, except for the People from Abroad Service, which saw an increase in usage.

## **4. Potential impact**

4.1 Based on the evidence available, overall, the Recovery Plan is deemed likely to have no specific adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and/or groups of people with protected characteristics at this time. In some instances, there may be a positive impact as services develop taking account the diverse needs and barriers experienced by people with protected characteristics.

4.2 This is because the Plan is seeking to address the unprecedented pressures on the system and develop a sustainable, safe and lawful framework for recovery to ensure the needs of all care and support users (including those who experience multiple disadvantages or inequalities) in Norfolk are met taking into account the resources available and the emerging demands.

4.3 As the Plan develops, and specific proposals are implemented these will consider the above impacts on people with protected characteristics and seek to mitigate any identified risks to these groups wherever possible. Further updates to this EqIA will be required where there is:

**(a) Cessation of a service/product because of the Recovery Plan**

**(b) A proposed new activity, service or product because of the Recovery Plan**

## **5. Conclusion**

5.1 At this time, there is no legal impediment to going ahead with the Recovery Plan where the above impacts are taken into consideration. It will be implemented in full accordance with due process, national guidance and policy. Similar proposals have been implemented elsewhere in the UK.

5.2 Decision-makers are therefore advised to take these impacts into account when developing the Plan, taking account of the mitigating actions recommended below.

5.3 Some of the actions will address the potential detrimental impacts identified in this assessment, but it may not be possible to address all the potential impacts at this time. Ultimately, the task for decision-makers is to balance these impacts alongside the need to manage reduced resources and continue to target support at those who need it most.

## **6. Recommended actions**

The below thematic recommendations should be taken into consideration as the Recovery Plan is developed to ensure that where possible the risks and impacts identified above are addressed, and the equality and inclusion principles are embedded.

It is recommended that this EqIA be kept live for the duration of the Plan and re-visited on a regular basis as required to inform delivery.

Number	Recommendation	Date / Lead
1.	<p>Continue to develop and utilise the evidence base with respect understanding the potential impacts, needs and barriers experienced by people with protected characteristics in Norfolk to inform the targeted use of resources to reach those most in need.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Identify how and where collection of monitoring data can be improved to accurately predict the uptake of services and likely outcomes for people with protected characteristics – particularly for diverse ethnic minority and LGBTQ+ service users (where there are known gaps in the dataset)</li> <li>II. Consider what additional data about service users can be used to inform the Plan and target resources to those most in need (e.g., social care referrals, INTRAN data, advice service referrals, safeguarding referrals)</li> <li>III. Where there is clear evidence of unmet needs, develop further targeted interventions as necessary to address specific barriers to accessing services and improve outcomes</li> </ol>	
2.	<p>Feed into the wider consultation work being undertaken in 2022 with seldom-heard communities (being led by the EDI team) to ensure that we continue efforts to design and deliver accessible and inclusive services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Identify key questions for older, disabled (including D/deaf and Blind /sight-impaired people), LGBTQ+ and diverse ethnic minority people including people with caring responsibilities about their experiences of health and social care during the pandemic and their experience of engaging with services to help shape services and identify and address other barriers.</li> </ol>	
3.	<p>Develop inclusive and targeted communications, recognising that some people from seldom-heard communities may not be fully aware of the support available to them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Build on the work delivered by the Communications and Communities teams during the pandemic with respect to promoting key public health messages and continue to use a variety of channels to promote messages to communities building on pathways established during the pandemic</li> <li>I. Work with diverse faith organisations and other key community contacts and VCSE partners to promote the offer in communities.</li> <li>II. Utilise the expertise within Adult Learning and Norfolk Libraries, recognising these as effective pathways with respect engaging and supporting diverse service users.</li> <li>III. Ensure that any visual images used reflect the wide diversity of adult social care users.</li> </ol>	
4.	<p>Ensure that all routes into available support meet Accessibility Standards, and particularly any web-based / online services.</p>	

Number	Recommendation	Date / Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Consider how service users with additional communications needs can be supported, including by community-based services, and where possible ensure there are a range of alternatives so that everyone is able to access support.</li> <li>II. Review all forms, leaflets, letter templates that are routinely used to ensure these meet Accessibility Standards and when published online, they are compatible with assistive technology.</li> <li>III. Continue to develop shared understanding of where there is a need to provide key messages or information in alternative languages or formats, including Easy Read, or audio / visual materials and make best use of INTRAN services</li> </ul>	
5.	<p>Continue to ensure that the most vulnerable people are signposted and supported to the right services for them when in crisis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Engage with other partners and providers to ensure that the increased risks to people with diverse protected characteristics are widely understood and that available resources are effectively targeted.</li> <li>II. Ensure that where appropriate service providers and employees are aware that some service users with protected characteristics may need additional support or reassurance in order that they can engage with services (particularly diverse ethnic minority including GRT and LGBTQ+ people)</li> </ul>	
6.	<p>Working closely with HR, ensure that employment practices are robust and in-line with Council policies and procedures and our legal obligations as an employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Use existing workforce data and analysis to target recruitment and retention plans to ensure that capacity is maximised, and diverse staff are retained and have equal opportunities to access support and progress within ASSD</li> <li>II. Continue to embed flexible / hybrid working arrangements without detriment to retention and progression recognising that a significant proportion of care and support staff will be balancing personal and familial caring responsibilities with working.</li> <li>III. Develop and embed anti-racist practice within ASSD recognising that diverse ethnic minority staff are experiencing racism directed towards them by service users which may result in skilled staff leaving the organisation.</li> </ul>	

## 7. Evidence used to inform this assessment

This EqlA has been informed by:

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

- [New Norfolk evidence based on equality, diversity and inclusion - review findings](#)
- Demographic factors set out in [Norfolk's Story 2021](#)
- [Digital Inclusion and COVID-19](#) and the Hardship Programme EqIAs
- EqIAs of Workforce policies including Smarter Working, Managing Organisational Change, Modern Reward System
- Norfolk County Council [Area Reports](#) on Norfolk's JSNA relating to protected characteristics
- Business intelligence and management data, as quoted in this report
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty codes of practice

## 8. Further information

For further information about this equality impact assessment please contact **Claire Charlwood, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer**

[claire.charlwood2@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:claire.charlwood2@norfolk.gov.uk)

 <p>The logo for 'IN TRAN communication for all' features the words 'IN' and 'TRAN' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'IN' is positioned above 'TRAN'. To the right of 'IN' is a solid black triangle pointing upwards. To the left of 'TRAN' is a solid black triangle pointing downwards. Below the text, the phrase 'communication for all' is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font.</p>	<p>If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Claire Charlwood on 01603 989946 or 18001 0344 800 8020 (Text relay)</p>
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## Annex 1 – table of protected characteristics

The following table sets out details of each protected characteristic. Remember that people with multiple characteristics may face the most barriers:

Characteristic	Who this covers
Age	Adults and children etc, or specific/different age groups
Disability	<p>A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with mobility issues (e.g., wheelchair or cane users, people of short stature, people who do not have mobility in a limb etc)</li> <li>• Blind and partially sighted people</li> <li>• People who are D/deaf or hearing impaired</li> <li>• People with learning disabilities</li> <li>• People who have mental health issues</li> <li>• People who identify as neurodiverse (this refers to neurological differences including, for example, dyspraxia, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, the autistic spectrum and others)</li> <li>• People with some long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.</li> </ul>
People with a long-term health condition	People with long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
Gender reassignment	<p>People who identify as transgender (defined as someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process or part of a process to reassign their sex. It is not necessary for the person to be under medical supervision or undergoing surgery).</p> <p>You may want to consider the needs of people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Marriage/civil partnerships	People who are married or in a civil partnership. They may be of the opposite or same sex.
Pregnancy and maternity	Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	<p>Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.</p> <p>A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example a person may identify as Black British, British Asian, British Sikh, British Jew, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller.</p>
Religion/belief	<p>Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.</p>

Characteristic	Who this covers
Sex	This covers men and women. Also consider the needs of people who identify as intersex (people who have variations in sex characteristics) and non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).
Sexual orientation	People who identify as straight/heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

## Document review

Reviewed and updated:	Reviewer
October and November 2016	Corporate Planning & Partnerships Manager
December 2017	Equality & Diversity Manager
October 2018	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2019	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2020	Equality & Diversity Manager
June and September 2021	Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

<sup>1</sup> The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic<sup>1</sup> and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

[The full Equality Act 2021 is available on legislation.gov.uk.](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

# Cabinet

Item No: 16

**Report Title: Corporately Significant Vital Signs**

**Date of Meeting: 07 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr FitzPatrick (Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance)**

**Responsible Director: Paul Cracknell, Executive Director Strategy and Transformation**

**Is this a Key Decision? No**

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

The purpose of this quarter three report is to provide the Cabinet with an update on the Council's performance towards achieving its strategic outcomes as set out in Better Together, for Norfolk.

Each performance report provides the opportunity to review and understand current performance, trends, identify performance risks, and by regular monitoring during the period, allow early interventions and to validate the actions being taken to address performance deviation and identify further opportunities for improvement.

Norfolk County Council sets itself ambitious targets which can often exceed those required nationally. However, this can result in the impact of events such as Covid-19 having a correspondingly greater apparent impact. This paper outlines the actual performance of the Council against its targeted performance for the last month in quarter three of 2021/22. This report represents a time where National Restrictions were once again imposed, as the country moved into Plan B arrangements in December 2021, where staff returned to working from home and face to face services again under pressure to deliver.

Whilst performance action plans are in place to improve performance where required, it should be remembered that many of the challenging targets were agreed during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 when the ongoing effects of the restrictions and impact of the pandemic were still not known, and this has challenged performance accordingly. As such, traditional ways of working and thinking have been challenged and alternative solutions have had to be explored and implemented.

In light of this, it should be noted that we have not had the opportunity as we would have liked, to review targets set within 2021/22 as expected in light of the impact of

Covid-19 and so in many cases targets set from 2020/2021 have rolled into this reporting year.

The report utilises the Corporately Significant Vital Signs that underpin portfolio outcomes using a traffic light visual rating. 42 monthly and quarterly Corporately Significant Vital Signs are being reported in this period, where performance for the monthly measure are drawn from the last month in quarter.

Performance is measured using Red, Amber and Green (RAG) ratings based on the current level of performance against target. The table below shows the proportion of corporately significant vital signs at each RAG rating in the last month at the end of quarter three. Performance in the last month of quarter three is compared to that in the last month of quarter two.

<b>42 Corporately Significant Vital Signs</b>	
<b>Green</b>	22 Vital signs met or exceeded the target (24 last month in last quarter)
<b>Amber</b>	6 Are within the accepted tolerance of the set target (4 last month in last quarter)
<b>Red</b>	14 Vital Signs are below or behind the target set (13 last month last quarter)

In the review of performance, in addition to the “RAG” ratings, the trajectory of performance against target is noted as -

Improving  Deteriorating  Static 

### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Review and comment on the end of quarter three performance data.**
- 2. Review the considerations and next steps.**
- 3. Agree the planned actions as set out.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

1.1. Vital signs provide measurements of operational processes (internal) and strategic outcomes (external). Poor performance and or a deteriorating trajectory represents a risk to the organisation in terms of our ability to meet legal responsibilities, maintain financial health, meet the needs of our citizens and a reputational risk.

1.2. The Corporately Significant Vital Signs are closely aligned to the principles underpinning our Council Plan - Better Together, for Norfolk:

- 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

1.3. Each vital sign has a target which has been set based on the performance required for us to work within a balanced budget and meet statutory requirements. Where the measure relates to the delivery of services, benchmarking data has also been used to assess our performance against that of our statistical neighbours.

#### 1.4. COVID-19 and Corporately Significant Vital Signs

1.5. COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on our residents, communities, businesses and council operations. Service demands have changed, resulting in a temporary shift in priorities. With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, some performance has deviated from expected plans and trajectories.

1.6. We have seen an ongoing impact of COVID-19 on several of our Corporately Significant Vital Signs, for example, Vital Sign 205, “% of high-risk fire safety audits completed” has a target of 100% but a performance of only 50%. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is currently providing a COVID-19 safe service, and face-to-face audits and visits are restricted to those premises where there is deemed to be an immediate risk. Within Adult Social Services, Decreasing the rate of admissions of people to residential and nursing care per 100,000 population (18-64 years), although still red rated, has improved from 28.05 to 25.17 against a target of 16.9 due to the action plan in place. In Children’s Services we have seen % of Looked After Children with up-to-date Personal Education Plan increase to 96%. When looking at the impact of COVID-19 on our workforce indicators we can see sickness absence remains below the target indicator at 3.4% against the target of 3.5%.

## 2. Proposal

2.1 This report uses data from the last month in the quarter, during which National Restrictions were once again implemented, seeing staff returning to work from home arrangements and face to face services being challenged by delivery. As such, national measures have impacted Norfolk during this time. However, as can be seen from the report, there has been some significant success during this time, with performance plans in place to address areas of concern, which will see improvements in the forthcoming quarters.

2.2. There do remain however, a number of areas where performance is a cause for concern and potential risk, and these are identified in the relevant parts of the report.

2.3 Highlights for the quarter (shows the total of indicators RAG by portfolio)

2.4. Throughout this report, the Red, Amber, Green “RAG” traffic light system of reporting is used, with some highlights on performance listed below.

	Total Vital Signs				Highlight
<b>Adult Social Services</b>	6	5	0	1	% of reablement cases where the outcome is recorded as not requiring any ongoing social care support has increased again this quarter to 87.17%, by just under 1% increase against previous quarter.
<b>Children’s Services</b>	8	1	2	5	% of Care Leavers who are EET (19 - 21) has increased against previous quarter by 4.5% to 58.50%.
<b>Community &amp; Environmental Services</b>	14	4	2	8	% of emergency response within 10 minutes to fire incidents where life may be at risk (and 13 minutes to other incidents where life may be at risk) has increased by 2.8% against previous quarter to 88.30%. Participation of Early Years Foundation Stage activity in libraries has increased from 6275 to 12751 against previous quarter.
<b>Finance &amp; Commercial Services</b>	7	1	0	6	Capital receipts for land sold, that will be counted as part of overall capital receipts has increased from £5,733,300 to £5,755,000 (£21,700) since previous quarter
<b>Strategy &amp; Transformation</b>	7	3	2	2	Adults Social Worker Vacancies - % establishment filled (Grade I – L) has increased from 94% to 98% against previous quarter.

### 3. Impact of the Proposal - Vital Signs overview by portfolio outcome

#### 3.1 Adult Services

Measures	Performance Q2	Performance Q3	Target	Trajectory
% of providers judged good or outstanding by Care Quality Commission	72.8%	71.70%	78%	Deteriorating 
% of Learning Disability service users who are in employment	4.74%	4.63%	5.9%	Deteriorating 
% of Mental Health service users who are in employment	2.63%	2.83%	5%	Improving 
% of Reablement cases where the outcome is recorded as not requiring any ongoing social care support	86.21%	87.17%	68%	Improving 
Decreasing the rate of admissions of people to residential and nursing care per 100,000 population (18-64 years)	28.05	25.17	16.9	Improving 
Decreasing the rate of admissions of people to residential and nursing care per 100,000 population (65+ years)	655.24	608.41	551.1	Improving 

3.2 As communicated to Cabinet previously, performance against a number of targets were, and continue to be, affected by the increase in work arising from the pandemic. The targets were set at a time when the full impact in increase in workload and complexity for Adult Social Services was not known. It was noted that greater understanding of the impact of demand and capacity needed to be undertaken to provide more realistic, but still stretching, targets. This has been taken into consideration where applicable against the relevant vital signs below, and target revision set for this purpose. Five of the six performance measures are below target and “red” flagged. These are as follows, and with the following plans in place for corrective action.

**3.3 Vital Sign 101: % of providers judged good or outstanding by Care Quality Commission. Target 78%. Current performance 71.70%. Deteriorating trajectory.**

The Norfolk care market remains challenged due to lack of choice for enhanced and specialised care in particular, which can limit options for both individuals and commissioners to use good and outstanding provision. Workforce issues including staff shortages, lack of staff retention, and lower level of skills and qualifications continue to be a factor for quality provision, often preventing more providers from expanding their offer to meet more complex needs. This has been exacerbated throughout the pandemic, but particularly by the national workforce shortages witnessed during Quarters 3 and 4.

Although the initial performance trajectory has suffered due to these factors the mindset is to maintain the original longer-term target as systems and routes to manage poor provider performance are now in place. Good progress has been made with a mix of both scheduled audits and undertaking focussed work with providers where quality concerns have been identified.

It is expected that this should give rise to a more immediate increase in performance against this measure. The intention is to reset the trajectory from its current position through to March '24 and in so doing, the revised targets would be set as such:

March '22: 74.3%

March '23: 79.6%

March '24: 85.0%

The impact of staffing issues during Covid have been well-documented. However, an increase in workforce shortages over the last few months is placing more pressure on care provision and will impact on quality. An enhanced quality assurance team had been put in place to complement the CQC programme of work and support quality improvement. During 2020-21 the team supported providers through the pandemic, including outbreak management support, which delayed the planned QA programme of work, this work has recommenced during 2021-22. However, an increase in care provision experiencing staffing and therefore quality concerns has required deployment of resources to focus on immediate improvement support.

Onsite quality assurance audits recommenced April 2021 and the team has been further strengthened to enable some catch up of work delayed during 2021-22. Good progress has been made with a mix of both scheduled audits and undertaking focussed work with providers where quality concerns have been identified. A review of contract management has identified improvement areas, including the need for a technology solution to support contract management across the £340m annual NCC spend with the adult care market and proactive and timely performance management discussions - discussing with corporate strategy and transformation is assessing the need.

The Developing Skills in Health and Social Care ESF project commenced training in January, this will help encourage and support wider skills and qualifications across the adult social care workforce. However, current workforce shortages is making it more difficult for care providers and their staff to access training, which is leading to low referrals.

A targeted programme to support registered managers has also been launched. The Norfolk and Waveney Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy has been published and a three-year implementation plan is being actioned. The government announced two rounds of Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant during the autumn. Rounds 1 and 2 of the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant amount to £8.052m. The majority of this had not been received at the beginning of January but plans are in place to enable quick allocation. The majority will be allocated to care providers, but some funding has been used to increase staffing capacity for Norfolk First Response who are operating as the provider of last resort and some universal measures to help both recruitment and retention including extending our recruitment campaign, an earn while you learn scheme, launching a Norfolk Care Academy to support people into the first steps of a job in social care and a wellbeing programme.

The quality report will be presented to members at the end of the year.

#### **3.4 Vital Sign 102: % of Learning Disability service users who are in employment. Target 5.9%. Current performance 4.63%. Deteriorating trajectory**

Impact of Covid on availability of employment opportunities and number of service users shielding continues to be a significant factor for people with learning disabilities. There has also been an increase in the overall ASS cohort of people with learning disabilities which is impacting on the percentage employment figures. Norfolk Employment Service (NES) were working at reduced capacity throughout Covid due to supporting with making Covid welfare calls. Progress has been limited due to the intensive work required with individuals to support them into employment and related opportunities. NES staff returned from their duties in other areas of work during the pandemic during August 2021. This is further impacted due to the delay in roll out of the new day service Life Opportunities Pathway model due to Covid. The data captured is from December 2021.

NES staff have new individual targets to increase employment outcomes and regular caseload monitoring meetings in place to maximise outcomes.

The wide range of partnership development activities continue, including working with the CHANCES scheme, DWP, the Kickstart initiative, Shawtrust and the Apprenticeships programme. NES is developing closer operational links with Chances to ensure an effective joined up working approach. A joint working protocol is in the process of being developed. Monthly data sets are being developed to track progress. Skills Employment Team (SET) continue to work with Children's Services to utilise an employer database in order to increase the number of employer contacts and opportunities generated over the next year to enable the overall employment target to be achieved. Promotion of the NES developed employment resource database across ASS. This gives information on the range of services across Norfolk and nationally that are available to help with employment related issues.

Work with employers continues through SET including generating vacancies, promoting the Disability Confident scheme, Access To Work and finding work placements for referrals from NES and day services. Development and promotion of the SET employer resource web page is underway. SET is currently looking at replicating the Inside Business virtual work experience programme developed by Children's Services for day services/ASS users. SET are also working with Adult Learning to put on bespoke employability courses. ASSD (inc PfAL/NES/SET) are actively supporting the new SEND Employment Action Group which will be the key forum through which Norfolk increases the number of SEND young people moving into an employment pathway. PfAL and Employment Service Manager is part of the co-production of this with Family Voice.

NES have developed closer links with PfAL and LD locality teams to ensure appropriate referrals and promote the employment pathway. PfAL and Employment Service Manager is supporting activities around increasing employment pathways as part of the SEND WSoA and SEND Strategy.

The Preparing for Adult Life and Employment Service Manager is supporting activities around increasing employment pathways as part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Written Statement of Action and Special Educational Needs Strategy. There is ongoing utilisation of the new employment data dashboard with a further version planned which also reports on Norfolk Employment Service specific data.

Commissioners have resumed their work to develop the Life Opportunities pathway in day services.

### **3.5 Vital Sign 106: % of Mental Health service users who are in employment. Target 5%. Current performance 2.83%. Improving trajectory.**

The impact of Covid on availability of employment opportunities and number of service users shielding is present here. There has been an increase in the overall ASS cohort size impacting on the percentage employment figures. Norfolk Employment Service (NES) were working with reduced capacity throughout Covid due to supporting Covid welfare calls. Progress has been limited due to intensive work required with individuals to support them into employment and related opportunities. There has been a delay in some service users returning to mental health day service opportunities which may prepare them for volunteering or training.

NES staff returned to working full time on employment from August 2021.

NES staff have new individual targets to increase employment outcomes and regular caseload monitoring meetings in place to maximise outcomes.

A wide range of partnership development activities continue including working with the CHANCES scheme, DWP, the Kickstart initiative, Shaw Trust, Individual Placement and Support (IPS), MIND and the Apprenticeships programme. NES is developing closer operational links with Chances to ensure an effective joined up working approach. A joint working protocol is in the process of being developed and monthly data sets are being developed to track progress.

Skills Employment Team (SET) works with Children's Services to share an employer database in order to increase the number of employer contacts and opportunities generated over the next year to enable the overall employment target to be achieved. Promotion of the NES developed employment resource database across ASS. This gives information on the range of services across Norfolk and nationally that are available to help with employment related issues.

Work with employers through SET including generating vacancies, promoting the Disability Confident scheme, Access To Work and finding work placements for referrals from NES. Also development and promotion of the SET employer resource web page.

SET is currently looking at replicating the Inside Business virtual work experience programme developed by Children's Services for day services/ASS users. SET are also working with Adult Learning to put on bespoke employability courses.

NES developing closer links with PfAL and MH locality teams to ensure appropriate referrals and promote the employment pathway. PfAL and Employment Service Manager supporting activities around increasing employment pathways as part of the SEND Written Statement of Actions and Special Educational and Needs Disability Strategy. There is ongoing utilisation of the new employment data dashboard with further version planned which also reports on NES specific data.

### **3.6 Vital Sign 203: Decreasing the rate of admissions of people to residential and nursing care per 100,000 population (18-64 years) Target 16.9. Current performance 25.17. Improving trajectory.**

For the number of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care, predicting and modelling more precisely given the factors this year has been particularly challenging with no patterns against which to benchmark and with much beyond our control. In addition to the well documented impact of Covid, the demands of D2A and the greater support provided to the local NHS system has had a detrimental impact on the Social Care metrics in this area. Focus remains on assessing and reviewing people in the community, rather than in hospital, supporting maximum return to independent

living and facilitating moves from short-term care back into peoples' own homes (rather than onward into long-term care) where possible.

The volatility of the last few months has created an increase in the number of people supported, with the lower numbers involved having a material bearing on the measure itself. Predicting and modelling more precisely given these factors is particularly challenging, with no patterns to benchmark against, evidenced where in-month activity was >50% higher than the preceding month on four occasions throughout 2021.

Revised target: 23.6

The large spike in admissions witnessed in Quarter 1 impacted this measure to great extent and although new admissions have fallen on a relatively consistent basis over the last six months, the progression apparent against the over-arching measure itself is taking longer to return to levels seen at the start of 2021.

Focussing on Quarter 3, and Quarter 4, and illustrating this in terms of Social Care pressures, SCOPEL level 4 was declared on December 8th as part of a declaration of OPEL 4 across the NHS Norfolk and Waveney System. This remained in place through to December 30th when it was further escalated to a Critical Incident, only de-escalating on January 26th. Social Care systems are still operating at SCOPEL level 4.

In response to the increased demands and challenges for winter 2021/22 Adult Social Services have produced a Winter Action Plan for Norfolk. This plan sets out the practical solutions being put in place to manage the unprecedented challenges faced by Social Services at this time. With over sixty actions identified for delivery, each with a Senior Responsible Officer and Project Lead, the expectation is that these will support with any recovery work necessary.

Looking further ahead, a wider Recovery Plan will be focused on the highest priority performance issues that have escalated during the latest wave of the pandemic.

**3.7 Vital Sign 204: Decreasing the rate of admissions of people to residential and nursing care per 100,000 population (65+ years) Target 551.1. Current performance 608.41. Improving trajectory.**

This is recognised as being challenging to improve. The volatility of the last few months has created an increase in the number of people supported, with the lower numbers involved having a material bearing on the measure itself. Predicting and modelling more precisely given these factors is particularly challenging, with no patterns to benchmark against – in month activity was >50% higher than the preceding month on four occasions throughout 2021. The large spike in admissions witnessed in Quarter 1 impacted this measure to great extent and although new admissions have fallen on a relatively consistent basis over the last six months, the progression apparent against the over-arching measure itself is taking longer to return to levels seen at the start of 2021.

Revised target: 607.1

Focussing on Quarter 3, and Quarter 4, and illustrating this in terms of Social Care pressures, SCOPEL level 4 was declared on December 8th as part of a declaration of OPEL 4 across the NHS Norfolk and Waveney System. This remained in place through to December 30th when it was further escalated to a Critical Incident, only de-escalating on January 26th. Social Care systems are still operating at SCOPEL level 4.

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Looking further ahead, a wider Recovery Plan will be focused on the highest priority performance issues that have escalated during the latest wave of the pandemic.

### 3.8 Children's Services

Measures	Performance Q2	Performance Q3	Target	Trajectory
% of schools judged good or outstanding by OFSTED	84%	83%	86%	Deteriorating 
% of Care Leavers who are EET (19 - 21)	54%	58.5%	52%	Improving 
% of family support referrals who have had a referral in the previous 12 months	12.90%	4.8%	15%	Improving 
Decreasing the rate of Looked-After Children per 10,000 of the overall 0-17 population	62.80%	62.7%	60%	Improving 
% of Referrals into social care who have had a referral to social care in the previous 12 months	13.8%	9.9%	20%	Improving 
% of children starting a Child Protection Plan who have previously been subject to a Child Protection Plan (in the last 2 years)	10.3%	10%	11%	Improving 
% of Looked After Children with up-to-date Personal Education Plan	95%	96%	95%	Improving 
% of Education, Health and Care Plans completed within Timescale	53.90%	54.10%	60.4%	Improving 

3.9 Of the eight performance measures, one is “red”, two are “amber” and these are as below, with the appropriate plan in place.

**3.10 Vital Sign 301: % of schools judged good or outstanding by OFSTED. Target 86%. Current performance 83%. Deteriorating trajectory.**

Ofsted paused graded inspection activity from April 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic until June 2021. After a positive start, there have been more schools nationally and in Norfolk who received a Requires Improvement Judgement in the Autumn term, usually because the curriculum hadn't been sufficiently well developed

and / or implemented. There have also been a number of schools who have been judged good having previously been judged as Inadequate or Requires Improvement.

94% of local authority maintained schools are good or outstanding. Our processes to identify schools at risk of adverse inspection and intervene successfully remains successful. As dictated by DfE policy, the majority of schools not judged as good are now part of Multi-Academy Trust. We continue to monitor the performance of Multi-Academy Trusts and discuss this with trust leaders, challenging and offer support if their trajectory of improvement is not strong.

**3.11 Vital Sign 309: “Decreasing the rate of Looked-After Children per 10,000 of the overall 0-17 population”. Target 60.00. Current performance 62.7%. Improving trajectory.**

There has been a decrease in the quarter from 1081 to 1080 Children Looked After, however the reduction in local CLA has reduced by 5 in the quarter.

The overall percentage rate has shown a decrease by 0.1 in this quarter and there has been an increase in the quarter of the number of UASC Children Looked After from 81 to 85 in the quarter, with the expectation that this cohort will increase over the next year due to the National Transfer Scheme.

Although we have not met the current target, we have consistently reduced our CLA rate quarter on quarter, however, Covid continues to impact on the number of CLA in the vast majority of LAs; whilst we have not seen the reduction in CLA that we would want to, we have not seen the same increase that other LAs are experiencing.

We have set ourselves a challenging target and whilst we haven't yet achieved it, we have continued the trend of reducing CLA from local families, so performance remains on track, albeit slightly slower than we anticipated when we set the target

There is a continued focus on new initiatives such as Support for Success Service, New Roads and other call-in models that support the reduction in CLA numbers by preventing children becoming Looked After and supporting children to return to their families when it is safe and appropriate to do so. We continue to work with social work teams to ensure they have the time and resources/skills needed to support this work.

There is a continued focus on permanence planning, including building family networks for children who may be able to return home in the future.

A review into the new initiative commenced December 2021 will be carried out, to ensure that call in resources are targeted effectively to prevent those on the edge of care from becoming Looked After.

**3.11 Vital Sign 322: “% of Education, Health and Care Plans completed within Timescale”. Target 60.40%. Current performance 54.10%. Improving trajectory.**

Over time, demand for EHCPs continues to rise in Norfolk and nationally. Across the pandemic the number of requests for EHCPs has varied significantly, since the last lockdown we have seen a prolonged period of particularly high demand which has exceeded our capacity.

Performance continues to improve due to improved systems and additional capacity. We are able to produce more EHCP plans each month (108 in December - the highest in 2021) and far more are being produced in timescale. Clearing backlog of cases necessitates producing plans that are already out of timescale.

### 3.12 Community and Environmental Services

Measures	Performance Q2	Performance Q3	Target	Trajectory
% of bus services on time	81%	80%	75%	Deteriorating 
% of planning applications determined within statutory or agreed timescales	99%	90%	90%	Deteriorating 
% of businesses brought to compliance	97.75%	97.69%	90%	Deteriorating 
Kilograms of residual household waste per household per week	10.59kg	10.37kg	9.8	Improving 
% of high-risk fire safety audits completed	18%	50%	100%	Improving 
% of emergency response within 10 minutes to fire incidents where life may be at risk (and 13 minutes to other incidents where life may be at risk)	85.5%	88.30%	80%	Improving 
% of high-risk home fire safety visits carried out	50%	59%	90%	Improving 
Number of museum visits	19633	7023	2320	Deteriorating 
Participation of Early Years Foundation Stage activity in libraries	6275	12751	19429	Improving 
% of learning delivered to the most deprived wards in Norfolk	41%	41%	40%	Static 
% waste recycled at Recycling Centres	62.56%	63.38%	70%	Improving 
% of highways capital programme funded by external sources	93%	93%	80%	Static 
% of defects dealt with within timescales	98.95%	97.60%	92.5%	Deteriorating 
Customer satisfaction (with council services)	91%	88%	90%	Deteriorating 

3.13 Of the fourteen performance measures, eight are currently on target and two are “amber” and four measured “red”. These areas and the associated responses and corrective measures are as below –

**3.14 Vital Sign 204: Kilograms of residual household waste per household per week. Target 9.8kg. Performance 10.37kg. Improving Trajectory**

The reported figures are unaudited, with final audited figures only published nationally in December of the following financial year. For December 2021, the unaudited figure is 10.37, which is higher (worse) than the target of 9.8. Since the pandemic began, householders have been generating more waste linked to behaviour changes and the shift to increased working from home. That is what is reflected here and is in line with the national picture.

**3.15 Vital Sign 205: % of high-risk fire safety audits completed. Target 100%. Performance 50%. Improving trajectory.**

The variation is due to suspension of programmed face to face audits during Covid19 working arrangements. During this time our audit programme focussed on those premises where there was deemed to be an immediate risk. We aim to audit the 20 premises by 31/03/2022. 10 have been audited so far.

Audits for all outstanding high-risk premises are being planned in the 2021/22 Risk based Inspection Programme.

**3.16 Vital Sign 207: % of high-risk home fire safety visits carried out. Target 90%. Current Performance 59%. Improving trajectory.**

Omicron is a large factor here as we saw lots of staff absences. Out of a team of 5.5 We have two full time members of staff off long term sick (inc the manager), 0.5 member of staff is being sickness managed. The two full time members of the team who are active have been employed for three months.

We have delivered additional activities to supplement. Watches recommenced physical visits in September 2021 and we would expect to see an improvement against target going forwards (subject to any restrictions having to be re-introduced).

**3.17 Vital Sign 209: Participation of Early Years Foundation Stage activity in libraries. Target 27844. Current Performance 12751. Improving trajectory.**

Recovery from Covid and ongoing restrictions on services and habits and behaviours in society account for the slight underachievement in this quarter, there is a marked improvement from Q2 to note.

A new initiative, Story Explorers, launched in November 21 is starting to have an impact on engagement, a campaign to encourage membership for children is starting in Feb 22, and activities and events are recovering in the libraries.

**3.18 Vital Sign 212: “% waste recycled at Recycling Centres” Target 70%. Current performance 63.38%. Improving trajectory.**

Continuing to strive for 70% recycling rate. Tonnage has reduced in line with usual seasonal patterns. Less green waste resulted in a lower monthly performance of 61% (Previous November in Covid lockdown was 49%)

Opening of delayed reuse shops at Norwich North and South. Increased recycling at the facility operated by our timber subcontractor, will also improve performance.

**3.19 Vital Sign 217: “Customer satisfaction with Council Services” Target 90%. Current performance 88%. Deteriorating trajectory.**

Our phone satisfaction remains high at 94%, however email satisfaction has fallen to 62% and this has resulted in overall satisfaction falling just below target.

Upon investigation into Email satisfaction, of the dissatisfied customers who left comments, 77% of them were Blue Badge customers who were unhappy with a policy decision.

The investigation into email satisfaction has not identified any actions relating to poor customer service. Acceptable satisfaction levels should resume in January 21.

**3.20 Finance and Commercial Services**

Measures	Performance Q2	Performance Q3	Target	Trajectory
Property - Savings target delivered	£162,500	£487,500	£487,500	Improving 
Capital receipts for land sold, that will be counted as part of overall capital receipts	£5,733,000	£5,755,000	£5,000,000	Improving 
Savings targets delivered	£39,179,000	£37,019,000	£41,179,000	Deteriorating 
FES - Debt recovery	92%	92%	85%	Static 
Payment performance - % of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	98.6%	99%	98%	Improving 
Level of borrowing / debt	£808,100,000	£855,324,000	£855,401,000	Improving 
Reserves forecasts (Annual)	£97,333,000	£106,091,000	£74,181,000	Improving 

3.21 One performance measure is “red” as outlined below –

**3.22 Vital Sign 404: “Savings targets delivered” Target £41,179,000.00. Current Performance £37,019,000.00. Deteriorating trajectory.**

Some saving programmes have highlighted risk areas which will need to be kept under review. Any updates to the forecast delivery of savings will be included in

future monitoring to Cabinet. Executive Directors are responsible for taking actions to deliver individual saving plans in 2021-22, and/or to restart delivery of savings to minimise 2022-23 impacts and/or to identify alternative options and mitigations. The forecast savings delivery position is reported to Cabinet monthly, and full details of mitigating actions are set out in that report.

Adult Social Services are presently forecasting to deliver £14.588m of their £17.858m, with £3.270m non delivery relating to forecasted savings. £2.000m non delivery relates to the Short Term Out of Hospital Offer saving (ASS015) due to the high demand experienced for short term residential care following hospital discharge. The saving was predicated on the reduction of the use of short-term beds and the ability to reduce the length of stay, however due to Covid this has not been possible. Therefore, at Period 8 we continue to declare £2.000m non delivery against this £3.670m saving.

### 3.23 Strategy and Transformation

Measures	Performance Q2	Performance Q3	Target	Trajectory
New employee retention (24+ months)	67%	69%	70%	Improving 
% of employees with written and agreed goals	83.8%	83%	95%	Deteriorating 
Sickness absences - % lost time	3.2%	3.40%	3.50%	Deteriorating 
Adults Social Worker Vacancies - % establishment filled (Grade I – L)	94%	98%	90%	Improving 
Voluntary turnover rate	9.9%	10%	11%	TBC
Absence due to mental health as a % of all absence	37%	36%	30%	Static 
Children's Social Worker Vacancies - % establishment filled (Grade I - L)	83%	84%	90%	Improving 

3.24 Three “red” causes for concern and two “ambers” that are highlighted as –

### 3.25 Vital Sign 500: New employee retention (24+ months). Target 70%. Current performance 69%. **Improving Trajectory**

A new leavers survey was introduced in June 2021. This is providing first time analysis on the most important factors for leavers. It was completed by 66% of the 191 leavers in the quarter who were invited to complete it. Response rates in both Children's and Adults are significantly lower at 43% of the 134 invited to complete it. Key driver analysis identifies what is of most importance to leavers; the most important is a life friendly career, and rated at 63 (amber) and is a worse experience than staff completing the annual staff survey who rated at 69 (amber). The third most important factor is that reasons for change were communicated effectively at 58 (amber) . People were also less positive about when changes took place in NCC, they were given opportunities to be involved in how change was managed 49 (red). Clear links between expectations before start and experience in role was of 2nd importance and

was rated at 66 (amber), with a sense of personal fulfillment of 4th importance at 65 (amber). There are acknowledged pressures in front line social Care in both Adults and Children's that are likely to be a contributory factor in this measure.

As this is first time analysis for NCC, it is being sense checked with the HR Leadership Team and their experience in Directorates. More detailed HR work is being carried out in those areas of high voluntary turnover to develop morAs this is first time analysis for NCC, it is being sense checked with the HR Leadership Team and their experience in Directorates. More detailed HR work is being carried out in those areas of high voluntary turnover to develop more bespoke solutions to localised problems. In March 2022 we will receive results of the Social Care Health Check where our Social Care staff have contributed. This will give us the high quality data and insight to understand where to focus effort on retaining Social Care Workers. Delivered by Local Government Association, this uses a similar approach of survey to our Annual Staff Survey and NCC has the opportunity to triangulate data from both surveys.e bespoke solutions to localised problems. In March 2022 we will receive results of the Social Care Health Check where our Social Care staff have contributed. This will give us the high quality data and insight to understand where to focus effort on retaining Social Care Workers. Delivered by Local Government Association, this uses a similar approach of survey to our Annual Staff Survey and NCC has the opportunity to triangulate data from both surveys.

### **3.26 Vital Sign 501: % of employees with written and agreed goals. Target 95%. Current performance 83%. Deteriorating Trajectory**

Performance this year so far ranges between directorates from 77% completion to 87.6% completion, so no directorate has reached the target yet but within that there is still a significant range of completion. The 'window' to complete performance development conversations and agree goals runs from 1 April to 30 June annually. 30 June is when we would like to achieve the 95% target. We measure again at 30 September to check that all outstanding conversations have taken place and been recorded. This year there has been a variety of reasons for not achieving the target, with the ongoing pandemic and associated staffing challenges being a key one for many services. There will also be a number of instances where the conversation and goals are in place but the recording of this on Oracle has not yet been done.

Regular communications with employees and managers to help them understand the importance of and to encourage them to complete any outstanding performance development conversations and record them on Oracle.

The new MyOracle system will include a section that supports and records performance development conversations and this will make the April 2022 round of performance development conversations much easier to plan, record, and monitor.

### **3.27 Vital Sign 510: Voluntary Turnover Rate. Target 10%. Current performance 11%. TBC**

The tolerances for this measure between what is positioned as Green, Amber and Red appear to be misaligned in the Performance Reporting system and are not reporting as anticipated. It is believed that this exception report may have been generated in

error and that performance is potentially 'Green'. Further investigation shall take place for Quarter 4 Reporting.

**3.28 Vital Sign 511: Absence due to mental health as a % of all absence. Target 30%. Current performance 36%. Static trajectory.**

There has been a small improvement in the overall percentage of absence due to mental health reasons this quarter although it remains above target.

It is recognised nationally that the pandemic has impacted significantly on people's mental health and this is likely to continue to be the case for some time to come. There continue to be many uncertainties that will have a direct impact on mental wellbeing. The contributors to our mental wellbeing are multi-faceted, it is rarely influenced by a single factor, some contributors will stem from our personal lives and some our working lives. Factors such as the rising cost of living and personal and family situations may contribute. In a work context, as services continue to manage the impact of the pandemic alongside increasing pressures from other sources such as increased demand, service backlog and recruitment and retention pressures there is likely to be an impact.

HR continue to provide a broad range of support to managers and employees to aid positive mental health and resilience. Service departments are supported through their HR Business Partners to review their absence data and identify areas for further support, promotion of services, training and action.

**3.29 Vital Sign 513: Children's Social Worker Vacancies - % establishment filled (Grade I - L), Target 90%. Current performance 84%. Improving trajectory.**

Social Work is a national skills shortage occupation and is highly competitive in both the permanent and temporary labour market, increasing the challenge to reach the targeted establishment level. That challenge now expands to greater geographical competition due to the ability for remote working and multiple opportunities nationally. Retention in our Family Assessment and Safeguarding Teams (FAST) remains a challenge. Performance in ASSD is similar to this, with specific difficulties in the qualified Social Worker role (assuming a vacancy level of 20%). These shortfalls are not reflected in the establishment figures, due to the way that COVID funding and resourcing is assigned on Budget Manager.

Working in partnership with HR, the service is pursuing a number of measures including a refreshed recruitment campaign, targeting all routes of entry into Social Work (e.g. apprenticeship, newly qualified to 'grow our own' etc) and sourcing temporary cover where possible in a challenging market. We have implemented a number of reward and attraction initiatives agreed at Employment Committee in October 2021 that include increased refer a friend payments, retention/loyalty payments for LW and SSWs in FAST Teams and an increase in the welcome payment. There are cohorts of international and newly qualified Social Workers due to start in January 2022 with another intake for April 2022 and a recruitment programme on a rolling basis. We have also recently agreed future retention/loyalty payments for key frontline social workers, plus other measures to support retention.

## **4. Impact of the Proposal**

4.1 Information Report

## **5. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

5.1 N/A

## **6. Alternative Options**

6.1 Information Report.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 N/A

## **8. Resource Implications**

8.1 Staff: N/A

8.2 Property: N/A

8.3 IT: N/A

## **9. Other Implications**

9.1 Legal Implications: N/A

9.2 Human Rights Implications: N/A

9.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included): N/A

9.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): N/A

9.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

9.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): N/A

9.7 Any Other Implications: N/A

## **10. Risk Implications / Assessment**

10.1 This report is intended to be read with the Risk Management Report

## **11. Select Committee Comments**

11.1 N/A

## **12. Recommendations**

1. Review and comment on the end of quarter three performance data.
2. Review the considerations and next steps.
3. Agree the planned actions as set out.

## **13. Background Papers**

13.1 None

### **Officer Contact**

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

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# Cabinet

Item No: 17

**Report Title: Risk Management**

**Date of Meeting: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr. Proctor (Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance)**

**Responsible Director: Simon George, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services**

**Is this a Key Decision? No**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: Not applicable**

## **Executive Summary / Introduction from Cabinet Member**

Risk management is required by regulations and as part of the Council's Constitution. It contributes to achieving corporate objectives, the Council's key priorities and Business Plan and is a key part of the performance management framework. The responsibility for an adequate and effective risk management function rests with the Cabinet, supported by portfolio holders and delivered by the risk owners as part of the risk management framework. This report sets out the key messages and the latest corporate risks in March 2022.

The Council continues to work through the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, with an ongoing commitment to safe and sustainable service delivery for its' citizens over the winter period and beyond.

Corporate risks continue to be monitored and treated appropriately in line with the Council's risk management framework, with risk-based decisions supporting the Council's recovery. There is joint working between the risk management and performance functions to ensure that both risk and performance management support the delivery plan for the Council's Better Together, For Norfolk strategy in a well-coordinated manner, with corporate vital signs being mapped to existing risks.

## Recommendations:

1. To consider and agree the key messages in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 and Appendix A containing key changes to corporate risks since the last risk management report in December 2021.
2. To consider and agree the corporate risks as at March 2022 (Appendix C).

## 1. Background and Purpose

1.1 With Cabinet's ownership of the corporate risk register, the purpose of this report is to set out the latest corporate risks for the Cabinet to consider and agree. **Appendix A** provides a summary of the latest proposed changes to corporate risks since December 2021, with the current corporate risk register scores visually summarised on the corporate risk heat map in **Appendix B**. Details of all risks on the corporate risk register are located in **Appendix C**.

The Audit Committee are responsible for monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of risk management and internal control, as set out in its Terms of Reference, which is part of the Council's [Constitution](#). There are Risk Management controls in place within the Council as per the Financial Regulations of the Council's Constitution.

## 2. Proposal

2.1 The key general risk messages are as follows:

- That corporate risk management continues to be sound and effective, working to best practice, and continues to support the Council's continued recovery from the pandemic.
- The review of corporate risks has taken place with risk owners and reviewers, and Corporate Board as a group.
- This corporate risk management report should be read in conjunction with the performance and finance reports.
- The continuous risks in nature with target dates of the end of this financial year have been amended. Mitigations and progress will continue to be monitored to ensure further progression with reducing risk scores wherever possible for the risks that Norfolk County Council can treat (reduce).

2.2 The key specific corporate risk messages are as follows:

**RM002 - The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams**

There is a proposal to temporarily reduce the score from 12 to 8, reducing the likelihood from 3 (possible) to 2 (unlikely).

**RM010 - The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems**

It is proposed to increase the risk score from 3 to 6 with likelihood increasing from 1 (rare) to 2 (unlikely).

**RM023 - Failure to respond to changes to demography, funding, and government policy, with particular regard to Adults Services**

There is a proposal to reduce the current score from 25 to 20 lowering the likelihood score from 5 to 4.

**RM032 - Capacity to manage multiple disruptions to business**

There is a proposed risk reduction from 15 to 9 lowering likelihood from 5 (almost certain) to 3 (possible).

It is proposed to change the risk title to **RM010 from The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - internet connection; - telephony; - communications with cloud-provided services; or - the Windows and Solaris hosting platforms to The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems.**

There is a proposed risk title change to RM022b from **Implications of Brexit for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses to Implications of EU Transition for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses.**

Further information on these specific risk changes in 2.2 can be found in Appendix A.

### **3. Impact of the Proposal**

3.1 Risk management plays a key role in managing performance and is a requirement in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (amended 2020). Sound risk management helps ensure that objectives are fulfilled, that resources and assets are protected and used effectively and efficiently. The responsibilities for risk management are set out in the Financial Regulations, which are part of the Council's Constitution.

3.2 Details of the proposals above in 2.2. can be viewed in Appendix A, offering further rationale and impact of the proposals.

#### **4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

4.1 Not applicable as no decision is being made.

#### **5. Alternative Options**

5.1 There are no alternatives identified.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 There are financial implications to consider, which are set out within the risks at **Appendix C**. The budget for the next financial year 2022-23 was set and agreed by Full Council in February 2022, following consultation. Mitigations supporting the controlled treatment of the risk of the potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams are set out in risk RM002.

#### **7. Resource Implications**

7.1 **Staff:** There are staffing resource implications to consider as part of risk **RM029 - NCC may not have the employees (or a sufficient number of employees) with critical skills that will be required for the organisation to operate effectively in the next 2-5 years and longer term.**

7.2 **Property:** The main Council offices have re-opened to staff, with appropriately adapted health and safety measures in place to ensure that staff are able to work in a safe environment if they need to work from an office.

7.3 **IT:** The Council's Information Management Technology team are continuing to closely monitor cyber security threat levels with the current geo-political situation, and continue to roll out the technology advances that are helping Members and officers to carry out their duties effectively.

#### **8. Other Implications**

##### **8.1 Legal Implications:**

There are no current specific legal implications to consider within this report.

##### **8.2 Human Rights Implications:**

There are no specific human rights implications to consider within this report.

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

None applicable.

**8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):**

None applicable.

**8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):**

Face to face services continue to operate in a safe and sustainable manner factoring in the current adapted service measures required to minimise the risk of infection from Covid-19. As per 7.2, main office hubs have re-opened with adapted measures to ensure safe working, for those choosing to work there.

**8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):**

There are no specific sustainability implications to consider within this report. Any sustainability risks identified as part of the Council's [Environmental Policy](#) (page 58) will be recorded and reported appropriately.

**8.7 Any Other Implications:**

There are no other risk implications to consider within this report.

**9. Risk Implications / Assessment**

9.1 The risk implications are set out in the report above, and within the risks themselves at **Appendix C**.

**10. Select Committee Comments**

10.1 There are no recent Select Committee comments to note within this report.

**11. Recommendations**

- 1. To consider and agree the key messages in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2, and Appendix A containing key changes to corporate risks since the last risk management report in December 2021.**
- 2. To consider and agree the corporate risks as at March 2022 (Appendix C).**

## 12. Background Papers

12.1 There are no background papers applicable.

### Officer Contact

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

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## Key Changes to Corporate Risks

The quarterly review of the corporate risk register has generated the following proposed changes;

<b>Risk Number</b>	<b>Risk Score Change</b>	<b>Risk title Change</b>	<b>Risk Description Change</b>	<b>Mitigations Change</b>	<b>Risk Owner Change</b>	<b>New Corporate Risk</b>
RM001						
RM002	✓					
RM003a						
RM003b						
RM004			✓			
RM006						
RM010	✓	✓				
RM013						
RM022b		✓				
RM023	✓		✓			
RM024						
RM026						
RM027						
RM029						
RM030						
RM031						
RM032	✓					
RM033				✓		
RM034						

## Proposed Risk Score Changes

### **RM002 - The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams**

There is a proposal to temporarily reduce the score from 12 to 8, reducing the likelihood from 3 (possible) to 2 (unlikely). This comes as a result of the Council having managed income streams for 2021-22, and will revert to a score of 12 from the beginning of the next financial year 2022-23 when we manage next year's income streams as part of the budget delivery.

### **RM010 - The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems.**

It is proposed to increase the current risk score from 3 to 6, with likelihood increasing from 1 (rare) to 2 (unlikely) to take into account the current growing geo-political tensions, and the raised possibility of a cyber-attack.

### **RM023 - Failure to respond to changes to demography, funding, and government policy, with particular regard to Adults Services**

There is a proposal to reduce this risk from 25 to 20, reducing the likelihood from 5 (almost certain) to 4 (probable). This is owing to the further progress being made against numerous mitigations including recovery planning to address backlogs of work arising from pandemic and winter pressures, preparation for the implementation of the White Paper, Putting People at the Heart of Care, the redesign of the Adults' front door points of contact, and collaboration with children's services to develop a preparing for adult life service to strengthen the transition experience for young people, all whilst recognising that there remain significant challenges.

### **RM032 - Capacity to manage multiple disruptions to business**

There is a proposed risk reduction from 15 to 9 lowering likelihood from 5 (almost certain) to 3 (possible), given the preparation work that has been undertaken to increase preparedness for any additional disruption to business as usual including a high proportion of business continuity plans being reviewed and tested and the increased Council resilience infrastructure as a result of the pandemic.

## Risk Title Refresh

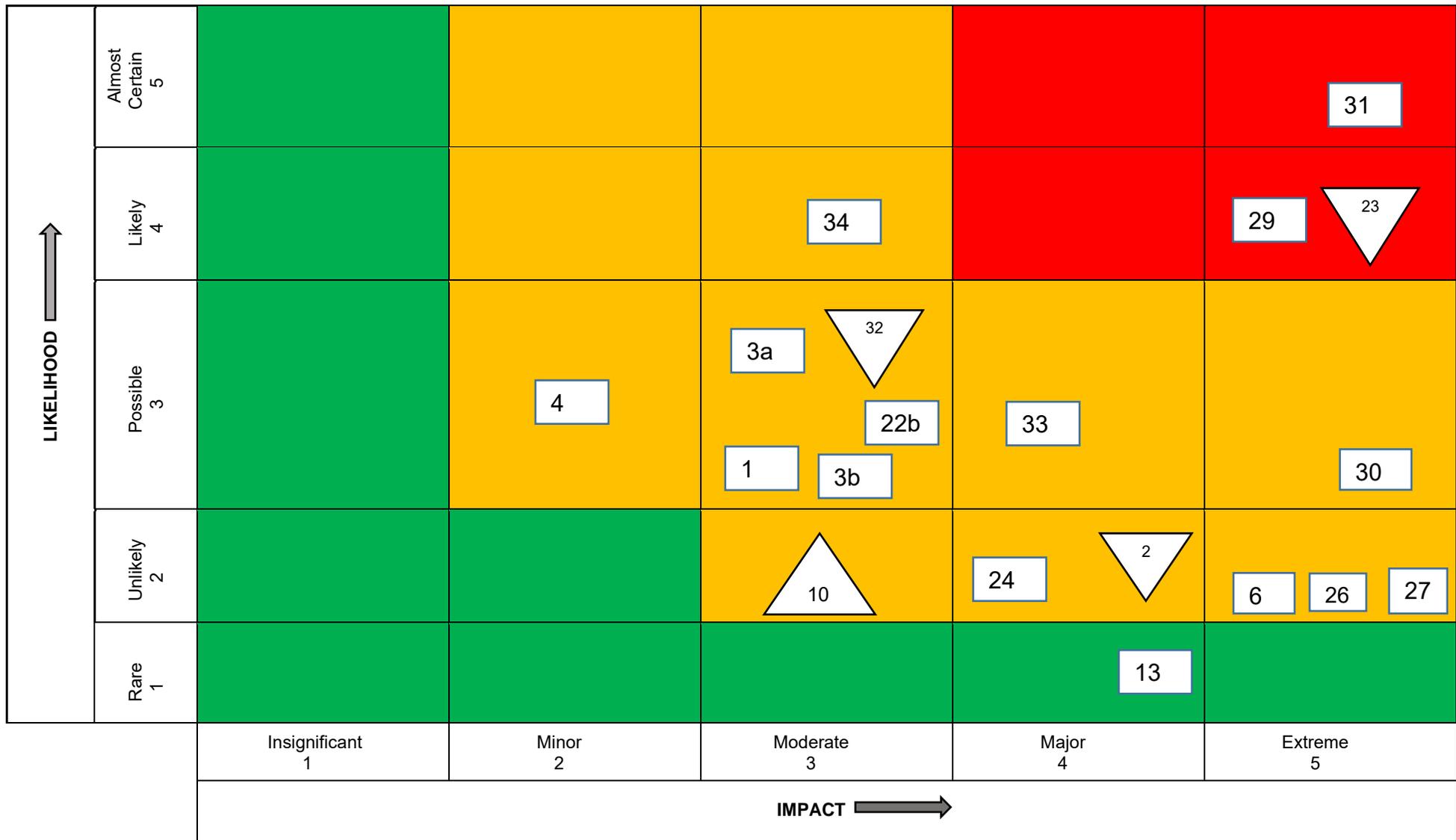
### **RM010 - The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems.**

This risk title change now incorporates the potential causes of any loss of key ICT systems.

### **RM022b - Implications of EU Transition for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses**

This risk title change reflects a movement away from the immediate aftermath of exiting the European Union and looks forward at the implications of the EU transition that lie ahead for external funding and Norfolk businesses.

Corporate Risks - Heat Map



**Key** = Risk score increase      = no score change      = risk score decrease

<b>No.</b>	<b>Risk description</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>
RM001	Not realising infrastructure funding requirements to achieve the infrastructure ambition of the Business Plan.	RM022b	Implications of EU Transition for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses
RM002	The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams.	RM023	Failure to respond to changes to demography, funding, and government policy, with particular regard to Adults Services.
RM003a	Potential for failure to comply with statutory information compliance requirements.	RM024	Failure to construct and deliver the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing (3RC) within agreed budget (£121m), and to agreed timescales (construction to be completed early 2023).
RM003b	Potential for failure to comply with relevant information security requirements	RM026	Legal challenge to procurement exercise.
RM004	The potential risk of failure to deliver effective and robust contract management for commissioned services.	RM027	Risk of failure of new Human Resources and Finance system implementation (myOracle).
RM006	The potential risk of failure to deliver our services within the resources available for the period 2018/19 to the end of 2020/21.	RM029	NCC may not have the employees (or a sufficient number of employees) with critical skills that will be required for the organisation to operate effectively in the next 2-5 years and longer term.
RM010	The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems.	RM030	Non-realisation of Children's Services Transformation change and expected benefits.
RM013	The potential risk of failure of the governance protocols for entities controlled by the Council, either their internal governance or the Council's governance as owner. The failure of entities controlled by the Council to follow relevant guidance or share the Council's ambitions	RM031	NCC Funded Children's Services Overspend
		RM032	Capacity to manage multiple disruptions to business
		RM033	Failure to receive the necessary funding or statutory approvals to enable the Norwich Western Link (NWL) project (at £198m) to be delivered to the agreed timescales (target opening by late 2025).
		RM034	Supply Chain Interruption

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM001		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Not realising infrastructure funding requirements to achieve the infrastructure ambition of the Business Plan									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Martin Wilby			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Tom McCabe					
<b>Risk Description</b>					<b>Date entered on risk register</b>	03 June 2019				
1) Not securing sufficient funding to deliver all the required infrastructure for existing needs and planned growth leading to: • Congestion, delay and unreliable journey times on the transport network • A lack of the essential facilities that create attractive conditions for business activity and investment, and sustainable communities, including good connectivity, public transport, walking and cycling routes, open space and green infrastructure, and funding for the infrastructure necessary to enable the county council to perform its statutory responsibilities, eg education. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	3	9	3	3	9	3	2	6	Mar-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1.1) Work with other county council officers and partners including government, local enterprise partnerships and district councils to compile evidence and the case for investment into infrastructure in order to achieve success through bidding rounds for capital investment.</p> <p>1.2) Identify and secure funding including Pooled Business Rates (PBR) to develop projects to a point where successful bids can be made for funding through compiling evidence and cases for investment.</p> <p>1.3) Engage with providers of national infrastructure – Highways England for strategic (trunk) roads and Network Rail for rail delivery – to ensure timely delivery of infrastructure projects, and work with partners on advocacy and lobbying with government to secure future investment into the networks.</p> <p>1.4) Review Planning Obligations Standards annually to ensure the county council is able to seek and secure the maximum possible contribution from developers.</p> <p>1.5) Continue to build the relationship with strategic partners including elected representatives, government departments, local enterprise partnerships, regional bodies such as Transport East (the Sub-National Transport Body) and other local authorities to maximise opportunity and work together in the most effective joined-up manner.</p> <p>1.6) Periodically review timescales for S106, and other, funding contributions to ensure they are spent before the end date and take action as required. Periodic reviews for transport contributions and an annual review process for library and education contributions.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

Overall: Impact of Covid-19 likely to affect funding streams in both the short and longer-term.

1.1) NWL: Outline Business Case submitted to DfT and Design and Build contractor appointed following Cabinet agreement 7 June. TfN draft Strategy, which will help to support future transport delivery in and around Norwich: Consultation finished 8 October and adopted by Cabinet 6 December. Work commenced on Action Plan. OBC for Long Stratton Bypass approved by government 24 July 2021. Revised planning applications from the developers submitted. West Winch Housing Access Road: Strategic OBC submitted to DfT at end of March. Working through DfT queries received October. A47/A17 Pullover Junction King's Lynn: Work has identified three options for improvement. Preferred Option to be identified and taken through DfT Major Road Network funding stream. Transforming Cities now in delivery phase. Gt Yarmouth Third River Crossing: Works started on 4 January 2021 as planned. Continuing to work with districts and other partners on a range of infrastructure projects. Norfolk Infrastructure Delivery Plan adopted by Cabinet December 2021

1.2) Funding secured from PBR for development of Norwich Western Link and West Winch Housing Access Relief Road (see 1.1). £1.8m received through DfT Active Travel Fund phase 1 and 2. Measures now being delivered. Bid made for ATF3. Work continues on scope of county-led transport levelling-up bid.

1.3) A47 Just Dual It campaign ran in run up to 2021 spending review. Great Eastern Main Line (Norwich to London rail): Awaiting government decision on revised scope of Network Rail work, focusing on performance and journey time improvements. Continuing to work on Ely Task Force: Consultation launched by Network Rail mid-October. Continuing to support East West Rail Consortium. Continuing to feed into the Examinations for A47 Blofield to Burlingham (now closed), Easton to Tuddenham and Thickthorn DCO applications submitted to Planning Inspectorate.

1.4) Officers are working with the County Council Network and the Regional Planning Obligations Officer Group to lobby the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government on proposed reforms to the developer contributions. Officers will continue to update the County Council's Planning Obligations Standards annually to ensure the county council is able to seek and secure the maximum possible contribution from developers. The review has commenced (2021/2022). The amendments/updates are fairly minor and as such will be dealt with under delegated officer powers; and referred to the Cabinet Member (Highways, Infrastructure and Transport) for information .

1.5) Continuing to work with Transport East on transport strategy (consultation launched in December); liaising with DfT, Network Rail and now National Highways on strategic road and rail schemes; attending wider partnership groups including LEP Transport Board

1.6) Officers have introduced a new system of monitoring known as the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) to comply with the 2010 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (as amended in September 2019). This will ensure monitoring is effective, transparent and up to date. The County Council will publish its updated IFS later in the year in line with the above CIL Regulations.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM002		<b>Date of last review</b>		31 January 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Jamieson			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		31 May 2019					
This may arise from global or local economic circumstances (i.e. Brexit), government policy on public sector budgets and funding. As a result there is a risk that the Medium Term Financial Strategy savings required for 2021/22 - 2024/25 are not delivered because of uncertainty as to the scale of savings resulting in significant budget overspends, unsustainable drawing on reserves, and severe emergency savings measures needing to be taken. The financial implications are set out in the Council's Budget Book, available on the Council's website. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	4	12	2	4	8	2	4	8	Mar-22	Met
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy and robust budget setting within available resources.  No surprises through effective budget management for both revenue and capital.  Budget owners accountable for managing within set resources.  Determine and prioritise commissioning outcomes against available resources and delivery of value for money.  Regular and robust monitoring and tracking of in-year budget savings by Corporate Board and members.  Regular finance monitoring reports to Cabinet.  Close monitoring of central government grant terms and conditions to ensure that these are met to receive grants.  Plans to be adjusted accordingly once the most up to date data has been received.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>County Council on 21.02.21 approved the 2021-22 budget and future Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-25 taking into account the Final Local Government Finance settlement for 2021-22. The risk target score for 31 March 2021 has been met.  The council's external auditors gave an unqualified audit opinion on the 2020-21 Statement of Accounts and were satisfied that the County Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31.03.2021.  The implications of the COVID-19 response, coupled with continued uncertainty and the further delay of the significant planned reforms for local government finance, represents a major challenge for the Council in developing its Medium term Financial Strategy. Cabinet on 5.7.21 considered a strategic and financial planning report for 2022-23 with an updated report presented to Cabinet on 8.11.21 following the Government's Spending Review announcement. Cabinet on 31.1.22 considered and agreed the 2022-23 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-26 and will make recommendations to County Council in order that County Council can agree the 2022-23 Budget and level of council tax at its meeting on 21 February 2022.</p>										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM003a		<b>Date of last review</b>		27 January 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Failure to comply with statutory information compliance requirements									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Proctor			<b>Risk Owner</b>		Andrew Stewart				
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		05 June 2019					
There is a risk of failing to comply with statutory information compliance requirements (e.g. under GDPR, FOI, EIR) which could lead to reputational damage and financial impact from any fines or compensation sought.										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
4	3	12	3	3	9	2	3	6	Mar-23	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mandatory Information Governance Training for all colleagues</li> <li>2. Information Governance Group and Steering Group occur bi-monthly</li> <li>3. Detailed management information in place to monitor performance</li> <li>4. Two-way relationship with ICO maintained to ensure positive working relationship</li> <li>5. Focus on resource available / required to ensure consistency of service</li> <li>6. Ongoing improvements underway to improve efficiency and effectiveness</li> </ol>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>Mandatory training for Information Governance (Data Protection Essentials) has now been live for a year which has received positive feedback and has been completed by over 50% of the organisation - completion rate at end of 2021 was 96%.</p> <p>Information Governance Group and the escalation Steering Group comprising the SIRO, DPO, Dir IMT, Audit and Caldicott Guardians has met for a year, occurring bi-monthly to deliver a strong focus and accountability on information related matters.</p> <p>Management information continues to be developed to allow actions to be taken on activity within the team and resource to be appropriately allocated / requested. Significant improvements in many areas including Freedom of Information Requests and Police disclosures. Subject Access Requests remain a concern and focus remains on these, looking for improvements to process where possible.</p> <p>Positive relationship with the ICO in relation to data incidents and responses to subject access requests which helps demonstrate a good culture towards information in NCC.</p> <p>Clear focus of activity has occurred in 2021 and to continue in 2022 to improve efficiency in the team when dealing with requests (online FOI, SAR and Breach form have already been delivered as has improved scanning process) which will further improve the resource availability the Information Governance Team can give to support IG queries across NCC. Electronic Storage Programme underway to reduce risk associated with unstructured information held on Fileshares.</p> <p>These activities will enhance many of the mitigations to a higher standard, reducing the likelihood of occurrence - the impact should anything happen would likely result in local or national media attention, depending on the severity of the issue.</p>										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM003b		<b>Date of last review</b>		05/02/2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Failure to comply with relevant information security requirements									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Tom Fitzpatrick			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Geoff Connell					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		05 June 2019					
There is a risk of failing to comply with relevant information security requirements (e.g. NIS, PSN, PCI-DSS) which could lead to reputational damage and financial impact. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
4	3	12	3	3	9	1	3	3	Mar-23	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mandatory Training in place for all colleagues - ongoing</li> <li>2. Development and monitoring of MI for breaches - ongoing</li> <li>3. Implementation of improved security measures - ongoing</li> <li>4. External networking to ensure best practice - ongoing</li> </ol>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rollout of new Mandatory training to all colleagues</li> <li>- Implementation of improved security measures e.g. E5 Licencing</li> <li>- Involvement with National cybersecurity organisation</li> <li>- Extensive communications to NCC staff on remaining vigilant against cyber-attacks</li> <li>- Increased take up of IT training;</li> <li>- A simulated phishing exercise, carried out to understand where weaknesses remain;</li> <li>- Roll-out of Safe Links and Safe Attachments technology, which screens MS Office attachments and links before being opened;</li> <li>- Anti-spoofing technology software being introduced.</li> </ul>										
<p>Risk score of 9 at present due to improved measures that have been implemented but acknowledgment that further activities would reduce the risk further, with a number of new challenges in a COVID and geo-political landscape. The impact should anything happen would likely result in local or national media attention, depending on the severity of the issue.</p>										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM004		<b>Date of last review</b>		14 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	The potential risk of failure to deliver effective and robust contract management for commissioned services.									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Jamieson			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		02 June 2019					
Ineffective contract management leads to wasted expenditure, poor quality, failure to achieve anticipated environmental or social benefits, unanticipated supplier default or contractual or legal disputes, and/or reputational damage to the Council. The council spends some £700m on contracted goods and services each year. Overall risk treatment: Tolerate										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	4	12	2	3	6	2	3	6	Mar-23	Met
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
1) Implement a proactive system to identify early signs of potential supplier financial / governance failure and respond appropriately. Next steps: - Develop robust process to respond to CreditSafe alerts - Checks of suppliers governance arrangements and following up on references										
2) Continue to report the pipeline of expiring contracts to Corporate Board every six months. Continue to discuss the pipeline of expiring contracts with CES DMT every quarter. Next steps: - Start to discuss the pipeline of expiring contracts with other departmental management teams or individual senior managers										
3) Through the contract compliance and optimisation workstream of the Smarter Workstream priority under the Norfolk Futures programme, implement measures to ensure that staff who have contract management as part of their job have the relevant skills and support to manage contracts effectively. Next steps: Implement phased plan										
4) Develop a standard specification for service transition that can be used as the basis for new sourcing exercises and used to manage transitions effectively										
5) Internal audit undertaking audits of the contract management control environment in the three service directorates.										
<b>Progress update</b>										
1) Process developed with finance to respond to CreditSafe alerts. Complete										
2) Pipeline reporting frequency at Corporate Board increased to quarterly and process is in place for monthly review by Director of Procurement and Executive Director of Finance. Procurement staff review monthly and make sure plans are in place with departments. Complete										
3) Contract compliance and optimisation workstream plan was approved at Corporate Board in December 2019 and phased implementation was under way, prior to COVID-19. Implementation of phased plan paused whilst efforts are focussed on the COVID-19 response.										
4) Transition/handover checklist developed and in use. Complete.										
5) Internal Audit have completed an audit of the senior management monitoring of significant contracts. Complete										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM006		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	The potential risk of failure to deliver our services within the resources available for the period 2021/22 to the end of 2023/24.									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Proctor			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Tom McCabe					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		13 June 2019					
The failure to deliver agreed savings or to deliver our services within the resources available, resulting in the risk of legal challenge and overspends, requiring the need for in year spending decisions during the life of the plan, to the detriment of local communities and vulnerable service users. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
2	5	10	2	5	10	1	5	5	Mar-23	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1) Clear robust framework, 'Together for Norfolk - Business Plan' in place which drives the delivery of the overall vision and priority outcomes. The delivery of a council-wide strategy which seeks to shift focus to early help and prevention, and to managing demand.</p> <p>2) Delivery against the strategic service and financial planning, by translating the vision and priorities into achieved, delivered targets.</p> <p>3) A robust annual process to provide evidence for Members to make decisions about spending priorities.</p> <p>4) Regular and robust in-year financial monitoring to track delivery of savings and manage in-year pressures.</p> <p>5) Sound engagement and consultation with stakeholders and the public around service delivery.</p> <p>6) A performance management and risk system which ensures resources are used to best effect, and that the Council delivers against its objectives and targets.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>Regular budget and performance monitoring reports to Cabinet has continued to demonstrate how the Council is delivering against the 2021/22 budgets and priorities set for each of our services. The Council has a robust and established process, including regular reporting to Members, which is closely linked to the wider Council Strategy, in order to support the development of future year budget plans taking account of the latest available information about Government funding levels and other pressures. This process includes reviewing service budgets and taking into account financial performance and issues arising in the current financial year as detailed in the budget monitoring reports. There is financial monitoring of in-year cost to address the impact of COVID-19 within departments, with monitoring of 2021-22 spend being reported to Cabinet on a monthly basis and monitoring of COVID-19 spend reported to Corporate Board regularly. Financial forecasting is taking place to further understand where there are likely to be areas of greater financial challenges as a result of COVID-19 beyond 2021/22. There has been an updated MTFs position reported to Cabinet within the year, savings proposals published for consultation in October, budget setting meeting of Full Council in February 2022, and monitoring reports taken to Cabinet in 2021/22. Work has been carried out by Departmental Leadership Teams, the Recovery Group and the Business Transformation Programme on future savings required. Savings proposals have been presented for Member review and then taken to Cabinet.</p>										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM010		<b>Date of last review</b>		09 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including: - Network connectivity; - Telephony; - Microsoft Office & all business systems. Caused by physical, technical or cyber problems.									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Tom Fitzpatrick			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>					<b>Date entered on risk register</b>	01 July 2019				
Loss of core / key ICT systems, communications or utilities for a significant period - as a result of a cyber attack, loss of power, physical failure, fire or flood, or supplier failure - would result in a failure to deliver IT based services leading to disruption to critical service delivery, a loss of reputation, and additional costs. Note that cyber security risks are elevated in 2022 due to global geopolitical issues (Cyber risk is detailed further in risk RM14184). Overall risk treatment: Treat.										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	3	9	2	3	6	1	3	3	Mar-23	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>Full power down completed periodically</p> <p>2) Replace ageing Local Area Network (LAN) equipment</p> <p>3) Implement Cloud-based business systems with resilient links for key areas</p> <p>4) Review and Implement suitable arrangements to protect against possible cyber / ransomware attacks including;</p> <p>5) Running a number of Cyber Attack exercises with senior stakeholders to reduce the risk of taking the wrong action in the event of a cyber attack</p> <p>6) We will hold a number of Business Continuity exercises to understand and reduce the impact of risk scenarios</p> <p>7) WFH has changed the critical points of infrastructure. Access to cloud services like O365 without reliance on County Hall data centres is critical to ensure service continuity.</p> <p>8) Keep all software security patched and up to date and supported. Actively and regularly review all software in use at NCC and retire all out of date software that presents a risk to keeping accredited to these standards.</p> <p>9) Continue to closely monitor security processes.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

- 1) Full power down completed as required by Property programme plans.
- 2) County Hall complete we continue to roll out to remaining offices throughout the County slowed due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- 3) We Implement Cloud-based business systems with resilient links for key areas as they are procured, guidance is being refreshed regularly.
- 4) We have now completed the cyber audit actions.
- 5) IMT and the resilience team presented a number of scenarios selected by the business to the Directors Operational Board (Previously Silver group) to test, understand and challenge on a number of key disaster Scenarios. This was to inform the business continuity plans and highlight further improvements we can make. Resilience team are considering dates for our next Business Continuity test.
- 6) Since COVID-19 has resulted in the majority of the workforce working from home, the network has been able to cope effectively with a vastly increased number of users working remotely.
- 7) Various security protections from Microsoft E5 have been implemented and more are being added.
- 8) Infrastructure design is evolving to accommodate cloud services, further strengthen cyber security and reduce reliance on County Hall infrastructure. NCC dependence on Solaris will reduce with Oracle Cloud.
- 9) The scope and frequency of security monitoring processes has been increased.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM013		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	The potential risk of failure of the governance protocols for entities controlled by the Council, either their internal governance or the Council's governance as owner. The failure of entities controlled by the Council to follow relevant guidance or share the Council's ambitions.									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Greg Peck			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>				<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		02 July 2019				
The failure of governance leading to controlled entities: Non Compliance with relevant laws (Companies Act or other) Incurring Significant Losses or losing asset value Taking reputational damage from service failures Being mis-aligned with the goals of the Council The financial implications are described in the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts 2019-20. Overall risk treatment: Treat This risk is scored at a likelihood of 1 due to the strong governance in place and an impact score of 4 given the size of the controlled companies.										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
1	4	4	1	4	4	1	4	4	Mar-23	Met
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1) All controlled entities and subsidiary companies have a system of governance which is the responsibility of their Board of Directors. The Council needs to ensure that it has given clear direction of it's policy, ambitions and expectations of the controlled entities. The NORSE Group objectives are for Business Growth and Diversification of business to spread risks. Risks need to be recorded on the Group's risk register.</p> <p>2) The shareholder committee should meet quarterly and monitor the performance of NORSE. A member of the shareholder board, the shareholder representative, should also attend the NORSE board.</p> <p>3) The Council holds control of the Group of Companies by way of its shareholding, restrictions in the NORSE articles of association and the voting rights of the Directors. The mission, vision and value statements of the individual NORSE companies should be reviewed regularly and included in the annual business plan approved by the Board. NORSE should have its own Memorandum and Articles of Association outlining its powers and procedures, as well as an overarching agreement with the Council which outlines the controls that the Council exercises over NORSE and the actions which require prior approval of the Council.</p> <p>4) To ensure that governance procedures are being discharged appropriately to Independence Matters. The Executive Director for Finance and Commercial Services' representative attends as shareholder representative for Independence Matters.</p> <p>5) Shareholder representation required from the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services on both the Norse, and Repton Boards.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

- 1) There are regular Board meetings, share holder meetings and reporting as required. For NORSE, risks are recorded on the NORSE group risk register.
- 2) The Norse Group follows the guidance issued by the Institute of Directors for Unlisted Companies where appropriate for a wholly owned LA company. The shareholder committee meets quarterly and monitors the performance of Norse. A member of the shareholder board, the shareholder representative, also attends the NORSE board.
- 3) The Council has reviewed its framework of controls to ensure it is meeting its Teckal requirements in terms of governance and control. The Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services is responsible for reviewing the ongoing viability of wholly owned entities and regularly reporting the performance of their activities, with a view to ensuring that the County Council's interests are being protected.  
All County Council subsidiary limited company Directors have been approved in accordance with the Constitution. Andy Wood has been appointed as the new Chairman of NORSE. A Managing Director is currently being appointed.  
A further strengthening of the Board is proposed with the appointment of two independent Non-Executive Directors with one vote each. As with Repton the appointments would be made through a transparent process of advertisement, interview and appointment.
- 4) The ED of F&CS directs external governance. An external company is undertaking a review of Norse Group's financial performance, discharging the Executive Director for Finance and Commercial Services' responsibility as per the Constitution.
- 5) There is Shareholder representation from the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services on both the Norse, and Repton Boards.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM022b		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Implications of EU Transition for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Graham Plant			<b>Risk Owner</b>		Tom McCabe				
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		28 August 2020					
<p>a) Risk RM14429 covers the closedown of the France (Channel) England INTERREG programme, managed by NCC. In terms of future external funding, we need to make a compelling case to Government for investment in Norfolk from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which replaces EU funding.</p> <p>b) Going forward, we need to understand the implications for Norfolk businesses of the Territorial Cooperation Agreement and work with partners to support Norfolk businesses to trade.</p>										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	3	9	3	3	9	2	3	6	Mar-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>a) Development of Norfolk Investment Framework to target the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (replacement for EU funding).</p> <p>b) Focussed support for business, in conjunction with LEP and Chamber of Commerce.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>a) Cabinet agreed at their meeting on 2/8/21 to commission a Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF), to draw down the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) worth £1.5bn p/a nationally. Additional work packages to reinforce stakeholder engagement have been added. Consultation for the Framework has been extended. Draft iterations of thematic objectives being tested further with stakeholders. Contract of work extended until end of March 2022.</p> <p>White paper has been published and reinforces the need for a collaborative approach in preparation for a County Deal.</p> <p>The Levelling Up White Paper indicates that in the short-term SPF and LU funds will be delivered through Districts. Should a County Deal be agreed, this may change.</p> <p>Feedback from Stakeholders confirms the need for a NIF. Approach endorsed by the Steering Committee (including Town Deal Board Chairs/Local Authorities/Business Reps/University &amp; Research Institutes and Private Sector).</p> <p>The NIF will identify funding options for delivery from a range of options including SPF and LUF, other national funding pots as well as private sector investment.</p> <p>b) Business advice provided by the LEP's Growth Hub, Norfolk Chamber and Federation of Small Business. While these bodies can provide advice, the challenge for businesses is to invest more resource in producing the paperwork that is now required for the import/export of goods, and still generate a profit. Government has introduced measures to help secure more HGV drivers (to replace those lost due to both Brexit and the pandemic) and increase the number of seasonal agricultural workers who can work in the UK. A key priority of the Norfolk Rural Strategy is to help increase the adoption of robotic solutions to increase productivity and help mitigate staffing challenges.</p>										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM023		<b>Date of last review</b>		14 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Failure to respond to changes to demography, funding, and government policy, with particular regard to Adults Services.									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Bill Borrett			<b>Risk Owner</b>	James Bullion					
<b>Risk Description</b>					<b>Date entered on risk register</b>	18 August 2017				
<p>Whilst acknowledging the pressures on adult social services, and providing some one-off additional funding, the Government has yet to set out a direction of travel for long-term funding. The pressures of demography and complexity of need continue to increase for adult social services. Direction of travel in terms of longer term funding has been signalled through Build Back Better and the introduction of the social care national insurance levy. However, additional funding is front-loaded towards the NHS, and there is a clear expectation that demography pressures should be met through local taxation. This makes effective strategic planning highly challenging and there is a risk that short-term reductions in support services have to be made to keep within budget; these changes are likely to be counter to the long-term Promoting Independence strategy. Overall risk treatment: Treat</p>										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
5	5	25	4	5	20	3	5	15	Mar-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1. Implementation of Promoting Independence Strategy. This strategy is shaped by the Care Act with its call to action across public services to prevent, reduce and delay the demand for social care. The strategy aims to ensure that demand is understood and managed, and there is a sustainable model for the future.</p> <p>2. Publication of the the White Paper: Putting People at the Heart of Care, alongside funding for social care through the national insurance levy provides a strategic direction of travel. Further direction will come through a further White paper on integration, expected imminently.</p> <p>3. As part of the PI strategy, a shift of spend towards targeted prevention, reablement services, enablement, and strengthened interim care.</p> <p>4. Implementation of Better Care Fund plans which promote integration with the NHS and protect, sustain and improve the social care system.</p> <p>5. Judicious use of one-off winter and other funding, as announced by Government, including accessing Discharge to Assess funding and other Covid-related funds.</p> <p>6. Close tracking of government policies, demography trends and forecasts.</p> <p>7. Influencing and shaping the development and governance of the new Integrated Care System to ensure a strong focus on social care</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

- 1) Detailed work to understand the financial and service impact of COVID for the next financial year and for medium term. Main themes for transformation being reviewed, and priorities for department being shaped. Overall strategy remains sound, but further work to identify the highest priority transformation areas and to track the interdependencies of programmes across the department.
- 2) Market shaping and development - strengthened working relationships; significant financial support for the market, now requires on-going work in partnership with care sector to look at future shape and sustainability.
- 3a) Refreshed prevention strategy required, building on the additional understanding and ways of working experienced throughout the pandemic. Engagement of Newton Europe consultants to re-design Adults front door, and strengthen prevention offer.
- 3b) Workforce – continues to be hugely challenging within Adult Social Services and in the wider care market. On-going recruitment campaign to sustain levels of front line social workers and occupational therapy staff. Joint European funded programme with Suffolk to support workforce in the wider care market
- 3c) Better Care Fund targeted towards supporting people to stay independent, promoting and enabling closer integration and collaboration across health and social care. Better Care Fund currently under review to reflect closer joint aims and objectives between health and social care
- 4) Close joint working with NHS, through the Integrated Care System, to shape and influence future integration of health and social care
- 5) Recovery planning underway to address backlogs of work arising from pandemic and winter pressures.
- 6) Preparation for the implementation of the White Paper, Putting People at the heart of Care,
- 7) Collaboration with children's services to develop a preparing for adult life service to strengthen transition experience for young people, and to improve service and budget planning.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM024		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Failure to construct and deliver the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing (3RC) within agreed budget (£121m), and to agreed timescales (construction to be completed early 2023)									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Martin Wilby		<b>Risk Owner</b>		Tom McCabe					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		14 June 2019					
<p>There is a risk that the 3RC project will not be delivered within budget and to the agreed timescales. Cause: delays during statutory processes put timescales at risk and/or contractor prices increase project costs. Event: The 3RC is completed at a later date and/or greater cost than the agreed budget, placing additional pressure on the NCC contribution. Effect: Failure to construct and deliver the 3RC within budget would result in the shortfall having to be met from other sources. This would impact on other NCC programmes. Overall risk treatment: Treat, with a focus on maintaining or reducing project costs and timescales.</p>										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
2	4	8	2	4	8	2	3	6	Jan-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>The project was agreed by Full Council (December 2016) as a key priority infrastructure project to be delivered as soon as possible. Since then, March 2017, an outline business case has been submitted to DfT setting out project costs of £120m and a start of work in October 2020. 80% of this project cost has been confirmed by DfT, but this will be a fixed contribution with NCC taking any risk of increased costs. Mitigation measures are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Project Board and associated governance to be further developed to ensure clear focus on monitoring cost and programme at monthly meetings.</li> <li>2) NCC project team to include specialist cost and commercial resource (bought in to the project) to provide scrutiny throughout the scheme development and procurement processes. This will include independent audits and contract/legal advice on key contract risks as necessary.</li> <li>3) Programme to be developed that shows sufficient details to enable overall timescales to be regularly monitored, challenged and corrected as necessary by the board.</li> <li>4) Project controls and client team to be developed to ensure systems in place to deliver the project and to develop details to be prepared for any contractual issues to be robustly handled and monitored.</li> <li>5) All opportunities to be explored through board meetings to reduce risk and programme duration.</li> <li>6) An internal audit has been carried out to provide the Audit Committee and management with independent assurance that the controls in place, to mitigate, or minimise risks relating to pricing in stage 2 of the project to an acceptable level, are adequate and effective and operating in practice.</li> </ol>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

The outline business case was submitted on 30 March 2017, and DfT confirmed approval of this following the autumn statement in November 2017. Progress against actions are: 1) Project board in place. Gateway review highlighted a need to assess and amend board attendance and this has been implemented. A gateway review was completed to coincide with the award of contract decision making - the findings have been reported to the project board (there were no significant concerns identified that impact project delivery). Internal audit on governance report finalised 14 August 2019 and findings were rated green. Further gateway review completed summer 2020 ahead of progressing to next stage of contract (construction). 2) Specialist cost and commercial consultants appointed and continue to review project costs. The Commercial Manager will continue to assess the project forecast on a quarterly basis, with monthly interim reporting also provided to the board. No issues highlighted to date and budget remains sufficient. A further budget review was completed following appointment of the contractor. The full business case was developed and submitted to DfT at end of September 2020 - the project is still at agreed budget. 3) An overall project programme has been developed and is owned and managed by the dedicated project manager. Any issues are highlighted to the board as the project is delivered.

The start of DCO examination was 24 September 2019, with a finish date on 24 March 2020. The approval of the DCO was confirmed on 24 September 2020 (no legal challenge). Construction started on 4 January 2021 as planned. The bridge completion and opening date remains early 2023. 4) Learning from the NDR the experience of commercial specialist support was utilised to develop contract details ahead of the formal commencement of the procurement process. Further work fed into the procurement processes (and competitive dialogue) with the bidders. The commercial team leads were in place from the start of the contract (January 2019) and continue in this role to manage contract administration. 5) The project board receives regular (monthly) updates on project risks, costs and timescales. A detailed cost review was delivered to the board ahead of the award of the contract (following the delegated authority agreed by Full Council), and took into account the contractors tender pricing and associated project risk updates. The project currently remains on budget and the programme to complete the works and open the scheme in early 2023 is still on track. 6) The further internal audit has been concluded and a report circulated. Findings were green with only one minor observation (already actioned).

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM026		<b>Date of last review</b>		14 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Legal challenge to procurement exercise									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Jamieson			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		04 June 2019					
That alleged breach of procurement law may result in a court challenge to a procurement exercise that could lead to delay, legal costs, loss of savings, reputational damage and potentially significant compensation Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
2	5	10	2	5	10	1	5	5	Jun-22	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>Review processes and practice in light of recent caselaw, in particular Amey Highways Ltd v West Sussex County Council [2019] EWHC 1291 (TCC) and Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust &amp; Anor v Lancashire County Council [2018] EWHC 200 (TCC).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) At team meeting w/c 10 June 2019, remind procurement staff of need to escalate any proposal to run a procurement exercise in an unreasonably short timescale</li> <li>2) Take pipeline to corporate board every six months and to directorate management teams quarterly to minimise risk of rushed procurement exercises.</li> <li>3) Seek corporate board sign-off for new approach with consistently adequate timelines, fewer evaluators and greater control over choice of evaluator</li> <li>4) Review scale of procurement exercises, avoid unnecessarily large exercises that increase risk and complexity and the scale of any damages claim.</li> <li>5) Make incremental change to instructions to evaluators and approach to scoring and documenting rationale, and test on tender NCCT41801 in w/c 3 June 2019</li> <li>6) Review standard scoring grid and test 'offline' on tender NCCT41830 w/c 10 June 2019</li> <li>7) Review template provisional award letter w/c 17 June</li> <li>8) Develop standard report to decision-maker w/c 17 June</li> <li>9) Make more significant changes to instructions to evaluators and pilot new approach on a future tender.</li> <li>10) Pilot new scoring grid in a future tender</li> <li>11) Institute formal annual review of sourcing processes in light of developments in case law. Review each December; add to senior staff objectives.</li> </ol> <p>Additional tasks identified February 2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12) Update HotDocs to include definitive versions of new templates - by 31 March 2020</li> <li>13) Formal sign-off of updated process by Nplaw- by 31 March 2020</li> <li>14) Further formal training for procurement officers - by 30 April 2020</li> </ol>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

- 1) Reminder given at team meeting - complete
- 2) Pipeline report frequency now quarterly. Pipeline being discussed with EDs or senior commissioners before each board - complete
- 3) Corporate board has signed off the new approach - complete
- 4) Ongoing as need to consider each procurement on a case by case basis.
- 5) Evaluator guidance was updated immediately. More significant changes have also now been implemented - see 9. Complete.
- 6) Scoring grid was updated as planned. Complete.
- 7) Template provisional award letter has been reviewed and updated. Complete
- 8) Existing reports have been reviewed and new report is being developed. Complete.
- 9) Evaluator guidance updated and in use as standard. Feedback from evaluators is positive. A new mechanism for capturing feedback on tenders is now in use after extensive piloting.
- 10) Scoring grid has now been updated and is in use as standard. - Complete
- 11) Added to senior staff objectives. Reviewed January 2020; no new issues identified beyond those in this risk RM026.
- 12) HotDocs templates have been updated. Complete.
- 14) All procurement staff in Sourcing have been trained in the new process and are adhering to it. Complete.

Additional task 13 was paused in the wake of managing the COVID-19 response. However, the Government's Procurement Green Paper is proposing a number of changes to the Public Contract Regulations, which would affect the process. This task has been put on hold until the impact on the process is understood.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM027		<b>Date of last review</b>		27 January 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Risk of failure of new Human Resources and Finance system implementation (myOracle)									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Tom FitzPatrick			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		16 August 2019					
Risk that there is a significant impact to HR and Finance services through potential lack of delivery of the new HR & finance system. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
2	5	10	2	5	10	2	2	4	Apr-22	Green
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1) Strong subject expert engagement in the system configuration to ensure that myOracle meets the needs of the organisation</p> <p>2) Rigorous testing of the system and data validation prior to go-live.</p> <p>3) Strong business change plans and establishment of a wide network of business representatives to ensure that the business is ready for myOracle and that there is good adoption of the system.</p> <p>4) Robust governance through operational boards and Programme Steering Committee and sponsorship by Exec Director Finance and Commercial Services. Regular review of risks and escalation where necessary and management of contractual milestones within the steering committee. Sign off on contractual changes by the Cabinet Member and Leader where required.</p> <p>5) Member oversight of the programme through Corporate Select Committee.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>1)The myOracle programme is currently in the implementation phase and on track for an April 2022 go-live. We have completed final UAT for the HCM and ERP modules and have action plans in place for the remaining issues which came out of the testing. Testing of payroll is still underway and the EPM module is still in the development phase.</p> <p>2)Ensuring continuity of business over the transition to the new system will be critical and is being managed by Systems Integration. In addition to system testing we are currently in parallel pay run 1 and plan to complete 3 runs prior to go-live.</p> <p>3)We are working with Socitm Advisory as our business change partner on the programme. Socitm bring significant local authority expertise and experience in adopting Oracle cloud and supporting business adoption. We have established a myOracle Business Readiness Implementation Group (BRIG) with senior representation from across NCC and are working with them to design the communications, training and readiness plans to take us through go-live and embedding the system. The myOracle intranet site was launched on 1 June and we also have over 200 myOracle Champions from departments across the authority who we will work with to provide communications and support</p>										

## **Progress update**

to their departments over the coming months.

4) There is on-going visibility of the plans via Programme Board and Programme Steering Committee. The award of integration services for Enterprise Performance Management module (EPM) was approved by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance in May 2021 and detailed plans have been re-baselined across the programme for an April go-live

5) Regular reports have been provided to Corporate Select Committee, the most recent being 15 November 2021.

6) The programme is at a key stage, with consolidated testing due to complete shortly. All issues arising from the testing process are reviewed and assigned a priority based on their impact. Any issues that are critical for go-live are escalated with the suppliers for a prompt investigation and fix. The myOracle Implementation Board and Steering Committee are now meeting weekly to ensure timely decisions to support the planned implementation.

note: the current rating of 10 will remain in place until final testing has taken place on all the modules and the remaining issues are closed.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM029		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	NCC may not have the employees (or a sufficient number of employees) with critical skills that will be required for the organisation to operate effectively in the next 2-5 years and longer term									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Proctor		<b>Risk Owner</b>		Sarah Shirtcliff					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		29 July 2019					
<p>There is a risk that a range of critical new/future skills are not available within NCC in the medium to longer term. The lack of these skills will create problems for, or reduce the effectiveness of service delivery. An inability or failure to consider/identify these until they are needed will not allow sufficient time to develop or recruit these skills. This is exacerbated by: 1.The demographics of the workforce (ageing) 2.The need for changing skills and behaviours in order to implement new ways of working including specialist professional and technical skills (in particular IT, engineering, change &amp; transformation; analytical; professional best practice etc) associated with the introduction or requirement to undertake new activities and operate or use new technology or systems - the lack of which reduces the effective operation of NCC . 3.NCC's new delivery model, including greater reliance on other employers/sectors to deliver services on our behalf 4.Significant changes in social trends and attitudes, such as the use of new technology and attitudes to the public sector, which may impact upon our 'employer brand' and therefore recruitment and retention 5.Skills shortages in key areas including social work and teaching 6.Improvements to the UK and local economy which may impact upon the Council's ability to recruit and retain staff. 7.Government policy (for example exit payment proposals) and changes to the Council's redundancy compensation policy, which could impact upon retention, particularly of those at more senior levels and/or older workers. 8. Brexit uncertainty impacting in some sectors 9. Uncertainty of covid impact which could increase pool of candidates and simultaneously increase current colleagues' possibilities for new jobs in other locations Overall risk treatment: Treat</p>										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	5	15	4	5	20	2	5	10	Sep-22	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of what new critical skills are required in services – using new workforce planning process and toolkit. As each directorate makes their changes to make savings / manage demand.</li> <li>• Identification of pathways to enable staff to learn, develop and qualify into shortage areas – As each directorate makes their changes to make savings / manage demand</li> </ul> <p>Creation of career families and professional communities, providing visible and clear career paths for colleagues.</p> <p>Adding a strengths based approach to performance development conversations and development plans - help people to know what their strengths are and the range of jobs where they could use those strengths</p> <p>Recruit for strengths not just qualifications and skills and experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore further integration with other organisations to fill the gaps in our workforce - ongoing</li> <li>• Develop talent pipelines working with schools, colleges and universities</li> <li>• Undertake market rate exercises as appropriate and review employment packages</li> <li>• Explore / develop the use of apprenticeships and early career schemes; this will help grow talent and act as a retention tool</li> <li>• Work with 14 – 19 providers and Higher Education providers to ensure that the GCSE, A level and Degree subjects meets the needs of future workforce requirements</li> </ul>										

## Progress update

1. Working with education providers to ensure subjects meet future workforce requirements – no further update
2. Work has begun to make best use of the 'skills' facility in the new Oracle system. It will take time to understand how best to use the functionality but it is planned to help with finding people within NCC with skills not usually associated with their role, as well as providing easy reporting on professional registrations. This functionality is dependent on completion of career families work which is currently in pilot stage, and is therefore a longer-term plan.
3. Work on how to use the full Talent module in Oracle will commence during optimisation year post November 2021 With focus on how to use functionality for Performance Development Conversations in April 2022
4. An email survey relating to digital skills has been created and piloted, enabling individuals to get instant access to information and learning resources relating to their own particular digital skills competence. Soft launch underway. Mandatory training policy is live and has been socialised
5. NCC careers website design is underway
6. There is an additional task relating to skills to identify the impact of COVID-19 on the availability of and demand for skills in NCC and Norfolk – this is beyond the remit of this risk but is related and therefore captured here.

Current likelihood score at 4 and prospects of meeting target to amber in light of challenges for front line workers and early sight of survey reporting workforce pressures. The target score has been amended to the end of September 2022 to allow sufficient time for MyOracle to become established after an April go-live, which will positively impact on mitigations linked to MyOracle within this risk.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM030		<b>Date of last review</b>		28 January 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Non-realisation of Children's Services Transformation change and expected benefits									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. John Fisher			<b>Risk Owner</b> Sara Tough						
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		08 August 2019					
There is a risk that Children's Services do not experience the expected benefits from the transformation programme. Outcomes for children and their families are not improved, need is not met earlier and the increasing demand for specialist support and intervention is not managed. Statutory duties will not be fully met and the financial position of the department will be unsustainable over time. Overall risk treatment: Treat										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
4	5	20	3	5	15	1	5	5	Mar-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1) A demand management and prevention strategy and associated business cases have been completed and a multi-year transformation programme has been established covering social care and education, with 5 key strategic themes: Inclusion, Prevention and Early Intervention, Effective Practice Model, Edge of Care Support and Alternatives to Care, and Transforming the Care Market.</p> <p>2) Significant investment has been provided to delivery transformation including c. £2m pa transformation investment fund since 2018-19 and £120m for capital investment in Specialist Resource Bases and Specialist Schools</p> <p>3) A single senior transformation lead, operational business leads and a transformation team have been appointed / aligned to direct, oversee and manage the change</p> <p>4) Regular governance structures in place through the Cabinet Member chaired Transformation and Benefits Realisation Board to track and monitor the trajectories of the programme benefits, risks and issues</p> <p>5) Services from corporate departments are aligned to provide support to transformation change e.g. HR, Comms, IT, Finance, Information and Analytics, Innovation, etc</p> <p>6) Interdependencies with other enabling transformation programmes e.g. Smarter Working will be aligned to help maximise realisation of benefits.</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										

## Progress update

Scoring rationale - Risk impact relates to outcomes for children and families not being met, a key county council objective and financial loss of benefits over £3m therefore scored 5. Risk likelihood has reduced from "probable" prior to programme being initiated to "possible" as the transformation programme is seeing initial success after first 36 months of the programme, therefore scored 3.

Jan 2022 update:

- The investment in transformation has proved successful during the last 36 months having met existing targets for specific schemes albeit in the context of overall dept overspends
- A balanced budget outturn position for 2020/21 was achieved, including a contribution to a Children's Services Business Risk Resilience reserve due to one-off Covid-related underspends
- Overall programme broke even in April 2021 rising to over £14m of cumulative net benefits by March 2022
- Programme is helping to mitigate the currently projected overspend outturn position for 2021/22 due to the considerable financial pressures faced and ongoing uncertainties due to COVID 19. Project programme savings are £6.5m for 2021/22
- Core indicator of number of Children in Care is broadly stable. Unit costs are under considerable pressure due to market forces, worsened by the impact of the pandemic, and changes to the profile of need including increasing pressure for placements for CYP with complex needs (particularly where there are also significant mental health needs). A number of existing transformation projects are in train to support these young people more effectively and reduce unit costs over the medium term.
- The next phase will focus primarily on prevention and early help – seeking to deliver a step change in our model and successfully bring together the system around special educational needs, early family help and emotional wellbeing.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM031		<b>Date of last review</b>		28 January 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	NCC Funded Children's Services Overspend									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. John Fisher			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Sara Tough					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		01 September 2019					
There is a risk that in-year pressures from service demand and other external factors beyond the department's control materialise and lead to a significant overspend.										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
5	5	25	5	5	25	3	5	15	Mar-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<p>1. Transformation programme that is targeting improvement to operating model, ways of working, and placement &amp; sufficiency to ensure that intervention is happening at the right time, with the right children and families supported, with the right types of support, intervention &amp; placements. This will result in improved value for money through ensuring that money is spent in the right places, at the right times with the investment in children and families resulting in lower, long-term costs. In turn, this will enable the most expensive areas of NCC funded spend (placement costs and staffing costs) to be well controlled and to minimise the risk of a significant overspend of budget.</p> <p>2. Implementation of improved monitoring system, to identify, track and respond to financial challenges.</p> <p>3. Cohorts will be regularly analysed to ensure that all are targeted appropriately and to develop new transformation initiatives to meet needs cost effectively.</p> <p>4. Ongoing recognition of underlying budget pressures within recent NCC budgets and within the MTFs, including for front-line placement and support costs (children looked after, children with disabilities and care leavers), operational staffing, and home to school transport for children with SEND.</p> <p>5. Recognition of pandemic-related additional budget pressures in-year and for future years, with actions identified to respond to these and to minimise cost pressures</p>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<p>Scoring rationale - Risk impact relates to financial impact of over £3m, therefore scored 5. Risk likelihood has increased from probable to "almost certain", due to department currently projecting an overspend outturn position for 2021/22 due to the considerable in-year financial pressures faced and ongoing uncertainties due to COVID 19.</p> <p>Jan. 2022 update: Improved monitoring systems have become embedded: CSLT finance sub-group, high cost reporting, LAC tracker, Permanency Planning Meetings, DCS Quarterly Performance meetings, weekly "Time for Outstanding Outcomes" Meetings and Transformation and Benefits Realisation Board chaired by Cabinet Member CS and attended by Members and CSLT.</p> <p>Multiple Transformation projects been successfully delivered and there are a number of projects underway that will contribute to the mitigation of this risk. For example, Our remodelled Corporate Parenting Service went live on schedule in April 2021 as well as our Targeted Youth Support Service in February 2021. Norfolk has been successful in being awarded DfE funding to introduce the No Wrong Door model in partnership N. Yorks, with New Roads successfully launched in June 2021. This is a proven model at working with adolescents differently improving outcomes and reducing costs.</p>										

**Progress update**

Financial benefits associated with New Roads programme are on track for delivery in 2021/22. We have established a significant programme to support children with disabilities and their families and, with partners, are redesigning our prevention and early help model to help meet the needs of families before they reach a threshold for statutory services.

Children Looked After numbers have reduced significantly since January 2019, which has resulted in reduced overall placement costs. The rate of reduction has slowed during COVID, becoming broadly stable, however, the impact of the pandemic has meant that we have now seen a small rise in numbers of LAC (although the rise appears to be below many other LAs). Unit costs are under considerable pressure due to external market forces, worsened by the impact of the pandemic, and changes to the profile of need including increasing pressure for placements for CYP with complex needs (particularly where there are also significant mental health needs). A number of existing transformation projects are in train to support these young people more effectively and reduce unit costs over the medium term.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM032		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Capacity to manage multiple disruptions to business									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Proctor			<b>Risk Owner</b>	Sarah Rhoden					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		29 October 2021					
NCC is affected by an internal or external incident/emergency that impacts on the authority's ability to deliver critical services. This could be internal threats such as loss of IMT or power or external impacts such as supporting the countywide response to Norfolk's Highest risk such as Coastal flooding or pandemic flu. There is a risk of insufficient resource to support a major incident within Norfolk or insufficient preparation for increased frequency of extreme weather events, leading to flooding causing potential negative impacts on service delivery, user access to service provision and to the reputation of the Council.										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
4	4	16	3	3	9	2	3	6	Sep-22	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Maintain the Corporate Resilience Plan.</li> <li>2) Maintain a robust Business Continuity process.</li> <li>3) Monitor and update internal BCP's and BIA's.</li> <li>4) Having the appropriate groups in place to be able to support and manage any response to an incident causing business disruption.</li> <li>5) Supporting and embedding of Business Continuity looking at best practice to support the operational delivery of services.</li> <li>6) Provide induction training on Business Continuity for all staff.</li> <li>7) Further training planning for both BC and Emergency Planning.</li> <li>8) Active engagement and participation in the Norfolk Resilience Forum.</li> </ol>										
<b>Progress update</b>										
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Internally NCC have a Corporate Resilience Plan which sets out the strategy for an organisational response to an incident and identifies roles, responsibilities and key actions.</li> <li>2) Robust BC process that includes a Policy, and corporate level Resilience plan. Department, Service and team level plans and Business Impact assessments (BIAs). BIA's and Plans are reviewed at least on a two-yearly cycle and when required if there is any changes within the plans. The BC process is enabled within NCC, with support from the Resilience team who provide assistance, peer review and training. Current stats = 89% of NCC plans reviewed and 82% plans have been exercised</li> <li>3) NCC Standing Silver/Director Ops and DMT's monitors internal BIAs&amp; BC Plans on a regular basis. Control measures are in place and will be subject to ongoing monitoring.</li> <li>4) A Gold and Silver level/Director Ops group is in place with the ability via the Resilience Team Duty Officer to respond 24/7 to support and manage any response.</li> <li>5) To support and to embed BC practices with the NCC culture we have a network of Resilience Reps within each department that support operational delivery.</li> <li>6) All staff are given induction training on BC and a manager package is available.</li> </ol>										

**Progress update**

7) The Resilience Team will be working to update its training offer for both BC and Emergency Planning training, this will be updated from learning from the COVID-19 and any other incidents.

8) Externally NCC are key stakeholders in Norfolk Resilience (NRF). Norfolk Resilience is our Local Resilience Forum, which is required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA). This is a partnership of over 60 organisations including the emergency services, local councils, health services and volunteers. The NRF is not a legal entity, nor does a Forum have powers to direct its members. Nevertheless, the CCA and the Regulations provide that responders, through the Forum, have a collective responsibility to plan, prepare, respond and communicate in a multi-agency environment. The NRF decide what to plan for using Norfolk's Community Risk Register and the government's national risk register.

NCC is a main partner within the multi-agency Norfolk Resilience Forum and the Resilience Team (RT) will be the main enablers to the wider partnership initially at any incident response. NCC Officers take leading roles in all the multi-agency working groups, these groups are in place to support and manage all the major risk within the County.

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM033		<b>Date of last review</b>		01 February 2022					
<b>Risk Name</b>	Failure to receive the necessary funding or statutory approvals to enable the Norwich Western Link (NWL) project (at £198m) to be delivered to the agreed timescales (target opening by late 2025).									
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Martin Wilby		<b>Risk Owner</b>		Tom McCabe					
<b>Risk Description</b>			<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		21 July 2021					
<p>There is a risk that the NWL project could fail to receive funding approvals from the Department for Transport (DfT), and/or statutory approvals necessary within the necessary timescales to achieve the Orders to construct the project (related to planning consent, land acquisition, highway orders). Cause: Objection to the project (particularly related to environmental impacts) that results in either DfT or Secretary of State failing to provide the necessary approvals for the funding/Orders. Event: The scale of the project and the funding requirement from DfT (at 85%) is such that without their funding contribution, it will not be possible to deliver the project. Without the necessary Orders in place, it will not be possible to deliver the project. Effect: The benefits that the project would bring in terms of traffic relief, accommodating growth in housing and employment, economic recovery and journey time savings would not be achieved. If ultimately the project does not get constructed there is the possibility that any funding already provided by DfT would need to be repaid and that the capital expenditure up to that stage could need to be repaid from revenue funds (as there would be no capital asset to justify the use of capital funding).</p> <p>Overall risk treatment: Treat, with a focus on maintaining or reducing project costs and timescales.</p>										
<b>Original</b>			<b>Current</b>			<b>Tolerance Target</b>				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
3	4	12	3	4	12	2	2	4	Sep-23	Amber
<b>Tasks to mitigate the risk</b>										
1. Work closely with DfT to resolve any queries related to the OBC approval. 2. Ensure programme dates for statutory approvals are achieved and submission details are legally checked. 3. Develop strong team resource to ensure well developed submissions for statutory processes (including public inquiry) are provided. 4. Provide regular updates to the project board to ensure any issues related to programme, cost and risk are reported. 5. Monitor scale of expenditure prior to SoS approval to ensure any potential financial implications can be accommodated within the NCC financial envelope.										
<b>Progress update</b>										
1. OBC submitted to DfT for approval at end of June 2021. Dec 21 - DfT queries responded to. Awaiting funding confirmation. 2. Programme being reviewed to ensure realistic timescales for submissions are in place (to be agreed by the project board). 3. Resource review in progress to ensure the team structure is suited to the next phases of the project. Dec 21 - Team resources established. 4. Project board meetings in place and risk, programme, cost regularly reported. 5. Section 151 officer updated on expenditure to date at project board and is comfortable that any potential cost/budget implications could be accommodated within the NCC financial envelope.										

<b>Risk Number</b>	RM034	<b>Date of last review</b>	01 February 2022
<b>Risk Name</b>	Supply Chain Interruption		
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	Cllr. Andrew Proctor	<b>Risk Owner</b>	Simon George
<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Date entered on risk register</b>		09 November 2021

There is a risk of a supply chain interruption, which could affect any of the Council's supply chains. This could take the form of either a sudden or gradual interruption, affecting the ability to deliver one or more services effectively. Cause: Examples of sudden interruptions include; loss of power; loss of supplies due to panic-buying (fuel being the prime example with knock-on effects); supplier insolvency; inability to replace critical components. Examples of gradual interruptions include; a gradual inability to recruit key in-demand staff (e.g. drivers & care workers); a gradual material shortage (e.g. construction materials); inflation; industrial action; staff absence owing to Covid-19 / seasonal flu, gradually contracting labour markets. Event: The materialisation of a sudden or a gradual interruption to a NCC supply chain. Effect: Different causes will generate different effects, but the common effect would be a disruption to service delivery stemming from the interruption of the supply chain involved. This could have knock on effects to other services depending on the interconnectedness / scale of the supply chain.

Original			Current			Tolerance Target				
Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Likelihood	Impact	Risk score	Target Date	Prospects of meeting Target Risk Score by Target Date
4	4	16	4	3	12	3	2	6	Mar-23	Amber

#### Tasks to mitigate the risk

For loss of power:

- 1) Understanding power resilience of County Hall
- 2) Understanding failover if we lost County Hall power
- 3) Reviewing plans for simultaneous loss of power or gas to multiple sensitive sites, e.g. care homes.
- 4) Thinking through command and control in case of widespread power loss

For fuel:

- 5) Sending out a de-brief form to all involved in the fuel disruption (NCC) and the Resilience team will collate the returns. This will inform changes to the NCC approach and potentially update the Corporate plan. Our work will feed into the wider NRF de-brief to the NRF plan.

For food:

- 6) Consideration of academies and our role with free school meals.
- 7) Maintain good relationships with key suppliers.

For supplier insolvency:

- 8) Formalising tiering of contracts

For critical spares:

- 9) Work with providers to ensure there is adequate support to just in time (JIT) deliveries (contingency stock of critical spares).

For IT:

- 10) Ensure IT refresh is considered and appropriate stock pre-ordered.

General mitigations against sudden major disruptions include:

- Early warning and trigger points
- Supply diversity
- Supplier relationships
- Public sector resource pooling
- Effective plans

## Progress update

For loss of power:

- 1) Power resilience understood.
- 2) Resilience of Disaster Recovery site understood.
- 3) This is being looked at via normal BAU winter preparedness. Resilience Reps and DMT's are supported by the Resilience Team to review BC plans.
- 4) Command and control will follow existing processes. Any issues to be reported by department and escalated to appropriate response level (Silver/Gold) to manage the NCC response. If beyond NCC the NRF will be activated to respond.

For fuel:

- 5) Resilience Team have sent out a de-brief form to all involved in the fuel disruption (NCC) and will collate the returns.

For food:

- 6) Work to be carried out with providers to ensure they think about support to just-in-time deliveries. (contingency stock of basics).
- 7) Close communication and good relations being upheld with key suppliers of food.

For supplier insolvency:

- 8) Tiering of contracts being formalised.

For critical spares:

- 9) Ongoing work with providers to ensure adequate support is available for JIT deliveries.

For IT:

- 10) Laptops for next round of IT refresh pre-ordered and in suppliers' warehouse.

# Report to Cabinet

Item No. 18

**Report Title: Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P9 & P10: December 2021 & January 2022**

**Date of Meeting: 7 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson ( Cabinet Member for Finance)**

**Responsible Director: Simon George (Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services)**

**Is this a Key Decision? No**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/A**

## **Introduction from Cabinet Member**

This report gives a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2021-22 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2022, together with related financial information.

## **Executive Summary**

Subject to mitigating actions, on a net budget of £439.094m, the forecast revenue outturn for 2021-22 at the end of period 10 (January) is **a balanced budget** after taking into account use of £22.745m Covid reserves brought forward from 2020-21 to meet Covid pressures in 2021-22.

General Balances are forecast to be **£23.763m** at 31 March 2022 following transfers of £4.056m from non-Covid related savings and Finance General underspends at the end of 2020-21 and taking into account the current year forecast overspend. Service reserves and provisions are forecast to total **£143.541m**.

Covid-19 financial pressures are taken into account in the forecasts in this report. Details of these pressures and progress on achieving savings are addressed in detail in this report.

## **Recommendations:**

1. To recommend to County Council the addition of **£3.766m** to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements funded from various external sources as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.1 as follows:
  - £1m ASC Transformation Programme funded from capital receipts
  - £0.880 DfT funding received for the Norwich Western Link
  - £0.301m DfT funding received for the St Williams Way Cycle Lane
  - £0.225 DfT funding received for the King Street Walking scheme

- £0.116m Local Authority funding received for the Harleston & Redenhall Town Centre Refurbishment
  - £0.832m increase in various projects funded by local developer contributions
  - £0.412m increase in the Academies expansion project funded by Academies contributions
2. Subject to County Council approval of recommendation 1 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 10 general fund forecast revenue **of a balanced budget**, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
  4. To note the COVID-19 funding available of **£102.023m**, including £22.745m brought forward from 2020-21;
  5. To recognise the period 10 forecast of 90% savings delivery in 2021-22, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
  6. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2022 of **£23.763m**.
  7. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes.

## 1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. This report and associated annexes summarise the forecast financial outturn position for 2021-22, to assist members to maintain an overview of the overall financial position of the Council.

## 2. Proposals

- 2.1. Having set revenue and capital budgets at the start of the financial year, the Council needs to ensure service delivery within allocated and available resources, which in turn underpins the financial stability of the Council. Consequently, progress is regularly monitored, and corrective action taken when required.

## 3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. The impact of this report is primarily to demonstrate where the Council is anticipating financial pressures not forecast at the time of budget setting, including the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, together with a number of other key financial measures.

## 4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

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

**Appendix 1** summarises the revenue outturn position, including:

- Forecast over and under spends
- Covid-19 grant income
- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

**Appendix 2** summarises the key working capital position, including:

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

**Appendix 3** summarises the capital outturn position, and includes:

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

- 4.2. Additional capital funds will enable services to invest in assets and infrastructure as described in Appendix 3 section 4.

## 5. Alternative Options

- 5.1. 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.

## 6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. As stated above, the forecast revenue outturn for 2021-22 at the end of P10 is a **balanced budget** linked to a forecast 90% savings delivery. Forecast outturn for service reserves and provisions is **£143.541m**, and the general balances forecast is **£23.763m**. Funding of **£79.277m** is forecast to be received in the year to off-set additional expenditure occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. When added to £22.745m Covid reserves brought forward the total Covid funding available is **£102.023m**.
- 6.2. Where possible service pressures have been offset by underspends or the use of reserves. A narrative by service is given in Appendix 1.
- 6.3. The Council's capital programme is based on schemes approved by County Council in February 2021, including previously approved schemes brought forward and new schemes subsequently approved.

## 7. Resource Implications

- 7.1. None, apart from financial information set out in these papers.

## 8. Other Implications

### 8.1. Legal Implications

In order to fulfil obligations placed on chief finance officers by section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services continually monitors financial forecasts and outcomes to ensure resources (including sums borrowed) are available to meet annual expenditure.

### 8.2. Human Rights implications

None identified.

### 8.3. Equality Impact Assessment

In setting the 2021-22 budget, the council has undertaken public consultation and produced equality and rural impact assessments in relation to the 2021-22 Budget. An overall summary Equality and rural impact assessment report is included on page 284 of the Monday 22 February 2021 Norfolk County Council agenda. [CMIS > Meetings](#)

The Council is maintaining a dynamic [COVID-19 equality impact assessment](#) to inform decision making during the pandemic.

The Council's net revenue budget is unchanged at this point in the financial year and there are no additional equality and diversity implications arising out of this report.

### 8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA)

DPIA is not required as the data reported in this paper does not drill down to the personal data level.

## 9. Risk Implications/Assessment

- 9.1. Corporate risks continue to be assessed and reported on a quarterly basis to both Cabinet and the Audit Committee. The Council's key financial based corporate risk (RM002 - The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams) has been reviewed and refreshed in February 2021 to incorporate the 2021/22 budget and Medium-Term financial strategy 2021/22 - 2024/25 being set. Key risk mitigations include amongst others regular (monthly) financial reporting to Cabinet, working to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and setting robust budgets within available resources.
- 9.2. Unlike many other parts of the public sector such as the NHS, local authorities are required by law to set a balanced budget. As part of their duties, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services has a responsibility to report to members if it appears to him that the authority will not have sufficient resources to finance its expenditure for the financial year. While not underestimating the continued severity of the current crisis on Council's finances, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services believes a balanced budget will be achieved in 2021-22.

## 10. Select Committee comments

- 10.1. None

## 11. Recommendation

- 11.1. Recommendations are set out in the introduction to this report.

## 12. Background Papers

- 12.1. Summary Equality and rural impact assessment [CMIS > Meetings](#) page 284

## Officer Contact

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## Appendix 1: 2021-22 Revenue Finance Monitoring Report Month 9 & 10

Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services

### 1 Introduction

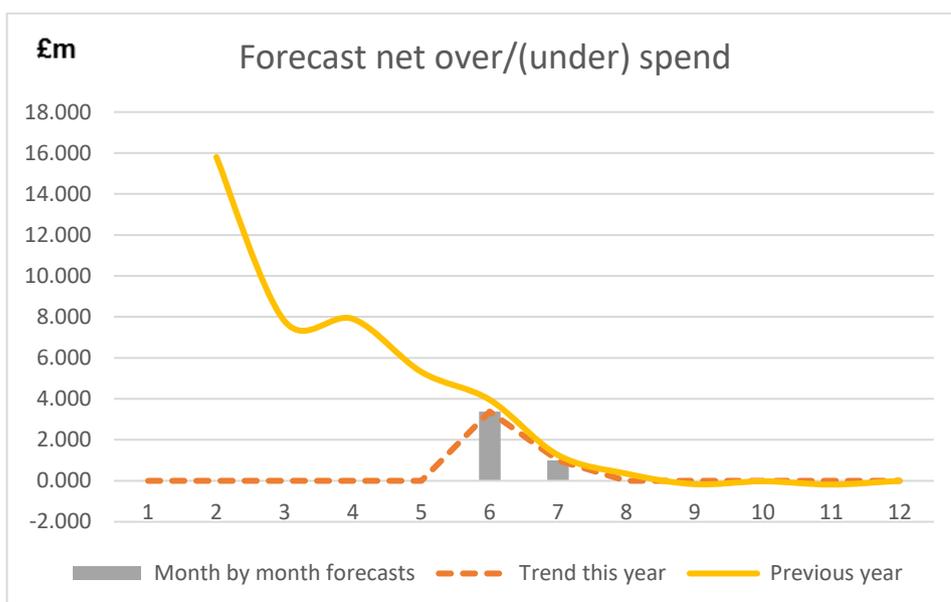
1.1 This report gives details of:

- the P9 & P10 monitoring position for the 2021-22 Revenue Budget
- additional financial information relating to the Covid-19 pandemic
- forecast General Balances and Reserves as at 31 March 2022 and
- other key information relating to the overall financial position of the Council.

### 2 Revenue outturn – over/(under)spends

2.1 **At the end of January 2022**, a balanced budget is forecast on a net budget of £439.094m.

Chart 1: forecast /actual revenue outturn 2021-22, month by month trend:



2.2 Chief Officers have responsibility for managing their budgets within the amounts approved by County Council. They have been charged with reviewing all their cost centres to ensure that, where an overspend is identified, action is taken to ensure that a balanced budget will be achieved over the course of the year.

2.3 Details of all under and overspends for each service are shown in detail in Revenue Annex 1 to this report, and are summarised in the following table:

**Table 1: 2021-22 forecast (under)/overspends by service**

Service	Revised Budget	Cost Pressures	(Under spends/ Savings)	Earmarked Reserves & Provisions Utilised	Net (under)/ overspend	%	RAG
	£m		£m		£m		
Adult Social Care	252.290	10.752	-1.852	-8.9	0	0%	G
Children's Services	178.636	13.660	-1.825	-5.285	6.550	3.7%	R
Community and Environmental Services	158.484	1.307	0	-1.307	0	0%	G
Strategy and Transformation	8.601	0.241	-0.964	0.723	0	0%	G
Governance Department	1.865	0.622	-0.019	-0.603	0	0%	G
Finance and Commercial Services	32.388	2.175	-0.198	-1.977	0	0%	G
Finance General	-193.17	1.815	-8.365		-6.550	3.4%	G
<b>Total</b>	<b>439.094</b>	<b>29.212</b>	<b>-12.318</b>	<b>-17.349</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>G</b>

Notes:

- 1) the RAG ratings are subjective and account for the risk and both the relative (%) and absolute (£m) impact of overspends.
- 2) Earmarked reserves and provisions were set aside in 2020-21 in order to meet and fund additional pressures in 2021-22.

2.4 **Children's Services:** The forecast outturn as at Period 10 (end of January 2022) is an overspend of £11.835m partially offset by use of reserves, resulting in an overall overspend position of £6.550m.

2.5 This position reflects that Children's Services budgets the significant operational pressures and challenging market forces that are outside of NCC's control; and experienced nationally. The key financial drivers are:

- External Market forces impacting our ability to purchase the right placements at the right cost;
- An unhelpfully rigid approach from the regulator (Ofsted) - challenging care settings in a way which makes them unwilling to work with young people with complex needs or drives a demand for very large packages of additional support;
- An unprecedented worsening of emotional wellbeing and mental health amongst children, young people and parents;
- A significant rise in 'extra familial harm', including county lines and exploitation of young people;
- An underlying trend of increasing special educational needs and disabilities, including some children with complex disabilities surviving into later childhood as a result of medical advances;
- An additional strain on families as a result of the pandemic and hidden harm with families locked down together.

Factors causing pressures previously identified have not eased off and, in many cases, have continued to increase, with many elements being unpredictable in

nature. The service now has better information enabling it to forecast the year end position.

- 2.6 Much of the pressures are due to the uncertainties and on-going impact of the pandemic. Patterns and trends have changed from those seen pre-pandemic as a result of our transformation programme, and the medium-to-longer-term impact of the pandemic continues to develop. Whilst management action has been, and continues to be, taken to mitigate the budget risks, the pressures have continued to increase.
- 2.7 The budgets that continue to cause the greatest concern are demand-led; specifically, external social care residential placements and home to school transport for those with special educational needs.
- 2.8 As previously reported, the former is under pressure due to rising demand for places, the rising complexity of need for vulnerable adolescents, and market forces significantly favouring suppliers of provision. The pressure on the number of residential placements required is due to the level of need and the scarcity of foster carers, both have been adversely impacted by the pandemic. Additionally, there has been increasing pressure on the leaving care budget, including where post-18s continue to receive support particularly with the challenge of securing suitable housing exacerbated by the pandemic. At this stage, £4.000m of the forecast overspend within social care is expected to be met through a corresponding contribution from Children's Services Business Risk Reserve.
- 2.9 The evidence from the tracking and delivery of the department's transformation programme is that pressure on placement supply and, therefore, budgets would have been far greater if transformation activity had not taken place and savings committed to as part of the budget planning process were not being delivered.
- 2.10 The home to school transport budget pressure of c. £3.6m is particularly due to the number of children and young people with high special educational needs and disabilities that need individual and/or high-cost assistance to travel to and from school or alternative provision. Since schools returned in April'21, similar to the national picture, NCC has seen a significant increase in demand for Education, Health and Care Plans and for specialist school provision, prompting increasing demand for transport. The current forecast includes the additional arrangements made throughout the Autumn term to meet needs and new requests, thus increasing the pressure on this budget (primarily for pupils for SEND). The forecast is higher than the pressure anticipated for this year when contributions were made to the Transport Equalisation Reserves at the end of the 2020-21 financial year; the use of these reserves, (£1.285m), had been forecast to mitigate the majority of this overspend. The cost pressure is a combination of higher costs from a less competitive market (a shortage of drivers following covid) and additional places in high SEND specialist provision seen within the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block spend.
- 2.11 The pandemic has had a disruptive impact upon education trading for the past 18 months, with some services unable to operate due to restrictions in place, others trading at reduced levels or staff being reassigned to undertake pandemic-related work to support the schools' sector. During 2020-21 there was significant additional government funding which mitigated the losses incurred during that period. Whilst we are seeing the market begin to rectify itself, this is delayed by rising COVID cases and schools remain understandably cautious about visitors. Management action is being taken to reduce the financial pressures caused through reviewing

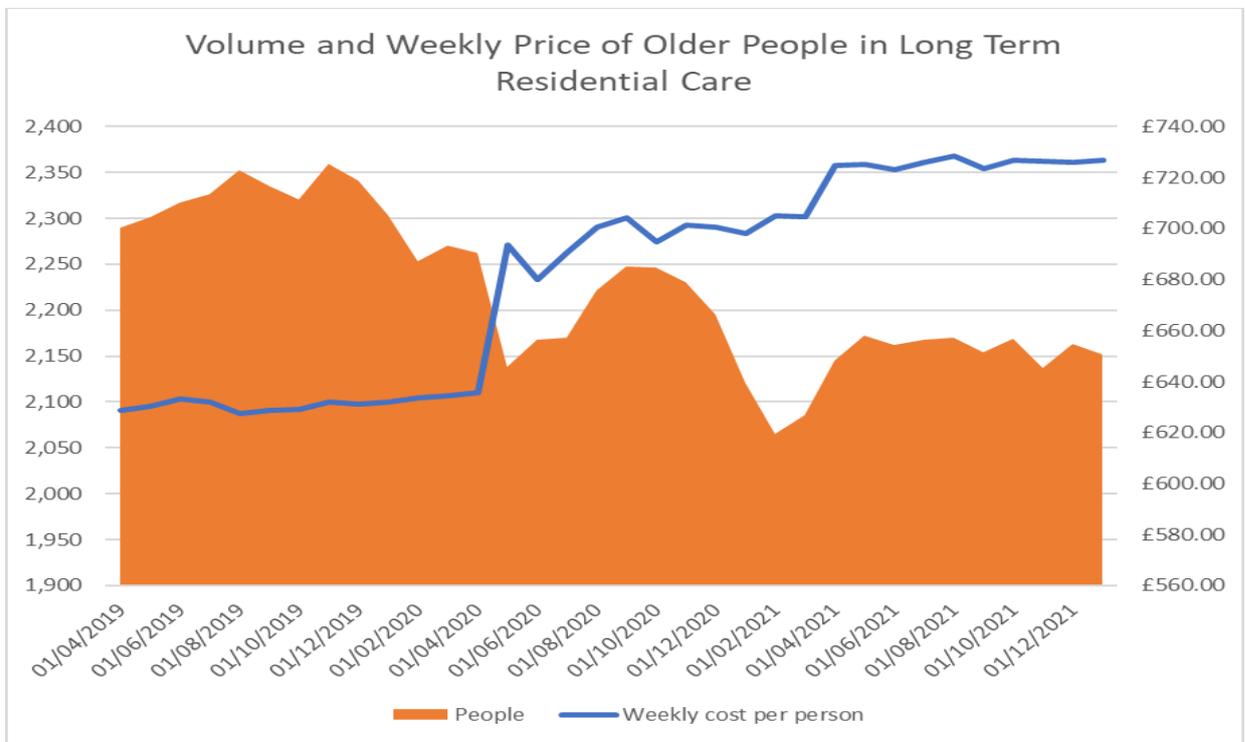
services to ensure that they will meet the new, anticipated demand as well as looking for alternative funding sources in the meantime.

- 2.12 Management action continues to be taken within the department, wherever possible to reduce the financial risks faced, both in this financial year and within future financial years. Any impact upon future years' budgets has been kept under close review as the 2022-23 Budget process was undertaken. The service also continues to presume the use of reserves to cover committed expenditure that slipped from 2020-21 due to the pandemic.
- 2.13 Given the current national context, there continues to be significant influences beyond the Council's control that make delivery of the transformation programme (and, therefore, savings) difficult. The ongoing recovery work is impacted by ongoing Covid-related staff shortages, surges in demands and any further Covid waves that may bring further restrictions and/or new scenarios to manage. These risks continue to be kept under close review.
- 2.14 **Adult Social Services:** The forecast outturn as at Period 10 (end of January 2022) is a balanced position after one-off reserve utilisation. With Adult Social Care (ASC) being a demand led service, the budget to provide it always operates under a degree of uncertainty. This has never been more apparent than in the last 12 months and is likely to continue for at least the remainder of this financial year. As reported throughout 2020/21, Covid-19 had a detrimental effect on the pace and scale of the ASC transformation programme. This therefore resulted in a shortfall in savings delivery which is still creating a legacy pressure against the department budget. At this time there is a risk that ASC will not be able to catch-up on the 2020/21 savings whilst also delivering against the new 2021/22 savings. During 2020/21 the department recognised the risk to 2021/22 budgets and built up a level of reserves to mitigate the risk.
- 2.15 The ASC service both in Norfolk and nationally, continues to be under immense pressure, with demands for services creating unique system and capacity constraints. Whilst not the direct remit of this report, understanding the wider departmental performance is crucial to understanding its financial performance.
- 2.15.1 As part of our regular reporting there are several key performance indicators that provide a sense of the challenge the department faces at present:
- Our holding lists are now at a high of 2900 people, which continues to represent a significant increase over the last 12 months. These lists are constantly monitored and prioritised to enable risk to be managed, which clearly is a significant resource pressure.
  - Our Interim Care list is above 800 people, which indicates that our Care Market currently cannot provide all the services that are demanded upon it. This is further indicated by the significant level of Reablement capacity that is being absorbed to provide traditional home support whereby this is not available from the independent market.
  - Since November 2020 we have seen a significant rise in the level of completed S42 (Care Act 2014) safeguarding enquiries. In Mental Health alone our service has completed 85% more S42 enquiries in 2021 than they did in the whole of 2020. The trend in Safeguarding referrals continues to be upwards with the Council receiving 152, 201 and 225 new referrals in the months November, December and January.

- The pressure facing our partners in the health system has meant discharge referrals from hospital into the Home First Hubs have increased by over 100% more than the staffing and commissioning capacity. We continue to work with members of Norfolk's Health and Care system to manage this demand.
- Our care providers' ability to recruit and retain staff, especially in services such as home support, is under strain at this time and will clearly limit capacity. For Home Support, since July 2020, we have seen a 35% increase in care vacancies, and in our care homes, a 14% increase in the last 3 months alone. Within this past month we are seeing a rise in the number of contracts that are either being handed back or having to be managed for interim periods due to temporary inability to staff.
- As well as external care staff vacancies, our own teams continue to struggle to maintain capacity despite a concerted effort to recruit and retain qualified Social Workers.
- As a result of the continued pressures, the service department has reintroduced its SCOPEL (Social Care Operational Escalation Level) measure, alongside the NHS OPEL equivalent. This provides a daily measure of the pressure on the systems in Norfolk. For much of December both SCOPEL and OPEL have operated at the highest level of pressure (Level 4) which has meant an urgent reprioritisation of resource towards managing this risk.

2.16 What the preceding paragraph means is our ASC budget, in particular the Older People Purchase of Care budget, continues to be under pressure. For our care purchasing budgets, whilst the pandemic has, in the short term, resulted in some reduced demand for services such as long-term residential care (see Graph 1), overall, we have still seen a 3% rise in demand for long term care, within which is a 13% rise in older people needing to access these services. We continue to give focus to our utilisation of short-term residential care beds and are seeing some positive results in reducing our dependence upon them. However, a high proportion of those previously in receipt of short term bedded care have converted into long term need. Of course, for the Health and Care system, as described by the SCOPEL paragraph above, the winter seasonal peak in pressure is now upon us, and capacity planning within our Winter Plan has kicked in and we make all attempts to manage this in the most cost-effective way possible.

Graph 1 & 2: Example of Older People care volume and price spikes over last 18 months.



2.17 During the last few periods the continued impact of the pandemic, and its effects on care capacity, has meant that we will see some short-term reductions in the volume, and therefore expenditure, of services such as home support and transport. These align to our rising interim care and holding lists. Whilst this could be perceived as positive movements financially, a continued pattern of movement from these drivers will likely be disadvantageous for both the outcomes of the people but also the longer term trend of cost.

2.18 We were pleased that new monies for Social Care relating to the six months to March 2022 were announced recently. These will provide a continued level of resource for care providers around infection control but also funding towards

Hospital Discharge arrangements. Both funds were only confirmed for the next 6 months and continue to present a longer term financial risk to the Council.

- 2.19 In order to meet current demand levels and balance both Covid recovery and service transformation, the department has needed to continue with both its recruitment drive and focus on staff retention. This meant we believed that some of our staff budgets that have historically underspent (due to vacancies) may well themselves have been under pressure. Our continued challenges in recruitment and retention, as articulated at a recent People and Communities Select Committee, has meant that these staff budgets continue to be underspent.
- 2.20 We recognised that 2021/22 would likely be a difficult financial year and built an adequate reserve balance to manage any presenting risk. We have now passed the mid-point in the financial year, and as at period 10, the ASC department is still forecasting an underlying overspend of £8m, mitigated by one-off utilisation of Business Risk reserves or one-off underspends. The ASC reserve forecast (Table 3, section 4.3) therefore reflects this planned reserve utilisation. As noted elsewhere in this paper, the recent announcements of additional funding relating to ASC, namely for the Care Market and Hospital Discharge, has meant the funding set aside for the latter half of the year towards these pressures will likely not be needed during 2021/22. The Period 10 reserve forecast therefore reflects the reduced usage towards these needs in the next few months. It does however recognise that the service is likely to require these funds to manage both these pressures, and the wider transformation requirements of the department, in 2022/23 and beyond.
- 2.21 **CES:** we are currently forecasting a balanced outturn position after the use of the business risk reserve, historically CES budgets have been fairly stable throughout the year, however the impact of the pandemic has added a degree of uncertainty to the budgets, specifically around income generation.
- 2.22 We are currently forecasting pressures around income within Museums, Libraries and On-street parking. Overall, the position will be mitigated through the local government income compensation scheme for lost sales, fees and charges and the use of the business risk reserve.
- 2.23 The department is also reviewing the additional costs of reopening services to ensure that they are available to the public and operating within the government guidelines.
- 2.24 Waste volumes at Recycling Centres and kerbside collections remain volatile following an exceptional year in 2020/21. The 2021/22 budget allowed for an increase in waste volumes, we continue to monitor this closely and the long term impacts on the budget.
- 2.25 **Corporate services:** The Strategy and Transformation and Governance directorates are forecasting a balanced position, making use of current underspends, Covid and reserves brought forward from 2021-22 where appropriate.
- 2.26 Finance and Commercial Services is forecasting a balanced budget as pressures due to the impact of COVID on loss of income and increasing overhead costs on Property services are offset using the business risk reserve.
- 2.27 **Finance General:** Finance General forecast for P10 includes the one-off reduction in Minimum Revenue Provision of £4.405m resulting from slippage in the 2020-21

Capital Programme. In addition, there are lower than anticipated redundancy and organisation change costs of £1.045m, interest savings of £0.777m due to borrowings secured at lower interest rates than budget, £0.632m additional interest receivable and £0.726m in Travel Rights Grants. This is offset by a £1.815m overspend in Covid related PPE, staff and premises costs. Other forecast underspends include £0.07m reduction in member travel and allowances, and the £0.1m Council's pension AVC salary sacrifice scheme. The net result is an overall underspend of £6.550m.

2.28 The forecast assumes use of £22.745m Covid reserves brought forward from 2020-21 to mitigate Covid related expenditure where appropriate and necessary to maintain a balanced budget. We are assuming that the combination of Covid grants and reserves will be sufficient to cover additional cost pressures, but at this stage of the year the extent of cost pressures may still change.

2.29 Further details are given in Appendix 1: Revenue Annex 1.

### 3 Approved budget, changes and variations

3.1 The 2021-22 budget was agreed by Council on 22 February 2021 and is summarised by service in the Council's Budget Book 2021-22 (page 17) as follows:

**Table 2: 2021-22 original and revised net budget by service**

Service	Approved net base budget	Revised budget P10
	£m	£m
Adult Social Care	252.550	252.290
Children's Services	178.886	178.636
Community and Environmental Services	158.307	158.484
Strategy and Transformation	8.422	8.601
Governance Department	1.904	1.865
Finance and Commercial Services	32.235	32.388
Finance General	-193.210	-193.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>439.094</b>	<b>439.094</b>

Note: this table may contain rounding differences.

3.2 There were some minor budget transfers between services in December 21 and January 22, however the Council's net budget for 2021-22 remains unchanged.

### 4 General balances and reserves

#### General balances

4.1 At its meeting on 22 February 2021, the County Council agreed a minimum level of general balances of £19.706m in 2021-22. The balance at 1 April 2021 was **£23.763m** following transfers of £4.056m from non-Covid related savings and Finance General underspends at the end of 2020-21. The forecast for 31 March 2022 is £23.763m, taking into account the forecast balanced budget.

#### Reserves and provisions 2021-22

4.2 The use of reserves anticipated at the time of budget setting was based on reserves balances anticipated in January 2021. Actual balances at the end of March 2021

were higher than planned, mainly as a result of grants being carried forward, including Covid-19 support grants, and reserves use being deferred.

- 4.3 The 2021-22 budget was approved based on a closing reserves and provisions (excluding DSG reserves) of £111.8m as at 31 March 2022. This, and the latest forecasts are as follows.

**Table 3: Reserves budgets and forecast reserves and provisions (excluding LMS/DSG)**

Reserves and provisions by service	Actual balances 1 April 2021(1)	Increase in March 2021 balances after budget setting	2021-22 Budget book forecast March 2022	Latest forecast balances 31 March 2022
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Services	38.611	16.836	14.102	31.892
Children's Services (inc schools, excl LMS/DSG)	17.412	8.953	5.832	7.438
Community and Environmental Services	54.223	12.274	49.780	57.360
Strategy and Transformation	1.892	0.529	1.265	2.615
Governance	2.119	0.236	0.908	1.515
Finance & Commercial Services	4.628	1.340	1.872	2.651
Finance General	39.255	6.172	30.739	25.477
Schools LMS balances	17.018	4.204	7.308	14.593
<b>Reserves and Provisions including LMS</b>	<b>175.158</b>	<b>50.544</b>	<b>111.806</b>	<b>143.541</b>
<b>DSG Reserve (negative)</b>	<b>-31.797</b>	<b>-0.834</b>	<b>-34.355</b>	<b>-55.057</b>

- 4.4 Covid grants and other grants and contributions brought forward as at 31 March 2021 resulted in reserves and provisions being £50.5m higher than had been assumed at the time of budget setting. However, it is assumed that the majority of these reserves will be used for service provision during 2021-22. As a result, the latest forecast net total for reserves and provisions at 31 March 2022 is approximately £31.735m higher than was assumed at the time of budget setting.
- 4.5 **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG):** The latest forecast DSG Reserve is based on the latest modelling of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Recovery Plan after the 2020-21 outturn, updated for the actual rise in placements and support seen during the financial year to date that have exceeded the growth estimates built into the budget. The forecast is for an in-year deficit of c. £23.3m overspend as at the end of March 2022 which increases the DSG Reserve to £55.1m at 31 March 2022. The forecast overspend is due to the High Needs Block, with the Schools Block forecast to have a small underspend c. (£0.2m), the Early Years Block forecast to overspend by c. £0.5m and the Central Services Schools Block to break-even. This compares to a budgeted deficit of £8.635m.
- 4.6 The areas of most significant cost pressure continue to be independent school placements along with post-16 provision and maintained special school placements. After the third national lock-down, there was a significant increase in demand for independent special school provision placements which significantly exceeds the

growth estimated in the budget and is the key driver behind the increased overspend forecast for the 2021-22 financial year.

- 4.7 In addition, the average cost of these places has risen by c. 15% since the budget was set. This price increase is replicated regionally and nationally and is due to the market conditions where demand is significantly exceeding supply. The charges of this sector are not regulated nationally, and local authorities are not in a position to properly negotiate upon price when it is required that a child is placed in the provision in line with statutory duties. Even prior to this increase in average costs, analysis shows that, Norfolk spends twice as much on independent special school places as it does upon state-funded (i.e., maintained, academy or free) school places, and the educational outcomes for children and young people are consistently higher within the state-funded sector.
- 4.8 These budgets will continue to be kept under close review. Officers have also raised concerns about the imbalance in the market with representatives of the DfE and requested support regarding regulation, to better support the control of costs and improving the outcomes for children and young people within these placements.
- 4.9 Another area of additional spend in 2021-22 relates to support in mainstream schools for children with high special educational needs to enable the child to remain within the mainstream sector either on a long-term basis, to prevent escalation of needs or on a short-term basis whilst specialist provision is awaited. As the pandemic restrictions have eased, there has been a significant demand from schools. This area of spend is being kept under close review, but it should be noted that additional spend on these budgets should mitigate pressures on maintained special school and independent school placements, particularly in the medium-to-longer-term.
- 4.10 Despite the pandemic, significant work by the NCC, Norfolk Schools Forum and the wider system continues to take place as part of the Children's Services Transformation Programme both to ensure that the right specialist provision is in the right place to meet needs (i.e. the capital investment), whilst also progressing work to transform how the whole system supports additional needs within mainstream provision.
- 4.11 NCC reports the forecast position each term to the Norfolk Schools Forum, in line with DfE expectations and feedback from the Forum continues to be sought. The latest report was to the November Schools Forum meeting (in line with the Period 6 forecast) and this position has been shared with the DfE in line with their requests for periodic update. As part of the DfE's ongoing monitoring where a local authority is carrying a cumulative deficit, a follow up meeting with representatives from the DfE has been held this term with no significant suggestions from the DfE as to alternative ways that Norfolk could be managing the DSG cost pressures.
- 4.12 Sustainable funding for the HNB continues to be pursued and NCC recently responded to a DfE consultation regarding revising the historical basis for the national funding formula for HNB; this consultation suggested that Norfolk has been under-funded for a number of years and, even if the proposals are implemented, will continue to be under funded due to a capping system. We have now received the provisional DSG allocations for 2022-23 that includes the outcome of this consultation; unfortunately, for Norfolk the final historical adjustment has been capped at a lower level than the consultation, meaning that level of under-funding for Norfolk continues and is exacerbated.

- 4.13 Norfolk has been investing significant capital monies in the creation of additional specialist places in existing state-funded schools alongside the building of new special schools and specialist resource base provision. Without this investment, the deficit position would have been significantly higher on the basis that the independent sector continues to expand to as demand continues. Officers have also fed back to the DfE regarding the vital role that capital investment could play in supporting the recovery of the High Needs Block, to enable placements to move from expensive independent provision into maintained / academy / free special schools. Sufficient capital investment has not been forthcoming from central government for many years and whilst there have been recent announcements, these need to be just the starting point if there is to be sufficient supply of state-funded specialist provision to fully meet the place needs of children with high SEND. Additionally, Officers have fed back that it is key that the funding announced is directed to those authorities where it would deliver the biggest benefit.
- 4.14 The outcome of the national major review into support for children with special educational needs following the implementation of the SEND Reform Act 2014 is currently expected this Autumn, having been previously delayed three times. It is anticipated that this review will deliver significant findings and that these will have financial implications.
- 4.15 In addition to the pressures seen within the High Needs Block, there is also a £0.5m forecast overspend in relation to the Early Years Block. When the hourly rate was set for 2021-22, various options were considered following a comprehensive consultation with the sector to refresh the formula for Norfolk. Detailed modelling of this block is challenging in 'normal' years due to the difficulties in estimating take up and the impact of supplements. 2020-21 was particularly unusual due to the pandemic, including in relation to future patterns of demand, with the modelling leaning towards maximising the rate to be disturbed and minimising the contingency available following underspends in previous years. Now that we have the majority of the 20-2122 data, it can be seen that the revised funding modelling overallocated and that, post clawback from the DfE, there will be an overspend. This is expected to be an in-year only pressure due to the modelling for 2022-23's hourly rate rectifying the situation to ensure affordability.
- 4.16 **Provisions included in the table above**
- The table above includes forecast provisions of £30.517m comprising:
- £10.0m insurance provision,
  - £12.6m landfill provision (this provision is not cash backed),
  - £4.921m provisions for bad debts,
  - £2.996m business rates appeals provision, and
  - a small number of payroll related provisions.

## **5 Covid-19 financial implications**

- 5.1 Details of central government funding announcements and forecast Covid-19 pressures are set out below.
- 5.2 Covid-19 funding forecasted to date is as follows:

Table 4a: Covid-19 funding

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Actual/forecast 2021-22 £m</b>
<b>Covid reserves brought forward</b>	
Home to School and College Transport Funding carried forward	0.598
Local Outbreak Control: test and trace service support grant carried forward	1.306
Contain Outbreak Management Fund carried forward	14.389
Community Testing Funding carried forward	0.049
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Funding carried forward	2.420
Wellbeing for Education Recovery Grant carried forward	0.037
Holiday Activity Fund Grant carried forward	0.018
Norfolk Assistance Scheme Reserve	0.491
Covid-19 Grant (Adults) carried forward	3.437
<b>Use of funding brought forward from 2020-21</b>	<b>22.745</b>
COVID-19 MHCLG Grant Tranche 5	18.829
Infection Control Fund	3.860
Infection Control and Testing Fund	4.755
Infection Control, Testing and Vaccination Fund	7.327
Home to School and College Transport Funding	0.245
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	4.859
Wellbeing for Education Recovery Grant	0.125
Covid Winter Grant Scheme	0.645
COVID Local Support Grant	2.579
Adult Social Care Rapid Testing Fund	2.535
Holiday Activity Fund Grant	2.389
Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant	3.803
Fire Home Office Grant	0.192
Hospital Discharge funding	12.706
Sales, fees and charges compensation	1.668
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	0.206
Practical Support for Self-Isolation Grant	2.069
Community Testing Funding	1.389
Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund	2.829
Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund – Round 2	5.223
Omicron Support Fund (OSF)	1.045
<b>Funding forecast in 2021-22</b>	<b>79.278</b>
	<b>102.023</b>
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	-4.859
<b>Funding to be carried forward into 2022-23</b>	<b>-4.859</b>
	<b>97.164</b>

***New / confirmed funding***

- 5.3 The majority of funding above is a continuation of funding streams first received in 2020-21. New funding sources include:

- 5.4 **Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund – Round 2:** On 10 December the government set out its Adult Social Care Winter Plan which included a commitment to providing a second round of funding for workforce recruitment and retention to support local authorities recruit and retain sufficient staff over winter, support growth and sustain the existing workforce capacity. Norfolk's share of this funding is £5.223m.
- 5.5 **Hospital Discharge Funding:** £6.210m agreed funding from Norfolk & Waveney CCG to cover the hospital discharge costs incurred by NCC for Adult Social Care up until 30 September 2021. £478m nationally has been announced by the Government for the second half of the financial year in relation to the Hospital Discharge Programme. For Norfolk and Waveney, we have been allocated £11.169m of funding, with c£6.496m currently aligned to expenditure associated with NCC expenditure. We have very strong indications that this will be the last funding for this national policy. We are therefore working closely with our Health partners to ensure we have a sustainable and effective Hospital Discharge Programme within the reduced resources for 2022/23 onwards.
- 5.6 An additional element of cost mitigation included in forecast over and underspends is the Government's **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**. While the scheme has not been used to duplicate other sources of public funding, such as the Covid-19 support grants, the government has recognised that there are exceptional cases where, for example, Local Authorities have needed to close venues such as museums and registry offices. Total furlough income scheme received in the year was £0.206m.
- 5.7 **Practical Support for Self-Isolation Grant:** The Council is expecting funding from the DHSC to provide practical support for those self-isolating.

#### **Other funding**

- 5.8 **Local government income compensation scheme for lost sales, fees and charges:** MHCLG have confirmed the extension to the Sales, Fees and Charges Scheme, into the first three months of 2021/22. The compensation subject to the same deductions as 2020-21 based on a 5% budget absorption and the 75 pence in every pound of loss thereafter). The Council submitted a claim on 20 October, if paid in full the Council will receive grant income of £1.668m from Government to compensate for lost income.
- 5.9 **Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF):** On 24<sup>th</sup> December the Council received confirmation that any unspent monies from COMF can be carried forward into the 2022-23 financial year. There is £14.389m carried forward from 2020-21 and an additional £4.859m received in 2021-22 which is being carried forward to offset the costs associated with containing the pandemic, vaccination roll-out and enhanced testing facilities across the county in 2022-23.
- 5.10 **Adult Social Care – Omicron Support Fund (OSF):** On 29<sup>th</sup> December the government announced a further £60m top-up to local authorities to support adult social care sector and protect those who receive care and their carers from COVID-19 infection. Norfolk's share of this funding is £1.045m.

### **Covid-19 related cost pressures**

5.10 A summary of the forecast Covid-19 related cost pressures are as follows:

**Table 4b: Covid-19 cost pressures**

<b>Table 4b: Covid-19 cost pressures</b>	<b>Adult Social Services</b>	<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>Community and Environmental Services</b>	<b>Strategy and Transformation</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Finance and Commercial Services</b>	<b>Finance General</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>2021-22 Covid-19 cost pressures</b>	<b>48.710</b>	<b>16.721</b>	<b>30.085</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.849</b>	<b>5.873</b>	<b>102.238</b>
Use of funding brought forward from 2020-21	-3.437	-0.653	-18.164	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.491	<b>-22.745</b>
2021-22 Grants and funding	-40.922	-3.020	-13.032	0.000	-0.025	-0.219	-22.057	<b>-79.277</b>
2021-22 Covid-19 Funding	<b>-44.359</b>	<b>-3.673</b>	<b>-31.197</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-0.025</b>	<b>-0.219</b>	<b>-22.548</b>	<b>-102.022</b>
Funding to be carried forward into 2022-23	0.000	0.000	4.859	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.859
<b>Net pressure</b>	<b>4.350</b>	<b>13.048</b>	<b>3.748</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-0.025</b>	<b>0.630</b>	<b>-16.675</b>	<b>5.074</b>

The forecast net Covid cost pressure position reflects ongoing pressures and costs throughout 2021-22 resulting in a net forecast Covid cost pressure of £5.074m.

### **Other pressures**

- 5.11 A particular risk relates to Business Rates and Council Tax income. This has been taken into account during 2021-22 budget setting. To assist future budgeting, the government has allowed Council's to spread their tax deficits over 3 years rather than the usual one year
- 5.12 The costs and income pressure relating to Covid-19 vary from the overall Council forecast balanced budget position shown in this report. This is due to non-Covid-19 related actions put in place by Chief Officers to mitigate the financial impacts of the pandemic.

## **6 Budget savings 2021-22 summary**

- 6.1 In setting its 2021-22 Budget, the County Council agreed net savings of £41.179m. Details of all budgeted savings can be found in the 2021-22 Budget Book. A summary of the total savings forecast to be delivered is provided in this section.

6.2 The latest monitoring reflects total forecast savings delivery of £37.019m and a total shortfall of £4.160m (10%) at year end.

6.3 The forecast savings delivery is anticipated as shown in the table below:

Table 5: Analysis of 2021-22 savings forecast

	Adult Social Services	Children's Services	Community and Environmental Services	Strategy and Transformation	Governance	Finance and Commercial Services	Finance General	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Budget savings	17.858	11.300	8.288	0.553	0.353	1.927	0.900	<b>41.179</b>
Period 8 forecast savings	14.588	11.300	8.288	0.553	0.353	1.367	0.900	<b>37.019</b>
Savings shortfall (net)	3.270	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.560	0.000	<b>4.160</b>

### Commentary on savings risk areas

6.4 Some saving programmes have highlighted risk areas which will need to be kept under review. Any updates to the forecast delivery of savings will be included in future monitoring to Cabinet.

#### Adult Social Services

6.5 Adult Social Services are presently forecasting to deliver £14.588m of their £17.858m 2021/22 savings target, but further significant risks exist. The £3.270m non-delivery relates to three savings.

6.6 £2.000m non delivery relates to the Short Term Out of Hospital Offer saving (ASS015) due to the high demand experienced for short term residential care following hospital discharge. The saving was predicated on the reduction of the use of short-term beds and the ability to reduce the length of stay, however due to Covid this has not been possible. Therefore, at Period 8 we continue to declare £2.000m non delivery against this £3.670m saving.

6.7 At Period 10 we are also declaring a shortfall in the Homebased Reablement Saving (ASS001) of £0.870m against a £1.250m target. The Reablement service is currently experiencing considerable capacity issues due to having to 'hold' home care packages due to the significant pressures in the market. They also have a number of staff vacancies. Both these factors have meant that the services capacity to accept reablement referrals has substantially reduced. This has resulted in a reduction in the savings that are forecast to be delivered this year.

6.8 The other area at period 10 that we are now declaring as expected not to be delivered is the Digital Sourcing saving (an element of ASC36), £0.400m. Due to the considerable resourcing and Covid pressures on the market, at the moment we are still seeing upward pressures on the price levels the Council is having to pay for care. This is exacerbated by not currently being able to use a Sourcing Tool to support discussions.

- 6.9 There are other risks to the delivery of savings which may mean in future periods some of the other savings will have adverse forecasts applied to them. As conveyed in the revenue section of this report, Adult Social Services will likely struggle to deliver the previous year's (2020/21) savings shortfall whilst also delivering the present year savings.

### **Children's Services**

- 6.10 Despite the ongoing pressures being seen by the department, it is anticipated that the Children's Services budgeted savings, which lie primarily within the transformation programme, will be delivered in 2021-22 based upon the latest analysis available. The profile of delivery of savings across the whole programme varies from the original budgeted expectation; some projects are under-delivering due to the impact of the pandemic (e.g. upon foster carer recruitment) but other projects, such as New Roads, are delivering savings ahead of schedule.
- 6.11 The forecast continues to assume that savings will be delivered during the remainder of the financial year; significant deviation from these plans could result in an increase to the forecast. Therefore, expected delivery of savings will continue to be kept under close review.
- 6.12 As advised elsewhere in this report, there are significant stresses within the system due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic that are diverting resources away from the transformation programme, as well as pressures within the market that means it is more challenging to secure the right provision, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost; all of which are essential to deliver many elements of the transformation programme.
- 6.13 Other significant influences that are beyond the Council's control continue to make delivery of the transformation programme (and, therefore, savings) difficult considering the ongoing recovery work, ongoing direct Covid-related impacts including self-isolation of staff, increases in demand seen and further waves. Therefore, expected delivery of savings will continue to be kept under close review.

### **Finance and Commercial Services**

- 6.14 £0.560m non delivery relates to Corporate Property Team savings (P&R027/P&R058/P&R060). Savings have to date been absorbed / delivered through one-off measures but following a detailed review of previously identified savings from 2016, particularly around commercialisation of elements, these are no longer felt to be achievable. A number of the initiatives have been market tested and evaluated and do not produce a significant return or pose a financial / reputational risk to NCC. The non-delivery of savings in 2021-22 has been reflected in the monitoring position and is proposed to be addressed as part of the 2022-23 Budget

### **2022-23 to 2024-25 savings**

- 6.15 Budget setting in 2021-22 saw the approval of £2.245m savings for 2022-23, £1.600m for 2023-24 and £2.500m savings for 2024-25. The deliverability of these savings, including any 2021-22 savings that are permanently undeliverable, has been considered as part of the budget setting process for 2022-26 and the saving

position in the Revenue Budget report to January Cabinet above reflected the removal or delay of £1.596m of saving proposals brought forward from previous budget rounds.

## Revenue Annex 1

### Forecast revenue outturn

#### Revenue outturn by service

The forecast net balanced budget is a result of a range of underlying forecast over and underspends which are listed below.

#### Revenue budget outturn by service – detail

Adult Social Services	Revised Budget	Overspend	Under spend	Forecast net spend
		£m	£m	
Purchase of Care		1.763		
Commissioned Services			-0.261	
Community Social Work			-0.360	
Business Development			-0.141	
Early Help & Prevention			-0.768	
Community Health & Social Care			-0.322	
Management, Finance & HR		8.989		
Use of Business Risk Reserve			-8.900	
<b>Forecast over / (under) spends</b>		<b>10.752</b>	<b>-10.752</b>	
<b>Net total</b>	<b>252.290</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>252.290</b>
<i>The underlying over and underspends above excludes the planned use of ASC reserves built into the 2021-22 budget</i>				
<b>Children's Services</b>				
Social Care		9.700		
Learning and Inclusion		3.960		
Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources			-1.645	
Use of Children's Services Business Risk Reserves			-4.000	
Use of Transport Equalisation Risk Reserves			-1.285	
Use of anticipated MHCLG Loss of Fees and Charges Income			-0.180	
<b>Forecast over / (under) spends</b>		<b>13.660</b>	<b>-7.110</b>	
<b>Net total</b>	<b>178.636</b>		<b>6.550</b>	<b>185.186</b>
<b>Community and Environmental Services</b>				
Museums – Forecast Loss of income		0.699		
Libraries Loss of income		0.208		
On-street Parking income		0.400		
Use of Business risk reserve			-1.307	
<b>Forecast over / (Under) spend</b>		<b>1.307</b>	<b>-1.307</b>	
<b>Net total</b>	<b>158.484</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>158.484</b>

	Revised Budget	Overspend	Under spend	Forecast net spend
<b>Strategy and Transformation</b>				
Net underspends			-0.241	
Cost pressures		0.241		
<b>Forecast over / (under) spend</b>		<b>0.241</b>	<b>-0.241</b>	
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>8.601</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>8.601</b>
<b>Governance</b>				
Election and coroners costs		0.622		
Net underspends			-0.019	
Use of Business Risk Reserve			-0.165	
Use of Election Costs reserves			-0.438	
<b>Forecast over / (under) spend</b>		<b>0.622</b>	<b>-0.622</b>	
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>1.865</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1.865</b>
<b>Finance and Commercial Services</b>				
COVID 19 – Loss of income, extra expenditure		0.378		
Cost pressures in Property and Finance		1.797		
Net underspends			-0.198	
Use of Reserves			-1.977	
<b>Forecast over / (under) spend</b>		<b>2.175</b>	<b>-2.175</b>	
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>32.388</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>32.388</b>
<b>Finance General</b>				
Covid-19 additional costs		1.815		
Travel Rights Grant income received, additional S31 grants and ESPO dividends			-0.994	
Members travel and allowances			-0.067	
Pension AVC Salary Sacrifice scheme			-0.123	
Interest on balances			-0.777	
Interest receivable			-0.632	
Minimum Revenue Provision			-4.405	
Lower than anticipated redundancy and organisation change costs			-1.045	
Other cost pressures and underspends			-0.322	
<b>Forecast over / (under) spend</b>		<b>1.815</b>	<b>-8.365</b>	
<b>Net total</b>	<b>-193.170</b>		<b>-6.550</b>	<b>-199.720</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>439.094</b>			<b>439.094</b>

## Revenue Annex 2 – Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve

	<b>Reserve as at 31 Mar 21</b>	Revised Budget (A)	<b>Budgeted Reserve as at 31 Mar 22</b>	Forecast Spend (B)	(Over) / under spend A-B	Forecast Reserve as at 31 Mar 22
<b><i>Dedicated schools grant</i></b>						
High Needs Block		8.635		-23.260	-14.625	
Increase in net deficit to be carried forward		-8.635				
<b>Forecast (over) / under spend</b>				<b>-23.260</b>	<b>-14.625</b>	
<b>Net deficit (DSG Reserve)</b>	<b>-31.797</b>		<b>-40.432</b>			<b>-55.057</b>

## Revenue Annex 3

### Impact of Covid-19 – forecast cost pressures

Forecast cost pressures summarised in paragraph 5 of the main report are as follows:

	<b>2021-22 Forecast £m</b>
<b><u>Identified / forecast costs</u></b>	
<b>Adult Social Care</b>	
Support for people experiencing domestic abuse	0.050
Provider support payments to cover liquidity/sustainability issues and any additional costs where not specifically related to a person's changing care needs	1.000
Savings Risk Mitigation and Covid Recovery	4.051
Weekend or Overtime staff costs	0.180
Additional Capacity	1.353
Adult Social Care remote working costs	0.055
Adult Social Care Voluntary Sector	0.016
Loss of income - Day Care and Residential contributions	1.639
Hospital Discharge Programme	12.792
Full use of Infection Control funding	11.527
Full use of Adult Social Care Rapid Testing Fund	6.950
Full use of Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund	8.052
Full use of Omicron Support Fund	1.045
<b>Adult Social Care Total</b>	<b>48.710</b>
<b>Children's Services</b>	
Loss of income - Children's Services	1.071
Maintaining Early Year's Provision	0.139
Safeguarding campaign	0.030
Additional social care placement costs, including impact of market supply pressures as well as additional numbers of placements	8.962
Delayed transformation savings	0.330
Additional frontline agency costs	0.500
Children's Services remote working costs	0.017
Children's Services staff costs	0.033
Additional social worker training	0.075
School Sickness Insurance Scheme	0.100
Holiday Activity Fund	2.421
Full use of Home to School and College Transport Funding	0.843
Full use of Wellbeing for Education Return Grant	0.162
<b>Children's Services Total</b>	<b>16.721</b>
<b>Community and Environmental Services</b>	
Customer Services additional Covid expenditure	0.005
Additional Resilience costs	0.185
Highways additional COVID costs from 3rd party contractor work	0.085
Public Transport - Covid Bus Services Support Grant	3.897
Loss of income: Libraries	0.526
Loss of income: Museums	1.186
Loss of income: Recreation and Sport	0.005

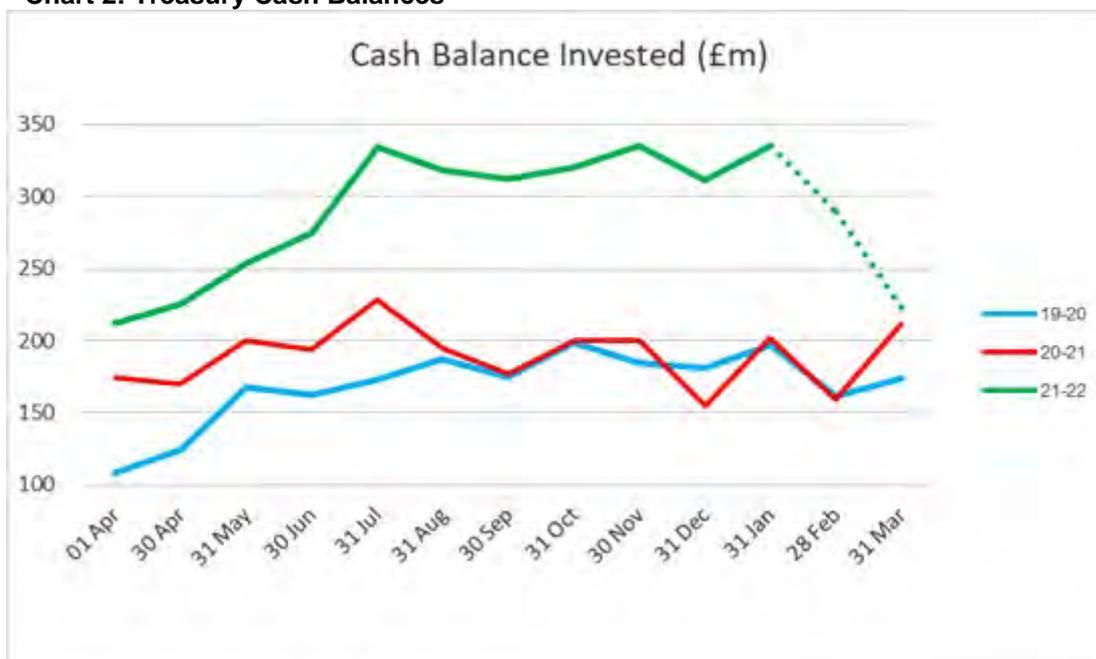
	<b>2021-22 Forecast £m</b>
Loss of income: Adult Education	0.170
Loss of income: Customer Service Centre	0.007
Loss of income: Planning Services	0.056
Loss of income: Public Transport	0.187
Loss of income: Records Office	0.005
Loss of income: CES including On-street Parking	0.629
Additional / redeployed Libraries staff	0.327
Additional / redeployed Museums staff	0.128
Additional / redeployed Records Office staff	0.005
Additional Covid Resilience/Consulting Costs	0.235
Additional COVID expenditure within Growth & Infrastructure	0.089
Additional COVID expenditure within Waste	0.974
CES remote working costs	0.018
CES property costs	0.034
Full use of Fire Home Office Grant	0.192
Public Health expenditure	0.066
Full use of Local Outbreak Control: Test and Trace service support grant	1.306
Full use of Contain Outbreak Management Fund grant	14.389
Full use of Community Testing funding	0.890
Full use of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable funding	4.489
<b>Community and Environmental Services Total</b>	<b>30.085</b>
<b>Strategy and Transformation</b>	
<b>Strategy and Transformation Total</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Governance</b>	
<b>Governance Total</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Finance and Commercial Services</b>	
Covid response costs - redeployed staff, property costs (FCS)	0.336
Loss of income across Finance and Commercial Services including IMT Services to Schools, Property and Car Park income	0.513
<b>Finance and Commercial Services Total</b>	<b>0.849</b>
<b>Finance General</b>	
Covid response costs - redeployed staff, property costs	1.258
Additional / redeployed IMT staff	0.025
IMT - Infrastructure - Extra Telephony costs associated with WFH	0.086
Temporary mortuary costs	0.178
Corporate procurement of PPE	0.035
Distribution hub - Site costs	0.329
Extension of Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS)	0.491
Kit for digitally disadvantaged children	0.071
IMT Guided Learning	0.176
Use of COVID Local Support Grant	2.579
Use of COVID Winter Grant Scheme funding	0.645
<b>Finance General Total</b>	<b>5.873</b>
<b>Covid-19 financial pressures Norfolk County Council total</b>	<b>102.238</b>

## Appendix 2: 2021-22 Balance Sheet Finance Monitoring Report Month 10

### 1 Treasury management summary

- 1.1 The corporate treasury management function ensures the efficient management of all the authority's cash balances. The graph below shows the level of cash balances over the last two financial years to March 2021, and projections to March 2022.

Chart 2: Treasury Cash Balances



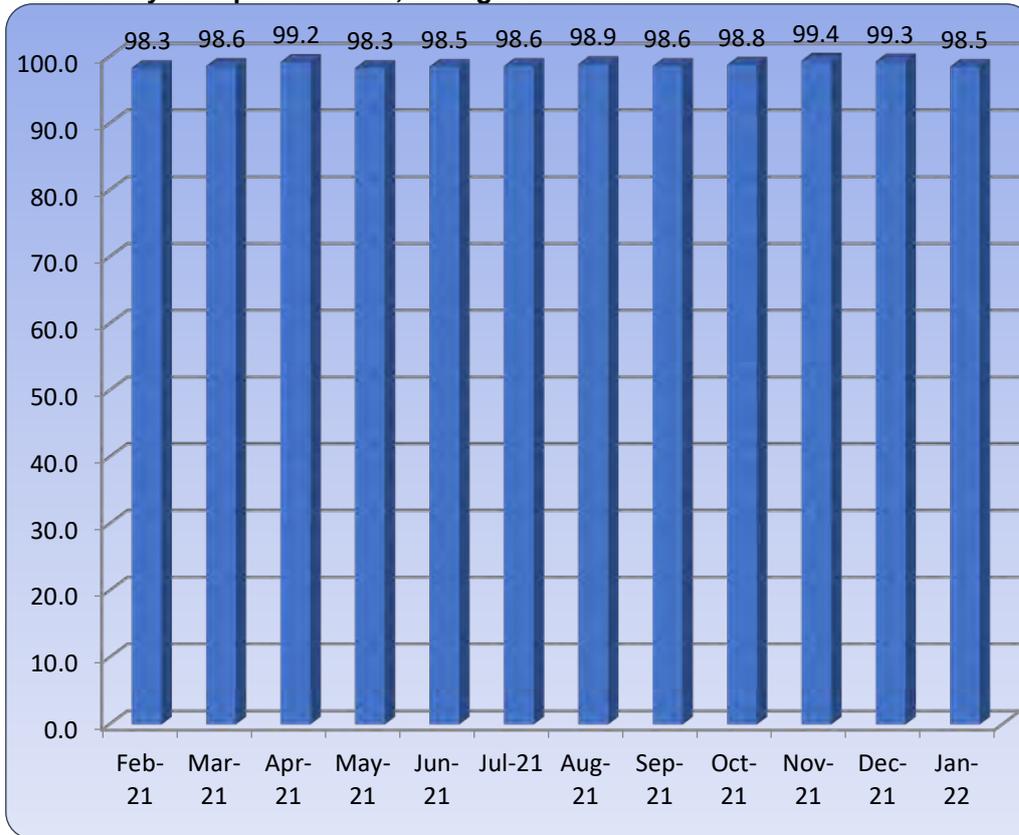
- 1.2 The Council has completed its planned borrowing for 2021-22 and will now hold off from further borrowing in the current financial year.
- 1.3 The Council has healthy cash balances for the immediate future and the year to date borrowing of £110m has reduced the Council's exposure to potential future interest rate rises and secured a £0.718m saving on interest payable this year. The Council intends to continue pursuing this strategy of long term borrowing secured at fixed rates below a 1.85% trigger point.
- 1.4 The Council's Treasury Strategy assumes as much as £80m may be borrowed in 2021-22, plus £30m deferred from 2020-21. The forecast cash flow takes into account the full £110m borrowed to date, £20m advance payments for April 2022 resulting from the Oracle implementation and current capital programme forecast resulting in a closing cash balance of approximately £222.876m
- 1.5 PWLB and commercial borrowing for capital purposes was £855.324m at the end of January 2022. The associated annual interest payable on existing borrowing is £30.905m.

### 2 Payment performance

- 2.1 This chart shows the percentage of invoices that were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received. Some 470,000 invoices are paid annually.

99.3% were paid on time in December 21 and 98.5% were paid on time in January 22 against a target of 98%. The percentage has remained above the target of 98% in the last 12 months.

**Chart 3: Payment performance, rolling 12 months**



Note: The figures include an allowance for disputes/exclusions.

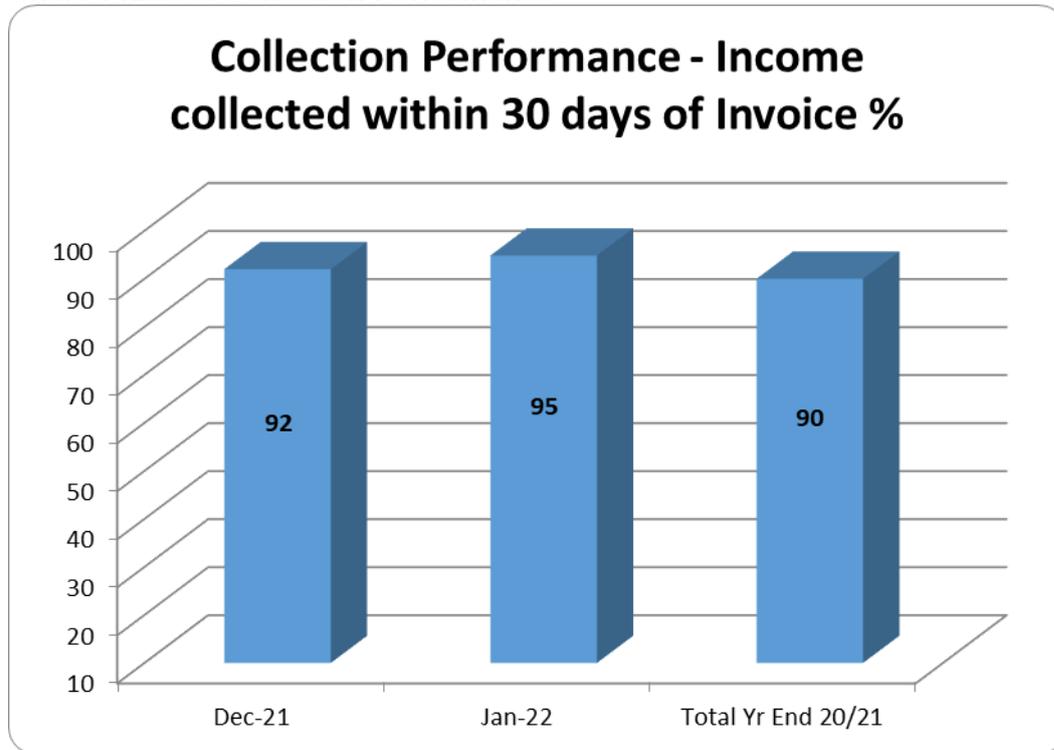
### 3 Debt recovery

3.1 **Introduction:** In 2020-21 the County Council raised over 135,100 invoices for statutory and non-statutory services. These invoices totalled in excess of £1.7bn. Through 2020-21 90.1% of all invoiced income was collected within 30 days of issuing an invoice, with 97.5% collected within 180 days.

#### **Debt collection performance measures – latest available data**

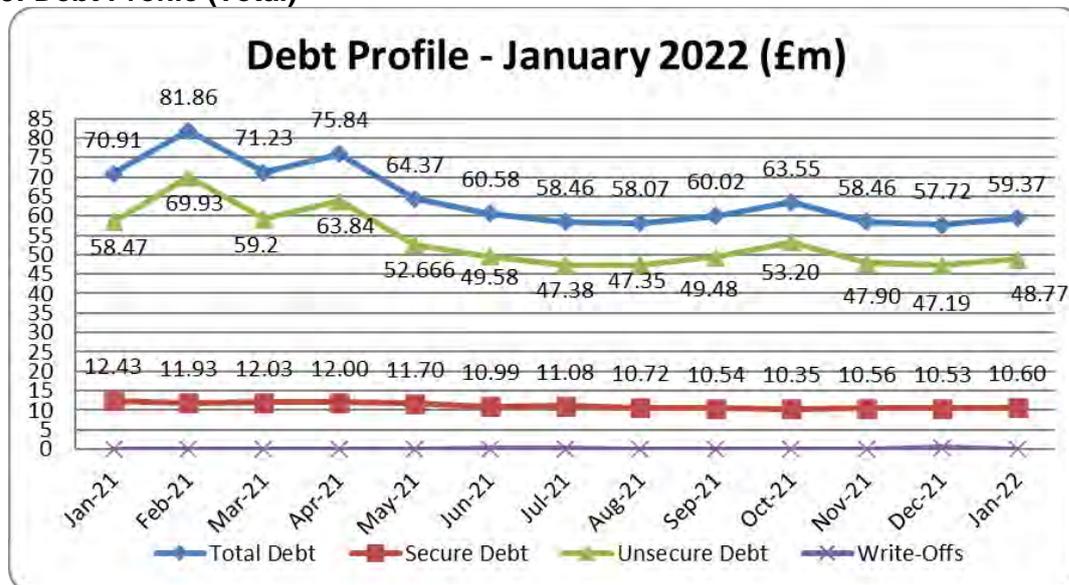
3.2 The proportion of invoiced income collected within 30 days for invoices raised in the previous month – measured by value – was 92% in December 2021 and 95% in January 22.

**Chart 4 :Latest Collection Performance**



3.3 The value of outstanding debt is continuously monitored, and recovery procedures are in place to ensure that action is taken to recover all money due to Norfolk County Council. The level of debt is shown in the following graph:

**Chart 5: Debt Profile (Total)**



3.4 The overall level of unsecure debt decreased by £0.71m in December 21 and then increased by £1.58m in January 22. Of the £48.87m unsecure debt at the end of January 22; £7.98m is under 30 days, £1.59m has been referred to NPLaw, £1.25m is being paid off by regular instalments and £7.77m is awaiting estate finalisation. The largest area of unsecure debt relates to charges for social care, £39.4m, of which £5.5m is under 30 days and £15.21m is debt with the CCG's for shared care, Better

Care Pooled Fund, continuing care and free nursing care. The overall debt with the CCGs has decreased by £0.33m in January 22.

- 3.5 Secured debts amount to £10.6m at 31 January 22. Within this total £3.62m relates to estate finalisation where the client has died, and the estate is in the hands of the executors.
- 3.6 **Debt write-offs:** In accordance with Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures, Cabinet is required to approve the write-off of debts over £10,000. The Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services approves the write-off of all debts up to £10,000.
- 3.7 Service departments are responsible for funding their debt write-offs. Before writing off any debt all appropriate credit control procedures are followed.
- 3.8 For the period 1 April 2021 to 31 January 22, 1557 debts less than £10,000 were approved to be written off following approval from the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services. These debts totalled £594,970.95, the majority of which are individual debts below £500 for which no further recourse for debt recovery is available .
- 3.9 Of the £595k debts written off 26 debts were over £500, totalling £53,373.24. No debts over £10,000 have been approved for write-off since 1 April 2021.

## Appendix 3: 2021-22 Capital Finance Monitoring Report

### Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services

#### 1 Capital Programme 2021-25

- 1.1 On 22 February 2021, the County Council agreed a 2021-22 capital programme of £281.594m with a further £256.066m allocated to future years', giving a total of £537.660m.
- 1.2 Additional re-profiling from 2020-21 resulted in an overall capital programme at 1 April 2021 of £661m. Further in-year adjustments have resulted in the capital programme shown below:

**Table 1: Capital Programme budget**

	<b>2021-22 budget</b>	<b>Future years</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
New schemes approved February 2021	33.687	68.781
Previously approved schemes brought forward	247.907	187.285
<b>Totals in 2021-25+ Budget Book (total £537.660m)</b>	<b>281.594</b>	<b>256.066</b>
Schemes re-profiled after budget setting	95.379	
New schemes approved after budget setting	1.249	
Other adjustments after budget setting including new grants	20.489	6.363
<b>Revised opening capital programme (total £661.140m)</b>	<b>398.711</b>	<b>262.429</b>
Re-profiling since start of year	-160.291	160.291
Norwich Western Link (approved 7 <sup>th</sup> June 21)	12.296	174.544
Other movements including new grants and approved schemes	75.950	27.856
<b>Total capital programme budgets (total £951.786)</b>	<b>326.666</b>	<b>625.120</b>

*Note: this table and the tables below contain rounding differences*

- 1.3 The total capital programme budget has increased by £0.434m compared to P8 (£951.351) due to:
- £1m application of capital receipts to the ASC Transformation Programme
  - £1.499m Department of Transport Funding received for the Norwich Western Link Project (£0.880m), the St Williams Way cycle lane (£0.301m), the King Street Walking Scheme (£0.225), partially offset by the release of (£0.45m) DfT funding for the Long Stratton Bypass, to align budgets to the latest forecasts
  - £0.823m increase in developer contributions to the Children's Services capital budgets or Loddon (£0.379m), Swaffham (£0.124m), Trowse (£0.319m)
  - £0.412m additional contributions for the expansion of Hethersett and Sprowston Academies
  - £2.691m reduction in borrowing required for the Better Broadband project following the receipt of further rebates from BT OpenReach in response to increased take-up of the fibre network across the county
  - £0.212m reduction in County Farms budget following funding identified via capital receipts related to the disposal of County Farm surplus land

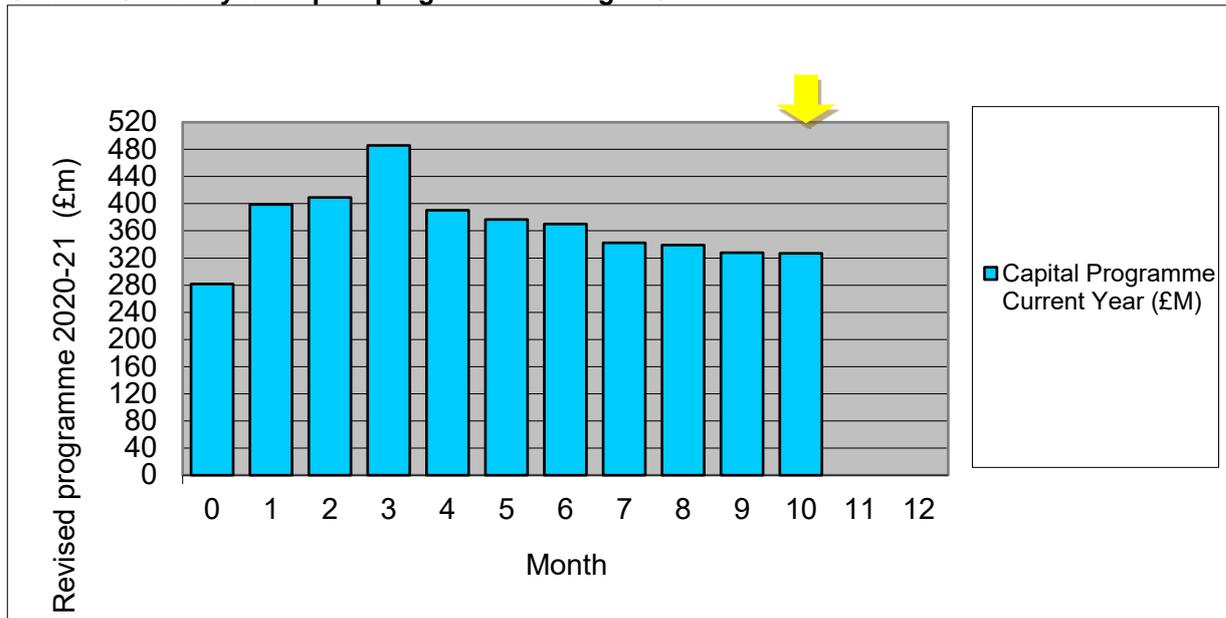
- Other minor adjustments to various project budgets totalling a £0.049m increase to reflect year to date spend and external contributions

1.4 The on-going review of forecasts has resulted in further slippage of £11.476m budgets to future years from 2021-22 budget bringing the total budget reprofiled this year to £160.291m. A full breakdown of these movements in capital budget are available in Capital Annex 1 below.

### Changes to the Capital Programme

1.5 The following chart shows changes to the 2021-22 capital programme through the year.

**Chart 1: Current year capital programme through 2021-22**



1.6 Month “0” shows the 2021-22 capital programme at the time of budget approval, with schemes reprofiled after budget setting shown in month 1, followed by the most up to date programme. The current year programme will change as additional funding is secured, and when schemes are re-profiled to future years as timing becomes more certain.

1.7 The current year’s capital budget is as follows:

**Table 2: Service capital budgets and movements 2021-22**

Service	Opening programme	Previous report	Reprofiling since previous report	Other Changes since previous report	2021-22 latest Capital Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's Services	133.879	-66.621	-1.152	-0.009	66.097
Adult Social Care	14.888	-0.217	0.135	1.000	15.806
Community & Environmental Services	162.948	7.254	-6.150	-1.584	162.468
Finance & Commercial Services	86.914	-0.248	-4.309	-0.212	82.145
Strategy & Governance	0.082	0.068	0.000	0.000	0.150

Total	398.711	-59.764	-11.476	-0.805	326.666
		338.947		-12.281	

Note: this table may contain rounding differences.

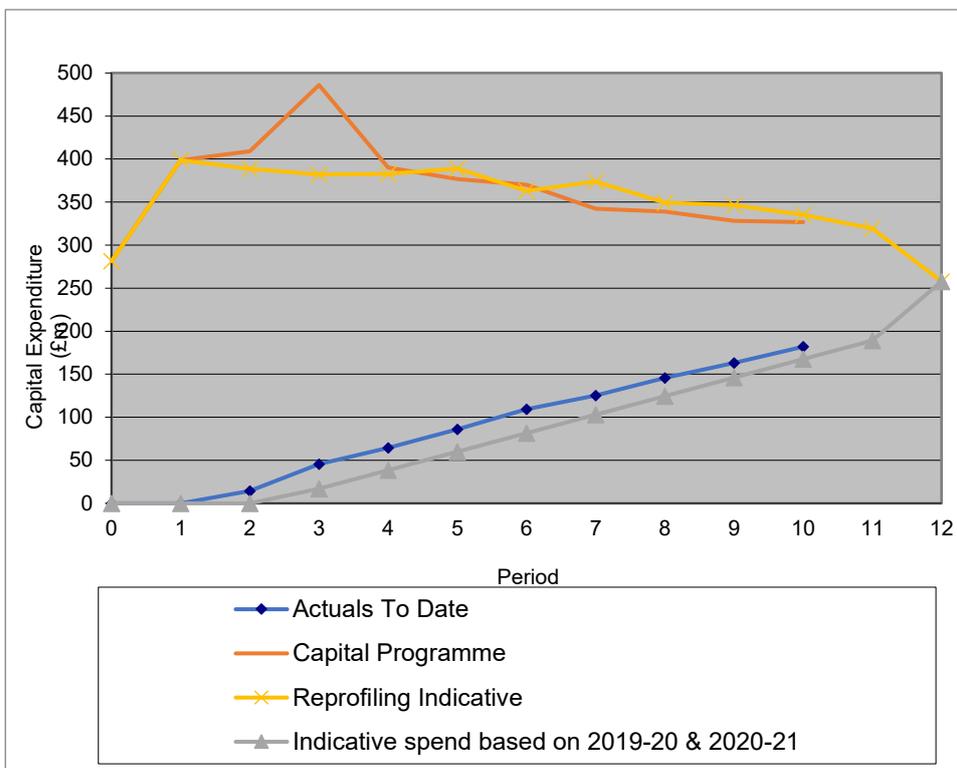
1.8 The revised programme for future years (2022-23 to 2024-25 and beyond) is as follows:

**Table 3: Capital programme future years 2022+**

Service	Previously reported future programme	Reprofiling since previous report	Other Changes since previous report	2022+ Future Capital Budget
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's Services	197.554	1.152	1.240	199.946
Adult Social Care	57.098	-0.135	0.000	56.963
Community & Environmental Services	317.257	6.150	0.000	323.407
Finance & Commercial Services	40.213	4.309	0.000	44.521
Strategy & Governance	0.282	0.000	0.000	0.282
<b>Total</b>	<b>612.404</b>	<b>11.476</b>	<b>1.240</b>	<b>625.120</b>

Note: this table contains rounding differences

1.9 The graph below shows the movement on the current year capital budget and year to date capital expenditure:



The graph shows that actual year to date capital spend is ahead of the opening forecast, which was based on the opening capital programme and an indicative calculation based on previous years' expenditure. It also shows that budgets are being re-profiled to future years as the progress on projects becomes clearer. As a result, capital expenditure of approximately £257.838m is expected to take place in 2021-22.

## 2 Financing the capital programme

- 2.1 Funding for the capital programme comes primarily from grants and contributions provided by central government and prudential borrowing. These are supplemented by capital receipts, developer contributions, and contributions from revenue budgets and reserves.

**Table 4: Financing of the capital programme**

<b>Funding stream</b>	<b>2021-22 Programme</b>	<b>Future Years Forecast</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Prudential Borrowing	149.112	383.822
Use of Capital Receipts	1.000	
Revenue & Reserves	0.235	-
<i>Grants and Contributions:</i>		
DfE	27.803	48.503
DfT	108.496	161.886
DoH	9.352	0.173
MHCLG	0.139	-
DCMS	5.175	-
DEFRA	2.000	-
Developer Contributions	8.707	24.108
Other Local Authorities	0.799	0.036
Local Enterprise Partnership	1.004	
Community Infrastructure Levy	2.971	2.969
National Lottery	4.638	3.182
Commercial Contributions	4.490	
Business rates pool fund		
Other	0.745	0.441
<b>Total capital programme</b>	<b>326.666</b>	<b>625.120</b>

*Note: this table may contain rounding differences*

- 2.2 For the purposes of the table above, it is assumed that all capital receipts will be applied directly to the re-payment of debt and transformation projects, rather than being applied to fund capital expenditure. Any proposals to utilise capital receipts to fund in-year capital expenditure are recommended to Cabinet for approval (see section 3 below)
- 2.3 Developer contributions are funding held in relation to planning applications. Section 106 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) contributions are held in relation to specific projects: primarily schools, with smaller amounts for libraries and highways. The majority of highways developer contributions are a result of section 278 agreements (Highways Act 1980).

### 3 Capital Receipts

3.1 The Council's property portfolio is constantly reviewed to ensure assets are only held where necessary so that capital receipts or rental income can be generated. This in turn reduces revenue costs of the operational property portfolio.

3.2 The capital programme, approved in February 2021, gave the best estimate at that time of the value of properties available for disposal in the four years to 2024-25, totalling £20.4m.

**Table 5a: Disposals capital programme forecast**

Financial Year	Property sales forecast £m
2021-22	10.6
2022-23	5.7
2023-24	3.9
2024-25	0.2
	<b>20.4</b>

The timing of future year sales is the most optimistic case and may slip into future years if sales completions are delayed.

3.3 The revised schedule for current year disposals is as follows:

**Table 5b: Capital receipts and forecast use current financial year £m**

Capital receipts 2021-22	£m
Capital receipts reserve brought forward	6.449
Loan repayments – subsidiaries forecast for year	0.787
Loan repayments – LIF loan repayments to date	0.358
<b>Capital receipts to date</b>	
Sale of Hopton Land to Repton	2.862
Other Capital receipts in year	2.932
Capital Receipts forecasted for asset disposals subject to contract	1.791
<b>Secured capital receipts to date</b>	<b>15.179</b>
Potential current year farms sales	-
Potential current year non-farms sales	-
Potential development property sales	-
<b>Potential capital receipts</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Forecast available capital receipts</b>	<b>15.179</b>
<b>Forecast use of capital receipts</b>	
Budget 2021-22 to repay debt	2.000
Maximum flexible use of capital receipts to support transformation costs	3.000
To fund short-life assets – IT and VPE	5.000
Norwich Western Link Reserve	5.061
<b>Total forecast use of capital receipts</b>	<b>15.061</b>

3.4 As can be seen from this table, enough capital receipts have been secured to support the approved 2021-22 revenue budget. Considering delays anticipated in January to

March 2022, the potential capital receipts anticipated for 2021-22 has been reduced by £2.65m and moved into 2022-23.

- 3.5 Further sales will contribute to the capital receipts reserve which can be used to reduce the external borrowing requirement, fund debt repayments, flexible use of capital receipts or to directly fund capital expenditure, thereby reducing the Capital Funding Requirement (CFR).
- 3.6 On 10 February 2021, the DLUHC announced that the flexibility granted to local authorities to utilise capital receipts to support transformation costs has been extended for a further 3 years. Table 5b includes £3m earmarked for this in 2021-22- £1m to ASC and £2m to Children's Services. The £1m ASC Transformation has been drawn down and added to the capital programme in P10.

#### **4 New capital budget proposals**

- 4.1 The additions to the capital budget for January 2022 include the following:
- £1m ASC Transformation Programme funded from capital receipts
  - £0.880 DfT funding received for the Norwich Western Link
  - £0.301m DfT funding received for the St Williams Way Cycle Lane
  - £0.225 DfT funding received for the King Street Walking scheme
  - £0.116m Local Authority funding received for the Harleston & Redenhall Town Centre Refurbishment
  - £0.832m increase in various projects funded by local developer contributions
  - 0.412m increase in the Academies expansion project funded by Academies contributions
- 4.2 The breakdown of the sources of funding is set out below in Capital Annex 1.

## Capital Annex 1 - changes to capital programme since last Cabinet

Service	Project	Funding Type	2021-22 Change (£m)	2021-22 REPROFILE	22-23+ Change (£m)	22-23+ REPROFILE	Reason
<b>Adult Social Care</b>							
SC8170	Supported Living Programme	NCC Borrowing		0.058		-0.058	Reprofiled to cover in year expenditure
SC8175	ASC Transformation Programme	capital receipts	1.000				Capital receipts to be used for Transformation salaries
SC8120	Social Care unallocated	NCC Borrowing		0.077		-0.077	Reprofiling Social care unallocated to cover in year exp
<b>Total Adult Care</b>			<b>1.000</b>	<b>0.135</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-0.135</b>	
	Various	S106 Interest	0.014		0.009		Interest from 20/21 added across a number of projects
EC3826	Loddon Developer contribution	Developer Contributions			0.379		S106 income received
EC3828	Swaffham Developer contribution	Developer Contributions			0.124		S106 income received
EC3858	Trowse S016 Income	Developer Contributions			0.319		S106 income received
EC4905	AC Hethersett Academy Expansion	External			0.180		Contribution from Academy
EC4352	AC - Sprowston Academy	External			0.232		Contribution from Academy
	School based projects	External	-0.023		-0.003		Amendment to correct minor errors on Schools ECAP budgets
ECAPAA/ECAPFM	School based projects	NCC funding		-0.104		0.104	Reprofile for future years use
EC4290	Condition contingency Funding(pot)	DFE Grant - Capital Maintenance		0.240		-0.240	Reprofile according to latest predictions
EC4695	Basic Need(pot)	DFE Grant - Basic need		0.493		-0.493	Reprofile to cover allocations
EC4747	SEND(pot)	NCC Borrowing		1.960		-1.960	Funding moved back to cover salaries at year end & Allocation to Drake
EC4934	Drake SRB	NCC Borrowing		-1.640		1.640	Reprofile allocation from SEND
EC4822	Condition Funding(pot)	DFE Grant - Capital Maintenance		-0.265		0.265	Move unused Grant for use in future years
EC4841	CM - condition wks for BMP Schemes	DFE Grant - Capital Maintenance		0.100		-0.100	Move unused funding to future years
		NCC Borrowing		-0.692		0.692	Move unused funding to future years
EC4927	FN - Fred Nicholson Modular	NCC Borrowing		0.100		-0.100	Move funding back to cover in year expenditure
EC2412	Sites	DFE Grant Capital maintenance		0.030		-0.030	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4344	Fen Rivers Ph2, former St Edmunds	NCC funding		0.010		-0.010	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
		DFE Grant Capital maintenance		0.200		-0.200	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4349	CM - Blofield Primary Masterplan	CIL		0.020		-0.020	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4724	AC - Arden Grove SRB	NCC funding		0.070		-0.070	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4806	FN-St Michaels, Aylsham - Additional classrooms	S106 Interest		-0.972		0.972	Reprofile as per latest forecast
EC4841	CM - condition wks for BMP Schemes	DFE Capital Maintenance - Funding Budget		0.090		-0.090	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4849	CM - Falcon Junior Modular	DFE Capital Maintenance - Funding Budget		0.100		-0.100	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4915	CS - Sidestrand Hall Mobile replacement	NCC Funding		-0.295		0.295	Reprofile to 22/23 as works to be completed summer 22
EC4921	COVID-19 Special Requests	NCC Funding		0.020		-0.020	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4927	FN - Fred Nicholson Modular	NCC Funding		0.002		-0.002	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4938	Sidestrand Hall HORSAs block	DFE High Needs Provision		0.010		-0.010	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
EC4939	Wymondham High Masterplan	DFE Basic Need - Funding Budget		-0.500		0.500	Reprofiled as project not starting in near future
EC4941	New roads	NCC Funding		0.500		-0.500	Reprofiled to cover virement to EC4850
EC4961	Rosecroft Fencing	DFE Capital Maintenance - Funding Budget		-0.030		0.030	Reprofile as won't be on site until next year
EC4990	High Needs Provision Capital	DFE High Needs Provision		-0.600		0.600	Reprofile budget to 22/23
EC4995	CM - Hubs New Road Implementation	NCC Funding		0.001		-0.001	Reprofiled to cover in year exp
<b>Total Children's Services</b>			<b>-0.009</b>	<b>-1.152</b>	<b>1.240</b>	<b>1.152</b>	

Service	Project	Funding Type	2021-22 Change (£m)	2021-22 REPROFILE	22-23+ Change (£m)	22-23+ REPROFILE	Reason
<b>Better broadband</b>							
KT0004	Next Generation Access Broadband Contract	NCC Borrowing	-2.691				Funding reduced as rebate received
<b>Adult Education</b>							
LA9007	Wensum Lodge Development	NCC Borrowing		0.014		-0.014	Funding moved back to cover in year expenditure
<b>ETD Other</b>							
PQ7004	Experience Targetted Tourism	NCC Borrowing		-0.200		0.200	Re-profile Experience Targetted Tourism budget to 2022-23
PQ7003	Ash Dieback Emergency Works	NCC Borrowing		-0.154		0.154	Re-profile Ash Dieback budget to 2022-23
<b>ETD GRT</b>							
PQ2014	Capital Site Improvements	NCC Borrowing		-0.064		0.064	Reprofile £64k to 22/23
<b>Fire</b>							
CF0399	Dereham Fs Phase 2 improvements	NCC Borrowing		-0.404		0.404	leave £30k for design fees in 21-22 and reprofile remaining budget to 22-23 t reflect works starting in 22-23.
CF0393	Sprowston FS - Accessibility	NCC Borrowing		-0.087		0.087	works slipped inot 22-23, keep £38k in 21-22 reprofile remaining budget to 22-23
CF0392	Swaffham FS Area Office Accommodation	NCC Borrowing		-0.039		0.039	remaining budget not committed to be diverted to Watton FS in 22-23.
CF0388	West Walton FS maintenance	NCC Borrowing		-0.050		0.050	out to tender Feb - March will ot start until Apr- May 21 reprofile to 22-23.
CF0398	Fire Training Facilities - Provisnal Police Collab	NCC Borrowing		-0.200		0.200	reprofile entire project to split over 22-23 and 23-34 - Police appetite for plan no longer a priority
CF0512	Fire Experience Unit	NCC Borrowing		-0.075		0.075	No resource to develop the spec for this project in FY 21-22
CF0506	Fire vehicle replacement program.	NCC Borrowing		-1.100		1.100	Delivery schedule delayed for stage 1 payments affecting 2 to 2 vehicles
CF0380	MTFA equipment HO grant	External Grant funding		-0.021		0.021	MTFA plan to be revised with new national guidance
CF0208	Real Fire Traning	NCC Borrowing		-0.007		0.007	Won't complete in year
<b>Highways</b>							
PFA046	Kings Street walking scheme	DFT - Other LA funding	0.225				Budget adj as per latest forecast
PKA117	Harleston & Redenhall Town Centre Refurbishment	Other LA funding	0.116				Budget adj as per latest forecast
PJA074	Thorpe Road Traffic management	Other LA funding	0.066				Budget adj as per latest forecast
	Vairous small project adj	NCC Borrowing	0.035	0.317		-0.317	Budget adj as per latest forecast
PK1002	Norwich Western Link	NCC Borrowing		-0.888		0.888	Reprofile as per latest forecast
PK1002	Ringland Western Link	Dft	0.880				Budget adj as per latest forecast
	Unallocated	NCC Borrowing	0.000	-0.606		0.606	Reprofile as per latest forecast
	Various projects	External	-0.177				
PMB380	Countywide - Mileage Capital 21-22 - Resurface	Dft Block	0.093				Budget adj as per latest forecast
PEA051	Thorpe St Andrew , St Williams Rd - new cycle lane	Dft Block	0.301				Budget adj as per latest forecast
PKA024	Long Stratton - Long Stratton Bypass	Dft Block	-0.450				Budget adj as per latest forecast
<b>Libraires</b>							
	Various	S106 Developer Contributions	0.019	-0.004		0.004	Reprofiling S106 income accross a number of projects
LL0733	S106 Hetherset North, Hetherset HET	S106 Developer Contributions		-0.024		0.024	Reprofiling for use in future years
LL0726	S106 White House Farm, Blue Boar Ln, Sprowston SPR	S106 Developer Contributions		-0.090		0.090	Reprofiling for use in future years
LL0815	S106 North of Norwich Road, Swaffham. SWA	S106 Developer Contributions		-0.015		0.015	Reprofiling for use in future years
LL0745	S106 Three Score Care Village (Phase2) NML	S106 Developer Contributions		0.007		-0.007	Funding moved back to cover in year exp
LL1037	Library Book Stock	S106 Developer Contributions		-0.083		0.083	Reprofiling for use in future years
LL1040	Library Building Improvements	S106 Developer Contributions		-0.281		0.281	Reprofiling for use in future years
<b>Museums</b>							
MM0524	SEAHENGE	NCC Borrowing		-0.006		0.006	Reprofile to 22/23
MM0550	HLF Castle Keep Delivery Phase	NCC Borrowing		-2.000		2.000	Reprofile to 22/23
MM0557	Support for Key Care of Bldgs & Collections	NCC Borrowing		-0.037		0.037	Reprofile to 22/23
MM0558	Develop GFW as an Environmental Hub for Nfk	NCC Borrowing		0.022		-0.022	Reprofile to 22/23
MM0546	Norwich Castle Critical M&E Services	NCC Borrowing		-0.067		0.067	Reprofile to 22/23
MM0555	GFW Building Improvements	NCC Borrowing		-0.010		0.010	Reprofile to 22/23
<b>Total CES</b>			<b>-1.584</b>	<b>-6.150</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>6.150</b>	

Service	Project	Funding Type	2021-22 Change (£m)	2021-22 REPROFILE	22-23+ Change (£m)	22-23+ REPROFILE	Reason
<b>County Farms</b>							
CB0094	Litcham - Oaklands Farm - New GP Building	NCC Borrowing		-0.241		0.241	
CB0082-84	Burlingham	NCC Borrowing		-0.829		0.829	
CB0108	Hilgay Fen Ten Mile Bank - Pleasant Hse - Impr Barn	NCC Borrowing					Hilgay Fen Ten Mile Bank - Pleasant House - Impr Barn - re-profile fm 2021-22 to 2022-23
CB0119	Stow & Marshland Est - New Road Farm - New GP Bldg	NCC Borrowing					Stow & Marshland - New Road Farm - New GP Building - re-profile fm 2021-22 to 2022-23
CB0098	Purchase of Farmland at Outwell	NCC Borrowing	-0.212				Reversal of budget
CB0108	Hilgay Fen Ten Mile Bank - Pleasant Hse - Impr Barn	NCC Borrowing		-0.106		0.106	Reprofile to 22/23
CB0119	Stow & Marshland Est - New Road Farm - New GP Bldg	NCC Borrowing		-0.299		0.299	Reprofile to 22/23
<b>Finance ICT</b>							
KT2660	Schools ICT Refresh 19-23	NCC Borrowing		-0.872		0.872	Reprofile due to expected delays with Lenovo
<b>Property - Fire</b>							
CA2284		NCC Borrowing	1.330		0.070		Transferred from CA2259
CA2275	NFRS Changing & Assoc Facil - Cap Maint (20/21)	NCC Borrowing		-0.076		0.076	
<b>Property - Other</b>							
CA2271	Childrens Homes Refurbishment Programme (20/21)	NCC Borrowing		-1.000		1.000	
<b>Offices</b>							
CA2259		NCC Borrowing	-1.330		-0.070		Transferred to CA2284
CA2232	VARIOUS:FIRE SFTY REQUIRE			-0.330		0.330	
CA2291	CH Monorail & Priory Hse Lift Replace (20/21)			-0.440		0.440	
CA2292	New - Asbestos Survey & Removal			-0.235		0.235	
CA2259	Corporate Maintenance - Fire Property			0.568		-0.568	
CA2287	Changing Places Toilets (20/21)			-0.100		0.100	
CA2288	Defibrillators (20/21)			-0.035		0.035	
CA2289	Energy Related Project (20/21)			-0.129		0.129	
CA2297	CPT - Carrow FS Damp Proofing and Tanking			-0.035		0.035	
CA2303	Norfolk Museums Shirehall Repairs 2021			-0.150		0.150	
<b>Total Finance</b>			<b>-0.212</b>	<b>-4.309</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>4.309</b>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>-0.805</b>	<b>-11.476</b>	<b>1.240</b>	<b>11.476</b>	



# Cabinet

Item No: 19

**Report Title: Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property**

**Date of Meeting: 7 March 2022**

**Responsible Cabinet Member: Councillor Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management**

**Responsible Director: Simon George  
Executive Director for Finance and Commercial Services.**

**Is this a Key Decision? Yes**

**If this is a Key Decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: 13 October 2021**

## **Executive Summary/Introduction from Cabinet Member**

Proposals in this report are aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council (NCC) priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational needs can be met from elsewhere and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County.

One of the key actions within the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework is a sharp focus on maximising income through adoption of a more commercial approach to property.

As part of corporate management of property and a systematic approach to reviewing the use and future needs of property assets for service delivery there is a continued emphasis on minimising the extent of the property estate retained for operational purpose. However, on occasion there will be the requirement to acquire or reuse an individual property to support a service to delivers its aims.

By adopting a “single estate” approach within the County Council and sharing property assets with public sector partners through the One Public Estate programme, the Council is aiming to reduce net annual property expenditure by £1million over the next two years (2021/22 to 2022/23).

Consideration is also given to the suitability of surplus property assets for reuse or redevelopment to meet specific service needs that could improve the quality of services for users, address other policy areas and/or improve financial efficiency for the County Council, for example, facilitating the supply of assisted living accommodation and other housing solutions for people requiring care, or undertaking re-development to support jobs and growth.

This means that as well as continuing with the rationalisation of the operational property estate to reduce the number of buildings used by the County Council, a more commercial approach is being adopted over the sale or redeployment of surplus property assets.

## **Recommendations:**

### **Cabinet is asked:**

- 1. To instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the County Councils property interest in the Beeston Park development, on the terms as set out in confidential annex Appendix A. In the event the disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits, or this current disposal does not proceed the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to agree terms with the new bidder (or future bidder) and complete the disposal on the best terms possible.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1 The County Council actively manages its property portfolio in accordance with the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 - 2026/27. Property is held principally to support direct service delivery, support policy objectives, held for administrative purposes or to generate income. Property is acquired or disposed of as a reaction to changing service requirements, changing council policies or to improve the efficiency of the overall portfolio.
- 1.2 The County Council challenges the use of its property on an ongoing basis. In the event of a property asset becoming surplus to an individual service need there are internal officer led processes to ascertain whether other service areas have an unmet need that could be addressed by re-using the property asset for that service. This may lead to a change of use of individual properties, for example, an office building may be adapted and reused for operational service delivery. Any proposals for retention are only agreed if supported by a robust business case showing the benefits to the County Council and are funded from approved budgets. This assessment will also consider whether a property could be offered at best consideration to public sector or third sector partners.
- 1.3 The above assessments are carried out by the Corporate Property Officer (the Director of Property) in consultation with the Corporate Property Strategy Group (CPSG). Once it is confirmed there is no further County Council requirement, Cabinet is asked to formally declare property assets surplus or re-designate for alternative purposes.
- 1.4 The Corporate Property Officer reviews options for maximising income from surplus properties usually by open market sale to obtain the best consideration possible. These will range from selling immediately on the open market (to the bidder making the best offer overall), enhancing the value prior to sale, strategic retention for a longer-term benefit through to direct development of the land and buildings and selling/letting the completed assets, in the expectation of enhanced

income for the Council. Most disposals will be by way of tender or auction. In respect of auctions the contract of sale will be formed at the fall of the hammer and where this approach is selected the Corporate Property Officer will determine a reserve below which the property will not be sold. Most disposals will include overage/clawback provisions to enable the council to collect future uplifts in value created by alternative uses.

- 1.5 For properties to be sold immediately there is sometimes a need to consider selling directly to a specific purchaser instead of going to the open market. This may be justified where the third party is in a special purchaser situation and is willing to offer more than the assessed market value. Conversely this might be to a purchaser who is in a unique position of control for the unlocking of the full latent value of the County Council owned site (ransom situation). A direct sale without going to market can also be justified if there are specific service benefits or a special partnership relationship which is of strategic value with service/community benefits.
- 1.6 In making recommendations for direct sale without going to market, or direct property development, the Corporate Property Officer will consider risks, opportunities, service objectives, financial requirements and community benefits.
- 1.7 The recommendations for all disposals, acquisitions and exploitation of NCC property in this report follow detailed assessment by officers of the range of options available. The recommendation for each property is based on existing policies and strategies and judged to provide the best return to the County Council in financial terms and, where appropriate, taking account of community and economic benefits.

## **2. Proposal**

### **Beeston Park (5053/013): Landowner's agreement update**

- 2.1 Beeston Park is a proposed urban extension to the north of Norwich in the Broadland District Council area. Norfolk County Council is a member of a consortium of landowners with 36.41 hectares (89.98 acres) of farms estate land included in the proposed development edged red on plan.
- 2.2 The promotor of the development, Town and U&I Plc, came forward in early 2020 with a proposal to dispose of the site to a single purchaser. Cabinet at their meeting on 3 August 2020 resolved to implement the terms of the sale agreed by all the landowners in the consortium.
- 2.3 Subsequently that sale did not proceed. A new bidder has come forward to acquire the whole development site on similar terms to the previous deal. All the other landowners have accepted the proposal from the promoter. Further details of the proposed sale are provided in the exempt annexe, **Appendix A**
- 2.4 **Appendix A** is exempt from publication as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The public interest test has been applied and it is

considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at this stage. The information is exempt from the Cabinet Report for the sale of the NCC land within the Beeston Park Development due to information being commercially sensitive but will be published by the land registry after completion.



### 3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 Property disposals will provide capital receipts for the council to support the capital programme and hence service delivery. The County Council will apply the capital receipts to meet its priorities.

### 4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 Declaring the sites and land holdings surplus to County Council use means that the Corporate Property Team can consider options for the disposal and exploitation of these sites.

### 5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 Declaring sites and land holdings surplus is a result of the sites no longer being required for service delivery. The alternative would be to retain resulting in incurring holding costs for an asset that is not contributing to service delivery.

### 6. Financial Implications

6.1 Disposals outlined in this report will provide the opportunity for capital receipts and savings in holding costs.

## 7. Resource Implications

7.1 **Staff:** Nil

7.2 **Property:** As described in the earlier parts of this report.

7.3 **IT:** Nil.

## 8. Other Implications

8.1 **Legal Implications:** For disposals in the usual way the legal implications are around the parties agreeing to the terms of the agreement for each disposal and entering a contract.

8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** No implications.

8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** - No specific EqIA has been undertaken in respect of the disposal of sites.

8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** No data protection impact implications in respect of the disposal of sites.

8.5 **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** No implications for the disposal or acquisition of sites.

8.6 **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** Future redevelopment of disposed sites will require planning permission and therefore would be mindful of sustainability measures.

## 9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The risks around disposals are around the non-agreement of terms. This risk is mitigated using experienced expert consultants.

## 10. Recommendations

10.1 Cabinet is asked to instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the County Councils property interest in the Beeston Park development, on the terms as set out in confidential annex **Appendix A**. In the event the disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits, or this current disposal does not proceed the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to agree terms with the new bidder (or future bidder) and complete the disposal on the best terms possible.

## 11. Background Papers

11.1 Beeston Park (5053/013): Cabinet 3 August 2020, Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of Property report, page 106 on agenda - [LINK](#)

**Officer Contact**

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