

## **Cabinet**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 6 December 2021 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 Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships.
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance.
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 Strategy and Transformation
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 Children's Services

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors formally introduced themselves.

**1 Apologies for Absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Andy Grant.

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

2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 8 November 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3 Declaration of Interests**

3.1 Cllr Peck, The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management declared an interest as a director of Repton Property Developments Ltd in relation to item 19, Disposal, Acquisition and Exploitation of property.

3.2 The Chairman declared an interest as a director of Repton Property Developments Ltd in relation to item 19, Disposal, Acquisition and Exploitation of property.

## **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 The Social Care white paper had been published by Government. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention spoke about this:
- The Council welcomed the white paper “People at the Heart of Care”, with its 10-year vision for people in social care. It included a focus on choice, control, quality and fairness. Initiatives in the paper included supporting the workforce, developing housing, improving advice and increasing use of technology. These were in line with the Promoting Independence Strategy which had been in place in Adult Social Care for a number of years.
  - The commitment of £1.7bn over 3 years to support this was welcome. Details on allocation of this funding and what this would mean for Norfolk people was awaited.
  - The introduction of assurance for Adult Social Care, due to start in 2023, was welcomed, and steps had been taken to review performance and support conditions so that the Council were in the position to provide good services for people in Norfolk
  - Norfolk County Council called on the Government to make clear how the new means testing system would work and how expectations on setting a fair price for care would work so people funding their own care and care providers would be clear on how changes would affect them
  - The Council welcomed the white paper but were aware that Adult Social Care would be under pressure over the next two years. Proposals in the paper would not address wage levels needed to attract people to work in social care and councils were not able to resolve this on their own

## **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.

- 7.2.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp asked a supplementary question:
- Cllr Kemp felt the answer to her substantive question was out of touch as the West Winch development was not well supported by local residents and no one supported commencement before the bypass was built
  - The answer to her substantive question said that withdrawing the county site would jeopardise delivery of the scheme however Cllr Kemp felt it made sense to keep the site as a farm, stating it could not be developed due to the gas main and as it was designated as green infrastructure
  - She asked, due to the increase, in mental health whether the Cabinet Member could approach the mental health trust to discuss having this site as a care farm. This would provide a facility closer to King’s Lynn than the one at West Walton.

7.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management replied that the Council were in discussion with King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council about including the site in the 4000-property housing development which would also include a health centre, sports facilities, allotments, a school and early years childcare and would support with development of the West Winch road. A potential care farm had just been announced in the West of the county and other sites in the West of the County estate were being sought for this type of development.

## **8. Domestic Abuse – Norfolk's Safe Accommodation and Support Strategy**

8.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the actions Norfolk County Council has taken to prepare for the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and presents the Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk 2021-24.

8.1.2 The Executive Director for Adult Social Services introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This was an important area of service delivery
- Since the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 came into effect in April 2021, it was a key action to promote awareness, protect victims and families and respond to perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- At the time of writing the report there were 11,500 domestic abuse crimes a year, which was a 20% increase from the previous year, 2020-21. Domestic abuse made up 20% of all crimes in the county.
- The report focussed on accommodation support, with the Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy due to be launched in January 2022 if Cabinet agreed the proposals.
- There was over £2m investment in this area

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

- The key aims of the strategy were, increasing the amount and flexibility of safe accommodation, improving engagement with victim-survivors of domestic abuse, improving quality of support and safe accommodation, supporting children in safe accommodation and improving intelligence.
- The proposals set out in the report were a step change in understanding and the facilities and support available to people.
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention asked Cabinet to endorse the report and moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

8.2 The Chairman noted the responsibilities of the upper tier local authority which were set out in the report and that information in the report linked this strategy to the Better Together for Norfolk Strategy.

8.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted the impact on children living in families affected by domestic abuse and was pleased to see the support for children outlined in the report.

8.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that a multi agency approach was important to prevent people "falling through the cracks".

- 8.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:
- a) Acknowledge the document as a draft that has been consulted on by key stakeholders as part of now Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) recommendations to consult (26th October – end November 2021)
  - b) Give approval for the Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk 2021-24, as a finalised version, to be submitted to DLUHC on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 as per government guidance
  - c) Approve the allocation of MHCLG (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) grant funding as set out in the Delivery Plan as part of the strategy document

## 8.6 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Legislation has come into effect which requires Tier 1 Local Authorities to undertake a Needs Assessment of accommodation and support for victims of domestic abuse (DA) and their families. This includes all victims of DA who need to reside in relevant accommodation (safe accommodation) and those that require highly specialist support as well as accommodation and support for those who access Norfolk services from out of county. Norfolk commissioned NODA to undertake the needs analysis which forms the basis of the Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy.

The Needs Assessment provides a comprehensive analysis which evidences need and provision in Norfolk and highlights the gaps in service. The Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk seeks to address the shortfalls in support and accommodation services for victims-survivors with a joined up, evidence-based response to address those gaps.

## 8.7 Alternative Options

Undertaking the needs analysis and enacting a Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk 2021-24 is a requirement of the Act 2021 and is consistent with the Council's strategic approach to supporting victim-survivors of DA.

We have no option other than to comply with the duty and to do so is the right approach and consistent in the County's existing corporate Together for Norfolk Strategy.

## 9 Adult Social Care Winter Plan

- 9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the winter plan for Norfolk, outlining the unprecedented challenges faced by Social Services and the practical solutions being put in place to manage these challenges.
- 9.1.2 The Executive Director for Adult Social Services introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The Winter Plan built on contingency arrangements in place during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Joint funding to the NHS and council from the Better Care Fund could be used to support the plan.
  - Direct funding for the social care workforce had been received in 2021; the use of this funding had been agreed by The Cabinet Member for Adult

## Social Care, Public Health and Prevention.

- 9.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The Winter Plan had been to the Health and Wellbeing Board for discussion who unanimously agreed to support it. It was a system wide plan for health and social care.
  - It was a difficult time for health and social care services; it was 2 years into the Covid-19 pandemic and an increase in demand was expected due to flu and winter health conditions. There was also deferred demand caused by people having put off seeking care for health conditions during the pandemic, which would cause further pressure
  - The help of the public would be needed to support the plan, such as by people receiving booster jabs, carrying out social distancing and wearing masks in crowded places.
  - Health and social care staff had been working very hard over the challenging past 2 years of the pandemic and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention thanked them for their work during this time.
  - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 9.2 The Chairman endorsed the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Preventions comment, recognising the hard work of staff in health and social care.
- 9.3 The Vice-Chairman referenced page 116 of the report which set out the difficulties being experienced in the service, such as workforce shortages in Adult Social Care; there were 14,000 vacancies in the care sector in Norfolk, highlighting the need for the public to take care and follow Covid safety guidelines.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance reflected on the challenges around filling the social care vacancies, noting the important role of these staff.
- 9.5 The Chairman pointed out the statistics set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report onwards about the work carried out by Adult Social Care to support people in Norfolk. These statistics highlighted the need for staff in this sector and for individuals to do what they could to support the sector.
- 9.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the Adult Social Care Winter Plan for 2021/22
- 9.7 **Evidence and reasons for decision**
- N/A
- 9.8 **Alternative Options**
- None identified
10. **Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) 2021**

- 10.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 which was a shared plan containing Norfolk's high-level strategic infrastructure priorities for the next 10 years, pulling together information on key projects needed to support planned development and deliver economic growth in Norfolk.
- 10.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 pulled together information on key strategic infrastructure projects needed to deliver economic growth in Norfolk
  - The projects in the plan were focussed on transport, utilities, regeneration and sustainability and aligned with the council's priority for improved infrastructure the ambition of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy, Economic Renewal Plan, District Council Local Plans and the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework. They were also in sync with the Government's Build Back Better Plan and would deliver infrastructure to help deliver the ambitions of levelling up and supporting the transition to Net Zero.
  - Future versions of the plan would reflect recent publications such as the Net Zero Strategy and Decarbonisation Transport Plan
  - There were 17 projects where local authorities were leading which would facilitate the delivery of 31,000 new homes and 11,000 new jobs
  - The plan provided a clear message of Norfolk's priorities to the government; the Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 had been included as a case study for best practice in supporting housing and infrastructure needs by the Town and Country Planning Association
  - The plan was a working document to be reviewed annually as new information became projects progressed to delivery
  - The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport moved the recommendations set out in the report
- 10.2 The Vice-Chairman noted that the plan set out a strong ambition for Norfolk to develop infrastructure and meet net zero targets; all the key infrastructure coming forward in 2021-22 were key schemes which would make Norfolk a better place to live and work
- 10.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of digital connectivity for residents to live lives equal to those in other parts of the country and to the tourism industry in Norfolk. Better Broadband for Norfolk had increased superfast broadband through working with partners from 42% to 96%. Upcoming developments included funding to invest in Project Gigabyte, which would provide connectivity development in rural areas of Norfolk, and planning reforms which would support rapid roll out of 4G and 5G mobile technology.
- 10.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that the plan demonstrated how well councils in Norfolk were working together to deliver infrastructure in Norfolk. He was pleased to see the Attleborough Link Road included in the list of schemes.
- 10.5 The Cabinet Member for Finance was pleased to note the strength of the Council's commitment to putting infrastructure in place to support residents'

needs, particularly in the West of Norfolk.

10.6 The Chairman noted the level of partnership working which had gone into this piece of work in response to the Norfolk Growth Agenda including housing and employment but also other areas such as digital development. He hoped that this plan would form part of a county deal for Norfolk for the future

10.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the 2021 Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 (NSIDP)
2. To support the continued production of NSIDP, together with annual review

10.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

None

10.9 **Alternative Options**

None

**11. Transport for Norwich Strategy Review**

11.1.1 Cabinet received the report summarising the outcome of the consultation into the draft new Transport for Norwich Strategy, the changes made to the strategy and the final version of the strategy recommended for adoption.

11.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport introduced the report to Cabinet:

- A new Transport for Norwich Strategy had been prepared in collaboration with Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council.
- A public consultation had been undertaken on the draft strategy and supporting environmental reports. The Cabinet report summarised the outcome of the consultation and the proposed changes to the strategy.
- The outcome of the consultation showed broad support, with the key issues from written and online responses focussing on the relationship of Norwich to the surrounding areas, the need to support the vitality of the city and ensuring implementation considered the needs of users of the city. Many views related to implementation of the strategy and would help develop the action plan.
- The findings of the consultation, including proposed changes arising from the consultation, had been reported to the Greater Norwich Development Partnership on the 15 November 2021, the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee on the 17 November 2021 and the Transport for Norwich Joint Committee on the 18 November 2021.
- The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport moved the recommendations as set out in the report

11.1.3 The Vice-Chairman noted that the outcome of the consultation showed this work was wanted in the Norwich area and thanked everyone involved in this piece of work.

11.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to adopt the Transport for Norwich Strategy, which incorporates changes arising from the consultation feedback, as set out in Appendix 2

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

See part 4 of the Cabinet report.

### 11.4 **Alternative Options**

An alternative option would be to make no changes to the consultation version of the Transport for Norwich Strategy. This option is not preferred as it does not draw on evidence and comments received through the consultation to shape and refine the final version of the strategy.

## 12. **Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-4**

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Norfolk Rural Strategy 2021-24 which provided an evidence base and the priority themes to deliver our vision of “inclusive, sustainable communities with a dynamic, connected economy and healthy natural environment, able to meet the needs of all rural residents and visitors”.

12.1.2 The Vice-Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy contributed to the aims of Better Together for Norfolk by focussing on economic issues affecting Norfolk’s rural communities.
- The Strategy had been produced by public, private and community sector partners and was refreshed every three years to take account of Government policy developments and national and local trends.
- The strategy would provide an evidence base for issues to make a case to Government such as fairer funding for rural areas and developing programmes to respond to Government policy and draw down funding.
- Section 1.2 of the report outlined successes since 2013, including the Food Innovation Centre and a range of rural funding programmes such as the 7 year LEADER programme, managed by the Council, which helped rural businesses diversify and had seen over 200 jobs contracted and more than £9m funding awarded.
- Some recent developments in policy were discussed at paragraph 1.3 of the report such as recovery from the pandemic, drive to Net Zero and the move from EU to UK based funding to drive economic growth.
- The strategy would compliment wider strategies such as the Norfolk Investment framework which had been agreed by Cabinet in August 2021 and would look at investment priorities across Norfolk to help deliver priorities.
- The steering group would work with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership on a new economic plan and on the delivery plan of the New Anglia Agri-Food Industry Council, to ensure joined up working. Paragraph 1.6 of the report outlined that the steering group had a broad membership reflecting priority themes of the public sector, business, Community Action Norfolk and Thematic Leads for Skills and Digital Connectivity.
- The vision and key themes of the strategy were shown at paragraph 2.1 and 2.2 of the report respectively.



- The six priorities of the strategy were: New Rural Economy and Market Towns; World Class environment and the Green Economy; Community Resilience; Skills and Rural Innovation; Digitalisation and Technology Adoption; and Modern Infrastructure.
- The Vice-Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report

12.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance endorsed the report noting it built on themes in Better Together for Norfolk and that the Council would work with partners to deliver aspirations through building on existing schemes such as the LEADER programme. Promotion of sustainable tourism was an example of how Norfolk County Council was enabling a broad range of partners to come together to achieve outcomes for public good.

12.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance pointed out that it was important to ensure good, skilled jobs were available and that the County was taking part in levelling up; this strategy would provide such opportunities.

12.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted the importance of this strategy as Norfolk was a rural county; joint working showed councils throughout Norfolk were working together on the same issues.

12.5 The Chairman noted links throughout the strategy to Better Together for Norfolk and that Norfolk County Council had been the enabler for joint working; this strategy could be part of the foundation work to achieve a county deal for Norfolk.

12.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24
2. Note that a Delivery Plan for the Strategy will be developed once the Government's guidance on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been published.

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

This is the third iteration of this partnership Strategy, each one responding to updated circumstances, such as a new national policy framework, and, this time round, the impact of the pandemic.

A refreshed evidence base, and online data dashboard that will be regularly updated, are also being provided, and will be used to advocate for and secure funding for the Strategy's priorities.

There was strong support for the Strategy's themes and priorities from the stakeholder consultation – both from the three engagement webinars (involving more than 60 individuals and organisations) and the online survey, which received 98 respondents.

## 12.9 **Alternative Options**

We could subsume rural economic development into the broader Norfolk Investment Framework, but this would lose the long-standing stakeholder partnership and broad expertise provided by the Steering Group.

There are also specific challenges that this Strategy and the Steering Group are best suited to champion and progress, such as challenges for market towns across the county and the implementation of project proposals that target specific rural circumstances, such as ELMS.

The Council supports the delivery of the current Strategy, with some dedicated officer time from the Growth and Development team.

### **13. Digital Inclusion Strategy**

13.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Digital Inclusion Strategy which supported the outcomes of “Better Together for Norfolk” by enabling residents to have digital skills for work, life, engaging with their communities and accessing information and resources to thrive in today’s digital world.

13.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The existing Strategy was agreed in 2018 and targeted groups in the population who were at a higher risk of digital exclusion.
- Over the last few years, the digital landscape had changed rapidly, and the strategy therefore needed to be reviewed to meet the needs of residents. Some people did not use connectivity due to cost, lack of ability or skill and lack of services on offer. This strategy offered ways to help people overcome barriers such as distributing devices to schools, digitally excluded and low-income adults and voluntary and social enterprise organisations and a scheme for people to rent MiFi dongles through Library Networks and schools to test connectivity and build their confidence or use it for specific tasks such as applying for a job or studying. The Council would work with partners to support children and young people at risk of digital exclusion and would help businesses by providing support from the Business and Intellectual Property Centres.
- It was an aim of the strategy to ensure everyone had equality of opportunity to access and use digital devices, develop digital skills for work and life, and have access to resources so that no one would feel excluded.
- The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

13.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance further commented:

- This strategy was to help address digital exclusion. The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance paid tribute to officers for their work on the strategy and work carried out by officers in Information Management Technology and outreach officers.
- The innovation network in Norfolk was the biggest in the country. It was important to ensure residents and businesses benefited from these developments to ensure they were able to communicate and apply for jobs

13.2 The Vice-Chairman noted that it was important for infrastructure to be in place for people to access technology while also recognising the reasons why people may not access it.

13.3 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services noted the support for children and

young people in the strategy, and the importance of providing them with opportunities to access digital technology

13.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention discussed that the covid pandemic had demonstrated the importance of technology to reduce social isolation in older people; he noted the support for older people and carers to access digital services and technology in this strategy such as support for carers to meet people in similar situations. Opportunities for people to trial assistive technology was a key ambition which fit with the promoting independence strategy in adult social care.

13.5 The Chairman noted that paragraph 8.6 of the report set out sustainability implications; use of digital technology could help reduce travel and the carbon footprint, tying into the council's Green Agenda.

13.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the Digital Inclusion Strategy and vision set out in section 2.1 of the report and the full strategy document set out in Appendix 1 of the report

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

There is wide ranging evidence of the impacts of digital inclusion, including papers by a range of government bodies and organisations such as the Good Things Foundation.

It has been widely recognised that the pandemic has resulted in the digitisation of the majority of public and private services, including many health offers and support services provided by the VCSE sector. This further cements the need for Norfolk people to be able to access online and digital services to be able to more fully integrate and interact with the world around them.

#### 13.8 **Alternative Options**

It could be decided to keep the existing strategy as it is and delay any refresh. The impact of this would be to have a less targeted and focussed approach to tackling digital exclusion at a time when the impacts are being even more severely felt. There is a window of opportunity for change where people can clearly see the benefits of digital inclusion and are motivated by this, and as a Council and a County we need to be in a strong position to apply for external funding to further support our digital inclusion initiatives

Digital inclusion is also a key enabler to the prevention and health inequality agendas being pursued by our NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) partners

### 14. **CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy – Annual Review**

14.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the annual review to the CES Compliance and Enforcement policy and associated performance data.

14.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:

- This annual review of the CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy covered a wide range of regulatory activity and law enforcement. Norfolk County

Council was committed to the principles of Better Regulation as set out in the Regulators' Code.

- Services were committed to protecting Norfolk residents, businesses, the environment and visitors while responding proportionally to address identified non compliances
- The policy covered a range of services, as set out on page 461 of the report
- It ensured enforcement in services was proportionate to the offence, transparent, consistent and met the Equality Act 2010.
- The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

14.2 The Chairman noted the importance of paragraph 2.3 which spoke about ensuring enforcement was proportionate, transparent, consistent and consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and the Council's Equalities Policies.

14.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the revised CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy at Appendix A of the report and its annex documents (A-1 to A-6).

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

The Policy provides a framework to ensure that we work in an equitable, practical, and consistent manner in the way we deliver regulatory activities and law enforcement. Norfolk County Council is committed to the principles of better regulation, reducing burdens on business with proportionate responses and ensuring we act to protect and support residents, visitors, businesses, and the environment. A range of enforcement approaches are available to the Council but there is a need to discharge these in a consistent, fair, and transparent way, as well as ensuring that the public or environment is adequately protected.

Appendix B provides enforcement performance information in relation to those regulatory functions covered by the Policy.

#### 14.5 **Alternative Options**

A CES wide Compliance and Enforcement Policy is considered to be the most effective way to demonstrate how CES intends to fulfil its regulatory/legal responsibilities. An alternative option would be for each service area within CES to produce its own policy. However, as described in section 4.1 above, there is need for consistency in overall approach. The format of the draft Policy provides for additional (detailed) protocols where necessary or appropriate.

### 15. **Progress on the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Objectives 2020-2023**

15.1.1 Cabinet received the report summarising progress over the last 12 months to deliver against the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives for 2020-2023, and the Motions agreed by Full Council on 20th July 2020 and 23 October 2020.

15.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The report set out work undertaken by the Council over the past year to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and remove barriers to

participation

- A key aim of the Council's plan, Better Together for Norfolk was to promote social mobility and ensure no-one was left behind. The equality inclusion and diversity objectives would play a key role in delivering this.
- In 2019 the Council commissioned an independent review of how the Council worked and to identify strengths and inequalities. There were many areas where Norfolk was excelling nationally on equality inclusion and diversity; for example, children from diverse ethnic backgrounds were doing better in education than in previous years and the attainment gap had narrowed. Gypsy Roma Travellers were achieving better in Norfolk than nationally; nationally they had the lowest outcomes of any ethnic group. Children with special educational needs and disabilities and those with Educational Health and Care Plans performed better than nationally at early years, and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities were more likely to enter employment than nationally.
- The Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service chaired the Eastern Region's equality, inclusion and diversity forum for the last 12 months. This was the first regional forum in the UK and Norfolk leading work to shape innovative strategy in the sector.
- Consultation with 35 seldom heard communities was taking place on fire, water and road traffic safety and the results were being compared to a control group of white British people.
- Equality impact assessments had been completed on 850 Norfolk County Council policies and procedures and opportunities to strengthen inclusion identified
- The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

15.2 The Chairman noted section 2 of the report which set out progress against equality inclusion and diversity objectives, and section 3 which discussed emerging national policy developments for the future. Section 4 looked at actions for the coming months such as work to develop refreshed objectives.

15.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity for all residents, particularly those with disabilities. A particular priority was to ensure that the council's digital web content was accessible to disabled people and people who did not have English as a first language.

15.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. To review and consider the progress made over the last 12 months against the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Objectives 2020-2023.
2. Note that 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 is the final year of the EDI action plan and agree that work should take place to develop refreshed objectives for 2023/24 to 2025/26 and associated actions for Cabinet to consider in 2022, in line with the emerging national policy set out in Section 3 of the report and the local evidence base.

15.5 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

As set out in the report

15.6 **Alternative Options**

The equality, diversity and inclusion objectives for 2020-23 and the associated key activity areas were agreed by Cabinet in December 2019. Cabinet could decide to change, add or delete an objective or key activity area. This would need to be balanced against the need for the Council to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## 16. Health, Safety and Well-being Mid-Year Report 2021-22

16.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing data and analysis on the Health, Safety and Well-being mid-year performance of NCC as an employer

16.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Data was not yet available from the Health and Safety Executive therefore an update on the national benchmark of reportable incidents per 1000 f.t.e would be reported to Cabinet in January 2022.
- Data in the report needed to be looked at in light of the pandemic and its impact on services and individuals; it reflected the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions and reopening of services, with an increase of incidents being seen as a result.
- The impact of the pandemic was seen in mental health data provided with 37% of absence days lost, reflecting the national picture of increased levels of anxiety and depression.
- Good progress had been made on the actions agreed from the 2020-21 annual report and this was shown in section 3 of the report.
- Key highlights included:
  - **Mental health and wellbeing**; following the reintroduction of Mental Health First Aid training, the number of mental health first aid champions rose to 437. Norfolk Support Line use remained high. Well-being Advisor referrals had increased slightly compared to the same point in 2020 (from 69 to 73) with 60% of referrals related to work, replicating the 2020/21 trend of Norfolk Support Line being primarily used for personal issues and Well-being Advisors for work.
  - **Musculoskeletal absence accounted for 17.2% days lost due to sickness at NCC**; 195 employees in NCC Services and 143 in NCC Schools were referred to the Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation Scheme this year, 2021-22.
  - **Management of health and safety**; the number of reportable incidents had increased compared to the same point last year, 2020-21 (from 0.74 per 1000 f.t.e to 1.14) reflecting services reopening more fully, particularly the reopening of schools. The timeliness of reviewing and signing off incidents had improved with the target being met for 85% of incidents compared to 70% for 2020/21. A number of incidents from previous reporting periods continued to remain open.
- Recommendation 2 asked for all incidents predating 2020 to be closed as meaningful investigation and learning from these was unlikely. However, doing this may mean that statutorily reportable incidents would go unidentified. The Chairman therefore suggested that recommendation 2 be amended to state: “review all open incidents that predate 2020 and report back to Cabinet in 6 months’ time”
- Violence continued to be the biggest cause of incidents and had increased since last year, 2020-21. This may reflect the reopening of educational facilities.

- Manual handling incidents had also increased; most occurred in the fire service reflecting the manual nature of their activity, and in primary schools where incidents were varied and did not suggest a gap in controls.
- Engagement with employee representatives had improved
- Competition of mandatory health and safety was slightly below the 90% target at 83%.
- £326,897 Traded income had been raised so far in 2021-22 which was an increase from last year 2020-21
- The Chairman moved recommendations 1. 3 and 4 as set out in the report, and the amended recommendation 2.

#### 16.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. HR lead a strategic review of organisational well-being
2. HR to review all open incidents that predate 2020 and report to Cabinet in 6-months' time
3. Executive Directors are asked to support the myOracle transition by ensuring all other open incidents are closed off in a timely way
4. Executive Directors are asked to continue to implement the recommended actions from their individual 2020/21 annual reports

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

N/A

#### 16.4 **Alternative Options**

N/A

### 17. **Corporately Significant Vital Signs**

17.1.1 Cabinet received the quarter two report to provide the Cabinet with an update on the Council's performance towards achieving its strategic outcomes as set out in Together, for Norfolk.

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

- This report was a review of performance towards strategic outcomes
- Ambitious targets had been set to achieve good outcomes for residents
- The report covered quarter 2 performance which included July to September 2021; national Covid-19 restrictions were lifted during this time. The impact of Covid-19 was seen on the vital signs.
- Five of the six Adult Social Care vital signs were below target due to the pressure on the department, but plans were in place to address this
- Five of the seven vital signs for Children's Services were green and two were amber. The proportion of schools in Norfolk judged good or outstanding was amber, but in an upward trajectory and just below green.
- Six of the seven vital signs in Finance and Commercial Services were green; two were slightly deteriorating but measures were in place to improve these.
- Nine out of fourteen vital signs in Community and Environmental Services were on target and 5 were rated red. Fire safety visits had not been able to be carried out due to the pandemic restrictions but would start up again soon. Libraries had now moved back to in-person activities but remained

affected by existing Covid-19 measures.

- There were three green and three amber vital signs in Strategy and Transformation. Staff absence was below target; new social workers due to start in January 2022 would support towards the vital sign around staff vacancies.
- The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

17.2 The Chairman noted that the targets which had been set were stretch targets.

17.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services discussed that the New Roads project would go live in June 2022 and would hopefully impact on the Children's Services vital signs and help keep children with their families.

17.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Review and comment on the end of quarter two performance data.
2. Review the considerations and next steps.
3. Agree the planned actions as set out.

17.5 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

N/A

17.6 **Alternative Options**

Information report.

**18. Risk management**

18.1.1 Cabinet received the risk management report setting out corporate risks which continued to be monitored and treated appropriately in line with the council's risk management framework.

18.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Risk management was a requirement of regulations and part of the Council's Constitution and contributed to achieving corporate objectives, the Council's key priorities and Business Plan and was a key part of the performance management framework.
- The responsibility for adequate and effective risk management function sat with Cabinet, supported by Cabinet Members and delivered by the risk owners as part of the risk management framework.
- This report set out the key messages and latest corporate risks in December 2021.
- The Council continued to work through the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic with an ongoing commitment to safe and sustainable service delivery for citizens and to following the Government's recovery roadmap.
- Joint working between the Risk Management Function and Resilience Team had been carried out to prepare for winter 2021-22.
- Corporate risks continued to be monitored and treated in line with the risk management framework with risk-based decisions supporting the Council's recover.
- **RM031, NCC Funded Children's Services Overspend:** this risk was proposed to increase to 25 due to the projected overspend in this



department caused by financial pressures from service demand and ongoing Covid-19 related uncertainties

- **RM032a**: this risk had been refreshed as RM032b had previously been closed. The refreshed risk would be RM032, “Capacity to manage multiple disruptions to business” and would cover potential internal threats such as loss of IMT and power, and external impacts such as supporting the countywide response to flooding or pandemic flu.
- **RM034, Supply Chain Interruption**; this was a proposed new corporate risk which would cover disruptions to any of the Council’s key supply chains and was covered on pages 653-4 of the report.
- **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”**; an update had been provided on this risk by the Director for People to Audit Committee in October 2021, as discussed on page 618, paragraph 7.1 of the report.
- The Chairman asked Cabinet Members to discuss risks set out in appendix C of the report currently at or at risk of a future red rating:
  - **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”**: The Chairman discussed that this risk was red but due to move to an amber rating in March 2022 due to mitigations put in place.
  - **RM023, “Lack of clarity on sustainable long-term funding approach for adult social services at a time of increasing demographic pressures and growing complexity of need”**; The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention discussed that funding implications for Adult Social Care was a national issue. The Government white paper had been published and a national insurance increase had been announced; the department would continue to do all it could to encourage central Government to come up with a workable solution to social care
  - **RM031, “NCC Funded Children’s Services Overspend”**; the transformation programme had been impacted on by the Covid-19 pandemic therefore had not progressed as far as planned. Although the number of children in care had reduced, costs were not reducing in line with this as the children remaining in care had a higher level of costs associated. This risk was being worked on
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

18.2 The Vice-Chairman discussed risk RM022b on page 636 of the report, “Implications of Brexit for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses”. Cabinet agreed in August 2021 to commission an investment framework to draw down funding and commission projects against framework priorities.

18.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance endorsed the addition of the new risk, noting the importance of protecting against interruption to supply chains.

18.4 The Cabinet Member for Finance felt that the new format of the risk management report gave an easy way to read risks and identify issues. The Cabinet Member for Finance pointed out risks RM004, “The potential risk of failure to deliver effective and robust contract management for commissioned

services” and RM0026, “Legal challenge to procurement exercise” noting that the target to reach net zero by 2030 was key to procurement policy.

18.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. To consider and agree the key messages in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the report and Appendix A of the report containing key changes to corporate risks since the last risk management report in September 2021.
2. To consider and agree the corporate risks as at December 2021 (Appendix C of the report)

18.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Not applicable as no decision is being made

18.7 **Alternative Options**

There are no alternatives identified.

**19. Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property**

19.1.1 Cabinet received the report 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.

19.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management introduced the report to Cabinet:

- 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 was a continued emphasis on minimising the extent of the property estate retained for operational purpose. There was an aim to reduce net annual property expenditure by £1m over the next 2 years.
- Consideration was also given to the suitability of surplus property assets for reuse or redevelopment to meet service needs that could improve the quality of services for users, address policy areas or improve financial efficiency for the 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 meant that as well as continuing with rationalisation of the operational property estate to reduce the number of buildings used by the Council, a commercial approach was adopted over the sale or redeployment of surplus property assets.
- Recommendations for disposals and exploitation of property in this report followed detailed assessment by officers of all available options. The options presented were judged to provide the best return to the Council and, where appropriate, provide community benefits
- **Acle – Land at Mill Farm, Norwich Road (5001/01) (Part):** The adjacent land to the east of this site was sold to Repton Property Developments Ltd who were developing the land. This site was part of the original agreement sale for use by Repton Property Developments Ltd for attenuation ponds and other works to support the development. It was proposed that this area of land be formally declared surplus to County Council use and sold to

- Repton Property Developments Ltd subject to agreement of the value.
- **Attleborough – Highway Land at Hargham Road:** This was a small site in freehold ownership of the Council which formed part of the public highway. Following a review by the Director of property and Corporate Property Strategy Group this piece of land had been confirmed as not required for Council use; Repton Property Developments Ltd were interested in purchasing this site and had applied for a stopping up order to remove highway rights
  - **Great Yarmouth – The former Lawns Day Care Centre, Caister Road NR30 4DQ (6009/089):** this property, owned freehold by the Council was acquired as part of an adjoining housing with care scheme. The former Lawns Day Care centre was retained by the Council when the rest of the property was transferred to service providers. The former centre was leased to Independence Matters from 2014-2020. Following a review by the Director of property and Corporate Property Strategy Group this piece of land has been confirmed as not required for Council use. It was proposed to offer the freehold to the adjoining owners of the housing with care scheme; if this does not proceed it would be disposed of on the open market through auction or tender.
  - **Great Yarmouth – Land at Shrublands, Magdalen Way, Gorleston on Sea NR31 7BP (6009/081C) (part);** this land was in freehold ownership of the County Council. The land in question was a field, part of which was leased to the NHS who had erected a temporary building used as a medical centre. The rest of the field was used by others. Following a review by the Director of property and Corporate Property Strategy Group this piece of land had been confirmed as not required for Council use; the temporary building was at the end of its life and it was proposed to dispose of this land to the NHS to build a new building for medical use. If this did not proceed other options for the site would be explored.
  - **Mileham – Former School Site, The Street PE32 2RD (3063/012) And Field, Back Lane, PE32 2PP (3063/011):** These two sites were declared surplus to Council use in 2017 by Business and Property Committee following closure of the school. Properties were in ownership of the Free School Mileham Charity, managed in accordance with a Charity Commission scheme. Norfolk County Council was the only trustee of the charity. The Council was considering whether it should continue to be trustee or if another approach should be taken. Mileham Parish Council wished to become involved in administration of the trust, subject to changes being agreed by the Charity Commission.
  - **North Runcton / West Winch - Mill Lane Farm, PE33 0LT (2054/100):** This 51-acre site was part of the County Farms estate. County Farms had agreed that this site could be removed from the County Farms estate. Discussions were being held with King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council around holistic use for this land, and if this did not proceed then it would be disposed of through open market sale by auction or tender.
  - **Sedgeford – Former Primary School Ringstead Road, PE36 5NQ (2065/012):** this site was owned by Norfolk County Council and was used as a school until 2020. Children's Services had declared that this site was surplus to their needs. Following a review by the Director of property and Corporate Property Strategy Group this piece of land had been confirmed as not required for Council use. It was proposed to dispose of the site on the open market through auction or tender.

- **Thetford – The former Laburnum Grove Day Care Centre, Elm Road IP24 3HS (3099/059) and adjacent Laburnum Grove Land (3099/056):** this property was a former day centre and land owned by Norfolk County Council, acquired as part of housing with care scheme. This site was retained by the Council when the remainder of the property was transferred to care providers in 1995. The former care centre was leased to Independence Matters from 2014-2020. This site was confirmed as not required for Council use, so it was proposed to offer the freehold to the housing with care scheme; if this did not proceed it was proposed to dispose of it on the open market by auction or tender.
- The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management moved recommendations as set out in report.

19.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

1. To formally declare the Land at Mill Farm, Norwich Road, Acle (5001/01) (Part) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the Land to Repton Property Developments Ltd subject to the agreement of the value in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services. 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.
2. To formally declare the Highway Land at Hargham Road, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the Land to Repton Property Developments Ltd subject to the agreement of the value in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services. 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.
3. To formally declare the former Lawns Day Care Centre, Caister Road, Great Yarmouth NR30 4DQ (6009/089) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to agree terms and dispose of the land to the adjoining owner. In the event of no agreement then the Director of Property is authorised to sell by auction or tender. 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.
4. To formally declare the Land at Shrublands, Magdalen Way, Gorleston on Sea, Great Yarmouth NR31 7BP (6009/081C) (part) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to agree terms and dispose of the land to the NHS. In the event of no agreement then the Director of Property is authorised to sell by auction or tender. 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.
5. To agree to the County Council relinquishing its trustee role of the Free School, Mileham Charity (charity number 311179) in favour of Mileham

Parish Council subject to the agreement of Mileham Parish Council and the Charity Commission.

6. To formally declare Mill Lane Farm, in North Runcton / West Winch E33 0LT (2054/100) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. 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.
7. To formally declare the Former Primary School Ringstead Road, Sedgford PE36 5NQ (2065/012) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
8. To formally declare the former Laburnum Grove Day Care Centre, Elm Road IP24 3HS (3099/059) and adjacent Laburnum Grove Land (3099/056) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to agree terms and dispose of the land to the adjoining owner. In the event of no agreement then the Director of Property is authorised to sell by auction or tender. 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.

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

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.

### 19.4 **Alternative Options**

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.

## 20. **Mid-Year Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2021-22**

- 20.1.1 Cabinet received the report and the attached annex providing details of the 2021-22 treasury activities and highlighting compliance with policy and strategy previously approved in relation to treasury management.
- 20.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:
  - The mid-year treasury management monitoring report set out how the Council had performed to date against its treasury management and capital borrowing strategies 2021-22 with an aim to maintain cash, borrowing and investment levels that remained within the prudential indicators outlined in the treasury management strategy paper 2021-22 ensuring compliance with the treasury management code and its principles of security liquidity and yield

- The plan for 21 -22 was for £110m new borrowing and as at 30 September 2021, £60m had been borrowed, mostly in July 2021 when there was a dip in the long-term borrowing rates.
- Since the report was published the remaining £50m had been borrowed in November 2021 where there was a further dip in the long-term interest to below 1.6%
- Reducing long term borrowing required at lower, fixed term interest rates had reduced exposure to interest rate rises and led to £0.5m savings on interest payable cost in 2022-23
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report

20.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to endorse and recommend to County Council the Mid-Year Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2021-22

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

One annex is attached to this report, giving details of treasury management activities and outcomes, including:

- Investment activities
- Borrowing strategy and outcomes
- Capital Plan and non-treasury investments
- Prudential indicators

### 20.4 **Alternative Options**

In order to achieve treasury management in accordance with the Council's treasury management strategy, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendation in this report.

## 21. **Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P7: October 2021**

21.1.1 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 as at 31 March 2022, together with related financial information

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

- At the end of October 2021, net overspend was £995,000, largely due to continued overspend in Children's Services where budgets were under significant and increasing pressure much of which was due to the impact of the pandemic and which would continue to increase.
- The budget in Children's Services which continued to cause the greatest concern were those which were demand led such as external social care placements, particularly residential care where the independent care market had control of pricing. Home to school transport for those with special educational needs and disabilities was a growing concern and would continue to be until Government guidance to tribunals changed.
- Pressure on the number of residential placements required since the start of the financial year was because the level of need and availability of foster carers had been impacted by the pandemic
- Table 1 of the report summarised the forecast levels of overspend, the overspend in Children's Services had been mitigated by a one-off reduction

in minimum revenue revision resulting in slippage in the 2020-21 capital programme

- A review of the capital programme would be undertaken to remove or delay unnecessary planned capital expenditure and enable a rigorous benefits realisation analysis to be put in place as part of the continuing determination to manage budgets efficiently
- Shortfall in Adult Social Care savings targets was expected to reduce by the end of the year 2021-22
- The deficit in the dedicated schools grant was now £53.844m; in percentage terms this didn't put Norfolk out of line with similar councils but demonstrated that this system required timely overhaul
- The Covid-19 omicron variant showed the need for continued vigilance and commensurate use of financial resources by the Council when fighting the pandemic.
- Current and new funding was shown in paragraph 5 of the report and showed how all new funding in this area only ran until the end of March 2022.
- Recommendation 1 related to £5m investment with Norse Care to shift the estate towards enhanced care rather than standard residential care. Voids would be reduced, achieving better value for money. The revised Adult Social Care short term hospital offer would be delivered, and all rooms fit for the future.
- The Train Station Mobility Hub would form part of the commitment of the shift towards lower carbon activities where possible
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in report

## 21.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the uplift of capital programme by a net £2.059m approved by County Council in September 21 to address capital funding requirements as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 1.3 of the report.
2. Given 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 approve the appointment of Scott Norman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, as a director of Norfolk Safety CIC in accordance with Financial Regulations, to replace Stuart Ruff, Chief Fire Officer, as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report;
  4. To approve the appointment of Alice Reeve, Chief Executive Officer, Hethel Innovation Ltd, as a director of Hethel Innovation Limited, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report;
  5. To recognise the period 7 general fund forecast revenue **net overspend of £0.995m**, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
  6. To note the COVID-19 funding available of **£94.572m**, including £22.745m brought forward from 2020-21;
  7. To recognise the period 7 forecast of 91% 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;
  8. To note the forecast General Balances as at 31 March 2022 of **£22.768m**.
  9. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes.

### 21.3 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

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

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

- Forecast over and under spends
- Covid-19 grant income
- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

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

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.



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

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

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

#### 21.4 **Alternative Options**

In order 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.

### **22 Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting:**

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

### **23 Exclusion of the Public**

23.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** not to exclude the press from the meeting.

### **24 Exempt minutes of meeting held on 8 November 2021**

24.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the minutes of the meeting.

The Chairman wished everyone a Merry Christmas. He commended all staff for their hard work responding to the pandemic. The Chairman thanked Cabinet Members for their work over the past year and thanked Executive Directors and their staff for producing reports for Cabinet meetings. The Chairman reiterated the importance of individuals being careful to protect themselves, protect others and protect Norfolk.

The meeting ended at 12.01

**The Chairman**

**Cabinet**  
**6 December 2021**  
**Public & Local Member Questions**

<b>Agenda item 6</b>	<b>Public Question Time</b>
6.1	<p><b>Question from Cavan Stewart</b>  In answer to my question to Cabinet in September 2020 I was delighted to learn a speed limit of 20 mph was deemed to be appropriate on Wolfe and Quebec Roads. After contacting Cllr. Wilby, I am pleased to learn that officers are finally actively working on this project and would be grateful for reassurance that no time is lost in its implementation. However, there continues to be safety concerns for schoolchildren, especially at the busy junction of Quebec, St Leonard's and Wolfe Roads. Please could Cabinet consider putting in additional safety measures which might include a pedestrian crossing and/or a lollipop person to mitigate the risk to children?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b>  I am pleased to report that, now that funding has been confirmed, the delivery of a 20mph speed limit project is being progressed and is going through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process. Being a legal process, which involves statutory consultation, this typically takes around nine to twelve months but will depend on the feedback received from consultation. The scheme has been funded by the Local Member Fund.</p> <p>In terms of additional measures, this would not be considered until the effectiveness of the 20mph, once implemented, can be determined.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question from Cavan Stewart</b>  Cabinet should also be aware that there are additional risks to children and parents walking to school on Quebec Road where cars frequently mount the pavement in order to pass each other where cars are parked at the kerb-side. What additional road safety precautions, such as pavement bollards, can be brought in to stop this extremely dangerous and daily occurrence?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b>  It is acknowledged that on occasions some drivers may choose to mount the footway in order to allow oncoming vehicles to pass. However, with good forward visibility and sufficient areas to stop in both directions, this should facilitate traffic to pass safely without any requirement to mount the footway. Quebec Road currently has an excellent safety record (0 incidents recorded in last 5 years) and therefore would not be a priority to investigate further. It is also worth highlighting that pavement bollards can also restrict accessibility for pedestrians, mobility scooters, pushchairs and wheelchair users, so we would not recommend their use here.</p>
6.2	<p><b>Question from Jamie Pennington</b>  On 21 April 21 Norfolk Foster carers were told that from 1 June 21 they must save £5/week in long term savings for each foster child in their care. This was a new policy. SSW were instructed to enforce it, and foster carers were chased. On 19 Nov 21 I was emailed by the Norfolk Complaints team who explained that no such compulsory savings policy exists. If there was no policy, what authority did Children's Services have to pursue foster carers?</p>

	<p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b> Children's Services have not made the expectations within the Looked After Children and Young People's Savings Policy since April 2021 a requirement. However, all Foster Carers have been actively encouraged by Children's Services to adhere to the policy from April 2021 in the best interest of the children and young people in their care. We have been dealing with Mr Pennington's concerns via the Complaints process.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question from Jamie Pennington</b> Can the Director of Children's Services please write to apologise to foster carers, repay the money which was taken from them (and replace it in children's savings with council money) and explain why the situation arose?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b> We have communicated our approach widely to foster carers, the vast majority have fully understood the rationale and are keen to support this best practice approach on behalf of children in their care, utilising the basic maintenance allowance, which is a specific allowance paid to carers by the Council to meet the needs of children. Carers saving on behalf of children is common practice in LA fostering services nationally, with Norfolk carers seeking for Norfolk to introduce this guidance.</p>
6.3	<p><b>Question from David Evans</b> An Environmental Hub has been established at Gressenhall to act as a centre for learning about Norfolk County Council environment policy aims, and to empower residents and communities to make positive changes in their own natural environments. Has the Council considered how difficult it is to reach Gressenhall by public transport?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> Located in the centre of the county, and with a range of diverse environmental and built assets including riverside walks, orchards and a working heritage farm, Gressenhall is perfectly placed to operate as the Council's new environmental hub, not least because of its already excellent reputation for learning and access.</p> <p>In terms of public transport, Gressenhall Farm &amp; Workhouse is served by a limited bus service (Konectbus 21/21A) which connect Gressenhall and Beetley villages to Dereham. Beetley and Gressenhall villages are also within easy walking distance of the site.</p> <p>Schools normally use coach travel to visit the site, where there is ample designated coach parking.</p> <p>With regard to Active Travel, Gressenhall is currently located on a National Cycle Route connecting Routes 1 and 13 and there is covered bicycle parking on site.</p> <p>The site currently marks the starting point for both the Wensum Way and Nar Valley Way walking trails. The Wensum Way has a spur linking to Dereham and walkers are welcomed to the site.</p> <p>As part of the Gressenhall Environmental Hub project, it is proposed that an</p>

improved walking and cycling route is established to connect the site to Dereham, opening up wider access to both the existing and new facilities which Gressenhall offers to Norfolk schools and communities.

**Supplementary Question from David Evans**

How do Norfolk County Council plan to communicate their environmental policy and strategy and to engage with their electorate and the community with regard implementation of the strategy and its further development?

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

The Council recognises that engaging with our communities in terms of the work which is being done around the Environmental Policy is vital.

Engagement to date has included press releases, social media and face to face programmes when Covid-19 restrictions have allowed.

Major projects such as the 1 Million Trees for Norfolk have involved work with schools and communities, and this will increase significantly in the New Year.

The new Environmental Hub at Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse will give many new and exciting opportunities for engagement with a wide range of Norfolk residents, with new, accessible learning spaces being created in the Union building and new schools' programmes focusing on the environment.

The November 8<sup>th</sup> cabinet report "Natural Norfolk: Progress on Delivering the Environmental Policy" included the recommendation that the Natural Norfolk concept be developed as a public-facing communications vehicle for Environmental Policy work, including as a platform to promote engagement opportunities delivered through the Gressenhall Environmental Hub. Our communications officers are currently assessing different options for the delivery of this platform.

6.4

**Question from Aiden Watts**

Following the return of Highways to NCC from the City, how can City residents be sure that sufficient funding is still available for road safety measures and parking issues within residential streets, without being overlooked due to broader County highways projects?

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

The return of highways to the County Council has not affected how funding for road safety measures is allocated. Funding for small scale works is available through the Local Member Fund and the Parish Partnership Fund (which operates with the City Council within Norwich). The Local Member Fund has been increased to £10,000 per member this year and the scope widened to include environmental initiatives such as the installation of electrical vehicle charging points and tree planting. We have also launched the new £1m Road Safety Community Fund for small scale safety schemes over the next four years. This increases the amount of funding available for road safety measures.

**Supplementary Question from Aiden Watts**

In light of significant safety concerns on a road full of families, when can the

residents of Christchurch Road expect a consultation on permit parking following the impact of permit parking on the “Welsh” streets in January 2020?

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

Extensions to permit parking zones are controversial, and expensive due to the consultation and legal processes involved. The implications of introducing permit parking need to be carefully considered in order to achieve an effective solution that does not create problems elsewhere. For those reasons, we do not introduce them lightly, and we would need to see widespread community support for any changes before proceeding.

In the case of Christchurch Road, an extension of the existing permit zone would allow people from that zone to continue parking there, so parking problems are likely to persist. Such an extension could also just move the problem elsewhere, so a wider permit parking scheme might be necessary. Initial considerations suggest that it would need to cover the area between Christchurch Road, the ring road (Colman Road), Earlham Road and Unthank Road.

Currently, the only funding for extensions to permit parking schemes is through the Local Member Fund. However, the wider scheme suggested would be more than the LMF could afford but we will explore whether other options are available. However, before investigating further, we would need to see that there is widespread support in the area for permit parking.

**Cabinet  
6 December 2021  
Local Member Questions**

<b>Agenda item 7</b>	<b>Local Member Issues/Questions</b>
7.1	<p><b>Question from Alexandra Kemp</b> The price of food is going up. The UK produces only 50% of its food supply. County Farms have a crucial part to play securing the national food supply. But Cabinet wants to declare a County Farm in West Winch, surplus to requirements. The estate is earmarked as green infrastructure and not developable. West Winch is co-located next to King's Lynn, an area of deprivation. Can Cabinet work with NHS partners to turn the estate into Care Farm, to protect food security, and improve health and wellbeing in West Norfolk</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b> The site, as Cllr Kemp well knows, is part of a long-term strategic site that will deliver 4,000 homes for the area, which is well supported by local residents and the Local MP and is crucial to the overall scheme. If Cllr Kemp supports the provision of a new road, the wider scheme needs to come forward and withdrawing our site would jeopardise delivery. I'm sure she would not be happy with this outcome. These homes are necessary for the long-term growth of Kings Lynn and I am glad to say that Norfolk County Council has been working closely with colleagues from BKLWN to support this site of regional importance. The site which is allocated in the Local Plan (policy E2.1 – adopted by the inspector back in 2016) – there has been extensive and ongoing consultation.</p> <p>The Norfolk County Council owned land forms part of this overall allocation</p> <p>As Cllr Wilby reported at a recent Cabinet meeting, we are making good progress with the application to DfT for the West Winch Housing Access Road, which will link the Hardwick Roundabout with the A10, this road will <b>only</b> be delivered with the delivery of the housing. What else will it deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two new primary schools and a nursery</li><li>• Increased secondary education provision</li><li>• Green infrastructure</li><li>• A health centre</li><li>• Sports and community facilities</li><li>• Habitat creation and allotments</li></ul> <p>All fantastic and strategic outcomes.</p>

	<p>The Councillor asks about Care Farms – can I direct her to the recent County Farms Lettings – six great new ways to get into farming. Ingleborough Farm in West Walton is currently being marketed as an equipped 133 acre Care Farm – providing a fantastic service to this part of the County.</p>
7.2	<p><b>Question from Cllr Ian Mackie</b> I welcome the NSIDP and the inclusion of the Broadland Business Park station. This would be a fantastic piece public transport infrastructure linking the business park, the park and ride as well as growth areas of housing to the city centre, thereby offering an alternative to car travel, as well as supporting sustainable development and growth.</p> <p>Please could the Cabinet Member reassure me and the community of Thorpe St Andrew that he will do all he can to meet the timescales of starting construction in 2028, if not before. I congratulate the Administration for a excellent report and positive vision for Norfolk</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> The NSIDP pulls together information on the key infrastructure needed to deliver economic growth in Norfolk, setting out the high-level strategic priorities for the next 10 years. This has been compiled in collaboration with stakeholders including the County Council, district councils, utility companies and government agencies. All of the schemes identified in the plan still require funding, and their presence in the plan enables us to co-ordinate implementation, prioritise activity and respond to any funding opportunities.</p> <p>The start dates identified for all the projects including the Broadland Business Park Rail Station are estimated and subject to change depending on the opportunities to progress projects. There are a number of delivery challenges currently affecting the viability of Broadland Business Park Rail Station scheme, and local authority officers will continue to work with Government and the rail industry to explore the potential options to bring this project forward. Its inclusion in the plan recognises it is a priority project which will contribute towards the County's ambition for strategic infrastructure in support of sustainable growth.</p> <p>I am happy to meet and work with the local member on this major piece of infrastructure.</p>
7.3	<p><b>Question from Cllr Dan Roper</b> There has been media coverage on the possibility of Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils relocating into spare space at County Hall. It is understood that despite ongoing interest the two Councils have since been informed by the leadership of NCC that space will not be available and the option is no longer feasible. Will the cabinet member outline how and why this decision was taken including any representations that were received on the matter?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b> As the Cabinet Member for Commercialisation and Assets – I am often asked how can we make the most of the estate and I am pleased to say that we will look to lease and commercialise parts of the estate where they are underutilised and not needed for service delivery. Indeed, this was a focus of the recent Corporate Select Committee.</p>

Currently we share County Hall with a number of partners including colleagues from the Police, health, Passport office and a number of other key partners across the County. We will continue to have discussions with partners around the colocation and use of property – one of the foundations of the very successful Norfolk One Public Estate programme.

Norfolk County Council has always been clear that it will discuss with partners where we can co-locate – very often these will be commercially confidential and / or at an early stage of option analysis. This was very much the case with the discussions with South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) / Broadland District Council (BDC) - where any space that could be available was one of several options to be explored by both SNDC / BDC.

Unfortunately, some of the public reports, following on from internal staff briefings to SNDC / BDC were incorrect. In the briefing SNDC / BDC did not say that County Hall was 'where they were moving to' but rather one of several option. As the year progressed - it became clear that the organisations were working to different timescales and that County Hall – for a number of reasons would not be a viable option.

#### **Second Question from Cllr Dan Roper**

The Local Government Association are warning that there could be a winter double whammy due to a shortage of gritter drivers and road salt ahead of Christmas, how is Norfolk faring on this?

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

I am pleased to report that Norfolk County Council has replenished salt stocks over the summer period ready for use this winter season. This equates to 15,000t held across the county and includes a 5,000t salt stock contingency should it be required. In addition, further salt orders have been placed to replace what has already been used this winter. Salt stocks are monitored on a regular and routine basis to ensure that we have sufficient stock and orders placed as required.

The winter service operation is delivered via Norse Highways. The winter service team have daily contact with Norse Highways to review their available resource in order to plan our winter service treatments effectively. Should there be resource challenges, strategies are in place to ensure routes are covered, although so far this winter period, crews have already completed 8 gritting runs given the recent cold weather.

7.4

#### **Question from Cllr Rob Colwell**

With insurers raising the alarm about the number of homes being built where owners were at risk of experiencing “traumatic and devastating losses”, and following last weeks Flood Action Week, together with warnings issued by the Environment Agency after Met Office warns of another above average wetter winter, will Councillor Grant join me in expressly opposing any new residential developments on Flood Zone Risk 3 in Norfolk, with Norfolk County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority and in particular the proposed Parkway development of 226 new homes on such land in Gaywood, King's Lynn.

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



	<p>Norfolk County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority have a role as Statutory Consultee to Planning for major development with surface water drainage. As such we provide advice (in line with our thresholds) on the local flood risk and drainage strategies. We do not comment on strategic flood risk (indicated in the Flood Zone mapping) as these matters are determined by the Local Planning Authority with advice from the Environment Agency, who have been consulted on the Planning Application that you mention.</p>
7.5	<p><b>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</b></p> <p>It is estimated that 1.5 million children and young people will need support for their mental health as a direct result of the pandemic over the next three to five years. It is crucial that early intervention and prevention services such as school counselling are able to help children avoid reaching crisis point in the first place. Can the Cabinet member say how the Council may be able to help assist in the development of these services in Norfolk schools?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b></p> <p>Many thanks for the question. Children's Services continue to work with Norfolk school leaders on a 'Learning Recovery' plan focussed on activities whilst we remain in the pandemic and looking beyond. This plan recognises that individual schools and Multi Academy Trusts are best placed to develop their individual plans with the LA playing a key role in co-ordinating support across our early support teams and those within the CCG. The CAMHS transformation programme which began prior to the pandemic is responding to school requirements that exist now and school leaders have welcomed their new approach. We have supported schools with an enhanced wellbeing programme and have delivered trauma -informed practice sessions across the county to enable schools to identify those children and young people who have been most affected by the pandemic. I have built close relationships with schools in my local area throughout the pandemic and would encourage Cllr Watkins to take the same opportunity.</p> <p><b>Second Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</b></p> <p>Many small and medium sized businesses in Norfolk are reeling from the repercussions of Brexit. They are absorbing unwanted costs, paying hidden tariffs, moving operations to within the EU, shedding workers and seeing a big decline in orders. How is the Council working with New Anglia Local Economic Partnership (LEP), other district councils, and organisations representing the business community, to try and mitigate the worst effects of this growing crisis?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy</b></p> <p>I do not recognise any of the description of business in Norfolk, can Cllr Watkins provide any evidence of his unfounded comments. Businesses in Norfolk are actually hiring at a fast rate, with the number of people claiming support for job seeking in Norfolk falling 29% between March and October this year. This is indicative of the demand-led recovery, with recruitment a primary concern rather than job losses. 73% of Norfolk firms entering the British Chamber of Commerce's <a href="#">Quarterly Economic Survey</a> tried to recruit staff in Q3 2021.</p> <p>Although the number of firms exporting in the region did decrease slightly between 2019 and 2020 (<a href="#">ONS</a>), much of this will be due to the pandemic and subsequent global supply chain disruption.</p> <p>In fact, Norfolk businesses entering the Chamber of Commerce's <a href="#">Quarterly Economic</a></p>

	<p><a href="#">Survey</a> did not report any change in export <b>sales</b> in first quarter of 2020 (with the UK's exit of the EU taking effect on 31 January 2020), although there was a small decline in export <b>orders</b> reported in that quarter, when the pandemic impact had begun to take effect.</p> <p>The most recent data shows a manufacturing sector in Norfolk that has been strongly increasing its export orders and sales this year (46% rebound growth in Q2 2021, a further 6% in Q3), recovering the ground lost in 2020. The service sector is still reporting weaker export recovery, but the picture has been improving rapidly in 2021.</p> <p>To support further growth, we provide full business support services through New Anglia's Growth Hub, which <a href="#">provides</a> comprehensive guidance and support (<a href="https://newanglia.co.uk/eu-exit/">https://newanglia.co.uk/eu-exit/</a>) for businesses regarding the exit from the EU; the LEP also leads a regional approach to inward investment. This support complements the work of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Norfolk Chambers of Commerce.</p>
7.6	<p><b>Question from Cllr Tim Adams</b></p> <p>The Police will be reporting areas where people feel uncomfortable due to street lights being turned off back to Councils - will the Cabinet member commit to turning them back on where requested?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b></p> <p>To reduce CO2 emissions and save money, we have adopted part night lighting in low crime areas where there are low levels of through traffic. It also complements other actions we have taken such as modernising lights to make them more energy efficient. The process involved consultation with all stakeholders which included residents and Norfolk Police.</p> <p>We will of course review locations if there is a proven safety issue and we liaise closely with Norfolk Constabulary on this. However, this needs to be carefully considered given the negative environmental impact it would have on reducing carbon emissions.</p>
7.7	<p><b>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires</b></p> <p>How many families in the rural areas of Norfolk is the Early Childhood and Family service currently reaching?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question. Norfolk's Early Childhood and Family Service (ECFS) is comprised of 3 distinct but interlocking elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Targeted early help support for families</li><li>• Online and digital services and support</li><li>• Community funding to enable new local early childhood groups to operate</li></ul> <p>At any one time the service provides targeted support to up to 800 families. We know on average that just under 40 % of the families receiving targeted support live in areas defined as 'rural' (not a city or larger town).</p> <p>The online and digital information and advice support has proven very valuable during the last 18 months with thousands of families accessing this resource. Over a</p>

	<p>thousand families who have accessed the digital offer have requested additional support from ECFS, with over 40% coming from rural areas.</p> <p>The community fund, coordinated via our Early Childhood Advisory Boards, has been used to support the development of local networks of support for families within their communities. We are aware of 440 parent and toddler groups currently running across the County, 117 of which have received support via this fund to either start up or expand their offer to families, with approximately 3500 spaces being created. I am happy to follow up with a breakdown of this split across urban and rural areas.</p>
7.8	<p><b>Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone</b> What help is given to those applicants who are not computer literate in completing the Blue Badge application process?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships</b> The Blue Badge scheme is a national scheme, using national criteria, run by the Department for Transport. Locally, paper applications are available on request for customers who need them. These can be picked up from a local library or posted on request.</p> <p>Customers can also visit a library and receive assistance to use the online application process.</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone</b> Has there been an analysis of how to make the process easier following difficulties experienced by some people?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships</b> Yes. We monitor customer feedback on a regular basis as part of our continuous improvement approach and a full end to end review took place in 2019. Customer feedback suggests the new process implemented as a result of that has been extremely well received. The % of applications completed online is now 86%. Prior to the review it was 67%.</p> <p>The DfT continually review applications and support groups feedback to develop and enhance the scheme.</p>
7.9	<p><b>Question from Cllr Saul Penfold</b> Following a question on twitter about why County Hall lights are left on overnight, Councillor Peck said “The lights are LED and are automatically switched on and off when staff enter or leave each area. So probably triggered by cleaners or security staff.” Yet the lights on each floor are all on at the same time so can you please provide more details about who these staff are and what they are doing to cause the lights to be on all the time?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b> I would draw Cllr Penfold’s attention to the second part of my response on twitter – that “Also, critical staff, social workers and partners work out of the building 24/7”.</p> <p>Put simply the building is used in the evening by a variety of staff. A number of these roles are essential functions serving the people of Norfolk, with County Hall acting as</p>

	<p>their base often providing cover and support for vulnerable people.</p> <p>I am more than welcome for him to come to County Hall one evening to see how the PIR system works and how the lights will turn off when people are not present on the floors.</p> <p>To be frank, the operation of low energy use LED lights controlled by movement sensors at County Hall, supporting for staff who are working in the evenings is a minor issue. Instead we should note that since the Conservatives took over in 2016/17 – we have reduced the carbon footprint of our built estate by 68% and we've reduced carbon emissions from water consumption by 52%.</p>
7.10	<p><b>Question from Cllr Ben Price</b> The county council leader has called Norfolk “car county”. Can the Cabinet Member for Highways give me a straight yes or no answer – does he accept that carbon emissions from transport are rising in Norfolk and that this correlates with the continued dominance of cars as the main mode of transport?</p> <p><b>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</b> Thank you for the question. Norfolk’s rural nature means that cars are an essential part of our transport mix- allowing those in the most rural settings to travel and work throughout our county and beyond. That is why I referred to Norfolk as a Car County and we must support those who need to use this method of transport. At the same time we will continue to strive to improve our bus services to provide alternative, more environmentally friendly options. For many in our county we must recognise that cars will be their only viable transport option. We all expect to see the change to using electric or other power means in the near future which will contribute to our carbon reduction ambitions.</p> <p>According to the latest carbon emissions data from BEIS (2005-2019) on local authorities; it shows a reduction in emissions in transport in the two years leading up to 2019 for road transport. Within the county as whole over all roads, there is wide variability, with some districts remaining relatively consistent over this period with regard to road transport. Road transport emissions in Norwich are significantly below its 2005 levels – 18%. So, the data shows relatively consistent levels over the 15 years covered in the latest report; with the last few years showing slight year on year reductions.</p> <p><b>Second Question from Cllr Ben Price</b> The draft Transport for Norwich Strategy refers to the promise in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) of a bus rapid transit network for Norwich, but nowhere else does it commit to the creation of such a network. Will the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure commit to the creation of a bus rapid transit network for Norwich?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</b> The proposed Transport for Norwich (TfN) strategy, due to be considered by Cabinet on 6 December, gives strong policy backing for public transport with the relevant policy setting out that it will continue to be a vitally important transport solution, and that the council will work in partnership with operators to deliver services that meet people’s travel needs. The key action associated with the policy is that, through the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), we will continue to work in partnership with</p>

	<p>operators to develop bus services that meet people’s requirements.</p> <p>Whilst the BSIP doesn’t specially mention bus rapid transit (BRT) as a concept, the proposals within it aim to deliver the component elements that form the basis of this, namely high frequency, accessible bus services utilising extensive bus priority infrastructure, providing quick and reliable bus journey times, complemented by high quality passenger information and convenient, competitive fares.</p> <p>Once we know the funding settlement from the BSIP we will commence work on identifying the specific improvements on the key public transport corridors., rolling out the approach that is in the TfN strategy and the BSIP, the latter of which sets out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County Council will conduct a Bus Network Review Study and a Bus Priority Study for the county between April 2022 and October 2022, in readiness to identify, design and mobilise delivery of the interventions and measures where bus priority should be delivered</li> <li>• More buses on time/faster journey times will be delivered by our bus priority programme, which will build on the investment already happening in Norwich through the Transforming Cities Fund and expanded to address bus delays across the whole county</li> <li>• In Norwich, we have bus lanes that run into Norwich along key corridors – Newmarket Road, Dereham Road and Sprowston Road – totalling 4.5 miles. As part of our Transforming Cities Fund, we will be introducing an additional 3 miles of bus lane.</li> <li>• Traffic light priority will be introduced in Norwich as part of the Transforming Cities Fund programme, and then also rolled out to King’s Lynn and Great Yarmouth, Norfolk’s other two urban centres. We are working on an approach that provides a green signal to buses irrespective of whether they are running early, on time or late, but is tailored to each individual junction. We are currently working with operators to ensure that the respective technologies are able to communicate seamlessly.</li> <li>• To ensure free flowing bus services on key routes at peak times we have identified, as part of our Permit Scheme for the authorisation of works on the highway, a network of Traffic Sensitive Streets. On these roads, limitations are applied to carrying out works on the highway so that, apart from emergencies, they have to be carried out outside traffic sensitive hours (i.e., between 0930-1600)</li> <li>• We work closely with the District Councils to ensure that off-street parking is monitored and controlled and will be applying for moving traffic offence enforcement powers to improve bus punctuality</li> <li>• The county council also collects data through the GPS functionality of operators’ ticket machines. This data includes dwell time on stops, average vehicle speed, journey time between stops, all of which we can use to assess where bus priority measures could be successfully deployed to optimise congestion relief for buses</li> <li>• On specified corridors where bus priority and bus vehicle investment is made during the lifetime of this BSIP, we will ensure that average journey times for buses between specified points are decreased compared to before the measures were implemented. Location specific targets will be agreed in Enhanced Partnership Schemes on a corridor by corridor basis, based on bus operator bus tracking data</li> </ul>
7.11	<p><b>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn</b> The River Wensum SAC could have serious planning implications for the Norwich</p>

Western Link, and details of this should be on the risk register. Opposition councillors have repeatedly asked for assurance regarding the legal advice sought by the council on the implications of the SAC, but have not received it. Can the Cabinet Member please provide details of the legal opinion obtained by the council, via a private email if it is impossible for this to be made public?

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

The Council has appointed external legal representatives to provide ongoing legal support in relation to its emerging planning and statutory order proposals for the NWL project. The Council does not routinely publish the legal advice it receives.

**Second Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn**

The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Development Plan discussed by the Infrastructure and Development Committee in November includes a number of major road projects, including the Norwich Western Link. Yet the report does not mention the carbon impact of these roads at all. Does the Cabinet Member agree that it is a major omission to discuss an infrastructure plan to build more roads without considering the carbon impact?

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

The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan recognises the importance of and supports the transition to Net Zero. There is a dedicated section detailing sustainability projects, and the work to accelerate the roll out of Electric vehicles. There are a number of sustainable projects included such as Weavers Way and the Green Loop, and schemes to promote active travel are also mentioned in the Up-and-Coming projects section of the plan.

Norfolk currently has an infrastructure “deficit” and the projects within the plan are aiming to bring Norfolk up to the level of infrastructure investment seen across the rest of the Country. Much of the emphasis of the NSIDP is around the transport infrastructure needed to support the planned growth across the county and projects will contribute towards active travel and improving public transport provision.

The NSIDP outlines the current stage and next stage of each project, and as each project progresses towards delivery it will be subject to necessary assessments, where environmental matters including carbon emissions will be thoroughly considered. Future iterations of the NSIDP will be reviewed and developed to place greater emphasis on projects that would enable reduction of carbon emissions and sustainability that would facilitate transition to Net Zero.

7.12

**Question from Cllr Paul Neale**

At the recent meeting of the People & Communities Select Committee we had some non-residential personal care representatives speaking regarding the handling of the charging policy that had discriminated against those that were in their care. Apart from the anguish of this affair, they were very annoyed that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services had been invited but not attended any of their meetings during this long running issue. With the assistance of the Director of Adult Services some Members will now be attending some of their meetings so we can understand first hand issues that affect them. Will the Cabinet Member now also meet with these groups and listen?

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

Thank you for your question. As you will be aware this project is led independently and designed by people who use the services and not the Officers or Members. I have asked Cllr Shelagh Gurney the Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to be the lead Member for this very important area of work. She has been working with Cllr Tony White, the Member Champion for Disability and has regularly met with the representatives. You will of course know that she was present at the meeting of the Peoples and Communities Select Committee and explained her role there as well. This teamwork ensures the department has good links into the work and feedback from it. As you would expect the Council remains active in lobbying central Government for more fundamental changes in line with the ambitions of this project.

**Supplementary Question from Cllr Paul Neale**

The Integrated Care System (ICS) will be one of the largest public spenders in Norfolk and Waveney. If the ICS agrees to improve social value in its procurement and pay the Real Living Wage of £9.90 an hour, there could be a significant boost to Norfolk's economy and living standards. Will the Council commit to working towards that goal of paying a Real Living Wage and ensuring improved conditions?

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

Thank you for your question. As you are already aware Norfolk County Council is one of many partners in the Integrated Care System (ICS) for Norfolk and Waveney. We will be working closely with all the organisations to help ensure that the aims and objectives of the ICS can best support the people of Norfolk and Waveney. The Council's own strategy "Better Together for Norfolk" sets out our vision and what we want to do to support levelling up for people in Norfolk across all services, partnerships and businesses. The way we procure services is just one part of this. We are committed to ensuring that we pay fair prices for the services that we commission. Our Health Partners are of course part of our review of prices that we collectively pay for care. We make sure that everyone pays at least the National Living Wage. Every 1p rise in the pay rates for Adult Social Care provision costs the Council an extra £200,000. So this years 40p proposed rise in the National Living Wage equates to an additional £8m. The Council fully recognises the value of the social care sector for Norfolk people, its economy and for the wider health system and the need as part of this to ensure that social care staff are appropriately paid.

7.13

**Question from Cllr Webb**

At full council last week the Leader said there was no need to include a passage in the Better Together for Norfolk seeking a whole system review of the pandemic in Norfolk because it was already happening. Will he tell us who is leading and carrying out the whole system review, what it's terms of reference are, and when it will report?

**Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy**

Thank you for your question. As Cllr Webb will be aware Government have announced that there will be a National review of the response to the pandemic and all partner organisations will be contributing to this. We would anticipate that this review would have a focus particularly on vulnerable people and how the response has affected them.

	<p>The Local Resilience Forum (NRF) and Public Health teams constantly review how the local system is responding to the Pandemic here in Norfolk to ensure we are taking the right action at the right time.</p>
7.14	<p><b>Question from Cllr Alison Birmingham</b> At council last week Cllr Peck said he had information on the future letting of County Hall he would share when we reached the motion on the agenda. Unfortunately council ran out of time so will Cllr Peck share that information now including how it was that offers of use of county hall to be the headquarters of other councils were made without prior consultation with the county council?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b> Please see response to question 7.3, above.</p>
7.15	<p><b>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones</b> Has Cllr Peck the number of vehicles that have used the newly constructed car park at County Hall since it opened, and will he tell us what they are?</p> <p><b>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</b> The number of vehicles using the County Hall car park varies each day – we do not record on a daily basis the use of specific parts of the County Hall car-park.</p> <p>However as Cllr Jones is fully aware, the occupation of County Hall is low at the moment, as we continue to keep a number of social distancing measures in place. As we continue to consolidate staff, partners and functions onto County Hall and occupation returns to pre-pandemic levels – there is a need – as was very clearly demonstrated within the planning application to provide sufficient parking, particularly for staff who need access to their vehicle as part of their job.</p>