

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 17 November 2021
10.00am, held at County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Barry Stone – Chair

Cllr David Bills
Cllr Claire Bowes
Cllr Chris Dawson
Cllr Philip Duigan
Cllr Lana Hempsall

Cllr Brenda Jones
Cllr Jim Moriarty
Cllr William Richmond
Cllr Colleen Walker
Cllr Brian Watkins
Cllr Tony White

Cabinet Members Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby

Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury

Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships

Cllr Andrew Jamieson

Cabinet Member for Finance

Also Present:

Grahame Bygrave	Director of Highways and Waste, CES
Joel Hull	Head of Waste, CES
Richard Doleman	Principal Infrastructure Growth Planner, CES
Nicola Ledain	Committee Officer, Democratic Services
Sarah Rhoden	Assistant Director, Performance and Governance, CES
Tom McCabe	Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Matt Tracey	Growth and Infrastructure Group Manager, CES
Sophie Leney	Head of Trading Standards
Ceri Sumner	Director, Community Information and Learning, CES
Nina Xu	Infrastructure and Economic Growth Project Officer, CES
Jo Middleton	Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, CES
Martin Collison	Collison Consultants
Vince Muspratt	Director Growth and Development, CES
Steve Miller	Director, Culture and Heritage, CES
Ben Jones	Director of Active Norfolk

1. Apologies and substitutions

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Colleen Walker, James Bensly, Vic Thomson (substituted by Brenda Jones, Lana Hempsall and Philip Duigan respectively). Apologies were also received from Steffan Aquerone.

2. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Cllr Bills declared an 'other' interest that he was a Director of Norse Environmental Services.

4. Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 There was one public question received and the response is given at Appendix A.

6. Local Member Issues / Questions

- 6.1 The list of Local Member questions/issues is attached at Appendix A.

7. Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-2024

- 7.1 The Committee received the annexed report (7) which set out the third edition of the Strategy, covering 2021-2024. The Strategy set out a partnership approach by the public, private and not-for-profit sector to rural economic development in Norfolk over a three-year period.
- 7.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:
- 7.2.1 Officers explained that the concept of local investment boards was still at an early stage, with implementation influenced by the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) guidance, when it is issued. Members acknowledged that the strategy did include things that could be developed by local market towns, without recourse SPF. Officers clarified that the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy (NRES) had been used to attract funding in the past and would be used as evidence for future funding bids.
- 7.2.2 The establishment of the market towns working group was in its infancy. There were District Council representatives on the NRES steering group, and this would ensure linkage with market town representatives. Discussions needed to be held with all relevant partners on the best way forward with the working group, to ensure arrangements were manageable.
- 7.2.3 Officers assured members that new initiatives to grow the visitor economy away from the coastal hotspots would not be created where the local communities did not want them. There were local area representatives involved in the Visit Norfolk tourism partnership, who would be able to feed in local concerns about any proposed developments. Such developments would also be subject to planning consultation. Officers explained that market towns were also being focused on, as they were more equipped to deal with visitors, and the visitor economy could help revitalise them after the pandemic.
- 7.2.4 Officers explained that stakeholders in the west of the county had contributed to the NRES consultation, including a number of young people. Officers had taken into account many of the ideas and were aware of the needs and made sure they had been built into the strategy. The consultation took place via webinars with key partners, and an online questionnaire which was promoted to a broad cross section

of partner organisations, such as parish councils.

- 7.2.5 It was understood that the Government guidance on SPF would be published in the new year, with the Fund itself due to be launched in April 2022. The delivery plan for the NRES would take account of this guidance in shaping priorities to target the funding.
- 7.2.6 There were various measures being considered to reduce emissions as part of the Strategy. Within agriculture and food supply chain, the reduction of emissions was high on the agenda and the change in support to farmers would accelerate that – future funding schemes will reward farmers for environmental improvements, not food production. There was also concern about the need to transition to electric vehicles, which would mean upgrading the grid, especially in the rural areas. The Government was also coming out with new schemes and programmes about the ways that homes were heated, and the strategy was engaged with this type of change.
- 7.2.7 The strategy integrates with planning priorities and housing developments in as much as it can do. Land use policy sits with district councils and NCC officers worked closely with them in developing the strategy. In the past, local action groups had assisted in the implementation of programmes such as LEADER, which targeted rural business diversification. Officers work closely to ensure that sustainable developments are brought forward and consider all aspects such as transport etc. In the consultation on the Strategy's priorities, young people were concerned about the affordability and availability of housing in rural areas, which could prevent them from living and working there.
- 7.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED:**
1. To review and consider the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24
 2. To note that a Delivery Plan for the Strategy will be produced once the Government's guidance on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund had been published.

8. Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan (NSIDP) 2021

- 8.1 The Committee received the annexed report (8) which set out the updated delivery plan.
- 8.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:
- 8.2.1 Report was welcomed especially the amount of investment that Norfolk was drawing into sustainable transport as well as the enhancements of the other areas. The rail link at Broadland Business Park would also be a major addition to the transport routes in the county. These additions would really add to the reduction of the carbon footprint.
- 8.2.2 The rail link at Broadland Business Park was still an ambition, but Officers had encountered a number of problems with implementing this.
- 8.2.3 As this document grew and changed, the opportunity to feed into the document for Members would be roughly annually in October as the document was refreshed on an annual basis. NCC had also responded to a number of consultations regarding the offshore transmission network, and it was hoped that it would bring joined up infrastructure but it would not be a quick fix.

8.2.4 The Chair proposed that an officer working group was set up to investigate the power shortages across the County and report back.

8.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**;

1. To review and comment on Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 as set out in Appendix A of the report, prior to consideration by Cabinet,
2. To recommend that an officer working group investigate the issues of power shortages and report back to Infrastructure and Development Select Committee with its findings.

9. Transport for Norwich Strategy Review

9.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (9) which summarised the outcome of the recent consultation on the Transport for Norwich Strategy.

9.2 The following points were noted in response to questions from the Committee:

9.2.1 One of the issues in Norwich was parking and the cash meters alongside the road. They needed to be updated to be able to use cards and / or apps.

9.2.2 As a result of the consultation that had taken place, the action plan that was being worked on would come back to the select committee for further discussion.

9.2.3 Page 171 of the report informed that over 80% jumped past the detailed part of the consultation, and members queried how helpful this was. Officers explained that the consultation was split into two sections, with the first part seeking views on the strategy vision and a higher-level look at the strategy with the second part giving them the opportunity to look at more detailed aspects of the strategy. Lessons learned could include how much information required from people and the scope and length of the consultation questions.

9.2.4 The Executive Director confirmed that there would be another consultation in the new year on bus improvement plan which would cover the whole county. But it was important to get the right people to give responses to be able to make the decisions based on that data.

9.2.5 The report and the work that was happening was welcomed. It was noted that due to covid, routes had changed, and buses cut out of the timetable which was felt defeated the objective of encouraging people to use public transport.

9.2.6 Members suggested that local hubs were strategically looked at to make journeys easier especially where those journeys included changing buses. The strategy is high level and set the plan for the work to come but the action plan that would be shared at a future meeting would detail how the vision was hoped to be put in place on the ground. The bus service improvement plan had been submitted and would find out towards the end of the financial year what level of funding NCC would receive. In the meantime, the points made would be fed into the enhanced partnership and eventually submit to the Department of Transport.

9.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED** to consider the responses received to the consultation and the proposed changes as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

10 Active Norfolk Strategy

- 10.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which set out the new strategy. This strategy detailed the actions to be taken by Active Norfolk, in partnership with departments across Norfolk County Council, as well as the broader local government, health and social care and voluntary and community sector, to improve residents' lives – supporting Better Together for Norfolk ambitions of a growing economy, thriving people and stronger communities.
- 10.2 Members raised concern at the statement on page 9 which read “activity levels of those young people are the same as those without one”. Officers reported that over 90% with those with a learning disability are in mainstream schools. Active Norfolk work with a range of special schools and organisations who work with disabled young people, and this all goes into the aims of the strategy and feeds into the decision making. The statement, however, would be removed and replaced with a more accurate description.
- 10.3 Officers clarified that the report was the shorter version of the strategy and there was a longer version which had greater detail about what the service aimed to do and how.
- 10.4 Officers reported that Active Norfolk had set up and invested in the first 12 park runs in Norfolk. The data of participation reflected that people did not feel it was an activity they could engage with so there was still a challenge.
- 10.5 The Select Committee **NOTED** the new Active Norfolk strategy, especially the way in which it connected with other Norfolk County Council strategies and priorities, including Public Health and Active Travel

11 Waste Services Update

- 11.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which provided an overview and update on the breadth of waste services delivered by the County Council. Firstly, in its role as the Waste Disposal Authority for Norfolk, which includes the disposal of residual waste, provision of recycling centres and payments to the District, City and Borough Councils for the recycling they do. And secondly, in relation to its responsibility for the safe aftercare and long-term management of closed landfill sites in its ownership or for which it has a liability. The report also provided a progress update on single use products initiatives, which was a legacy of the Member Task and Finish Group; work on waste initiatives together with the District, City and Borough Councils as the Norfolk Waste Partnership; and provided further indications of the potential implications of national waste policy development.
- 11.2 Officers updated that the Environment Bill mentioned at 2.7.2 of the report had since become the Environment Act.
- 11.3 Officers explained that, in relation to charges at Recycling Centres and concerns about fly-tipping, the recent report provided by Wrap endorsed the reasoning behind the NCC approach and that NCC continues to monitor things very closely and was working closely with the seven Waste Collection Authorities to deliver the SCRAP fly-tipping campaign. It was also reported that 75% to 80% of flytip incidents related to materials which could be accepted at recycling centres with no charge and that over 50% of incidents were larger than van size, which was why duty of care was a campaign focus

The potential use of photovoltaic cells on closed landfill sites to generate electricity was referred to, and Officers explained that on NCC sites over 1MW of electricity was already generated from landfill gas and that in the future options around energy generation, amenity use, biodiversity and tree planting options could all be progressed as appropriate.

- 11.4 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**;
1. To note and comment on the update.
 2. In accordance with the County Council's second Waste Policy to review the arrangements for the 'incineration of waste or fuel derived from waste' outside Norfolk set out in para 6.6 of the report.
 3. To comment on the intention to extend an arrangement with Norse Environmental Waste Services Ltd to 2027 as a fall-back and alternative option for the processing and sale of material from recycling centres and recycling points, as outlined in section 2.5.2 of the report.

12 CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy Annual Review

- 12.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which set out the CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy as that, and associated performance data, are subject to annual review by Members. The Policy had been reviewed and updated to reflect recent changes to legislation and guidance. A revised CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy had been included at appendix A of the report, with proposed amendments highlighted with explanatory notes.
- 12.2 Due to covid, the number of prosecutions were down. The more serious offences were higher priority and the backlog through the system was slowly being cleared.
- 12.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**.
1. To review and comment on the revised CES Compliance and Enforcement Policy at Appendix A and its annex documents (A-1 to A-6), prior to consideration by Cabinet
 2. To note the 2020/21 enforcement performance data provided at Appendix B, and summary of stakeholder engagement at Appendix C.

13 Developing an overarching Policy for the use of Glyphosate-based herbicides by NCC

- 13.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which set out set out the plans for developing the policy. The NCC Policy would set out in what circumstances continued use of glyphosate will be permitted (and its use optimised); where it will never be used; and how the Council (and third parties) will adopt alternative measures to control vegetation. The Policy will be developed by an NCC Officer-led group.
- 13.2 Members welcomed the report and asked if there was an effort to engage members on the development of the policy. Officers confirmed that the member oversight group would be consulted throughout the process.
- 13.3 Members also asked if views of parish councils etc could be included in the development as it was an issue that arose frequently. It was also asked if Members not on the Oversight Group could also be consulted but as easily as possible.
- 13.4 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**.

1. To note that a Policy for the use of Glyphosate-Based Herbicides by NCC. The Policy will be developed by an NCC Officer-led group
2. To identify any key points, issues or concerns that the Select Committee would like to see taken account of as part of development of The Policy.

14 Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23

- 14.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (10) which provided an opportunity for the Select Committee to provide its views on the detailed budget proposals for the services within its remit which are being taken forward to public consultation (subject to Cabinet decisions 8 November 2021). As such this report formed an important part of the process of preparing the 2022-23 Budget and would enable the Select Committee's views on proposals to form part of the Cabinet's considerations when it makes recommendations about the Budget to Full Council in February 2022.
- 14.2 Members noted that increased income was not mentioned as part of the potential savings. A lot of the services within the Committee's remit could increase their income such as museums and adult learning. However, it had been a difficult two years and in the short term could be tricky. Some had already been built into the museums service as well as other areas so it had been thought about.
- 14.3 The Select Committee **RESOLVED**
1. To consider and comment on the County Council strategy as set out in section 2 and how the Budget process is aligned to the overall policy and financial framework;
 2. To consider the potential implications of Government announcements about Social Care, the considerable uncertainty remaining in respect of these, which may result in additional cost pressures in the medium to longer term, and agree that these should be reflected, where possible, in the 2022-23 Budget;
 3. To consider the latest details of announcements made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget 2021, and note that the outcome of these national funding announcements, alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement, will have potentially significant impacts on the 2022-23 Budget position, which will not be fully known until later in the process;
 4. To consider and agree for planning purposes the latest assessment of significant areas of risk and uncertainty around emerging budget pressures for the 2022-23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which remain to be resolved and which may have a material impact on budget planning (paragraph 13.4);
 5. To confirm that Cabinet's intention is to seek, as planned, a total council tax increase of 2.99% for 2022-23 made up of 1.99% general council tax and 1.00% adult social care precept deferred from 2021-22;
 6. To direct Executive Directors to seek to identify further recurrent savings of £5.000m and to report to Cabinet in January 2022;
 7. To agree to undertake a full review of how the Council operates to deliver its future services and strategy;
 8. To note the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' advice about the sustainability of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy position (section 13), noting also the wider uncertainty about funding levels and cost pressures for 2022-23. Recommendation 5 sets out Cabinet's intention to seek, as planned, a total council tax increase of 2.99% for 2022-23 made up of 1.99% general council tax and 1.00% adult social care precept and therefore in that context to agree to consult the public on that level of increase

9. To consider and agree the proposed savings as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10) to be taken forward in budget planning for 2022-23, subject to final decisions about the overall Budget in February 2022, noting the level of savings already included from the 2021-22 Budget process (table 10. To agree that public consultation (as set out in section 5) and equality impact assessment (as set out in section 21) be undertaken on the 2022-23 Budget and saving proposals as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10), and the level of council tax and Adult Social Care precept for 2022-23, as set out in section 14 and table 11;

11. To note the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services under section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 and section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to comment on the robustness of budget estimates as set out in section 13, and having regard to the level of savings required for 2023-24, to direct Officers to bring forward proposals to support early development and identification of saving proposals for 2023-24 with a focus on transformational activity;

12. To agree the proposed next steps in the Budget planning process for 2022-23, and the remaining Budget planning timetable (Appendix 1).

15. Forward Work Programme

- 15.1 The Select Committee received the annexed report (15) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the Forward Work Programme to enable the Committee to review and agree it.
- 15.2 The Policy for the use of Glyphosate-based herbicides by NCC would come back to Committee in March rather than January as detailed on the plan.
- 15.3 The Select Committee reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to
1. review and agree the Forward Work Programme for the Select Committee set out in Appendix A

The meeting closed at 12.15pm

Chair



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**MEMBER/PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO SELECT: INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE: 15 September 2021**

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

5.1	Question from Lynda Groves
	Is anything being done to address flooding in high-risk areas of Norwich?
	Response by Chairman of I&D Committee (Assigned to Grahame Bygrave)
	<p>There is a considerable amount of work being done to proactively reduce the risk of surface water flooding in Norwich.</p> <p>A key part of this is the Council's proactive highway's gully cleaning programme, which runs throughout the year. Gullies are routinely cleaned in a cyclic manner, but those in higher-risk areas are cleaned more often in order to prevent surface water flooding. These routine works are complemented by small drainage improvement schemes.</p> <p>The Council have also been working with partners on the CATCH EU Interreg project in the high flood risk areas of Norwich since November 2018. This project has installed over 1,703 specially designed water butts and raised planters in properties that capture rainwater from roofs during a storm and release it back into the sewer network after the storm has passed. The installed units can hold up to a total of 320,000 litres of water, helping reduce the pressure on existing sewers and reduce the impact and frequency of surface water flooding. It is hoped that the findings from this pilot project will be incorporated in future surface water mitigation projects as they progress.</p> <p>Although the Council is responsible for highway drainage, most of our gullies connect into Anglian Water drainage systems which also drain private properties. Anglian Water have resources to improve capacity and their priority tends to be where foul sewage flooding occurs. However, we also look for opportunities to improve drainage where we can and work closely with Anglian Water. An example of this is the recently completed (2018) Norwich Fringe Drainage improvements which brought in some £10.3m of funding to improve drainage assets across Norwich.</p> <p>In addition, the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance (NSFA) has been set up this year to further co-ordinate the 36 different agencies that have flood and water management responsibilities across Norfolk, in order to provide a better coordinated response. As part of their work, 16 sites across Norfolk that are regularly at risk of flooding have been identified. These sites form the first tranche of locations that the NSFA will inspect with a view to proposing how to minimise or mitigate local flooding risk. Sites in Norwich will be considered during future phases as funding becomes available.</p>

6. LOCAL MEMBER ISSUES/ MEMBER QUESTIONS

6.1	<p>Question from Cllr Councillor Jamie Osborn</p>
	<p>Question: The Government’s recent Decarbonising Transport plan requires councils to set out how local transport plans will deliver quantifiable carbon reductions in transport in line with national carbon budgets and net zero ambitions. The Transport for Norwich Strategy includes a commitment to building the Western Link road. The carbon emissions from that scheme will not be calculated until an environmental impact assessment is carried out by the contractors. Does [addressee] agree that a robust and transparent calculation of the full carbon emissions of the NWL should be available before adoption of the TfN Strategy?</p> <p>Supplementary: The Committee on Climate Change recommends that to achieve required carbon targets, a reduction of overall traffic levels is required. Will [addressee] consider inclusion of targets for reducing overall traffic as part of the LTP4?</p>
	<p>Response by Chairman of I&D Committee (Assigned to Vince Muspratt)</p>
	<p>The new Transport for Norwich Strategy, currently out for consultation, sets a long term and ambitious policy commitment to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable transport measures. It commits the Council to reducing carbon emissions from transport in Norwich to make the necessary contribution to the national target of reducing emissions from all sources by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels and achieving net zero by 2050. The proposed strategy recognises that there are a number of new and improved strategic connections being developed, including the Norwich Western Link. This new Transport for Norwich Strategy also commits the Council to develop a carbon budget for the transport programme to demonstrate how it will ensure emissions are contained within the budget.</p> <p>This strategy puts in place the commitment to develop a carbon budget and to set a baseline and gather evidence for far-reaching interventions including restrictions in travel demand, mode shift through an increased emphasis on active travel and accelerating the switch to electric vehicles. It would be premature to require the detailed carbon budget baseline work to be carried out before deciding to adopt a strategy which commits the Council to develop a carbon budget.</p> <p>Supplementary</p> <p>The draft Fourth Local Transport Plan sets out a policy commitment to meet the County’s Environmental Policy and recognises that there is further work to do through development of an implementation plan and it will be at that stage that a range of targets and interventions will be set out in detail.</p>