

Cabinet
12 January 2021
Public Questions

Agenda item 6	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question 1 from Hannah Wallis Will members support the introduction of a 20-mph speed limit on Thorpe Road between the junction of Clarence Road and the Fat Cat and Canary PH? Residents often find that traffic here greatly exceeds the 30-mph limit causing a danger to people as they enter or leave their parked cars. It is also dangerous for cyclists near parked cars where the road is narrowed. The introduction of the new road system here in January, will be put cyclists at increased risk as they will be forced to make an effective right turn as they enter the contraflow system. A 20-mph limit on their approach would make this safer.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport. The revised road layout as part of the proposed Transforming Cities Fund scheme provides a new zebra crossing and a narrowing of the carriageway. Drivers approaching the new zebra crossing should be exercising caution and pedestrians crossing will break the flow of traffic. This combination of changes should encourage a reduction in traffic speeds.</p> <p>With regard to cyclists turning right into the contraflow, this is a normal manoeuvre carried out in a wide variety of highway environments and is not a reason in itself to implement a lower speed limit.</p> <p>The accident record in this area shows that in the last 5 years, one accident has been recorded by Norfolk Constabulary. This was a slight injury accident in November 2020 in dark street lit conditions where speed was not identified as a contributing factor.</p> <p>A 7-day automated traffic survey was carried out in November 2019 on Thorpe Road near to Heathside Road. This indicated average eastbound speeds of 25.6mph (85th%ile 29.5mph) and average westbound speeds of 22.2mph (85th%ile 27.3mph), which represents good compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit. Given the low accident record, good speed limit compliance and that the proposed highway works should help reduce traffic speeds further, we are not recommending any further changes at this time</p>
6.2	<p>Question 2 from Hannah Wallis Other than a new pedestrian crossing, what alternative or additional measures would the council be prepared to put in place to safeguard pedestrians, cyclists, children and pets who live on this short but dangerous and busy stretch of road?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport As outlined in 6.1 above, given the low accident record, good speed limit compliance and that the proposed highway works should help reduce traffic speeds further, we are not recommending any further changes at this time.</p>
6.3	<p>Question 1 from Moira Newlan A new study by the Centre for Cities (EDP 11 December) has shown that the improvement on Norwich's air quality during lockdown was short -lived with levels of NO2 reaching pre-lockdown levels by October 2020. In addition, levels of particulates (PM2.5) have continued to rise even during lockdown. The study says that increased post-pandemic home-working will do little to alleviate these problems,</p>

	<p>as cars are still being used for leisure and shopping activities.</p> <p>What urgent measures will the Council be taking to ensure that car use is reduced, and improvements in public and cycling transport are increased?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste</p> <p>While significant reductions in traffic emissions were seen in the first lockdown over prior levels, these did return to levels at or close to those before lockdown commenced. However, it is important to note that prior to the pandemic, significant improvements had already taken place, focussing on tackling congestion, carbon emissions and poor air quality. The 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report from the City Council reported that overall levels of NO₂ within the central Air Quality Management Area are falling. The increase in PM_{2.5} particulates observed during lockdown was identified as not being due to road traffic sources and was caused by dust from the Sahara blown over the UK.</p> <p>Before lockdown, we saw an overall increase in those cycling by more than 40% following investment in cycle infrastructure. In the last few months, we have had two successful funding bids from the Department for Transport (DfT) through the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) and Active Travel Fund. The roll out of these programmes will see new cycle lanes, improved pedestrian facilities, additional bus priority features and an £18m investment by First in new and refurbished buses and increased frequency of bus services.</p> <p>Other schemes that have been introduced during the last year aimed at reducing car use include the new Beryl bike share scheme, which has now been enhanced to include electric bikes, and the provision of an electric scooter trial. Both schemes have been very successful, with users of the Beryl Bike scheme cycling the equivalent of six and half times round the globe, saving 44 tonnes of CO₂. Use of bikes and e-scooters is increasing all the time.</p> <p>The Transport for Norwich Strategy is currently being reviewed and will be revised and updated to further support the increased use of sustainable transport, improving air quality in and around the city centre and reducing carbon emissions</p>
6.3.1	<p>Question 2 from Moira Newlan</p> <p>Are you able to supply up to date figures on the levels of NO₂ and particulates within Norwich and set these in the context of levels over the whole of 2020 and in addition, can you tell me what measures are being taken to discourage parents sitting with car engines running whilst waiting for children to enter and leave school?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste.</p> <p>The whole of Norwich city centre is formally declared as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), with a low emission zone in place. Levels of NO₂ and particulates within Norwich are monitored and reported by Norwich City Council and is reported annually in their Air Quality Annual Status Report, which can be downloaded from the City Council website. The most recent report is for 2019 and outlines that overall levels of NO₂ within the central AQMA are falling. The City Council also has an Air Quality Action Plan, which sets out measures to address air quality issues. The latest version of this is from 2015, which can also be downloaded from the City Council website; a more up-to-date 2020 version is currently being finalised. This</p>

	<p>will outline the measures being delivered through the recent funding awards, such as the Transforming Cities Fund.</p> <p>In addition to highway measures that provide more cycle lanes, pedestrian facilities and public transport enhancements, we need people to change their behaviour in order to reduce current levels of single car occupancy and increase the number of people travelling sustainably. Going forwards, we are therefore seeking to promote behaviour change through a sustained and co-ordinated programme. Through this approach, there will be the opportunity to consider how best to improve air quality around schools.</p>
6.4	<p>Question 1 from Carol Smith</p> <p>On the 19/12/2020, the EDP stated that Cllr Borrett said, “I absolutely regret that people were charged the wrong amount and am very sorry for the distress this has caused.”</p> <p>The young person who took the case to judicial review and her litigation friend clearly suffered great stress, so I assume that they are ‘owed’ an apology from Cllr Borrett. As Cabinet member for Adult Social Care, it was Cllr Borrett that led the changes, so should therefore take responsibility.</p> <p>If Cllr Borrett is truly sorry, has he had the decency to write to the individual who took the case to Judicial review to apologise?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. I can confirm that I have.</p>
6.5	<p>Question 2 from Carol Smith</p> <p>If Cllr Borrett has not written to apologise to the young person who took the case to judicial review can I ask why not?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Please see the answer to your first question.</p>
6.6	<p>Question 1 from Andrew Smith</p> <p>Our son has recently transitioned into Adult Social care, and the fear of the of reduced services as well as these charges, deemed illegal by the High Court, has been of great concern. Quality of life and independence were affected by the charging policy. What assurances have we that future policies do not further erode the quality and affordability of our young adults?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. The Council’s aim is to help people meet their needs so they can achieve the things that matter to them. Promoting their independence to maximise their quality of life and enable them to have as much control over their lives as possible. The Council continues to look at new ways to support people, with new opportunities being offered by our day services to specialist housing like the enablement schemes at Netherwood Green and St Thomas House. These services are specifically designed to support people with disabilities to live as independently and full a life as possible. We have already taken steps via our Preparing for Adult</p>

	Life Service to improve the transition for younger people between children's services and adult services. I hope that these continuing actions demonstrate the Council's commitment, because we do recognise that this is a hugely important time in people's lives.
6.7	<p>Question 2 from Andrew Smith. How can we be assured that NCC future actions are transparent and do not affect my son's human rights and independence and treat him as an equal citizen in every way in Norfolk?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention The Council makes all its decisions in a transparent way and the paper in today's Cabinet meeting confirms this and outlines the future plans.</p>
6.8	<p>Question 1 from Rose Titchiner When the unlawful care costs are refunded, will the full £65.95 of the Severe Disability Premium, paid to people who live independently, still be taken towards ASC care costs? It seems discriminatory and disproportionate to take all of this allowance, or will it take a new judicial review by someone receiving this benefit, to rectify this. From his track record I have no confidence that Cllr Borrett is the appropriate person to ensure this group of people, who may still be subject to MIG charges, are treated fairly and he must resign.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. The immediate amendment to the charging policy set out in today's Cabinet paper will (if agreed) remove the charge in relation to the enhanced daily living allowance element of Personal Independence Payment. The treatment of the Severe Disability Premium is in line with the National Guidance. This has been the case for many years under all political administrations. If the Government were to change the guidance we would of course seek to change the Council's policy to align with it. The Council would also look to lobby the Government for compensation for any increase in costs that may arise as a result.</p>
6.9	<p>Question 2 from Rose Titchiner In the light of the recent Judicial Review, how will NCC and the Cabinet ensure that all those disabled people affected by the drop in the MIG, are repaid swiftly and fully, the money they are now owed, including repaying fully all those in receipt of the Severe Disability Premium?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) sets out the Council's arrangements for reimbursing people affected by the judgment.</p>
6.10	<p>Question 1 from Jan Kerby I believe the Disability Norfolk Network Group, of which I am a member, have called for the resignation of Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, which he has refused.</p> <p>Mr Borrett has no empathy or understanding of Adults with Learning and/or Physical Disabilities. He appears pompous, sneering and dismissive of this community towards individuals and their families/carers.</p>

	<p>Doesn't he see for himself how difficult life is for these people? He so obviously does not understand the situation and should not be in a position of power on the cabinet. Adult Social Care should be championed and supported at the very least.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. I am sorry that you feel the way you do and for the impact of the Council's original decision.</p> <p>The Council does not have unlimited resources and has to set a balanced budget by law. It has to make some very difficult decisions across all the people that adult social care supports. Our approach to balancing the budget includes investment in prevention and housing, integrating our work with the NHS, maximising people's income through welfare benefits, advice, supporting carers and – in line with National guidance – charging people. This judgement challenges and potentially changes that Guidance, the Council is responding accordingly. It is for other councils to consider its implications too.</p> <p>I have supported the raising of the Adult Social Care Precept when we have been allowed to by the Government. I have campaigned with fellow Councillors, our local MP's and Government Ministers to raise the issue of the need for a sustainable settlement for Adult Social Care. My colleagues in the Cabinet will testify to my championing for a generous share of the Council's resources for adult social care.</p> <p>I have the utmost respect for people who live with disabilities, and for those who care for them. I will continue to do all I can to improve the quality of the Council's services, and strive to make the resources available work in the best possible way for the people who rely on them.</p>
6.11	<p>Question 2 from Jan Kerby Can we ask Mr Borrett how he feels following the recent legal judgement made against him?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention I am surprised at the result of the Judicial Review because I was advised that the Council was following the National Guidance and making a decision that had already been taken by many other similar councils. I do accept it and today's Cabinet paper is designed to reduce the uncertainty and worry for everyone affected.</p>
6.12	<p>Question 1 from John Hannaway When the unlawful care costs are refunded, will the full £66.95 of the severe disability premium pay to people who live independently still be taken towards ASC care costs - it seems discriminatory and disproportionate to take all of this allowance or will it take a new judicial review by someone receiving this benefit to rectify this? From this track record I have no confidence that Cllr Borrett is the appropriate person to make sure this group of people who still may be subject to MIG charges, are treated fairly and he should resign.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. As your first question is exactly the same as that asked by Rose Titchiner (No. 6.8) I refer you to the answer given there.</p>

6.13	<p>Question 2 from John Hannaway When will NCC reverse the MIG and when will the over charges be reimbursed?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) sets out the arrangements for reimbursing people affected by the judgment.</p>
6.14	<p>Question from Matthew Plunkett Cllr Borrett has been responsible for introducing a policy judged to have breached the human rights of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk, despite being told many times his discriminatory actions were causing anxiety, distress, misery and hardship. His actions have caused huge reputational and financial harm to NCC. Neither can be excused with just an apology for the 'wrong charge' not even for the decision to apply it. He refuses to take ownership, despite his arrogance and lack of empathy at pushing through the MIG cuts, saying 'it was a full council decision'. This is misleading at best. Will the responsible Member explain why he has not yet resigned?</p> <p>Response: Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.</p> <p>The Council is responsible for setting its own charging policy, and to interpret the relevant guidance. It has tried to do this accurately, based on consultation and advice and the final decision was made by Members at a full Council meeting.</p> <p>The judgement is clear that the discrimination in the policy was inadvertent, unforeseen and unplanned. It is however the Council's responsibility to change its approach in line with the judgement. The Council (and therefore the Cabinet Member), did not intend to discriminate. Its intention – which the judgement acknowledges – was to amend its charging policy in line with the National Guidance, and to bring it into line with other councils. It considered this carefully and conscientiously, seeking to both phase in and mitigate the impact on vulnerable people and their income. Cllr Borrett has publicly apologised on behalf of the Council, he continues to work with the people who use services to explain the implications and he has brought forward revised arrangements for us to consider at today's Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>Due to the above reasons and the acknowledged unintentional nature of the breach I do not consider this a matter for resignation</p>
6.15	<p>Question 1 from Rachel Knights Councillor Borrett was specifically asked to lobby Government with DNNG members in October 2019 and refused. If he is unable to work with the people he represents then why does he hold this post?</p> <p>Response: Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance The Council continues to lobby Government for fair and sustainable funding, including and importantly the future of Adult Social Care funding. This issue has been raised with the Chancellor and Secretary of State within written correspondence from myself and the Cabinet Member. I, with the support of the Cabinet Member, have been working with local MPs, in particular George Freeman MP to raise the issue of funding for adults with disabilities.</p>

6.16	<p>Question 2 from Rachel Knights What assurances do we have that this Council will fight for the extra funding required from the Government openly and inclusively with the disabled people themselves and /or their advocates?</p> <p>Response: Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance As referred to in the previous answer we are working with Local MPs to engage directly with the Secretary of State to highlight the need for a reform on Adult Social Care funding. If you look at the actions of the Council you will see that not only are we lobbying but we have also taken the full Adult Social Care Precept whenever the Government has allowed it to be charged. This now makes a significant contribution to the income available to the Council for adult social care</p>
6.17	<p>Question 1 from Amanda Smy During the Judicial Review which I viewed live, NCC's barrister (Jonathan Auburn) referred to Direct Payments as income. This is incorrect, who briefed the barrister with this information which he publicly stated? Direct Payments are not income to be spent as pleased, they are tightly monitored on how they are spent. If unused throughout the financial year they are grabbed back and placed back into NCC's income.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. The Council did note during the Judicial Review the incorrect use of language by the barrister on this point. We have been reassured that the barrister was properly briefed and understood the position, which is that Direct Payment funding is not deemed to be 'earned income' for those that choose that service arrangement. The Council does monitor Direct Payment spend and where resources remain unused we will undertake reclaims against those accounts but always leaving up to 12 weeks funds with the service users.</p>
6.18	<p>Question 2 from Amanda Smy How has NCC described DP payments as income?</p> <p>Since NCC took over accounts from Equal Lives it has been extremely difficult to oversee, manage, communicate, etc. The whole scenario of care charging alongside financial services shambolic, degrading and expensive to the Council addressing many errors with manpower. I call for Councillor Borrett's resignation from his post</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Please see the response given to your first question on Direct Payments.</p>
6.19	<p>Question from David Fairbairn Can the Cabinet member for Childrens' Services please provide an update on planning for new primary school places in the Poringland area, reflecting the shortfall in places identified in the Schools local growth and Investment Plan April 2020?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Children's Services I would like to thank Mr Fairbairn for his questions. We have commissioned and received a site search to look at available land which meets the criteria for a new school. This availability is slightly limited because there has been considerable</p>

	<p>house building on land around the village (hence the pressure on school places). This has been shared with NCC Highways to ensure access for any of the sites is achievable, and we are now looking at these sites in more detail.</p>
6.20	<p>Question 2 from David Fairbairn Can the update include the latest projection of the shortfall in primary school places, and a list of all sites that have been or are being actively considered, identifying those that have been rejected as unsuitable?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Children's Services A site search has been completed, but this makes no assumption about the land available and in particular a landowner's desire to dispose of their land. As such it wouldn't be appropriate to put this into the public domain at the moment, but as we move forward we will share some proposals. The forecast of pupil numbers indicates a similar level of pressure for places. Some parents are choosing to send their children to other schools nearby and this is helping us to manage the pressure through the admissions process.</p>
6.21	<p>Question 1 from Jacqueline McCarney Mr Justice Griffiths' recent High Court judgement against the Council highlights that none of the consultation, discussion and decision-making records (including briefing papers, meeting minutes and an Equality Impact Assessment) addressed the differential impact on the most severely disabled of the Charging Policy (judgement paragraph 85). What measures and corrections will the council now undertake to ensure that its policy development processes, especially EIAs, address and ensure there are no breaches under the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) seeks to address the immediate issue through an interim amendment to the charging policy and to put in place steps to adjust people's accounts. The Council is also asking for a review of the charging policy to ensure a sustainable policy going forward, and this will include a full Equality Impact Assessment.</p>
6.22	<p>Question 2 from Jacqueline McCarney The recent High Court judgement also highlights that the Council ignored warnings (judgement paragraph 90 and 91) and a suggestion of a "less intrusive measure" (paragraph 92) in Government guidance. What measures will the council introduce into its policy development processes to ensure that, in the future, guidance issued by the Secretary of State is fully followed under Section 78 of the Care Act?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention As mentioned in the answer to your first question, the Council is requesting a review of the charging policy to ensure a sustainable policy going forward, and this will include a full Equality Impact Assessment.</p>
6.23	<p>Question 1 from Iain Robinson The 2020/21 budget allocated a total of £4.055m for the Norwich Western Link road broken down into Procurement (£637K), Design (£931K), Statutory process</p>

	<p>(£1.94m) and Outline Business Case (£544K). A further £2.98m was allocated to acquire land. A total of just over £7m. How much of each of these allocations has been spent to date and how much is allocated for each in the 2021/22 budget?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport</p> <p>To month ending December 2020 the costs for each element are Procurement (£0.479m), Design (£0.700m), Statutory Process (£1.559m) and Outline Business Case (£0.473m) for financial year 2020/21. There is a degree of overlap between these activities, and the development of the scheme is in line with the budget allocation.</p> <p>Land acquisition costs to the end of December are £2.466m and include costs from financial year 2019/20 as well as 2020/21. Most of this is as a result of blight notices served on the Council where the qualifying criteria have been met following the preferred route announcement in July 2019.</p> <p>The budget for 2021/22 will be determined following completion of the design and build contractor procurement process. All details forecasting future year budget provision will be reported to Cabinet in March 2021 and will be set out in the Outline Business Case.</p>
6.24	<p>Question 2 from Iain Robinson</p> <p>In response to Cllr Corlett at December's cabinet, you said that the design and build contractor for the Norwich Western Link road is due to be appointed in March 2021. Who are the shortlisted companies and which Cabinet meeting will agree the appointment?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport</p> <p>A report that will seek Cabinet's approval to appoint a contractor for the Norwich Western Link is due to be taken to a Cabinet meeting in March. We cannot disclose who the shortlisted bidders are as this information is commercially sensitive at this time.</p>
6.25	<p>Question from Ben Price</p> <p>I note the targets for the Environmental Policy and welcome the commitment for Norfolk CC to get to net zero carbon emissions by 2030. It is good to see that a programme of tree planting is included in the policy. However will the cabinet member and the oversight group go further and commit to keeping all mature trees on council land in situ, as it is well documented that it will be more than 50 years before any new saplings planted now will have an appreciable effect on carbon reduction?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for the Environment & Waste.</p> <p>In response to the question, the intention of the tree-planting programme is to build on already established trees and shrubs as these are already working effectively to trap carbon. The focus initially, will be on areas where there are gaps in the existing tree cover. However, tree-felling may be needed to control disease (such as Ash dieback), to manage safety, and for development purposes. In this regard we will follow the agreed protocols in the latest version of the NCC Tree Policy.</p>

	<p>It is worth stressing that the tree-planting programme is not just focused on the County Council's own land, but seeks to support tree planting endeavours within the community at large. The same premise applies – we aim to consolidate around existing established woodland where that already exists, if at all possible.</p>
6.26	<p>Question from Harry Clarke Surface water flooding in Dereham is now more frequent, before and after 20i6, including September 2020 and 24th December 2020. You no longer have Surface Water Management Plans in place. Are you confident and can evidence that your new approach will work, and will you review and reintroduce Surface Water Management Plans if this is necessary and resources for the Flood Team ?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport The Council prioritises and progresses flood risk mitigation studies based on the findings of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) for Norfolk. The PFRA provides a consistent evidence base to guide our work. Due to this and the Flood Investigation Report for Dereham we are undertaking a feasibility study to identify a package of measures to better protect properties at risk of flooding within the Town. This approach is similar but more targeted than the Surface Water Management Plan process. Implementation of these proposed measures will require external, partnership funding, but the evidence from the feasibility study provides the best evidence case to help access this funding in the future.</p>
6.27	<p>Question from Christine Dring Cllr Borrett has been responsible for introducing a policy judged to have breached the human rights of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk, despite being told many times his discriminatory actions were causing anxiety, distress, misery and hardship. His actions have caused huge reputational and financial harm to NCC. Neither can be excused with just an apology for the 'wrong charge' not even for the decision to apply it. He refuses to take ownership, despite arrogance and lack of empathy at pushing through the MIG cuts, saying 'it was a full council decision.' This is misleading at best. Will the responsible Member explain why he has not yet resigned?</p> <p>Response: Please see answer provided for 6.14</p>
6.28	<p>Question 2 from Christine Dring It says in the Cabinet Papers 4.3 that you will bring a new policy following consultation. Will that 'consultation' include ALL those who will be affected (unlike the 2018 consultation for the MIG cuts) and will you take proper notice of that consultation or just ignore the outcome as you did with the aforementioned consultation?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your question. The Council wants to continue to work with the DNNG and other representative groups on how we engage and consult on future policy.</p>

6.29	<p>Question 1 from Tracy Clarke</p> <p>Cllr Borrett has been responsible for introducing a policy judged to have breached the human rights of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk, despite being told his discriminatory actions would cause severe hardship and distress. These actions have caused financial harm to NCC and anxiety to those unfairly charged which cannot be excused with apologies. This policy was implemented despite many attempts by those affected to point out the hardships this would cause, showing a clear lack of empathy and understanding.</p> <p>Will Cllr Borrett explain why he has not yet resigned?</p> <p>Response: Please see answer provided for 6.14</p>
6.30	<p>Question 2 from Tracy Clarke</p> <p>Will the council explain how they will move forward from here, including their plans to work with those affected, their families and carers to gain a full understanding of how these decisions will impact the lives of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention</p> <p>Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) outlines the interim amendment to the charging policy and the steps to put in place to adjust people's accounts. The Council has also asked for a review of the charging policy to ensure a sustainable policy going forward, and this will include a full Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The Council wants to continue to work with the DNNG and other representative groups to on how we engage and consult with those people affected.</p>
6.31	<p>Question from Anne Killett</p> <p>A net carbon footprint of -47K tCO₂e is given for the new arrangements to treat around 180,000 tonnes of Norfolk's waste at energy from waste plants outside Norfolk at agenda page 58. Please provide (in tCO₂e – tonnes of 'carbon dioxide equivalents'):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The gross CO₂e generated by the burning process - The avoided CO₂e from each of recycling, energy recovery, landfill diversion, transport and any other factors <p>Please provide clear assumptions behind the figures (eg: how many tonnes of landfill are being diverted by the new arrangements).</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste</p> <p>The figure referred in the Cabinet report as 47,000 tonnes of carbon emissions saved every year is over the period of the contract and is 'compared to sending the waste to landfill'.</p> <p>This figure derives from a tool called Wrate (Waste and Resources Assessment Tool for the Environment), which is a Life Cycle Assessment tool specifically for the purpose of evaluating the environmental aspects of waste management activities, which was applied to evaluate the effects of each solution received on 20,000 tonnes of waste a year.</p>

	<p>Using this approach, for the proposed solution Wrate established a Global Warming Potential (GWP100a) of -778,009kg CO2 equivalent. In relation to the different aspects of the proposal they were calculated as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The treatment process: +544,873kg of CO2 equivalent. • Transport: +557,371kg of CO2 equivalent. • Recycling: -1,882,296kg of CO2 equivalent. • Landfill: +2,044kg of CO2 equivalent. <p>This generates a calculated -778,009kg CO2 equivalent saving or -778.01 tonnes per 20,000 tonnes of waste treated a year, which when compared to the high carbon scenario of waste landfill for 180,000 tonnes a year over the life of the contract generates the overall estimate of carbon saving referred to in the Cabinet report.</p> <p>And in the proposal all 180,000 tonnes a year are being diverted from disposal direct to landfill but from the treatment process some air pollution control residues will be disposed of and that is reflected in the assessment.</p>
6.32	<p>Question 2 from Anne Killett</p> <p>For full transparency of how waste management fits into the Corporate Environmental Policy, please publish the carbon emissions assessment in full for the new arrangements to treat around 180,000 tonnes of waste including relevant references to the carbon footprints of the waste disposal facilitie(s) being contracted by the Council.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste</p> <p>Residual waste treatment is not the only way that waste services relate to the County Council's Environmental Policy, as the County Council has a longstanding and significant focus on waste reduction, reuse and recycling.</p> <p>The answer to the previous question provides details about the carbon emissions assessment for the new arrangements. The carbon footprint of the entire facility is not a feature of this process, as what was calculated in the evaluation and used to estimate the effect of 180,000 tonnes a year over the life of the contract, was the carbon footprint of the treatment of the County Council's waste – which is only a part of the total capacity of the proposed new Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility at a site near Stewartby, in Bedfordshire.</p> <p>For context on the carbon emissions details provided in the previous answer, these were established using a bespoke waste composition that was based on a 2015 residual waste composition study in Norfolk. The Wrate evaluation tool calculated the potential impacts arising from all processes in the waste management system that would apply to this waste, including the collection of waste from locations in Norfolk, transportation, transfer, treatment, disposal and recycling of materials. The Wrate model also takes account of the construction and operation of infrastructure and vehicles, and offsets this burden against the avoided burdens associated with materials and energy recovery, meaning that inputs of waste, energy and materials, and outputs of energy, process residues, materials and emissions are taken in to account.</p>
6.33	<p>Question 1 from Karen McKerrow, obo National Autistic Society West Norfolk</p>

	<p>Branch.</p> <p>Given that this council has wrongfully charged the most severely disabled within our autistic community more than the less severely disabled and this has been found to be discriminatory – please give assurance that not one penny more will be taken and that every penny wrongfully taken will be refunded forthwith.</p> <p>Our adult children are so severely disabled with such complex needs they are never likely to be able to work and need their money back as a matter of urgency. Please confirm this will be happening.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) sets out the Council's arrangements for reimbursing people affected by the judgment.</p>
6.34	<p>Question 2 from Karen McKerrow, obo National Autistic Society West Norfolk Branch.</p> <p>Our adult children are so severely disabled with such complex needs they are never likely to be able to work and need their money back as a matter of urgency. Please confirm this will be happening.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Please can we refer you to the answer to your first question which also covers this one.</p>
6.35	<p>Question 1 from Marilyn Heath</p> <p>The Judge stated that the discriminatory effect of the measures NCC imposed was irrational, unnecessary, and wholly out of proportion. This is what we have said from the start but it took a JR for you to listen.</p> <p>There is more to be done to remove the discriminatory impact and whilst I look forward to engaging with the council to achieve this, it is impossible to accept that Cllr Borrett is the right person, given his refusal to hear us. If the Council is serious about observing Human rights and eliminating discrimination then will they put in place a person who genuinely Cares, as Cabinet member for ASC ?</p> <p>Response: Please see the response provided for 6.14</p>
6.36	<p>Question 2 from Marilyn Heath</p> <p>1.2 correction- 3 phase</p> <p>Severely disabled people and carers have suffered great stress, financial hardship and fear since this policy was announced in 2018.</p> <p>The report mentions other Councils as a mitigating factor, which seems non-sensical, when the judgement means some are clearly breaking the same laws. I wish the Council was more concerned with their own breach of Human Rights</p> <p>Costs are due to your mistakes.</p> <p>When will the interim repayments be made?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention. Thank you for your question. Today's Cabinet paper (if agreed) sets out the Council's arrangements for reimbursing people affected by the judgment.</p>

6.37	<p>Question 1 from Shane Landamore Will the entire amount of the Severe Disability Premium paid to people who live independently continue to be taken towards care charges, does NCC consider the taking of the full amount of this benefit has a discriminatory impact, is disproportionate, makes the severely disabled worse off than the lesser disabled and does this breach Article 14 and Article 1 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your question. The immediate amendment to the charging policy set out in today's Cabinet paper will (if agreed) remove the charge in relation to the enhanced daily living allowance element of Personal Independence Payment. The treatment of the Severe Disability Premium is in line with the National Guidance. This has been the case for many years under all political administrations. If the Government were to change the National Guidance we would of course seek to change the Council's policy to align with it. The Council would also look to lobby the Government for compensation for any increase in costs that may arise.</p>
6.38	<p>Question 2 from Shane Landamore Are you confident that you are not putting the Council at risk of further legal action by not considering the discriminatory impact on the disabled by taking the entire amount of this fully assessed benefit towards care charges?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Please refer to the answer given to your first question above.</p>
6.39	<p>Question from Susan Hewitt I have noted in the meeting details, the MIG level is remaining for the time being at the 2019 rate of £165, a drop in benefits of £24. In April 2021 disabled peoples benefits ESA and PIP will rise respectively by 1.7% amounting to around £3.50, My question to the Cabinet is..... Are the cabinet aware that when the benefits ESA and PIP rise each year the disabled people will not receive this, the rise although paid within the benefits are added to the way the MIG is worked out and therefore in turn taken as part of the care contributions?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your questions. The Council is aware which is why it has supported the call for the Government to increase the Minimum Income Guarantee in line with benefit increase.</p>
6.40	<p>Supplementary Question from Susan Hewitt Will the Cabinet consider when charging to now start raising the MIG level with inflation each year? The MIG level has not risen since 2015!</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention. As mentioned in the response to your first question, the Council supports the call for</p>

	<p>a Government increase in the Minimum Income Guarantee in line with benefit increase. Given the financial pressure the Council is under, we are not able to make a decision on the position for Norfolk for next year until the relevant Government information for that year is announced.</p>
6.41	<p>Question from Debbie Pegg.</p> <p>I understand if there is a rise in our sons benefits. He will not actually receive this rise. It will automatically be taken away.</p> <p>Will the MIG level raise with inflation each year?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your question. The Council has supported the call for the Government to increase the Minimum Income Guarantee in line with any benefit increase. It will be possible to take a decision on the position for Norfolk for next year when the Government announces the information for that year.</p>
6.42	<p>Question 1 from Bernard Tansley</p> <p>I refer to the judgement against Norfolk County Council by Mr Justice Griffiths and the subsequent Discrimination Ruling. Bearing in mind a comment by the judge stating, “the discriminatory effect is irrational, unnecessary and wholly out of proportion”, I question why you have chosen not to “withdraw” the existing flawed discriminatory Charging Policy and misleading Impact Assessment, nor to revert back to the original £189 MIG, whilst you produce a new Charging Policy & Impact Assessment?</p> <p>Cllr Borrett has been responsible for introducing a policy judged to have breached the human rights of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk and should step down from his position forthwith.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Today’s Cabinet paper (if agreed) sets out the Council’s interim arrangements and its plans to carry out a full review of the policy.</p>
6.43	<p>Question 2 from Bernard Tansley</p> <p>Would a decision to bring in a charging policy on the back of a flawed document render that decision null and void? I refer to NCC Jan 2019 Impact Assessment (Conclusions 39) & (Human Rights Implications 43).</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Today’s Cabinet paper (if agreed) seeks to introduce interim changes to the charging policy in advance of a full review taking place during 2021. If any further changes are identified as part of that review, appropriate consideration will be given as to the point in time that such changes should be introduced from. At this time we believe the actions and rectifications included as part of the interim solution are in line with the JR judgement and are reasonable given the detailed review which the Council seeks.</p>
6.44	<p>Question 1 from Sharon Sapwell</p> <p>We welcome the changes to the care charges however after 2 years. You have been told numerous times the impact of these charges will have on the severely disabled, by themselves or their family and carers. I ask are they not worthy of a</p>

	<p>quality of life, the same rights that you hold?.</p> <p>This had to be taken to high court for you to finally wake up and see the stress, anxieties, scared, frightened you have caused families.</p> <p>As we go forward Cllr Borrett is not the appropriate person to make sure this vulnerable group of people, who may still be subject to MIG charges, and therefore should resign, to make way for someone who cares, and do right by them</p> <p>Response: Please see the response provided for 6.14</p>
6.45	<p>Question 2 from Sharon Sapwell</p> <p>Do you agree to work with the disabled themselves and family carers, as this has been said by you before, and then you refused to meet with any of those that you are discriminating against, this has now been proven at high court, to see for yourselves the impact of hardship, isolated, scared, me having to give up our motability car because of these charges. Its time for you to look upon the severely disabled as people with rights</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention Thank you for your question. The Council wants to continue to work with the DNNG and other representative groups to look at how we engage and consult on these matters.</p>
6.46	<p>Question from Corinne Fulford</p> <p>The actions of Cllr Borrett in bringing forward the MIG proposal caused distress to vulnerable people and brought disgrace on Norfolk for breaching their human rights. Why has he not resigned?</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>
6.47	<p>Question from Simon Skull</p> <p>How can Norfolk put their trust in a cabinet member who has been found to have breached the human rights of some of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk? Whether or not it was deliberate surely resigning is the only honourable thing to do.</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>
6.48	<p>Question 1 from Mike Wabe</p> <p>The actions of Cllr Borrett in bringing forward the MIG proposal caused distress to vulnerable people and brought disgrace on Norfolk for breaching their human rights. Why has he not resigned?</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>

6.49	<p>Question 2 from Mike Wabe</p> <p>How can Norfolk put their trust in a cabinet member who has been found to have breached the human rights of some of the most vulnerable people in Norfolk? Whether or not it was deliberate surely resigning is the only honourable thing to do.</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>
6.50	<p>Question 1 from Jack Manzi</p> <p>Cllr Borrett is the cabinet member for adult social care. In bringing forward the MiG proposal that caused so much distress to those that he is meant to represent, he has utterly failed in this role. When so many of the very people he is meant to represent are calling for his resignation, what possible justification is there for the councillor to carry on in his role?</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>
6.51	<p>Question 2 from Jack Manzi</p> <p>How can the councillor, in good conscience, stand before the council and insist that he is still the right person for the job</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>
6.52	<p>Question from Roger Atterwill</p> <p>In light of the recent devastating High Court ruling which found that NCC had breached the human rights of vulnerable people here in Norfolk in an attempt to save money, it is disappointing to see that you have not removed Cllr Borrett from his cabinet post nor has he found the moral courage to resign. This gives the impression of arrogance and that neither of you really care about our vulnerable people. Given the reputational damage to Cllr Borrett and NCC, can you please explain how, going forward, vulnerable people in this county can have confidence that this council has their best interests at heart?</p> <p>Response: Please see response provided for 6.14</p>

Cabinet
12 January 2021
Local Member Questions

Agenda item 7	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question 1 from Cllr Mick Castle.</p> <p>I welcome the prospect of Norfolk developing a concerted bid for funding to address the threat from surface water flooding to thousands of homes in Norwich and our Market Towns but - if we are to have an overall strategy embracing both inland surface water flooding and coastal flooding and erosion - does the Cabinet agree with me that it must recognise that the latter is concentrated in a small number of locations and that the position of Yarmouth as a heavily-populated port and industrial town is quite different to a rural location where managed retreat and adaption might be more appropriate?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport</p> <p>We would acknowledge that Gt Yarmouth does present unique challenges when it comes to addressing flood risk compared to areas inland. However, there are links with regard to upstream impacts. Though as far as coastal erosion specifically focused on Gt Yarmouth is concerned, any action going forward will be determined by conclusions in the work emanating from the Broadland Futures Initiative – a partnership that includes the Environmental Agency, Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council. The work within the partnership has not drawn final conclusions as yet but will be outlining approaches to meet the challenge of the expected sea level rise in the southern North Sea by 2125, where it is not expected to exceed 160cm. In addition, we continue to liaise with those coastal authorities forming Coastal Partnership East along the Norfolk and Suffolk Coasts as part of ongoing coastal strategy work to identify measures to manage the risk of coastal erosion and flooding to people and the developed environment along the coastline.</p>
7.2	<p>Question 2 from Cllr Mick Castle</p> <p>Does the Cabinet agree with me that the Council needs to continue to balance its Economic Development and Regeneration imperatives alongside its wider commitment to carbon-reduction especially when Yarmouth as an Energy Hub is so essential to the meeting those latter targets and that it is a matter of regret that the Cameron/Clegg Coalition Government jettisoned implementation of SUDs back in 2013 which is critical to progress on alleviating surface water flooding?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport / Environment & Waste</p> <p>Great Yarmouth as an energy hub is indeed essential both to driving clean growth jobs and helping the county transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. We are seeking to address both economic growth and carbon reduction aims by putting forward the Offshore Wind Operations and Maintenance Centre as part of the package of capital projects deliverable within 18 months for the Government's call for the Getting Building Fund last summer. The project received £6M from the Fund.</p> <p>In terms of SUDs, all new development is required to use Sustainable Drainage Systems to drain their sites, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Policy Guidance and the Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems. The County Council, as Lead Flood Authority has a clearly defined role to support sustainable urban drainage through the planning system and continues to exercise these functions.</p>

7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield</p> <p>What work is being done to model how Children's Services will work following local government reorganisation if, say, the current arrangement is replaced with two or three unitary authorities covering Norfolk?</p> <p>Response: Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance</p> <p>We aren't modelling any scenarios until we receive government guidance around Local Government Reform. Any work done before the publication of the white paper towards developing a detailed deal or unitary proposals will take up time and effort and will not be the best use of scarce resources at a time when we are focused on the COVID19 impact and recovery. It is fully recognised that this is emerging government policy and that we must take a positive approach to working to deliver it but only once the white paper is published or we are completely certain of its content and direction.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Eric Seward</p> <p>For some two years the County Council in different formats has commissioned the delivery of a Social Prescribing Service in Norfolk. In North Norfolk the District Council was commissioned by the County Council to provide a social prescribing service. It consists of three officers and currently funding for the service ends on March 31st 2021. My question is:</p> <p>How does the County Council view the advice and support service provided by the Social Prescribing Project in North Norfolk?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.</p> <p>Thank you for your questions. The Council recognises the value of the service and its ability to respond to the needs of its community, so much so that despite the intense budget pressures in Adult Social Care we were able to add a further year's investment. Social Prescribing has enabled the provision of additional access into other services provided by Adult Social Services, for example our Information Advice and Advocacy services and Social Isolation and Loneliness services.</p>
7.5	<p>Question 2 from Cllr Eric Seward</p> <p>What plans does the County Council have for the continued funding of the Social Prescribing Project in North Norfolk beyond March 2021?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention</p> <p>The Council took an early lead on funding Social Prescribing, but the initial money available was just for two years. We have managed to extend our funding by an extra year despite budget pressures. The council's funding ends on 31st March 21. We are very pleased that the NHS has also recognised the value of the work and there is now funding for Primary Care Networks to fund social prescribing.</p> <p>Even though the Council's direct investment ends in 2021, there still exists the opportunity to work with all partners on the development of a strong Norfolk Social Prescribing offer. It is important to note the links with the Social Isolation & Loneliness service. Loneliness is one of the top 3 reasons for a Social Prescribing referral and based on this, the Council has begun to develop the options for continuing delivery of the Social Isolation and Loneliness service beyond the current contract end date.</p>

7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Dan Roper</p> <p>How many complaints has the council lost over the last two years in judgements by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on Children Services and Adult Social care complaints and what have been the financial implications of these?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention & Cabinet Member for Children's Services.</p> <p>Thank you for your questions. During 2019/2020 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman received 127 complaints regarding Adult or Children's Services at Norfolk County Council. Of those, 68 were closed after initial enquiries or referred back to the Council for local resolution. The Ombudsman's office made a final decisions in 56 cases, following detailed investigations. Fault was identified in 63% of those cases. This compared to an average of 66% in similar authorities. The Council agreed with the Ombudsman's recommendation of a financial remedy in 28 cases , with payments to recognise fault, backdate allowances, refund charges, agree to waive outstanding fees or arrange additional services totalling £33,694.95.</p> <p>In the previous year, 2018/2019, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman received 125 complaints regarding Adult or Children's Services at Norfolk County Council. Of those, 64 were closed after initial enquiries or referred back to the Council for local resolution. The Ombudsman's office made final decisions in 58 cases, following detailed investigations. Fault was identified in 67% of those cases. This compared to an average of 64% in similar authorities. The Council agreed with the Ombudsman's recommendation of a financial remedy in 24 cases, with payments to recognise fault, backdate allowances, refund charges, agree to waive outstanding fees or arrange additional services totalling £64,918.02.</p> <p>It is important to note there may be a significant elapse of time between the circumstances giving rise to a complaint and the Ombudsman arriving at a final decision, at the conclusion of what may be a lengthy and complex investigation by his office. Whilst the Ombudsman normally expects a complaint is brought within 12 months, this can be extended if it is felt a person was not in a position to raise the matter earlier. Some of the circumstances which the Ombudsman investigates are therefore historic in nature, for instance those brought by former looked after children when they become adults, and may not be reflective of contemporary services.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp</p> <p>The Covid Vaccination Programme in GP Surgeries began in West Norfolk on Tuesday 15 December and on Wed 30 Dec at the QE's Inspire Centre, prioritising people over 80, Care Home Residents and Care Home Workers. The NHS is responsible for the Covid Vaccination Programme, while the County Council regulates Care Homes. Can the Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care tell us if every care home in Norfolk has now been contacted with available timeslots for residents and staff to receive their first doses of vaccine, or when this is expected to happen, bearing in mind that the Govt target is to vaccinate all vulnerable cohorts by 15 February.</p>

	<p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The Covid-19 vaccination programme is a fast moving and fast changing picture and is particularly challenging and complex for care homes and people who are housebound.</p> <p>National guidance recommends that staff and residents from the care homes with the largest number of beds are vaccinated first, and this is the approach we have followed locally. All care homes have been asked to complete a return for NHSE/I identifying their staff numbers and locations. Staff lists from our largest care homes have been provided to the hospital hubs who have contacted these staff direct to arrange appointments for vaccination. Primary care hubs are also inviting staff from their aligned care homes and others to attend appointments for their vaccine.</p> <p>Lowestoft, Thetford and Swanton Morley PCNs participated in a care home Pfizer pilot and vaccinated 75 care home residents between Christmas and New Year. We are now starting to vaccinate more care homes residents using roving teams, led by our PCNs. The roving teams will be using the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine and the care homes will be contacted directly to inform them when vaccination will take place.</p> <p>The NHS is refining its planning based on the pilot and work done to date, as well as conducting preparatory work (for example talking with care homes and organising consent), so that the system is as ready as it can be as the supplies of vaccines increase. There has been positive feedback from those care providers and from those who have received the vaccination as part of the care home pilots.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett</p> <p>How much has the Minimum Income Guarantee legal case cost Norfolk County Council to date?</p> <p>Response: Finance / Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention</p> <p>We are still calculating the costs and will publish these as soon as we can (subject to commercial confidentiality on certain aspects).</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones</p> <p>How are you going to restore trust given the breakdown in relationships between those affected and those Cabinet members responsible for promoting the unlawful Minimum Income Guarantee policy?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.</p> <p>Thank you for your question. I have apologised to those affected on behalf of the Council. The Council did not intend to discriminate. Its intention – which the judgement acknowledges – was to amend its charging policy in line with the National Guidance, and to bring it into line with other councils (see appendix 2). It considered this carefully and conscientiously, seeking to both phase in and mitigate the impact on vulnerable people and their income. I hope that we can continue to work together in the future.</p>

7.10	<p>Question from Cllr David Rowntree Given the substance of the legal judgment regarding the Council's interpretation of the Human Rights Act and the Equalities Act, why does the Leader believe it is reasonable to publish an Easy Read version less than four hours before the deadline to inform questions submitted to this meeting?</p> <p>Response: Leader I am disappointed that it took as long as it did to publish the easy read version and as a result, we extended the question deadline for questions on the report to 10am Friday 8th January.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy On Boxing Day hundreds of Thetford residents were advised of possible flooding. Having been contacted by dozens of residents asking for advice I attempted to speak to County Council officers on the emergency numbers but could not speak with anyone - the telephone system advised the offices were closed.</p> <p>I spoke with the Emergency Team at Breckland Council who advised County Council had advised there were no sandbags available for Thetford residents and they would not be replenished until at least the 29th December 2020.</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member urgently review arrangements for the provision of sandbags across Norfolk to ensure the County is better prepared for future incidents?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste The usual procedure for Norfolk County Council out of hours response is via Highways, Norfolk Fire and Rescue and Adults Social services and all these teams were available. Highways received over 200 calls and NFRS over 400 for Flooding across Norfolk.</p> <p>The provision of flood protection measures (including sandbags) is a District Authority function.</p> <p>The Norfolk Resilience Forum have already started a multi-agency de-brief procedure and an information request has been sent out to all agencies for their input and feed back. A full structured de-brief will take place on 26th January when all lesson learnt will be captured. This will then form an action plan to ensure that required measures and mitigations are put into place.</p>
7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare In response to a question I asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services on 11th May 2020, his response was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools have been working in clusters and have resilience plans in place which ensure that if they have significant reductions in staff and are unable to be open safely, there is back up provision for places for children elsewhere. • Furthermore there is a plan for an emergency workforce that can be drafted in to support schools. <p>Why then aren't there enough places now and why did he make these claims, when</p>

	<p>he must have known they were unachievable?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Children's Services I would like to thank Cllr. Smith-Clare for his question. The situation for this lockdown is different compared to March 2020. The support that was in place then was appropriate and schools were able to operate effectively.</p> <p>The guidance from the Department for Education for how schools need to operate in this Lockdown with regard to the attendance of pupils was issued on Thursday 6th January 2021.</p> <p>Schools have needed this week to understand the demand for provision and the staff that are available. With regard to capacity a number of factors have affected this, including staff ill health, shielding, and union action. On Thursday 6th January some aspects of the union action were changed which continues to affect the capacity that schools have to offer places in school.</p> <p>Schools have been open as normal for the last term, and services that supported the cluster structure also returned largely to normal working as this infrastructure is not needed when schools are open. Since Tuesday staff have once again be re-focused to support schools at a District level.</p> <p>With regard to an emergency workforce different control measures to prevent transmission, compared to March affect how school staff and any additional adults can be used in school. Supply teachers cannot be used in the same way as previously, as adults must be locked into bubbles and cannot be swapped for different teachers.</p>
7.13	<p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby Since the beginning of December 2020, how quickly have decisions been made on applications to the Norfolk Assistance Scheme?</p> <p>Response: Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance The Council has seen a significant increase in applications to the Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS) throughout 2020 with an average of around 450 applications per month in the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year. December saw the launch of the Winter Hardship scheme and we received 2,920 applications within the month for the NAS element. This has proven a challenge however applications for food, heating and living costs were able to be processed from receipt of application to fulfilment on average within 3 working days. Further additional staff have been recruited and are currently being trained to support the continued increasing application numbers.</p>
7.14	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Sands In response to a question in regarding the distribution of the Councils allocation of 1,800 laptops to children with social workers on 6th July 2020 the Cabinet Member for Children's Services stated that "the laptops for children with a social worker have been distributed already via Norfolk schools." On 7th December 2020 however, he advised that "this scheme is still active and distributing devices to care leavers and children with a social worker in Norfolk."</p> <p>Please could he therefore clarify whether or not the laptops have been distributed,</p>

	<p>when, and why there is a disparity in his responses to this issue?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>I would like to thank Cllr. Sands for his question. The criteria for this government scheme limits the distribution of devices to children with a social worker, who don't already have access to a device. We contacted schools and families of more than 2000 children to identify who most needed this support. We responded to all requests received from schools and distributed the devices as previously advised. The remaining devices are allocated to social work teams, so that any emerging need could be responded to immediately. Schools and social workers continue to be aware of this scheme. Devices are held in three locations across the county to ensure swift distribution</p>
7.15	<p>Question from Cllr Colleen Walker</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services explain what he has done to ensure SEND families receive the support they need during this lockdown?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>I would like to thank Cllr. Walker for her question. Our approach during this latest lockdown follows the way we worked during the first lockdown, appreciating that direct support for SEND children and their families comes from our early years settings, schools and colleges.</p> <p>We are again ensuring close working with our parent/carer groups and special school headteachers. This contact ensures that we have a two-way process; hearing their concerns and providing LA support as well as ensuring that they are aware of the requirements set out by the DfE nationally. Officers are meeting every day with a range of setting, school and college leaders and this week has met twice with leaders in Special Schools, hearing the extraordinary lengths they are going to in order to support families.</p> <p>We know that some families will need additional support during this time and staff across children's services are working together, with schools to provide additional support where needed.</p>
7.16	<p>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton</p> <p>The Cabinet Member Delegated Decision Report on use of the Infection Control Fund Round 2 made on 11th December 2020 states that £100,000 will be allocated to carer support, with "more detailed proposals pending." One month on from this decision being made, can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services expand on what this funding is for and how, if appropriate, carers will be able to access this money?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The infection control fund is a national grant which has been allocated to Norfolk County Council to put in place infection control and prevention measures.</p> <p>We aim to deliver wellbeing packs to carers using this funding, which includes PPE as well as information on the Carers Matter Norfolk Service and other support available to them over the Winter. In line with the grant conditions, funding will be used by the end of March 2021, we are urgently working with delivery partners to</p>

	ensure the quickest mobilisation possible.
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7.17	<p>Question from Cllr Chris Jones Could the Cabinet Member for Finance confirm how much funding Norfolk County Council will be receiving from the Government which could be used to support a Localised Council Tax Support Schemes in each Norfolk district?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Finance. The £670 million of new funding for 2021-22 – the “local council tax support grant” announced at the Spending Review 2020 is being provided in recognition of the increased costs of providing local council tax support (LCTS) and other help to economically vulnerable households following the pandemic. For the avoidance of doubt, this grant is mainly to cover lost income arising from the anticipated extra cost of LCTS schemes in 2021-22 including costs due to higher unemployment (i.e. higher numbers of claimants and extensions of LCTS schemes). The grant is therefore being used by the County Council to enable the continued provision of all services.</p> <p>The Government has published indicative allocations for this funding (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/946116/LCTS_indicative_allocations.xlsx), which are subject to confirmation following consultation on the provisional settlement. These provide the following for Norfolk, including a County Council allocation of £7.512m</p>
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Billing authority	Initial total billing authority area allocation (£m)	Of which:		
		Indicative County allocation (£m)	Indicative Police allocation (£m)	Indicative Billing Authority allocation (£m)
Breckland	1.334	1.009	0.187	0.137
Broadland	1.051	0.788	0.146	0.117
Great Yarmouth	1.423	1.082	0.201	0.140
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	1.462	1.104	0.205	0.153
North Norfolk	1.177	0.879	0.163	0.134
Norwich	2.307	1.677	0.311	0.319
South Norfolk	1.317	0.973	0.181	0.163
Total	10.070	7.512	1.395	1.163

7.18	<p>Question 2 from Cllr Chris Jones Could the Cabinet Member for Finance confirm what this additional funding will be used for if not to support Local Council Tax Support Schemes?</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Finance The Government expects that the funding will meet the additional costs associated</p>
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	<p>with increases in local council tax support ('LCTS') caseloads in 2021-22. Decisions on local council tax support scheme design for 2021-22 are for billing authorities to take, in consultation with their major precepting authorities (the County Council), and the public.</p> <p>In essence, the grant funding is intended to compensate for reduced council tax income due to LCTS changes and increased uptake in 2021-22. This will impact on the County Council via the tax base set by the billing authority, which should represent the amount that they estimate they can collect in 2021-22, taking into account growth in the number of properties on the valuation list, the impact of local council tax support schemes, and the estimated collection rate. As such the grant will be included within the proposed 2021-22 Revenue budget to offset these LCTS scheme impacts.</p> <p>The County Council provides targeted support for the most vulnerable people in the county through the Norfolk Assistance Scheme, which is available to all people who are unable to meet their immediate needs or need practical support to set up home, as well as those who are struggling because of coronavirus.</p>
7.19	<p>Question from Cllr Danny Douglas Will Norfolk County Council call for the retention on Bridge 1171 on the Fakenham to Wymondham line, which is under threat of being demolished by Highways England? This will keep the possibility of the rail network to be reconnected to Fakenham and support the Norfolk Orbital Railway project.</p> <p>Response: Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport The concerns regarding this bridge, which carries a minor road across the old railway near Guist, were only brought to the council's attention on 5th January.</p> <p>This bridge is one of a number of similar structures across the county which is the responsibility of Highways England Historical Railway Estates. HE Railway Estates took over responsibility for bridges on disused railway lines from the British Rail Property Board some years ago.</p> <p>Our Bridges Team has had no communication from HE Railway Estates regarding any proposals for this bridge.</p> <p>Officers have not yet been able to contact HE Railway Estates to get clarity about what, if any, proposals they intend to bring forward on this structure. I hope that I am able to give an oral update at Cabinet once officers have spoken to the HE Railway Estates team. The team will also be invited to attend the next meeting of the Norfolk Rail Group (in February) to give a broader outline about their assets on old railway lines and their management plans for these.</p>
7.20	<p>Question from Cllr Steff Aquarone To the Leader: If the High Court judgment over cuts to the MIG isn't a resigning matter for a cabinet member, then can he give a specific example of a (non-criminal) action that would lead him to call for a resignation?</p> <p>Response: Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance If a Cabinet Member loses my trust and confidence I would only then consider</p>

	asking for their resignation. I would suggest an incident such as the Greyhound Opening Scandal, which happened under the Leader of the opposition's watch would be a perfect example for a call for resignation.
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