

Cabinet
Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 3 October 2022
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am

Present:

Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chairman. Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Public Health
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation and Transformation
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Executive Directors Present:

James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Helen Edwards	Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services
Simon George	Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Children's Services

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors introduced themselves. The Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner and Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service were also present at the meeting.

1a Apologies for Absence

- 1a.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Graham Plant, (the Vice-Chairman) the Executive Director for Community and Environmental Services (Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service substituting).

1b. Election of Vice-Chair

- 1b.1 In the absence of Cllr Graham Plant, a Vice-Chairman was elected for the meeting. The Chairman, seconded by the Cabinet Member for Finance, nominated the Cabinet Member for Children's Services. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services was elected as Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on Monday 5 September 2022.

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5 September 2022 as an accurate record.

3 Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

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

- 4.1 Cllr James Bensly, Chair of Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, spoke to Cabinet about the Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and King's Lynn Multi-User Community Hub which had been discussed at the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee meeting on 26 September 2022 (please refer to item 13 for associated report to Cabinet):
- Cllr Bensly thanked Cabinet for their support of these two projects
 - Cllr Bensly spoke about the exciting development of Great Yarmouth Library in the former Palmers building into a one-stop-shop for skills, learning and advice to enhance peoples' everyday lives and provide easy access to services.
 - Cllr Bensly noted that the projects were a significant investment, which would transform residents' and visitors' experiences of the two town centres, and he hoped that Cabinet would join him in praise of the progress taken towards these projects to date.
 - Cllr Bensly was keen to see these projects progress to completion.

5 Items of Urgent Business

- 5.1 The Chairman made an announcement about the Household Support Fund
- Across the country government was investing £500m for local authorities to use as the latest round of the Household Support Fund. Norfolk's share is worth £6.7m and being bolstered by the county council with a further £1.2m, adding to the already significant investments planned for Norfolk communities.
 - The funding would enable the continuation of the excellent partnership work that had happened across the county to date, including the creation of 15 food hubs across the County through a pioneering collaboration with the community foundation. This had supported 12,000 people already, with other parts of the country seeking to learn from this best practice.
 - This tranche of the Household Support Fund would run from October to April 2023 and be spent in several areas:
 - £3.6m for cost-of-living vouchers to families of free school meals eligible children
 - £2.7m to continue the county council's existing Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS)
 - £0.9m for district councils to provide community support which targets those most in need
 - £0.4m of support targeted to voluntary and community groups, via the Norfolk Community Foundation
 - £0.22m to voluntary and community organisations to cover core costs for providing warm spaces for vulnerable people
 - £0.084m to support libraries to continue their "Warm and Well" schemes, and "Grab and Go" bags, including free sanitary products
 - The council would be using this extended package of investment to help those most in need to access additional support over the winter months, including help with energy and water costs.
 - The success of delivery was through the strong partnerships established across Norfolk - with district councils, the voluntary sector, Anglian Water and schools to make sure we can reach those who need this support the

most. It would also provide some much-needed help over the Christmas period.”

- Alongside the many economic development and infrastructure projects, NCC’s investment in Norfolk communities includes:
 - £7m of capital funding for Multi-Use Hubs which will re-develop town centres in King’s Lynn and Great Yarmouth, co-locating Adult Education and Libraries alongside wider community support
 - £4.7m in multiply funding aimed at improving adult numeracy skills through free personal tutoring, digital training, and flexible courses
 - £2.7m for the Holiday Activity and Food programme in conjunction with Active Norfolk, providing free holiday activities for eligible children and young people aged 5-16 in Norfolk
 - £1.2m for Nourishing Norfolk, Warm Spaces, and to expand the capacity of the Advice Network

5.2 The Chairman made an announcement about Avian Flu in Norfolk:

- Avian Flu in Norfolk is currently rife and there are 6 infected sites in Norfolk 4 of which are the Attleborough / Watton area. Suffolk has 6 with 5 near the Norfolk border
- To have these many cases at this time of the year is unprecedented.
- What I have mentioned is Avian Flu in commercial flocks and does not take into the account any losses our wild birds have suffered.
- Reports are coming in from the Broads, Thetford and along the coast of cases in wild birds. This shows the virus is impacting the wild bird populations and we all need to do our bit to prevent this virus spreading in Norfolk.
- We are now entering the season when the virus can survive for a long period in the environment.
- If you live in or frequent our countryside to do nothing is not an option and we must all show collective responsibility in doing what we can to combat this virus.
- One thing to do is to disinfect your footway if you have been where wild birds frequent or are going to.
- We have yet to see most of the migratory wildfowl that frequent Norfolk during the winter, and this is why we have to do our bit to protect them as well as our domestic poultry. Heavy losses across all sectors will impact on our economy and our biodiversity.
- The Eastern region has 20% of the UK poultry flock and 41% of the UK turkey flock. 90% of Christmas geese are also farmed in Norfolk and of the 4 largest flocks in Norfolk there is only 1 now so you can see the heavy toll this virus has taken already.
- Members of the public should report to Defra on the Helpline 03459 335577, if they find 1 dead bird of prey, 3 or more Gulls, ducks, geese and swans and 5 or more other birds.
- Please do not touch or move the birds and keep your pets away from any sick or dead birds.

6 Public Question Time

6.1 No Public questions were received.

7 Local Member Questions/Issues

- 7.1 The list of Local Member questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.
- 7.2.1 Cllr Maxine Webb asked a supplementary question:
- Cllr Webb noted that in the response to her substantive question, the figures she used were queried; she clarified that she took figures from page 532 of the Cabinet Report, "Corporately Significant Vital Signs".
 - Cllr Webb acknowledged the hard work of staff under pressure in teams with limited resources available, but felt that families did not recognise the statement in the reply to her question that SEND services had improved "significantly over the past 2 years"
 - Cllr Webb was under the impression that a fourth special needs school was in planning, however the response to her question stated that a bid for a fourth and fifth special school was being submitted this month. She queried if the funding set aside for building special needs schools had therefore been spent and this bid was for additional money.
- 7.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services apologised for the error in his response; this figure in the report related to April to June 2022 statistics, whereas the figures covered in his response were current. He replied that the department had the same target in place as before and were working with schools to build confidence in the school system, so parents did not feel that the only route for support for children with special educational needs and disabilities was an Education Health and Care Plan. Identifying sites for special needs schools had been an area of difficulty and officers had been working with a landowner to come to an agreement for the fourth planned school. He offered to provide a full financial breakdown to Cllr Webb.

8. Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance 2021/22

- 8.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Statement of Assurance for 2021-22, an annual statement which provides assurances on financial, governance and operational matters for the previous year and showing how the service has had due regard to the expectations set out in their Community Risk Management Plan (previously Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)) and the requirements included in the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018.
- 8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The effects of Covid-19 affected statistics for 2021 due to staff illness and less home visits being carried out due to the risks of spreading Covid-19.
 - During the pandemic, other work was carried out by the Fire Service in collaboration with the Police, ambulance service and Resilience Forum.
 - Following the inspection in October the results of which had been published and the Service was working on improvements as set out in the Community Risk Management Plan 2023/26 in item 9 on the agenda.
 - This report provided assurance that the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service were financial, governance and operational assurance arrangements were operating effectively and following statutory requirements as set out in the national framework 2018 and subsequent updates.
 - The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 8.2 The Chairman noted the vision and mission set out in the Statement of Assurance. The Chairman also noted the discussion of collaboration on page 37, training and evaluation on page 52 and external scrutiny on page 54 of the report.
- 8.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
1. Note the assurances that financial, governance and operational management of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service meet statutory requirements.
 2. Consider and approve the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Statement of Assurance 2021/22. (Appendix A of the report).
- 8.4 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
It is a legal requirement to publish an annual Statement of Assurance. The format and content is for the Fire Authority to agree.
- 8.5 **Alternative Options**
It is a legal requirement to publish this document, therefore, there is no viable alternative.
9. **Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2023/26**
- 9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2023/26 in accordance with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018, setting out the authority's strategy in collaboration with other agencies for reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents. The CRMP is the renamed Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- 9.1.2 The Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service introduced to Cabinet that the plan was comprehensive with significant data setting out how Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service would organise and respond to risks. There were elements to the Community Risk Management Plan including 6 proposals which the service would consult on prior to approval, and several elements of emergent risk which would be kept under review to ensure the service was agile and responding to Norfolk's needs.
- 9.1.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk thanked the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service for providing them with a briefing. The Police and Crime Commissioner noted that the Police Service were interested in collaboration, but this was not discussed in the Community Risk Management Plan. He suggested that an additional proposal was included on collaboration. The Police and Crime Commissioner noted that the Community Risk Management Plan included lots of discussion on prevention, but this topic was not included in the proposals; he therefore suggested including a separate proposal on prevention.
- 9.1.4 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service played a vital role in keeping the County safe, as seen in the summer 2022 heat wave and resulting wildfires, and flooding of previous years. Thanks to the professional dedication and

preparedness of the service the damage caused by the wildfires was not more significant.

- Consideration and analysis of risks ensured that the service has the right infrastructure, resources and capacity in place to have a robust response to emergencies.
- The Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service had a duty to develop management plans in line with national guidelines.
- The current integrated risk plan had five proposals: to strengthen communities via protection services; to develop a new concept of operations; to explore the potential to develop co-responding; to maintain our specialist water rescue capabilities and; adopt national performance measures against emergency response measures when introduced. This plan would come to an end in 2023 and the new Community Risk Management Plan therefore needed to be ready with a new set of proposals
- the aims were: to improve response times by considering improvements in the highway infrastructure and reviewing the optimum locations for fire stations; improve the effectiveness of prevention activities by improving collaboration with other agencies to ensure there is a joined up safety net across the county; maximise efficiency and effectiveness by assigning staff and resources most effectively across the county, realigning specialist emergency response capabilities and; future proofing the service by developing intelligence, data and staff skills.
- Results from the public consultation would be considered in December 2022 and January 2023, with the final version of the Plan being considered at Full Council for approval in March 2023.
- The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 9.2 The Chairman requested that the suggestions raised by the Police and Crime Commissioner be added into the Community Risk Management Plan, if possible to do so without delaying the consultation. If this would delay the consultation, he suggested that these be put forward as part of the consultation response. The Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service **agreed** to add these suggestions into the Community Risk Management Plan.
- 9.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention highlighted the support in the report for the East Anglian Ambulance Service working with the Fire Service as this was one of the health and care services under stress since the Covid-19 pandemic. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention applauded the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnership's desire for the Fire Service to work in collaboration with the other emergency services.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste noted paragraph 1.9 of the report talking about the community risk profile and impact of climate change on communities. Evidence of this had been seen in 2022 but the full impact had not yet been seen in Norfolk. He was pleased to note that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service had recognised this as an operational matter to address moving forward.
- 9.5 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service was highly respected and thanked them for

their work during the summer heatwave and fires. He discussed the high level of stakeholder input in developing the plan.

9.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree to proceed to public consultation on the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2023-26 (CRMP23-26), as detailed in this report and at Appendix A of the report, including the following two amendments to the proposals:
 - A proposal to be included covering collaboration, the wording of which to be finalised by the Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue
 - A proposal to be included covering prevention, the wording of which to be finalised by the Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue
2. Review and agree the CRMP23-26 Summary Version as set out in Appendix B of the report

9.7 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Norfolk County Council, as the Fire and Rescue Authority for Norfolk, has a statutory duty to develop an CRMP covering at least 3 years. The current IRMP sets out the service strategy for the period 2020-2023. Therefore, there is a need to develop a new plan for 2023 onwards.

9.8 **Alternative Options**

Please see section 6 of the report.

10. Strategic Review Update

10.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out work carried out today on the Strategic Review.

10.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Firstly, what is the Strategic Review all about? It's a review of the whole organisation to enable the County Council to meet the organisational and financial challenges that we are currently facing and will continue to face in the coming years. As an upper tier local authority, we are far from alone in having to address these challenges. To serve our communities well we need to have the right size and shape of the organisation not just for now but for the years to come. And also, the right people in place to deliver on all that our residents, businesses and communities want.
- How is it being taken forward? The report talks about a number of complementary themes that will lead us to bring about a leaner organisational structure, which in turn should aid engagement and communication, internally and externally.
- The work to date has seen us review the organisation through the lens of organisation design. We have deliberately taken a whole Council approach to considering new models, ways of working and any associated structural changes. This will enable the right capacity and capability across the organisation within the current challenging financial landscape.
- The initial focus areas are primarily those that facilitate and support the delivery of our core services to our communities. We are also applying a consistent set of principles around spans of control and the organisational layers across the whole Council. This will lead us to reviewing and

refreshing our current structures and give us greater clarity on accountabilities, faster decision making, improved management of risk and empowerment of staff with clarity on career progression and development opportunities.

- Future activity will see us adopt career families, which will support professional leadership, development and talent – which should aid staff retention. This will partly be delivered by implementing standardised job role profiles, which will help to maintain a good structure in the future and mitigate equal pay risk.
- Part of the work is to design a pay and reward strategy, which will assist recruitment by ensuring we are competitive in the job market.
- The Strategic Review is not a temporary piece of work. It should lead to the Council being one that can recognise, analyse and respond to change in a positive manner – for the benefit of staff, the wider organisation and the communities that we serve.
- This will be an ongoing challenge in an evolving public sector environment - with various financial and policy levers exercised by Government and other key players – but one in which we must succeed.
- We will discuss later the strategic financial challenges facing the Council and how we are responding to them.
- The Strategic Review is an integral part of this Council's response. This particularly reflected in the third element of the recommendations before us and set out on Page 203 of the report.
- What's happened so far? Cabinet members can see from section 1 starting on page 203 of the report how the work has evolved from the time of the first Cabinet report in April and that section summarises where we have got to in the first 4 of the initial 12 months of the review.
- I think we should take on board what is said in paragraph 1.3 on Page 203 of the report that this is the first time such a review has been done at Norfolk County Council for 10 years. Whilst the organisation as it currently exists has served us and our communities well, we need to look to the future and create a modern, efficient and cost-effective Council focused on delivering the best quality services we can for everyone in Norfolk.
- The Chairman referred Cabinet Members to and went through the recommendations on Page 203 of the report which were very specific to move the whole review forward.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 10.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention felt that the biggest risk to the Council was not to continue with the review; he noted that an organisation as large as the Council needed to review its operations periodically, which had not been carried out by Norfolk County Council for ten years. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention felt that it was responsible in the current global climate to ensure the Council was as efficient and strategic as possible to meet people's needs.
- 10.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the need to focus on the delivery of services following the aims of Better Together for Norfolk, what was best now and how things could be carried out in a better way. With changes in technology ways to carry out work at a lower cost may be able to be identified.
- 10.4 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management felt that

the review was overdue and congratulated the Council on the commitment to this being an ongoing process.

- 10.5 The meeting adjourned at 10:40 until 11:02 due to a fire alarm.
- 10.6 The Chairman noted Cabinet's commitment to the review as an important piece of work to carry forward.
- 10.7 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that as it had been 10 years since the last review this would provide an opportunity to examine the direction of the organisation and how things could be done more effectively across the organisation leading to better outcomes. This would be an ongoing review and he was pleased to see that savings of £16m had been highlighted so far. The final figures would be incorporated into departmental savings targets.
- 10.8 The Chairman recognised that there was lots of work still to be done however this review was part of the strategic work needed to create an organisation fit for the future.
- 10.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
Approve the approach to developing the emerging proposals of:
- Reconfiguration of prioritised service areas for Phase 1 as set out at Paragraphs 2.4 - 2.8 of the report;
 - Driving consistency in our organisation's spans and layers through application of common principles to all service areas as set out at Paragraphs 2.9 - 2.11 of the report;
 - A rolling review of all service areas to build the new strategic operating model for the Council.

10.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please refer to section 4 of the report.

10.11 **Alternative Options**

We could decide to not proceed with the review, but this will not address the organisational issues identified in this paper nor the budget imperative.

11. Norfolk's Bus Service Improvement Plan

- 11.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the proposals for the Bus Service Improvement Plan funding that we were submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT), what we have delivered so far without funding, and what the public and stakeholders said about our Bus Service Improvement Plan when we carried out a county-wide consultation earlier this year.
- 11.1.2 The Director of Highways, Transport and Waste gave an update to Cabinet. The Infrastructure and Development Select Committee due to be held in September 2022 which was postponed due to the national period of mourning had been rearranged for Monday 26 September 2022. At this meeting they had received a report about the Bus Service Improvement Plan. There had been good debate on the topic with key points covered being keeping the network clear from obstructions and suggestions for bus service routing. The report was

unanimously agreed.

- 11.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport introduced the report to Cabinet:
- In March 2021 Government announced their bus strategy “Bus Back Better”. As part of this, to receive funding, local transport authorities were required to publish a bus service improvement plan and form an enhanced partnership with bus operators which Norfolk County Council did.
 - In April 22 Norfolk was one of 31 local authorities to receive an indicative funding allowance of one of the highest amounts in the country. The allocation was £49.55m over 3 years split between £30.9m for capital and £18.6m for revenue.
 - By May 2022, the council was required to outline to the Department for Transport what they would spend the funding on and what would be achieved as a result. By June 2022 a proposed revision to the enhanced partnership plan that reflected this funding and reconfirming the commitments to funding and provision had to be submitted. By mid-August the Department for Transport confirmed the funding.
 - The report outlined the commitments submitted to the Department for Transport and what had been delivered so far without funding, and what stakeholders had said about the service when a consultation had been carried out earlier in the year.
 - The council worked closely with bus operators to put the plan to the Department for Transport and would continue to work closely with them to deliver the project outlined in the report.
 - The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services agreed that working in partnership with bus companies would help improve services for people. He had spoken to officers about the proposals for his area and supported them.
- 11.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance pointed out that the allocation awarded was one of largest allocations of this funding in the country and congratulated officers on the successful bid. He was pleased to see how the money was being allocated including an increase in rural networks. It would be beneficial to look at ways for people to access Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty other than by car.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that some people may have chosen not to take the bus previously due to poor availability, reliability and high cost. These issues had been addressed in the Bus Service Improvement Plan. More evening and Sunday services would encourage people to take the bus more regularly.
- 11.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that reliable and direct services resulted in people using bus services more. Out of the funding allocation £2.5m was planned to support value for money fares across the network and £12.5m revenue was planned to increase frequency and reach of services which he noted was positive.
- 11.6 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste was pleased by the information in the report as it could be reported to residents that their needs were being

addressed by the Council. The aims set out in the Improvement Plan would also have a positive impact on the climate.

11.7 The Chairman noted the development of the single travel brand across the County. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport replied that officers had worked with bus operators to come up with this branding.

11.8 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport added that it was recognised that some areas of the county were very rural and it was hoped that they would achieve a better bus service through this piece of work.

11.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To agree the proposals for the Bus Service Improvement Plan funding.
2. To agree that we vary the Enhanced Partnership Plan & Scheme to reflect this funding and re-confirm our and bus operators' commitments to public transport provision and improvements.

11.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

If we do not proceed with the proposals put to and agreed by the DfT, the funding will be withdrawn. Changes can potentially be made as the three-year programme progresses, in agreement with the DfT, but we must comply with their 4 key priorities.

As a consequence of this funding we will have stronger commitments in place with bus operators, via the Enhanced Partnership, to improve services in return for this investment. This will ensure that bus services continue to be improved for the benefit of all people who wish to travel by bus around Norfolk.

11.11 **Alternative Options**

Please refer to section 5 of the report.

12 Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance Strategy and Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy Vote

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report detailing the strategy and action plans of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance and explaining the process of local levy setting for the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees and proposing that the County Council makes an allowance for an increase in levies of up to 3.00%.

12.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste introduced the report to Cabinet

- The Environment Agency could require the county council as the lead flood authority to contribute to programmes of work to address flood and coastal erosion carried out by associated agencies in the region. This was carried out via a levy and the rate was set area by area by regional flood and coastal committees
- The County Council was involved with 3 committees across Norfolk which levied a total of £955,000 a year from the Council.
- The proposal in the report was to show support for a 3% increase for the levy in place, an increase of £28,500 to the council. This may be higher

or lower as determined by the votes of the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees.

- Each £1 of the local levy fund helped draw in over £5 of additional funding from central Government. The money was used to support work in Norfolk such as the Great Yarmouth Tidal Defence and the Hemsby Coastal Management Scheme as well as various surface water schemes around the county. In addition to this, approval for £120,000 for two new county council led schemes in the River Bure catchment area had been secured and £600,000 for a £1.2m flood alleviation scheme in Dereham.
- The report highlighted the valuable work of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance, bringing together district, city and borough councils, the Broads Authority, Environment Agency, Anglian Water, drainage authorities, water management allowance and others to ensure inland and coastal flood risk was as low as possible and managed.
- The report also set out the action plans of the Alliance to show the council's ongoing support for their work.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste paid tribute to the chairman of Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance, Lord Dannatt, whose time as Chairman would soon end. He had been a driving force behind the outcomes achieved by the alliance.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

12.2 The Chairman also paid tribute to Lord Dannatt and his work on the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance.

12.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport felt that having agencies working together through the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance had provided clarity for people, providing a single point of contact. He spoke about the flooding in Christmas 2020; a project had been undertaken to alleviate these problems and further work was planned.

12.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that the Council's responsibility as lead flood authority was a recent one, and with this the Council had no power to bring all partners to work together. He therefore noted the work of Lord Dannatt in creating this partnership. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention also noted that the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee covered all of East Anglia; for every £1 raised, £5 was gained from central Government to support projects however this was spent across all of East Anglia. It did however provide a mechanism for urgent issues in Norfolk to be addressed and funded.

12.5 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the positives of a single point of contact for people during a flood.

12.6 The Chairman noted the summary of progress made which was set out on page 151 of the report.

12.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

1. Approve the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance's action plans and updated strategy and thank the Chair of the Alliance and all partners for their ongoing commitment to reducing and managing flood risk in Norfolk.

2. Agree supporting an increase in the local levy to the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees of up to 3.00%

12.8 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Please refer to section 4 of the report.

12.9 Alternative Options

Please refer to section 5 of the report.

13 Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and King's Lynn Multi-User Community Hub update paper

- 13.1.1 Cabinet received the report discussing plans to deliver Great Yarmouth Learning Centre and King's Lynn Multi-User Community Hub and providing an update on the progress made towards these projects so far.
- 13.1.2 The Director of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service noted that these projects would provide significant benefits to residents of the two areas and bring economic outcomes.
- 13.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships introduced the report to Cabinet
 - Over the last 20 years, the Millennium Library at the Forum in Norwich had provided a wide range of services for the community. The council wanted the residents of Yarmouth and King's Lynn to have a similar, welcoming and accessible venue available to them in the centre of their communities.
 - Each venue would have a bespoke programme of events and services based on local data and strategies.
 - The library service, adult learning, voluntary sector, health, further education, colleges, universities, councils and others would provide services for people to socialise, learn and develop skills for employment.
 - The two venues would provide services to children and adults of all ages in the two towns and the surrounding areas.
 - Both projects were making significant progress and had project boards in place to oversee delivery.
 - Both projects supported the aims of Better Together for Norfolk.
 - The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 13.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management discussed that libraries were a key part of communities, providing support for learners, new mothers and education among others. The report set out how this scheme was helping meet the Cabinet's manifesto pledge. The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management thanked the library service for their work delivering a 21st century service. Both of the schemes set out in the report would bring key hubs into the heart of the communities, making services more accessible. Norfolk was leading the way in using assets to help people access services, education and have fun. The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management was disappointed by the scare mongering and negativity surrounding the project; he pointed out that moving to a central

location was positive; the Carnegie building was historically significant however was not in an accessible location for many users, particularly disabled residents. Feedback from central Government on the business case had been positive with every part rated green. It had also passed external assessment and the two sites would help transform peoples' lives.

- 13.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that the King's Lynn project replicated the Millennium Library in Norwich for people in the West of the County, with 200,000 people estimated to use the town centre as a result providing an economic benefit to King's Lynn of an estimated £31.6m; this would be vital for levelling up in King's Lynn.
- 13.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the issues raised in King's Lynn of moving out of the Carnegie building. He noted that Carnegie believed in giving to the "industrious and ambitious; not those who need everything done for them, but those who, being most anxious and able to help themselves, deserve and will be benefited by help from others". The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance therefore believed that the project proposed for King's Lynn would be approved by Carnegie as he built libraries for people to better themselves and access books. The project was planned to make the library more accessible for more people in the centre of the town and closer to public transport. Carnegie's first library in Dunfermline was now no longer used as a library as it had been deemed not suitable for this use.
- 13.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
1. Note the continued progress to bring both of these projects to delivery, as set out in this report
 2. Approve the business case for the "Multi-User Community Hub" in King's Lynn, as included at Annexe 2 of the report.

13.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please refer to section 4 of the report.

13.7 **Alternative Options**

Please refer to section 5 of the report.

14 **Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus**

- 14.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing an update on the project seeking to create an Operations and Maintenance Campus in Great Yarmouth, capitalising on space in Borough Council ownership at the southern tip of the Great Yarmouth South Denes peninsula, which is presently under-utilised.
- 14.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The offshore energy sector provides Great Yarmouth and Norfolk with arguably the single most important economic opportunity for a generation. Oil and Gas have been a mainstay of the economy for over 50 years and the recent emergence of offshore renewables has presented Great Yarmouth's port, its supply chain, and its skills base with the chance of enjoying hugely significant growth and investment.

- Not only that the UK is seeking to have less reliance on other forms of energy and the North Sea, through Great Yarmouth and Norfolk, will play a significant role in the country's future energy security
- Following on from that one of the principal economic benefits from offshore renewables investment is the long-term operations and maintenance function.
- Great Yarmouth already benefits from the presence of several businesses undertaking this work, but research has shown that more can be done to provide the facilities they need.
- This project seeks to create an Operations and Maintenance Campus in Great Yarmouth, capitalising on space in Borough Council ownership at the southern tip of the Great Yarmouth South Denes peninsula, which is presently under-utilised. It is the closest port to the Southern North Sea wind farm arrays with access to deep water, as well as the river port. The project will upgrade or enhance facilities through three separate work packages.
- Research has shown it will give Great Yarmouth an asset that will enable the area to rival other parts of the UK and to accelerate the growth already being seen in the energy sector. It is anticipated 650 jobs will be created here, once the site is fully built out. This project has emerged through strong partnership working and could not have been conceived and developed as far as it has without the support of the New Anglia LEP, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council.
- We had a report to Cabinet on 8 March 2021, which agreed Norfolk County Council would lead the delivery of infrastructure works required for the project. There was then a key member decision on 15 August 2022, to adjust the project budget following a protracted procurement and to set in motion the award of the construction contract.
- This report provides a progress update on the key milestones for project, including detailed design, in river investigation, Marine Management Organisation licences, planning permission (granted in December 2021), demolition works and dredging of berths 1a and 1b ready for marine construction works.
- The construction contract has now been let (as set out in paragraph 4.11 on Page 442 of the report) and that is due to complete by January 2024.
- This is a real good news story for Norfolk and the region.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report

- 14.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that in the 1980s and 1990s, the gas industry was being built up in Great Yarmouth but was eventually relocated to Aberdeen. The work set out in the report was therefore important to recognise that the offshore wind sector was the future and ensure Great Yarmouth was at the forefront, creating a network to support and lead the industry.
- 14.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that the increased costs related to this project had been set out in a Cabinet Member delegated decision. The County Council was underwriting £11.4m towards the project and there was a large contingency built in, but anything above this would be shared 50:50 between Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council.
- 14.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste welcomed this piece of work noting that there was not an energy crisis at that time, however there might be in

the future if initiatives such as this were not taken forward.

- 14.5 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance was pleased that this ambitious project was being taken forward to ensure Great Yarmouth could stay at the forefront and prevent the work being taken elsewhere
- 14.6 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention was pleased that this would create a new chapter in the life of Great Yarmouth and an opportunity for the town to be an important infrastructure hub to support green energy. It would bring economic benefits leading to improvements in health and educational outcomes.
- 14.7 The Chairman noted that this report discussed the benefits of energy security and green energy which he pointed out were positive aspects.
- 14.8 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to
1. Acknowledge the progress update for the Great Yarmouth Operations & Maintenance Campus project, approved by Cabinet 08 March 2021.
 2. Agree that a further progress update is brought back to Cabinet in June 2023

14.9 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Please refer to section 5 of the report.

14.10 **Alternative Options**

Please refer to section 6 of the report.

15 Risk Management

- 15.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the latest corporate risks for cabinet to consider and agree following officer review of the Council's corporate risks.
- 15.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:
- Changes to risks were set out in the report:
 - Two new proposed corporate risks:
 - **RM035 - Inflationary pressure on revenue and capital budgets:** This has been proposed to capture the risk of inflationary pressure on revenue and capital budgets. It also reflects the rapidly-emerging national risk of inflation causing greater financial pressure that also impacts on Norfolk County Council at a local level. **(risk on page 488-489 of the report)**
 - **RM036 - Environmental Policy:** This has been proposed to capture the risk of not delivering the key objectives of the NCC environmental policy. It recognises the environment as a key risk theme, framing the proposed risk in the context of NCC's environmental policy that is within Norfolk County Council's direct control to manage. **(risk on page 490 of the report)**
 - Proposed score change:
 - **RM003b - Information and cyber security requirements:** This proposal is to increase the current impact score of this risk from 3 to 4, increasing the current overall risk score from 9

to 12. This follows the continuing threat of international cyber warfare on the UK from abroad, with Local Authorities a potential target for high-level cyber disruption. **(risk on page 462 of the report)**

- Proposed risk scope change:
 - **RM027 – myOracle:** There is a proposed scope change to this risk, following the movement in time from a pre- go-live environment to a post- go-live environment. The nature of the risk has subsequently changed. This risk has moved from the risk of non-implementation, to a risk of non-delivery of key operational processes. **(risk on p. 476)**
- Proposed risk closure:
 - **RM026 - Legal challenge to procurement exercise:** given that mitigations have now been implemented as far as possible, minimising the possibility of a legal challenge to a procurement exercise, this risk is proposed to be closed.
- General Risk Title Changes
 - Some of the corporate risk titles have been simplified to show only the risk theme. Previous detail within risk titles has been transferred into the risk descriptions.
- General information to note on winter planning and specifically RM032 (page 483)
 - As per the Civil Contingencies Act, and to remain as prepared as possible for the winter period and beyond, the Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) has in place weekly Risk Intelligence Group (RIG) meetings. Here, emergency planning professionals from across the NRF partnership come together to review the potential risks that the county faces in the short term (next 7 days), medium term (7 days to 2 months) and longer term (beyond 2 months). This process creates an assessment picture that considers the potential impacts, aims to recommend and support mitigations, and, if required, stand up response structures that look to reduce the impacts as far as possible for Norfolk. The NCC Resilience team attend this weekly Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) Risk Information Group (RIG) meeting to enable situation awareness and horizon scanning to support and manage all the major risks within the County.
 - In addition, the NRF is also fully engaged at a regional and national level with the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities around winter assurance and preparedness for winter.
- Today's report to Cabinet is more detailed than normal as it includes departmental risk summaries and the red rated departmental level risks as at October 2022.
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

15.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance was pleased to note risk “RM035 - Inflationary pressure on revenue and capital budgets” added into the register. The adverse impact on budget planning of significantly higher levels of inflation and the pressures this would bring on the revenue and capital budgets was something that the council was looking to mitigate. All likely inflationary pressures were

being reviewed and would be incorporated into the final budget report in January 2023.

- 15.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance spoke about the proposed score change to risk “RM003b - Information and cyber security requirements”. He noted that the war in Ukraine meant hostile intelligence was targeting public systems such as the NHS and local authorities; a large amount of work had been done by Information and Management Technology staff to mitigate this however the risk needed to be reflected. Everyone had a responsibility to be aware of and mitigate these risks. The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance discussed the proposed scope change to risk “RM027 – myOracle”; there had been reports in the press about delays in or incorrect payments to some employees however as a fraction of the total number of staff paid this amounted to a fraction of 1% affected. The system had been implemented over the Covid-19 period and the supplier was impressed how quickly it was delivered and with relatively few problems. These problems had been addressed through staff training where appropriate. Replacing the finance system had been imperative as it was out of date and therefore could have been at risk of increased cost and cyber attack
- 15.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that no organisation was without risk and the risks identified in the report showed that the council was professional in identifying the risks that did exist.
- 15.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree:
1. The key messages detailing key changes to corporate risks following the corporate risk register review and refresh (paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 and Appendix A of the report)
 2. The refreshed corporate risks as at October 2022 (Appendices B and C of the report)
- 15.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**
- Not applicable as no decision is being made.
- 15.7 **Alternative Options**
- There are no alternatives identified.

16 Corporately Significant Vital Signs

- 16.1.1 Cabinet received the quarter one report providing Cabinet with an update on the Council’s performance against its Corporately Significant Vital Signs.
- 16.1.1 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This was a quarterly report however the vital signs were reviewed on a regular basis.
 - There were new priorities outlined in the report for example related to the strategic review, net zero, county deal and levelling up.
 - It was important to be achieving strategic objectives.
 - Vital signs were underpinned by portfolio outcomes and scored using a RAG rating system.

- The report was for data of the quarter up to March 2022.
- There were 43 corporately significant vital signs including one which was not RAG rated. Six of these were within accepted tolerance and ten were behind or below target. Picking up poor performance or deteriorating trajectories was important.
- All targets set were challenging and helped the council to achieve a balanced budget and meet statutory requirements within departments.
- The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance moved the recommendations as set out in the report

16.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services discussed the figures for Education Health and Care plans which were discussed in the report; these had now improved and were back at 52%. The department was also looking at putting in more resources. The rate of exclusions had been impacted by Covid-19 and the department was working with schools to reduce this rate. Government guidance was due on this topic to put more responsibility on local authorities to work with schools and reduce exclusions. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that the rate of looked after children was static however costs related to this were rising due to increasing costs per child. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services also reported that the number of schools rated Good and Outstanding by Ofsted had increased.

16.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that the red RAG rating related to capital receipts was a timing issue and capital receipts for land sold were moving forward as planned.

16.4 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships noted that home fire visits had been static due to operational demand to respond to wildfires meaning that staff were needed elsewhere. Emergency response times of 10 minutes had not been able to be met for the same reason.

16.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

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

16.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

N/A

16.7 **Alternative Options**

Information Report.

17 **Finance Monitoring Report 2022-23 P5: August 2022**

17.1.1 Cabinet received the report giving a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2022-23 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2023, together with related financial information.

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

- This month pressures being seen impacting the ability to deliver a balanced budget in-year continued as highlighted in the report.

- Children's Services were reporting an overspend of £6m, an increase from the £5m estimated in the last finance monitoring report. This would be offset by use of £1m departmental reserves but the overspend for the month for the council as a whole was £4.735m.
- A £177m addition to the capital programme had been enabled by external funding, not by borrowing, from the successful work of the highways team and money from the Department of Transport.
- Page 549, paragraph 2.23 of the report discussed the pay award for staff at the time of writing. The final confirmation of the pay award for 2022-23 was being awaited however it could be assumed that the offer of the flat rate per employee of £1,925 would be the agreed deal, which had been agreed with Unison at the time of the meeting. This would result in an in-year pressure and the details of this were being worked through to see how the pressures could be absorbed by departmental budgets. This provision would need to be included in future years' budgets as well.
- Funding via the cancellation of the 1.25% national insurance increase and any residual balance would be looked at to see how much would need to be met through reserves later in the year if needed.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

17.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services discussed the increased pressures for Children's Services which were reflected in the report. A small number of children and young people with complex needs involved high costs and there was a lack of support and sufficiency in the market for them. Increased costs through the court system due to a slower return to normal after the Covid-19 pandemic in this area impacting on budget and on children and families.

17.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted the £177m to be added to the capital expenditure programme received from outside funding and pointed out that it was positive that the council had such high quality funding bids.

17.4 The Chairman noted the staff pay increase; work was ongoing to see how this would be managed this year, but this would also affect the budget of future years.

17.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To recommend to full Council the addition of **£177.144m** to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements funded from various external sources as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.1 of the report as follows:
 - £1.044m uplift to Childrens Services capital projects, including £0.963m update to Section 106 Developer contributions
 - £4.5m uplift to Section 106 Developer contributions to Highways capital projects for future years
 - £171.599m grant funding updates from the Department of Transport for various capital projects
2. Subject to full Council approval of recommendation 1 to delegate:
 - 3.1) To the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any) and the award criteria; to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions (in consultation

- with the Chief Officer responsible for each scheme); to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary.
- 3.2) To the Director of Property authority (notwithstanding the limits set out at 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 of Financial Regulations) to negotiate or tender for or otherwise acquire the required land to deliver the schemes (including temporary land required for delivery of the works) and to dispose of land so acquired that is no longer required upon completion of the scheme;
- 3.3) To each responsible chief officer authority to:
- (in the case of two-stage design and build contracts) agree the price for the works upon completion of the design stage and direct that the works proceed; or alternatively direct that the works be recompeted approve purchase orders, employer's instructions,
 - compensation events or other contractual instructions necessary to effect changes in contracts that are necessitated by discoveries, unexpected ground conditions, planning conditions, requirements arising from detailed design or minor changes in scope
 - subject always to the forecast cost including works, land, fees and disbursements remaining within the agreed scheme or programme budget.
 - That the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Policy Framework, with the approach to Social Value in Procurement endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 6 July 2020, and with the approach set out in the paper entitled "Sourcing strategy for council services" approved by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting of 16 July 2018.
3. To recognise the period 5 general fund revenue forecast of a £4.735m overspend (1.02% of net budget), noting also that Executive Directors will take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
4. To recognise the period 5 forecast of 97% savings delivery in 2022-23, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
5. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2023 of **£23.840m**, assuming the Council will mitigate the overspends reported in P5 of the report.
6. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-26 capital programmes.

17.6 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

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

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

- Forecast over and under spends
- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

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

- Treasury management

- Payment performance and debt recovery.

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

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

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

17.7 **Alternative Options**

To deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in this report. In terms of financing the proposed capital expenditure, no further grant or revenue funding has been identified to fund the expenditure, apart from the funding noted in Appendix 3 of the report.

18 **Strategic and financial planning 2023-24**

18.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out details of the initial proposals for Cabinet consideration prior to public consultation. It also explains the broad approaches planned to enable further options to be brought forward in order to contribute to a balanced Budget being proposed for 2023-24.

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

- The County Council faced a significant challenge; uncertainty in developing the budget for 2023-24. The scale of the budget gap identified in the medium-term financial strategy agreed in February 2022 was the largest the Council had sought to bridge. There were severe headwinds in the wider economy and public finances that will serve to pose increased costs.
- Cabinet acted promptly to the challenge of the gap by having a strategic review of the council and allocating savings targets to departments in April 2022 with a 2-phase approach of identifying initial budget options put forward in July 2022 which brought savings of £13m. This early start gave a key part of the robust approach to developing savings proposals.
- Many upper tier local authorities faced similar challenges, with local authority funding remaining unclear in 2023-24 and detail on individual local government provisional settlement funding allocations still to be announced.
- The County Council's second tranche of proposals for the 2023-24 budget, listed on page 588 of the report, together with the savings put forward in July 2022, shown in table 5 of the report, totalled savings of £32.515m, summarised in table 8 of the report. The savings shown in the report excluded proposals from the strategic review which was signalling upwards of £16m at that time.
- New pressures emerging since the development of the budget would impact current and future years and could increase the size of the gap further however they had not been reflected in departmental service targets as they were uncertain and a number of counter measures such as reduction in MRP, increase in business rates and increase in interest received on cash balances could help resist further pressures assuming

the fiscal plan did not bring negative news for local authorities. Such counter measures would now not be available to offset the gap.

- The pay award offer made of a fixed increase of £1925 for all pay grades had been accepted by Unison out of the 3 unions. If accepted this would be a 10.5% increase for staff on the lowest grade and an overall increase on the pay bill of 6%. The increase, if agreed would add an additional cost of £7.6m in 2022-23 over and above the costs budgeted for throughout the life of the medium-term financial strategy. Any increase above this in future years would add further to the gap. Each extra 1% would add £3m to the council's bottom line.
- The national living wage would result in additional costs for commissioned services such as Adult Social Care and each 1 pence increase added £270,000 to the council's bottom line. Depending on the level of national living wage, this could add significant further pressure to the gap.
- Adequacy about assumptions related to inflation in the medium-term financial strategy would need to be reassessed; forecasts for 2023-24 were as high as 18%. This would impact on the energy and fuel budget and have implications on other budget lines including where contracts were paid.
- Work carried out over the autumn period would give greater clarity over the scale of issues but would contribute to an increase in the gap. Levels of funding, charges and additional costs remained unclear. Other councils were forecasting shortfalls in funding of around £20m.
- Underfunding of special educational needs and disabilities had caused significant financial problems for many years. The county council was engaged in negotiations with the Department for Education as part of the Safety Valve Programme with an aim to agree a DSG recovery plan to eliminate the DSG deficit and bring in-year DSG budget in balance. If this was successful, the Department for Education would make a material financial contribution to addressing the deficit however a contribution within the council's revenue budget over the term of the medium-term financial strategy and mitigations would also be required.
- Existing pressures continued in departments and could require an increase in growth and may have an adverse impact on the budget for Children's Services and Adult Social Care. In April 2022 when the Medium-Term Financial Strategy was refreshed and a new year added, the new year added £19m to the financial deficit. A higher inflation in the intervening 4 years meant that the deficit would increase and be higher than this.
- The fair funding review implementation had been postponed several times and a shift in Government priorities had lowered county council expectations.
- The services grant was a one-off grant in 2022-23 of £10.7m; the national pot of £822m may be redistributed on the same or on a different basis as part of the fair funding review. The impact of the issues above would be assessed on emerging information in the coming months and fed into the January budget report to Cabinet however it had been assumed that the £10.7m service grant would continue into 2023-24. From the mini budget this was considered a significant risk.
- Factors to mitigate financial risks were being worked on to be brought forward under key areas. The strategic review proposals would be incorporated into budget planning when developed. The report on the strategic review at item 10 of the agenda identified savings of £16m with

ongoing savings in future years. Corporate finance options, including flexible use of capital receipts would do little more than offset additional costs and would not bridge the gap

- Work on the fourth round of budget challenge would end in December 2022 and would involve reviewing additional savings proposals brought by services. If the next phases failed to yield the required savings proposals, then work would be needed in the autumn and winter to plan a balanced budget including identification of significant capital receipts to fund transformation work and reduce borrowing.
- The section 151 officer's advice was set out in the report including advice about reviewing non-essential expenditure.
- Work by the Executive Director for Adult Social Services working with NHS agencies and lower tier authorities would be an increasing area of focus as the council worked to share resources.
- The adult social care precept was assumed to continue but had not yet been confirmed by the Secretary of State. Every 1% precept generated £4.7m each year. Core council tax may be allowed to increase without referendum from 1.99%. Higher inflation may increase expectation for a higher cap however severity of the cost-of-living crisis may result in Government maintaining a lower cap. District council tax collection rates had improved and a net surplus from 2022-23 was expected to offset the deficit in this area.
- Government funding announcements including the local government finance settlement and additional interest on cash balances would help balance the budget going forward. It was possible that Government might extend the new homes bonus grant.
- Currently, the council was still facing a significant gap to be mitigated by the strategic review proposals, assuming that currently programmed savings of £32m would be delivered.
- To balance the budget use of general reserves would be adopted by some authorities; this could deal with short term problems but did not address structural imbalances and it was important that all resources were targeted. It was important that savings under consideration were progressed and the fourth budget challenge would provide an opportunity to look at further savings brought by departments.
- The ability to borrow at historically low rates of 1.8% fixed for 50 years was over and the Council was correct to take advantage of this to allow transformation to take place such as in special the education needs and disability programme. Capital schemes and projects had less scope to take place unless they were invest to save, would promote economic development or were for end of life services delivery. The Government had plans to accelerate new road, rail and energy infrastructure and had referenced the A140 long Stratton bypass and Norwich Western Link. They were aiming to get most started by the end of 2023.
- The Government had announced that it was in discussion with 38 local authorities including Norfolk County Council to establish investment zones to offer time limited tax benefits and the council was engaged in discussions.
- Implications for local government on the growth plan and medium-term fiscal plan remained to be seen. It had been reported that the chief secretary to the treasury had instructed all Government departments to look for efficiencies which some believed would lead to further funding

cuts for local government. This made it unlikely that the local government provisional settlement would be announced until December 2022 or later.

- It was likely that there would be no new funding in the system, making a rollover of the 2022-23 settlement likely. Services grant allocations and funding to meet national insurance increases may be at risk. This would make the final balancing of the revenue budget challenging and there would be a strong focus on identifying and driving out inefficiencies however there was limited scope and a different approach was needed to fund local government services as those above statutory level were at risk.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

18.2 The Chairman noted the theme of uncertainty of risk and the growth pressures as set out in the report in table 3. If there would be cuts to public spending, then this would not align to the governments approach to low tax as this would lead to high tax. 3% had been planned for however the Government was looking for economic growth and low tax. The Chairman had written to the Prime Minister about these issues, as every year due to the significant growth pressures, the council's net spend was increasing.

18.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted the 5 key strategic priorities which the council was delivering against. The amount of money the council was spending each year was increasing showing that the money being spent to achieve objective was not being reduced. Increase in demand for the services the council offered was being seen, particularly in Adult Social Care as people lived for longer and due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the impact of which was still being seen in the health and social care system. The number of people over 85 was set to double over the next 10 years. Covid 19 impacts meant that backlogs of work had built up. It was important that people took precautions to protect themselves, their families and other people through the upcoming winter flu period as this would increase demand on the health service. Social care reform was positive for the social care system moving forward however the increased cost that would come with the Government reforms had not yet been understood by Government and would give further pressure in the system if not properly managed. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention had liaised with the Local Government Association, Adult Social Care Bodies as part of his role on the Integrated Care Partnership.

18.4 Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To consider and comment on the County Council's strategy as set out in section 2 of the report and note that the Budget process is aligned to the overall policy and financial framework;
2. To note that fiscal and policy decisions made by the Government in autumn 2022, including any Emergency Budget, may have implications for the County Council's budget planning position. The outcome of these national funding announcements, alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement, will have potentially significant impacts on the 2023-24 Budget position, which will not be fully known until later in the budget setting process.
3. To consider and agree for planning purposes the latest assessment of significant areas of risk and uncertainty around emerging budget pressures

for the 2023-24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which remain to be resolved and which may have a material impact on budget planning (section 9 of the report).

4. To direct Executive Directors to identify proposals for further recurrent Departmental savings to achieve the original target of £60.000m agreed in April 2022, for consideration by Cabinet in January 2023 and to support final 2023-24 Budget recommendations to Full Council.
5. To note that, taking into account the significant emerging budget pressures for 2023-24, the S151 Officer anticipates recommending that the Council will need to apply the maximum council tax increase available in order to set a sustainable balanced budget for 2023-24;
6. 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 10 of the report and the further actions which may be required to set a balanced budget as set out in paragraph 11.3 of the report;
7. To consider and agree the proposals as set out in sections 5 and 6 (Table 5 and Table 7 of the report) to be taken forward in budget planning for 2023-24, subject to final decisions about the overall Budget in February 2023, noting the level of savings already included from the 2022-23 Budget process (Table 4 of the report);
8. To note that proposals are also being developed via the Strategic Review running in parallel with the wider 2023-24 Budget process. Once fully developed, these will be incorporated into the final 2023-24 Budget presented to Cabinet in January 2023.
9. To note that consultation is being undertaken in respect of the proposal relating to the review of the mobile library services and the outcomes of this will be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet;
10. To agree that public consultation (as set out in section 12 of the report) and equality impact assessment (as set out in section 18 of the report) in relation to all other proposals for the 2023-24 Budget be undertaken as set out in section 12 of the report, and asking residents for their views on the level of council tax;
11. To note that the Head of Paid Service has the delegation to undertake any staff consultation relating to specific proposals as required to inform and support 2023-24 Budget setting decisions in January 2023;
12. To confirm the remaining next steps in the Budget planning process for 2023-24, and the Budget planning timetable (Appendix 1 of the report);
13. To note and thank Select Committees for their input into the Budget development process for 2023-24 in May, and to invite Select Committees to comment further on the detailed proposals set out in this report when they meet in November 2022 (section 20 of the report).

18.5 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Please refer to section 13 of the report.

18.6 Alternative Options

Please refer to section 14 of the report.

19. Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions

made since the last Cabinet meeting

- 19.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **note** the Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting

The meeting ended at 12:57

Chairman of Cabinet

Cabinet
3 October 2022
Local Member Questions

	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp Economic prosperity in West Norfolk and reducing congestion around King's Lynn, demand better bus services. Norfolk has secured £49.55m to improve bus services. £12 million will be spent on new or expanded bus routes and increased service frequencies on key routes. Will Cabinet end the deplorable deterioration of bus services on key corridors of movement into King's Lynn, the A10 and C80 Clenchwarton Road; reverse the reduced frequency of buses in Norfolk from Terrington, Clenchwarton and West Lynn into King's Lynn; and provide earlier and later buses along the A10 to encourage modal shift.</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport We welcome proposals for new or enhanced bus services from Members and other stakeholders. These will be added to a long list of options which will then be scored using a scoring mechanism that determines financial sustainability after the 3 year funding period and where new and enhanced routes would have the most impact in terms of passenger demand and growth. We are currently working on this with the DfT.</p> <p>Second Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp As the local County Councillor, I recently visited local Mobile Library stops - Norfolk's ageing population, isolated village demography, poor transport connectivity, mean the Mobile Library will become more important, to help residents without cars or computers, stay independent, with health information, Assistive Technology, opportunity to socialise. Nursery teachers introduce under-fives to the Library Van, encouraging literacy and GLD. Children of all ages sign up to the Reading Challenge on the Mobile Library and are rewarded with Certificate and Stickers. Does Cabinet agree Norfolk Aspiration and Attainment could increase if the Mobile Library Service is expanded to deprived urban areas?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships As you know, a public consultation on the mobile library service recently closed. We are grateful for the 1,500 residents, including yourself, who took the time to let us know their views. We will now be taking time to consider the findings of the consultation in detail before bringing forward a proposed way forward.</p>
7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn People have been telling me that this winter they will be skipping meals so that they can feed their children, staying in the library all day because they can't afford heating, and worse. The Conservatives chose this moment to scrap the cap on bankers' bonuses and cut taxes for those on the highest incomes. The result has been a crash in the economy. Some Tory MPs are already submitting letters of no confidence in Liz Truss. This speaks of a country in crisis.</p> <p>What emergency planning does Norfolk have for the winter to respond to the crash in the economy, falling economic confidence and the worsening cost of living crisis?</p>

Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance

Cabinet recognises that cost of living pressures are likely to put increasing demand upon many of the vital services that we provide. Therefore, the Council is continuing to work within 2022-23 budgets as we approach the winter season while developing plans for the next financial year, 2023-24, to ensure that these services can continue to be delivered in the context of a robust, balanced local authority budget.

The Council has also worked hard with partners and district council colleagues to continue to provide support for people who find themselves in financial hardship and cannot pay their living costs. We have supported many thousands of families with direct financial support and advice through the Norfolk Assistance Scheme and, working with Norfolk Community Partnership have invested £500,000 in the Nourishing Norfolk programme, 8 food hubs are now operational across Norfolk, with up to 15 planned by the end of 2022.

Using funding from Government topped up by funds from NCC we have, with partners, delivered 2 tranches of the Norfolk Hardship Fund with a third to come shortly.

To help ensure we meet our duties under the Civil Contingencies Act, and to remain as prepared as possible, the Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) has in place weekly Risk Intelligence Group (RIG) meetings. This is where emergency planning professionals from across the NRF partnership come together to review the potential risks that the county faces in the short term (next 7 days), medium term (7 days to 2 months) and longer term (beyond 2 months). This process creates an assessment picture that considers the potential impacts, aims to recommend and support mitigations, and, if required, stand up response structures that look to reduce the impacts as far as possible for Norfolk.

The purpose of the RIG meetings is to create a Common Operating Picture risk assessment, which then feeds into the individual partner's strategic and tactical management meetings that help to shape the Norfolk wide preparedness and strategy. The NRF also undertakes specific monthly risk assessment meetings to look at the risks to Norfolk on a rolling basis, to ensure that we are current with our risk profile and planning. In addition, the NRF is also fully engaged at a regional and national level with the Department of Levelling Up Communities and Housing around winter assurance and preparedness for winter.

Second Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn

Millions of children who do not qualify for Free School Meals are going hungry, including in Norfolk. Teachers have called for Free School Meals to be extended to all children in all primary schools in England. This has already been done in Scotland. Will the County Council support the NEU's No Child Left Behind campaign and write to the Government to request that FSM are extended to all primary-age children?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Thank you to Cllr Osborn for raising this point in the current context of the rising cost of living creating additional pressures for many individuals and families. Children in reception, year 1 or year 2 are already entitled to free school meals regardless of household income. As a council we support nearly 30,000 children across our primary and secondary schools who are eligible for means tested free school meals, at a

	<p>weekly cost of approximately £450,000. I do not believe free school meals should be extended for all primary school children.</p> <p>As a council we will continue to lobby central government for a fair deal for Norfolk residents. We welcome the additional funding from government to support individuals and families in Norfolk experiencing hardship which is enabling us to provide additional support over the current period including through our cost-of-living voucher scheme for families with children eligible for free school meals, as well as support for other families and older people.</p> <p>The County Council has added an additional £1m to the Norfolk Assistance Scheme to provide financial support to families who are not eligible for other government funded hardship support this winter.</p> <p>For more information about the support that is available for families: Help with living costs - Norfolk County Council</p>
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Ben Price</p> <p>The Government has said that Norfolk will be one of the areas considered for low-tax, low-investment zone. This comes alongside plans for a rash slashing of planning regulations, which environmental groups have said represents an unprecedented threat to wildlife.</p> <p>If Norfolk applies to be a low-regulation zone, please can the leader set out in detail how this would help to deliver a green economy with carbon reductions and restoration of nature?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</p> <p>"Our <i>Better Together, for Norfolk</i> strategy outlines our commitment to sustainable growth, stronger communities and greener future. These strategic principles will guide our engagement with the opportunity. When we see the detail of the opportunity for any investment zones we will carefully consider how they fit with our sustainable growth objectives"</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Ben Price</p> <p>Norfolk Car Club members have complained about the new service that is being run by Enterprise. They have highlighted higher prices, long waits for customer service, and a lack of available cars.</p> <p>What steps is the county council taking to ensure a cost guarantee and service quality for car club members in order to retain members of this important part of the Transport for Norwich Strategy?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>We recognise the important role that the car club plays in encouraging more sustainable travel and that it needs to offer a cost-effective option to attract new users and retain existing customers. We are in regular dialogue with Enterprise and will raise these concerns with them.</p> <p>It should be noted that there are a number of offers for Norfolk residents, which include discounted costs for previous members of the Norfolk Car Club as well as for new members. There are also numerous benefits to car club members, which include</p>

	<p>free minutes use of Beryl Bikes, discounted membership of Cycling UK and discounted parking.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale The County Councils Network, which represents 36 mainly Conservative-run authorities, recently highlighted grave concerns over the increasingly fragile state of social care.</p> <p>The chief executive of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services estimated that over half a million people are waiting for assessments, care, or reviews and over 165,000 staff vacancies means it will only get worse.</p> <p>In light of the Cabinet Member's analysis that further savage cuts may be needed, does he share his fellow Conservative councillors' concern for the state of social care and their lack of confidence in the new Government to address the crisis?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. Norfolk County Council has been engaged with the Government on this issue very closely for a number of years, and the Local Government bodies such as the County Council's Network (CCN) and the Local Government Association (LGA) have been very helpful in that regard. There have been a number of reports to Cabinet highlighting the pressure the system is under due to increasing demand, partly caused by an ageing population and partly by the fallout from Covid 19. We have seen recent welcome announcements from the Government of a further £500m for the sector together with specific grants such as £30m to help with recruitment of staff from overseas and I look forward to a productive relationship in the future.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Paul Neale The County Council has expressed its delight that the Norwich Western Link scheme could proceed outside the planning process. Previously, the Cabinet Member had insisted that all environment impacts would be detailed in the planning application. That planning application could now be skipped.</p> <p>Can Cabinet Member give assurance that the full environmental impacts of the road are published and subjected to scrutiny before any further work on the road?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The County Council is continuing to follow existing guidance to achieve the necessary approvals for the delivery of the Norwich Western Link. We will review any changes to that guidance when provided by Government</p>
7.5	<p>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires Will the County Council bring back school dentistry?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. Commissioning this is the responsibility of NHS England.</p>

7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone</p> <p>With Norfolk having a high number of people who are digitally excluded, is it the county council's policy no longer to provide stationery to members to support their correspondence with constituents? I write to and on behalf of citizens dozens of times a month and have recently been told I am no longer entitled to use County Council prepaid postage envelopes to do so.</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</p> <p>In accordance with the Constitution Councillors are provided with the resources and facilities to assist them in carrying out their duties as a councillor including provision of office support and equipment such as phones and computers. Wherever possible we encourage Councillors to use email or telephone when contacting their constituents however we recognise that some residents may not have this level of access and therefore we provide stationery (paper and envelopes) to Members which they can use to contact these residents. Stationery can be requested via Political Assistants for those groups that have one or the Councillor Support team but has never been the policy of the Council to provide pre-paid envelopes and we have not had a request to consider this as an option in the past.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Steffan Aquarone</p> <p>By how much do interest rates have to rise by to make any further borrowing to pay for the construction of the Norwich Western Link uneconomic?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The Council's ability to borrow, and the cost of such borrowing, is distinct from the assessment of the economic viability or otherwise of individual projects within the capital programme. The Norwich Western Link is one of the Council's top infrastructure priorities, with a high Benefit to Cost Ratio, as reported to Cabinet on 4 July 2022. This remains unchanged.</p> <p>The Full Council will have an opportunity to consider the overall affordability of the Capital Programme when making budget decisions in February 2023. It is worth noting that the additional £14m of borrowing required for the Norwich Western Link would be split across four years, roughly equating to £3.5m per year. This represents under 6% of the annual borrowing planned for the next four years.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Tim Adams</p> <p>North Yorkshire County Council's executive have voted for a 100% premium on council tax bills on second homes to be brought in within the next two years. Will you put this forward to this council's Cabinet on the basis that the money raised by this proposal is spent on providing much needed affordable homes across the county?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Thank you for raising this important issue. It is necessary to recognise that the North Yorkshire decision has been made in the context of a transition to a Unitary Authority in April 2023. By contrast, in Norfolk, decisions about council tax premiums and similar matters rest with the individual District Councils. The County Council has therefore engaged with Districts at officer level in order to encourage them to consider implementing this premium, where possible. The nature of the two-tier structure in Norfolk would result in additional council tax funding flowing to the District, the Police and the County Council, and it would be at the discretion of each of these organisations to determine how their share of additional income would be used. A</p>

	<p>common view by lower tier councils to consider the way forward would be useful. However, it should also be noted that the 100 per cent council tax premiums on second homes could not be introduced until 1 April 2024 at the earliest, and in any event these powers are currently subject to Government proposals within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, published in May 2022, becoming law. I would also particularly welcome Cllr Adams' views on the appetite to consider a Unitary Council for Norfolk, which would streamline many of these types of decision.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Sharon Blundell</p> <p>The report to the Cabinet meeting in September said "Whilst the pandemic is officially over, there are on-going impacts on service provision and demand for support from Council services. The council has carried forward £31.125m grant funding received from central government in 2021-22 to mitigate any on-going risks and cost pressures associated with addressing the service needs arising from COVID-19." If you think that the pandemic is over shouldn't this money be going back to the Government?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The statement made in the Finance Monitoring Report 2022-23 to September Cabinet reflects the fact that no additional funding support in relation to the COVID pandemic is expected from central Government in 2022-23. However, as the report also makes clear "there are on-going impacts on service provision and demand for support from Council services." In recognition of this, the County Council's 2022-23 budget included a carry-forward of COVID grant funding to support and mitigate these ongoing impacts, within the conditions of the grant(s) as set out by the relevant Government departments which provided them. The current forecast includes the use of £28m on vaccinations, infection control and preventative measures to protect Norfolk's residents. The Council has complied with all grant conditions to date, and will continue to do so.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</p> <p>Isle of Wight Council in their Ryde Esplanade development scheme funded by Transforming Cities funding, are now taking out their sawtooth bays as they have found them to be ineffective. As this council has spent almost £6m on the St Stephens bus schemes, how long do you think it will be before they are taken out here as well?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>Thank you for your question. We don't know the specific details surrounding the decision of another local authority amending their bus stop infrastructure. However, we are confident that the sawtooth bus stop design in St Stephens Street will enable buses to access bus stops much more effectively than before, reducing congestion and enabling easier access for all bus users. Successful trial runs of this design were undertaken using buses before the works commenced and there has been close collaboration with bus operators throughout the design and construction.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Brian Watkins</p> <p>It is clearly in the Council's interests that our corporate parenting board shows a determined vision for wanting the best outcomes for Norfolk's cared for young people. Does the Cabinet member believe that children's voices are properly heard and expressed within the board including how it is working with other partners to create more employment opportunities for care leavers?</p>

	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>Children's voices are being heard at Corporate Parenting Board in a number of ways. Their feedback is presented by young people at each formal Board meeting, including the views of the wider In Care Council including Young People's forums – this is on a variety of areas, in particular the ongoing work completed by the Corporate Parenting Priority Subgroups but also in respect of social care services for young people. In addition, young people's views are regularly sought in respect of their own care planning and the wider service and these themes are often shared at Board. Further to this, a quarterly report 'voice of the child' which provides details and evidence of the voice of the child from a variety of participation and feedback sources. This report is shared with Corporate Parenting Board, the first report was discussed at July's meeting.</p>
7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Saul Penfold</p> <p>Incidents of fly-tipping during the pandemic increased in Norfolk with over 11,00 incidents of fly-tipping recorded across the county in 2020/21. For example, 100 or so tyres were recently dumped in Scottow, very near the Badersfield residential area. Councils in Norfolk spent £87,530 just on clearing instances of large-scale fly-tipping. With the recycling rates not significantly improving either in Norfolk what do you say to those people who think the council has a waste problem?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>Fly-tipping is a waste crime that the County Council is fighting together with all Councils in the Norfolk Waste Partnership.</p> <p>The most recent figures for fly-tipping show a sharp 4.5% reduction in 2021/22 to around the lowest levels seen in several years, and the aim is to drive levels even lower with the Scrap fly-tipping campaign and the co-ordinated work of the Norfolk Waste Partnership.</p> <p>And in relation to recycling levels, the pre-audit figures for 2021/22 indicate an increase of around 2% on the previous year to 44.2%, bouncing back up to offset the effects of changes to consumer behaviours and household habits, (such as an increase in work from home practices) caused by Covid-19 restrictions.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Rob Colwell</p> <p>With long queues on the days of the Hazardous Waste amenity days what consideration will you give to running more of them and being more widely spaced so that people do not give up because the queues are so long?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>Hazardous waste days are popular with our customers and we thank them for their patience in using the service on the days when it is busy. We know that this approach is an efficient way of providing a free service and each year the approach and feedback is reviewed to identify any changes and refinements that can be made.</p>
7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones</p> <p>The national minimum wage is £9.50 per hour. Lidl have increased their entry level pay rates to £10.90 per hour. Bringing care workers' rates of pay to at least those of Lidl workers is necessary to deal with the staffing crisis in the care sector and will cost more than £30 million.</p>

	<p>Can the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention clarify where we will find cabinet proposals to find the £30 million extra to begin to deal with the staffing element of the care crisis?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question. As you are already aware the Council's current usual rates are above the national living wage and previously above the Living Wage Foundation's assessment of the living wage. The Living Wage Foundation last week increased its assessment to £10.90 per hour to reflect cost of living rises. As with all councils, we have been undertaking a fair cost of care exercise. This is part of the preparations towards Social Care Reform. The Government will receive the information from these submissions this month ahead of national considerations of local government finance settlements. As with the previous cost of care exercises that this Council has regularly undertaken, this will also inform our budget planning process for 2023-24 and beyond.</p>
7.13	<p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby</p> <p>Cabinet is not scheduled to consider winter pressures until December 2022. Can the Leader confirm when Norfolk will learn what emergency measures are planned by the administration to support them in the event of a hard winter, inflation, COVID and flu, and possible shortages?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for this question. In relation to Adult Social Care, due to the ongoing challenges caused as a result of Covid 19 that are being experienced across the wider Health and Social Care System, planning measures were started months earlier than in a typical year. Adult Social Care has been continuing to work with health colleagues to identify a range of measures to mitigate risks and support continuity of services. Specific measures include increasing recruitment campaigns like targeted actions to recruit to Norfolk First Response, building resilience for the Provider of Last Resort role working to secure additional agency staff resource, recruitment and retention actions for the wider care market, supporting international recruitment including working with the NHS, targeted commissioning actions to secure more capacity where there are the greatest challenges, a package of incentives to support care placements and actions with the ICB to use health funding to bolster intermediate care services. Winter resilience planning has also been increased across the Integrated Care System, which will include Adult Social Care actions. These will also be reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board in November. Please also refer to the answer to Cllr Osborn's question in relation to wider measures.</p>
7.14	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett</p> <p>The recently announced increases in the cost of the Norwich Western Link showed that it had been increasing by £100 per minute. With soaring inflation, the slump in the pound that will drive up the cost of raw materials and increasing interest rates, can the Cabinet Member for Finance confirm how much per minute is the Norwich Western Link going up now?</p>

	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>The budget forecast reported within the Norwich Western Link Update to Cabinet on 4 July 2022 included a significant allocation of over £82m of the total £251m budget as an allowance for inflation and risk (c.33%). The Council is aware of the significant uncertainty within the wider economy but notes also the level of volatility which may see some costs dropping back in the medium to longer term. Project costs are kept under continuous review but it would not be appropriate to provide a running commentary on costings. The latest available forecasts will be reported to Members at relevant stages of the delivery of the project.</p>
7.15	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb</p> <p>There is still no sign of the 4th special school promised four years ago or the increase in SEND support and resources in mainstream schools required to tackle the serious and consistently poor outcomes for children and young people in Norfolk. The percentage of EHCPs completed on time has plummeted to 46% while demand rises.</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services confirm how much longer do Norfolk families have to wait for services that meet the needs of their children and young people?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>We have already delivered on our promise of building 2 new special schools and a 3rd, being built by the DfE, will open in Spring 2023. This was our promise 4 years ago when we secured investment of £120million to build new special schools and specialist resource bases. At that time we set out that we may build a 4th school but that we would determine this based upon need once we had completed the first phase of our special schools and specialist resource bases. That first phase is now complete and we are submitting a bid for a 4th and 5th new special school to the DfE on 10th October as we must try to secure central government funding when this is available rather than using council investment that could be used in other ways. Also, it should be noted that we have delivered the current new schools on time and on budget, however, it should be acknowledge that these building schemes are complex to achieve including securing land in the right location.</p> <p>The latest EHCP performance, as measured by the DfE, is actually 52% for the calendar year to date (cumulative) and for the last complete month (August) the team achieved 59%. We do not recognise the figure stated in the question by Cllr Webb. However, we are not complacent as we try to move the performance onwards beyond 60% to achieve above national average.</p> <p>We have improved SEND services significantly over the past 2 years and we would hope that these achievements could be celebrated by everyone with an interest in SEND across the county whilst we all collectively acknowledge the need to work together on the 2nd phase of SEND Strategic Improvement programme. As Cabinet Member I will be leading in this, as I am firmly committed to securing more specialist provision within the next stage of our plan.</p>
7.16	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Sands</p> <p>What is the cabinet member for Children's Services doing to ensure that literacy and numeracy achievement rates improve across Norfolk's schools?</p>

	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services Average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in primary schools is unacceptably low and has been for too long. There has been a national dip in standards due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Norfolk's results in writing and mathematics declined by more than they did nationally. We have written to all schools at the start of the new year to reflect our concern about the outcomes at Key Stage 2 and outline our collective priorities for the year ahead. We have written to the Regional Director and met with his team to discuss outcomes in MATs and LA maintained schools. We will be working closely with schools through the DfE Education Investment Area and the Norfolk Learning Board to focus on raising standards. We no longer have a role to deliver school improvement directly, but KS2 results will be a focus of our conversations with local authority school leaders and governors, and with MAT CEOs. In addition we will work with the local Teaching School Hubs to provide any support that we can to enable their work in supporting schools to improve outcomes.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Mikes Sands Can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services identify how many former/LAC are currently NEET across Norfolk 16-19?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services Currently we have 597 young people in care or care experienced. Of this number we have 191 (33%) not currently in Education, Employment or Training. However, many courses do not start until October for this age group so we expect to see the number in Education, Employment or Training increase substantially over the next 4 – 6 weeks.</p>
7.17	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare Can the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships confirm what role the community plays on the Cabinet's proposed Youth Justice Policy?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services Whilst we are restricted in completing the annual Youth Justice Plan to a national template, this does not detract from the importance and focus placed on the context in which youth justice work takes place and our broader work with networks and communities.</p> <p>To this end we are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying community-based organisations to support our work around girls and help with exit strategies/pathways away from the criminal justice system. • Gathering feedback from members of the community including victims, families and children to ensure their voice is heard and we improve our services. • Embracing a community element to the development of the newly created Serious Violence Duty Group. • Looking to identify a community organisation to sit on our local Youth Justice Board in the future. • Ensuring a contextual safeguarding and place-based approach to our interventions (using shared agency oversight and data) in working with children at risk of exploitation. • Undertaking specific multi-agency work in the east of the County with monies from the national Youth Endowment Fund to reduce serious youth violence by

	<p>co-designing solutions with the community, which would like to scale up the learning from in 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering plans in relation to an award to the County from the Youth Improvement Fund to invest in community facilities for young people. <p>Finally, in the wider prevention space, a broad range of services and support are available in Norfolk from commissioned services, community organisations, digital signposting, and voluntary groups. Our Community and Partnerships Service support partners and families to consider and identify the most appropriate early help response</p>
7.18	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy Investment in bus services and bus infrastructure is indeed very welcome, although long overdue. I note however with disappointment that there are no specific proposals for anything in Thetford, or indeed the whole of the Breckland District. Could the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport reassure these residents that they will not be left behind with these improvements?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport There are still several aspects of the Bus Service Improvement Plan that we have not yet fully determined, using the funding provided. For example new or enhanced bus routes, improved infrastructure and real-time information. We will be taking any and all requests into consideration so that the funding can be used across the county to benefit as many residents as possible.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Terry Jermy The Thetford Bus Interchange has been left in an appalling condition this year with various organisations arguing as to who is responsible for its maintenance and cleanliness. Shrub beds have been left unkempt, pathways blocked and weeds coming through the bus shelters and bays. Can the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport confirm just who is responsible for this space?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Officers have visited the site recently and agree that it is in need of some attention and maintenance. When the Bus Interchange was built an agreement was made with Thetford Town Council that they would undertake general maintenance and cleaning of the site and the toilets and the County Council would maintain the bus related infrastructure and replace any capital items when needed.</p>