

Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 3 May 2022 in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am

Present:

Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chairman. Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance.
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance.
Cllr Eric Vardy	Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Executive Directors Present:

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

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Eric Vardy to his first Cabinet meeting as Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste. The Chairman thanked Cllr Andy Grant who had held this role until the 1 May 2022 for his hard work while in this role in the last 3 years and for being instrumental in development the Natural Norfolk: Progress on delivering the Environmental Policy. Cllr Grant had stood down from the role due to growing business interests meaning he would not be able to give the role the time and dedication he had given over the past three years.

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors formally introduced themselves. The Chairman welcomed Chief Fire Officer, Tim Edwards, and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, Giles Orpen-Smellie, to the meeting.

- 1a.1** The Chairman made an announcement on the award for County Hall:
- Last Thursday night in Manchester at the Blue Badge Access Awards, County Hall won the prestigious Leonard Cheshire Award for "Most Inclusive venue or organization".
 - This is a Global award, and the council were competing against national and international projects and organisations. For example, amongst the seven nominees County Hall was up against a project in Romania and a

Gaudi building, the CASA Batlló, in Spain.

- The award was received on the council's behalf by Neil Howard, Norfolk County Council's Senior Advisor on access and inclusion. Neil was a member of the project team and his advice and testing of designs contributed massively to our overall success.
- This success was the result of great teamwork and in addition to Neil, the Chairman congratulated Jeannine de Souza, the Project manager, and the entire Project Team.
- On the same evening at the Constructing Excellence Awards, the Architects Purcell also received a certificate of commendation for agile and inclusive working changes made at County Hall.
- County Hall was also nominated at two upcoming award ceremonies, the BCO (British Council of Offices) awards in Birmingham in May and RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) Awards. County Hall Phase Two project has been shortlisted in the category 'Public Sector'. Here we are up against the great Tapestry of Scotland Gallery, the Steam Academy in Wales and Nottingham Castle, so even a nomination against these prestigious competitors is a great achievement.

- 1a.2** The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention made an announcement about the Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT):
- On 28 April 2022, the Care Quality Commission reported the outcome of its inspection into NSFT. The overall rating was "inadequate"
 - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention was disappointed to see the outcome of the inspection, particularly given that despite support from NHS England and partners the organisation did not maintain improvement.
 - Vulnerable people and people with mental health deserve better and The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention had written to the Chairman of the Mental Health Trust. He would keep Cabinet apprised of the outcome.
 - As partners would play a constructive part in the improvement process, the county council were entitled to expect radical steps that would deliver improvement and sustained improvement.
 - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention would talk to NSFT colleagues to see how the council could receive oversight of improvements, including reports to Committees.

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1** Apologies were received from Cllr Margaret Dewsbury, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships and Cllr Greg Peck, the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on Monday 4 April 2022.

- 2.1** Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 4 April 2022 as an accurate record with the following amendment:
- Due to an administrative error the resolution made at item 14, "Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Investigatory Powers Act 2016" was omitted from the minutes. The decision made regarding this report was published in the public domain on the summary notice of decisions.

To complete the record the minutes will be updated to also show the decision made.

3 Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 The Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest as a council appointed director of Repton Property Developments Ltd and Norse Group.

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

- 4.1 No matters were referred to Cabinet.

5 Items of Urgent Business

Shareholder approval of appointment of Norse group Ltd Chief Executive Officer

- 5.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the intention to offer the position of Norse Group Ltd Chief Executive Officer to Justin Galliford, who was carrying out the role on an interim basis, following a recruitment process carried out by the Council and the Company.

- 5.2 The Vice-Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The Chief Executive role at Norse Group Ltd had been vacant since the end of 2021 and filled on an interim basis.
- An external recruitment process had been carried out involving Norfolk County Council officers and members and Norse Group Directors. From this process, it was intended to offer the position to Justin Galliford who was filling the role on an interim basis at that time.
- The Articles of Association of Norse Group Ltd stated that Norfolk County Council should appoint Directors. Norfolk County Council had managed the recruitment process and wished to appoint Justin Galliford to the position.
- According to the council's constitution, making decisions on behalf of the council's wholly owned companies was a Cabinet responsibility.
- The Vice-Chairman moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

- 5.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to give approval as shareholder to Norse Group Ltd to appoint Justin Galliford as Chief Executive Officer and as a Director of the Company.

5.4 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

There is a need to fill the vacant role.

5.5 Alternative Options

As an alternative, Cabinet could determine not to approve this appointment, which would leave the company without a permanently appointed Chief Executive Officer.

6 Public Question Time

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 Alexandra Kemp asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Kemp felt that free school meal vouchers needed to come back for the spring and summer holidays'; the manager of a food bank had said there was a 71% increase in people accessing help from their food bank.
- She felt the holiday scheme wasn't accessible for many people or for children who were disabled or autistic.
- Cllr Kemp believed that £3.15m of the £6.7m funding received from Government could be available to provide meal vouchers.
- She stated that there was a need to target help directly on children as some parents didn't know how to claim or missed the messages and asked the Chairman to apologise to parents.
- Cllr Kemp stated that she was arranging a child poverty conference in King's Lynn and that organisations needed to work together to solve this issue.

7.2.2 The Chairman replied to Cllr Kemp's question, stating that the £6.7m funding from Government for Hardship Funding had a requirement that it was to be spent to benefit a range of people. A scheme would be launched on the 6 May 2022 with the objective of reaching as many people as possible using this funding.

7.3.1 Cllr Maxine Webb asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Webb felt that a focus on activities being inclusive and accessible would not provide the assurance needed for families. She noted that there was an absence of a statement for children with long term health conditions or disabilities despite the need to update this by the end of February 2022.
- Trying to find inclusive provision for children was difficult. The county council wanted all children to flourish so she asked how it was making sure that all disabled children had the same opportunities available to them as their non-disabled peers.

7.3.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services replied that a project had been worked on including a bid for funding for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, however this bid was not successful. This work would however go forward for further development.

8. Carbon reduction in the Council's wholly owned companies

8.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out current actions under way in relation to carbon governance for the Council's companies. These were the early stages in aligning the Council's companies to a low carbon future.

8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste introduced the report to Cabinet:

- In the November 2021 Cabinet report, "Natural Norfolk: Progress on

delivering the Environmental Policy”, Cabinet resolved to “commission the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services to report to Cabinet about the options for setting formal low carbon objectives in relation to companies where the County Council is the majority shareholder”. These companies were owned by the Council but were separate entities. This meant Norfolk County Council did not have direct control over their emissions, but as majority shareholder could exert influence to put carbon reduction targets in place.

- The actions underway in the Council’s companies relating to carbon governance were early stages in aligning the companies to a low carbon future. The ongoing approach to carbon reduction would be dynamic as the Council and its companies responded to a rapidly evolving technological, financial and legislative context.
- A further report would follow, outlining the progress for each company in establishing specific targets for reducing carbon.
- At the Cabinet meeting in April 2022, Cabinet considered the progress that the Council was making in the shift towards net zero on its own estate. It was now appropriate that attention turned to the Council’s wholly owned companies which had a significant impact on the county’s carbon emissions through their operations and impact on the built environment.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste congratulated the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management and team for bringing forward this report. It was vital that the Council demonstrated to communities that it was serious about the 2050 zero carbon target and putting their money and efforts “where their mouth is”
- Norse was a particularly large business with a diverse business model and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste looked forward to seeing its progress in reducing carbon emissions.
- Promoting the Council’s efforts to reduce carbon would hopefully influence other businesses to take similar steps.
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 8.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services noted that the Council would lead the way in this area, making changes to mitigate climate change. The council’s wholly owned businesses had in-house expertise to deal with this and he welcomed the proposals to encourage the businesses to reduce their carbon output.
- 8.3 The Chairman noted that Norse Consulting had been working on Passivhaus, low carbon housing in Brentwood, Essex.
- 8.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that the Council sought to act for the whole of Norfolk by leading by example.
- 8.5 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport discussed that Norse Highways managed 6200 miles of road across Norfolk, offering a comprehensive range of services including pothole repairs, carriageway resurfacing and winter gritting. Highways’ construction used energy intensive materials such as bitumen and concrete and therefore moving towards carbon neutrality was a concern for the industry. The centre for excellence would be key for identifying innovative methods for the industry including recyclable materials.

- 8.6 The Cabinet Member for Finance was pleased to endorse the paper as the next step on the programme to account for scope 3 emissions measured by the council's wholly owned subsidiary companies. He noted that there may be indirect implications to the Council's funding as a result.
- 8.7 The Vice-Chairman drew attention to paragraph 4.3 of the report which discussed, regarding the house building industry, that there was a "debate around the appropriate measurement of carbon, availability of technology (including fitting and resilience of networks to support technology), customer perception of technologies, and what national standards should be in place". Paragraph 4.4 of the report stated that "purchaser willingness to pay a premium for low carbon homes was mixed", however in future years customers would be more likely to pay for this as seen in the automotive industry. Paragraph 4.7 of the report noted that Repton was ahead of the market in carbon reduction on its sites.
- 8.8 The Chairman noted that Cabinet Members were collectively in support of the proposals.
- 8.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED** that
- A. That Cabinet agrees that the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services should write to the Council's wholly owned companies setting out, on behalf of the council as shareholder, objectives as set out below to facilitate carbon reductions.
 - B. That Cabinet should receive a further report in due course setting numerical targets for each company.

8.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The proposal will demonstrate that the Council is following up on a commitment made in November 2021 in relation to delivering its Environmental Policy.

This represents an appropriate use of the Council's influence towards its publicly stated ambition of not just achieving net zero on its own estate but helping Norfolk towards climate neutrality.

The Council is a major customer of the services provided by some of its companies, particularly Norse. The carbon associated with this service provision falls within the Council's Scope 3 emissions in accordance with accounting conventions defined by the GHG Protocol. Through engaging its companies on carbon reduction objectives, the Council is taking steps to address these Scope 3 emissions. This can offer some future proofing from potential upcoming requirements to address Scope 3 emissions as the national policy and legislative context further pivots towards meeting the UK's 2050 net zero commitment.

For the companies, this engagement from the Council as shareholder can help provide the impetus to better align with a low carbon future. While it may require investment, actively reducing carbon footprint also brings benefits through reducing exposure to volatile fossil fuel prices and providing better access to the burgeoning green economy.

8.11 **Alternative Options**

The alternative to setting shareholder objectives for the Council's companies on carbon reduction is to not provide specific shareholder guidance on this issue.

Pursuing this alternative would not be consistent with the Council's ambition to help Norfolk reach carbon neutrality. It could leave the Council exposed to reputational risks associated with criticism of not leveraging its influence over its own companies to this end.

In addition, not taking these steps could leave the Council's companies exposed to significant costs and challenges as the national policy and legislative context further pivots towards meeting the UK's 2050 net zero commitment.

9. NFRS Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP 2023-2026) Development Plan

9.1.1 Cabinet received the report setting out the proposed steps and timetable to develop the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2023/26 and an update on work to further enhance the NFRS Community Safety service.

9.1.2 The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report to Cabinet:

- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service's vision was to be at the heart of protecting the communities of Norfolk.
- We are legally required to analyse and review community risk and outline key risk mitigation measures through prevention, protection and response by developing a three-year strategic plan called the Community Risk Management Plan.
- This plan would take into account findings from the 2021 visit from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.
- The plan would reflect up to date key risk analysis and show how prevention, protection and response activity would be used to prevent fires and incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on communities. It would outline how we will best utilise our resources to mitigate risks and set out management strategies and risk-based inspection programme to deliver the regulatory reform fire safety order.
- The plan would cover 3 years, reflecting the outcome of consultation and would be easily accessible and publicly available.
- Key considerations were to review the impact of highway infrastructure improvements in Norfolk, maximising resources focussed on prevention activities and improving organisation improvements and activity.

9.1.3 The Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk commented on the report

- Although the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk had no formal role on fire governance however he had sight of the report as the information it contained offered useful context for development of police and fire collaboration which he hoped would move forward during the Chief Fire Officer's tenure.

9.2 The Chairman noted that page 60 of the report set out what the CRMP was about, with risks set out in the report. Page 61 of the report, paragraph 2.2.1 showed the key considerations of the plan. This continued into paragraph 2.3 which discussed the five key themes of the plan. The drive of the plan was

service led to ensure the right service for Norfolk aligned to budget setting, in a phased approach leading to a consultation for a final plan to consider and take forward in due course.

9.3

The Vice-Chairman noted that the service must be fit for purpose to serve the communities in Norfolk which changed over time, with changing demographics, new housing and new roads. The report stated that communities and interested parties would be engaged with during development of the plan and before final publication of the plan.

9.4

The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that it was important for risks to be reviewed on a regular basis to protect residents; this plan would help the service remain at the forefront of delivering good services to the people of Norfolk.

9.5

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that there was an aim to maximise resources focused on prevention activities; this was a difficult area to measure however it was important and he hoped that this would remain in the final report. There could be a tendency towards silo working in organisations, so the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention was also pleased to note that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk and fire service intended to work together in the future.

9.6

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport reported that several highway improvements were planned such as the Long Stratton Bypass, Great Yarmouth River Crossing and installation of bus lanes, among others, which would lead to improved journey times and therefore improved response times. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport was looking forward to these being constructed to help the fire service.

9.7

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste welcomed that Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service would engage and listen to communities; it was important that they felt valued and had ownership over issues being engaged with.

9.8

The Chairman noted that the last plan was published in 2019 therefore it was time to update the plan and nationally there was a desire for transformation which this plan met.

9.9

The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

9.10

Cabinet **RESOLVED**

1. To approve the timetable and approach for developing the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan 2023/26 as set out in this report.
2. To note the key considerations that will be explored as part of the development of the Community Risk Management Plan.
3. To note the work to further enhance the Community Safety service, including the Development Plan which is set out in Appendix C of the report.
4. To agree that the terms of reference of the NFRS Strategic Development Oversight Group should be amended to task the Group to oversee the development and implementation of the CRMP.

9.11 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The development of the CRMP is an opportunity to take a fresh look at the picture of risk across the County and how we can best organise and deploy our resources to eliminate and mitigate this risk, keeping Norfolk communities and business as safe as possible.

As set out above, the proposed approach to a greater focus on community engagement as part of the development of the CRMP will enable us to develop a broader and stronger picture of the needs of Norfolk communities, a better understanding of vulnerability and therefore placing the service in a better position to address these needs and risks.

9.12 **Alternative Options**

Members could decide to extend the date of the existing IRMP by a further year instead of developing a new Plan. However, in doing this it would be very difficult to demonstrate that the plan reflects up to date risk analyses (a statutory requirement) as the risk data will be at least three years out of date.

The minimum length for a CRMP is 3 years but there is no maximum. It would be possible to develop a plan covering a period of more than three years. However, it is felt that a 3-year period provides a balance between medium/long term horizon scanning/planning and the ability to take up-to date information into account in our plans.

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

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

The meeting ended at 10:42

Chairman of Cabinet

Cabinet
3 May 2022
Local Member Questions

	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp When it comes to Standards in Public Life, actions speak louder than words. I walked out of April's full Council Meeting out of respect to disadvantaged families in my Division, after the Chair refused an emergency debate on restoring Easter Holiday School Meals vouchers, that the Conservative Administration took away. South Lynn was particularly disadvantaged. The nearest "Lunch for Exercise" scheme was in North Lynn, two bus rides away. So I distributed free lunch packs to families in South Lynn church - mothers asked for food that did not require heating, afraid of the cost of gas. Can the Leader show some compassion and restore Vouchers for the Summer Holidays?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy Thank you for the question. Concerning free school meals vouchers we do understand how the increased cost of living is hitting many people harder now. We wouldn't want to see anyone go hungry and that is why our help will be to focus the Government's new hardship funding on all those in greatest need: we are developing a new scheme with the £6.7m we have been allocated that will have the depth and flexibility to reach a much broader range of people facing hardship.</p> <p>In addition, as you mentioned we have continued to run our holiday activity scheme, the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Programme, which provided support and healthy food for 4,000 five to 16-year-olds over the Easter holidays.</p> <p>The Norfolk Assistance Scheme offers support for people who are struggling. The best way to apply to the scheme is through the website www.norfolk.gov.uk/NAS or if you do not have access to the internet, call 0344 800 8020. I would urge families who are struggling to feed their children, afford heating bills or have other financial worries to get in touch. The Scheme received 750 applications in the 2-week period of the Norfolk Easter Holidays, 315 of which were people with children, and the families are now receiving the support they need.</p>
7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Stuart Dark As Cabinet members are aware, NCC and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council have worked closely together on numerous projects benefiting residents in the West of the County. I, as Leader of that Council, thank the administration and officers at NCC for that ongoing interest and support.</p> <p>As part of our regular dialogue, the Leader is aware of the ongoing serious concern that many local residents have regarding the proposed large commercial Incinerator at Wisbech, just outside Norfolk and in very close proximity to Kings Lynn Borough. Given this, would the Leader elaborate on the County's position to this particular proposal, to, if possible, alleviate some of that concern?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy I'd like to join Cllr Dark in thanking officers across both the County Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for their continued work on projects and initiatives which have, and will continue to, benefit residents in the west of Norfolk.</p>

	<p>I'm aware that a Development Consent Order application for this facility is due to be submitted to the Secretary of State soon and once received the County Council will give its response as a statutory consultee. But I do understand the serious concerns being raised by local residents about this.</p> <p>As part of the regular dialogue between Cllr Dark and myself it has been emphasised that the current capacity of the waste disposal chain is sufficient, and there are ambitious environmental plans to reduce waste levels across King's Lynn and West Norfolk in future years. Based on this information as a consequence the county Council can, and will be, stating its opposition to the proposed energy from waste facility in Wisbech.</p>
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Saul Penfold With the May half term on the horizon will Norfolk County Council commit now to the reintroduction of school meal vouchers to prevent the need for last-minute community action to feed hungry children?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We will be launching a new scheme on the 6 May reflecting the new Household Support Fund allocation for Norfolk. This is based on supporting a wider group of Norfolk's residents, who may be facing hardship due to the increased cost of living. The new scheme will run in addition to the continued support provided by the Norfolk Assistance Scheme.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Sharon Blundell Residents have been telling me that the Big Holiday fun activities have been far from fun. Some clubs did not provide food, parents couldn't get codes from their school, not all children could get food, clubs were not suitable for children with disabilities/special educational needs and young carers were unable to attend. Will you apologise for leaving some children, who needed Council help, hungry over Easter?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We've had some great initial feedback about the activities on offer and we'd encourage those who have raised concerns with you to let us know, so that we can look into these with the specific schools and providers.</p> <p>All families experiencing financial hardship during Easter had access to the Council's Norfolk Assistance Scheme where families eligible for free school meals were prioritised for support, including support for food and also wider living costs.</p> <p>The team at Active Norfolk worked with more than 70 providers to deliver the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun programme over Easter, as part of the wider support available for children and families. They have delivered a range of activities providing children with the opportunity to keep active over school holidays through participating in free, enriching and fun activities, with lunch provided.</p> <p>The team is gathering feedback from children, parents and providers to help further develop the scheme going forward, including ensuring the opportunities are</p>

	<p>promoted widely to children through schools and that provision is as inclusive and accessible as possible.</p>
7.5	<p>Question from Cllr Rob Colwell Will Norfolk County Council join other stakeholders with financial assistance to begin habitat restoration of Gaywood River, Norfolk's most polluted river in 2021 according to data published by Anglian Water and considered by The Rivers Trust?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste The poor condition of the Gaywood is a matter of great concern. This relatively short river, only 12 miles long from its source to where it joins the Ouse at Kings Lynn has been much modified, over time, from its natural state. To effectively deliver a habitat restoration scheme will require a whole river catchment approach. This will need investment and partnership working with several agencies and many landowners/managers in the area. Norfolk County Council has been involved in the past with this type of partnership working and currently with supporting restoration work on other north Norfolk rivers like the Glaven, Stiffkey and Hun and has brought in significant funding. I will ask the Council's Environment Team to contact the Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Water Alliance (Inland Drainage Board) to see if we can assist them in improving the condition of the Gaywood river.</p> <p>Second Question from Cllr Rob Colwell Whilst police have stepped up their patrols, what action can be taken and reassurance given to concerned residents in King's Lynn who report increased use of dangerous mini motorbikes on Norfolk County Council paths and lanes. Spring Lane, Gaywood a particular problem?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Thank you for the question. I understand that such activity on paths and lanes can cause great disturbances to communities and users of these paths and lanes. I am glad that the Police have increased their patrols and hopefully this will have the desired effect of addressing this issue</p>
7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires How does the council keep count of how many private family arrangements are made, whilst a case is open to Norfolk Children's Services?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We do not measure private family arrangements as by very nature, they are made outside of our intervention and not at our request. If made at the service's request they become placements and temporary foster care approval will be sought</p> <p>Second Question from Cllr Lucy Shires I'm receiving lots of correspondence from our Special Guardians. Why is there no public policy explaining how decisions are made regarding Special Guardians Allowance including what information is available on how many placements the council thinks might fail due to financial hardship?</p>

	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>Special Guardianship allowances and discretionary support is set out in legislation and Statutory Guidance, which defines what NCC and all other LAs should consider in supporting Special Guardians – the legal framework includes Children Act 1989 Section 1, 2 and 3, also set out in Special Guardianship Regulations 2005; Special Guardianship (Amendment) 2016 as well as the Statutory Guidance on Special Guardianship.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</p> <p>A report by the County Council Network has warned that the Government has seriously underestimated the cost of its adult social care reforms. They have warned that there could be large numbers of care homes closures and bed shortages when the reforms are introduced. There is widespread concern that there will inevitably be serious consequences for councils, providers, and most importantly for those who rely on that care. What response does the Cabinet member intend to make on behalf of this Council?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>The report referenced in the question (available here) by the County Council Network (CCN), and undertaken independently by Healthcare market specialists LaingBuisson, does indeed reference a potential national shortfall in the funding of two aspects of the Governments Adult Social Care reforms – namely those related to proposals to allow private payers (self-funders) to ask councils to arrange care on their behalf at a presumed lower local authority negotiated fee rate and the intention to introduce a new 'Fair Cost of Care'. We welcome this independent assessment, and indeed other assessments now being undertaken such as those by our strategic partner.</p> <p>Social care and housing are very much inter-connected and therefore at the right time, and under the right circumstances, we recognise the value and importance of both residential and home based services in supporting Norfolk's residents. This Council however does also recognise there should be a bridge between these services, and therefore continues to stimulate the market for alternatives such as our £29m investment in Independent Living housing that will supplement these existing services, and provide alternative preventative capacity.</p> <p>Our commissioners are actively continuing to shape our important care markets to ensure they provide quality services, that enable choice within efficient and sustainable markets. There will be an intense focus on our support to the Care market during 2022/23 with Cabinet due to receive reports on quality improvement, the publication of our market position statement and finally our response to governments requirement to submit a cost of care exercise and market sustainability plan. It will be this latter report that will outline our plans to try to address some of the issues described within the CCN publication. At present we are proactively working with our care providers, and Norfolk's care association NorCA, to develop both of these key plans.</p> <p>As a Council we very much welcome the reforms to Social Care being brought forward by Government. However, it still remains important that all new burdens</p>

	<p>placed on Local Government, including this reform, are fully funded by Central Government and we continue to work with the County Councils Network, the Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Social Care to lobby the Government on these very important issues.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Brian Watkins Eaton Primary School does not have any double yellow lines to prevent parking close by, and all attempts to make it safe for children to walk and cycle to school safely have not yet met with a satisfactory response. What can the school expect from the County Council by way of them introducing appropriate parking restrictions?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport I am sorry to hear of the issues concerning parking outside Eaton Primary School. The County Council are aware that introducing parking restrictions in localised areas especially around schools can lead to parking being displaced into side roads where currently parking problems do not exist. As such additional parking restrictions can adversely impact adjacent residents so it is important to strike a balanced approach when dealing with parking outside schools. To mitigate against issues caused by displaced parking, the wider area around the school would need to be reviewed to establish the most appropriate solution.</p> <p>Managing parking around schools should be a multi-stakeholder approach, with the School, Parents, the County Council, Police, and residents all taking an active role. A good example of this is the School Streets trials which are due to begin at the start of May in several locations in Norfolk. This trial will see the roads outside the schools in question closed to general traffic when children arrival and leave school. The closures are manned by volunteers from the school or local community. Funding for the trial is already committed but should it be successful the initiative could be rolled out to other schools in Norfolk.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb The government says its Holiday Activities and Food programme responds to the “holiday experience gap” that exists for children from low-income households. Shockingly, during the Easter holidays I heard from over 70 eligible families of children with SEND who couldn’t attend an activity and who therefore went without the food and support they should have received.</p> <p>Without denying the lived experience of these families, will the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services guarantee that ALL eligible children, including those with SEND, are equally able to benefit in future, and to provide the voucher equivalent of one meal a day to any child without a place?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun team at Active Norfolk is keen to understand why some families felt unable to attend holiday activities over Easter, and there will be an opportunity for families to provide feedback through a survey being issued to those taking part and opportunities for further discussion with parents. As indicated in my reply to Cllr Blundell, there is a focus on ensuring all Big Norfolk Holiday Fun</p>

	<p>provision is inclusive and accessible as possible, recognising that some activities may not be accessible for some with certain needs due to the nature of the activity. Providers are happy to talk to parents/carers should families want to discuss their child's needs.</p> <p>As part of the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun programme, we have encouraged providers who are more specialist to deliver activities, alongside the requirement for all Big Norfolk Holiday Fun provision to be as accessible as possible. Securing a breadth of providers across the county continues to be a focus for the team, so that we can build up a strong network of local organisations able to offer Big Norfolk Holiday Fun activities safely and in line with the Department for Education's (DfE) requirements.</p> <p>The Big Norfolk Holiday Fun scheme is funded by the Department for Education and funding cannot be used to provide food support vouchers for children not participating in activities, but we will be launching our next phase of support for residents in hardship on the 6 May.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services confirm how many children were eligible for Free School Meals in my Division at the beginning of the Easter holidays this year, how many places on the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme were offered in my Division, how many of those were booked and how many children actually attended them?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services There were 908 children aged 5-16 eligible for means tested free school meals in Thetford schools at the start of the Easter holidays. The team secured 5 providers in the Thetford area to run Big Norfolk Holiday Fun activities over the Easter holidays. Between them these providers offered 1060 activity days with spaces for up to 310 children and young people to take part in four days of activities. The team at Active Norfolk are still collecting data on bookings and attendances for the Easter holidays.</p>
7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare If the administration continues to refuse to reinstate vouchers, what measures have been put in place to ensure no children in Norfolk who would usually be in receipt of free school meals go hungry during the Jubilee half term?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services In addition to the continued support provided by the Norfolk Assistance Scheme for families experiencing hardship we will be launching a new scheme on the 6 May based on the new Household Support Fund allocation for Norfolk focused on the needs of residents in meeting the cost of living crisis.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones The CQC rating consistently show Norfolk County Council to be the worst performing social care provider in the country compared to other councils who have experienced similar challenges through underfunding and the pandemic. What is the</p>

	<p>cabinet doing to close the huge gap between Norfolk and the best performing councils?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>It is of course incorrect to say that the County Council is the worst performing social care provider in the country, care is provided by independent businesses, as I am sure that you are aware.</p> <p>The Council is supporting Norfolk's independent care providers to improve the quality of their provision through the payment of the highest fee uplift in five years – an above average inflation increase of 6%, increasing the quality teams – allowing for a more intense challenge and support function and investment in recruitment in the whole of the Care Sector.</p> <p>The full list of actions are detailed in the reports to the People and Communities Select Committee held last September and the Performance Improvement Group held in January. The Council is leading a system wide programme of improvement, supported by NorCA, across the emerging Integrated Care System to accelerate and drive improvement. The outputs from this will form proposals for the Care Quality Strategy and Framework for Norfolk, which will be discussed by Cabinet in June and will be part of the agenda for the new Integrated Care System.</p>
7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Steve Morphew</p> <p>The internal challenge mechanism the cabinet claims to be robust has resulted in what they admit is duplication and excessive layers of management. How much could the budget gap have been reduced if there had been earlier intervention?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The County Council has a robust and well-established process for annual budget setting, with a demonstrable track record of producing a deliverable, balanced budget.</p> <p>All organisations inevitably change and develop over time, and it is therefore appropriate to periodically review and reassess the structures and resources that are required to deliver organisational objectives in as efficient, effective and economical manner as possible. This is not to say that individual departments and service areas have not restructured or undertaken reviews of their own in recent years. On the contrary, the Council is a continuously evolving organisation as it changes in order to respond to demand, funding and other pressures, but there has not been a fundamental "whole organisation" review completed for more than ten years. In particular, the pandemic, and the Council's response to it, has demanded significant and rapid organisational changes over the last two years. Now, as we move into the post-pandemic recovery period, the time is right for a rigorous review of the whole Council as set out in detail in the report considered by Cabinet in April 2022.</p> <p>While it is too early to say definitively what the level of savings delivered by the review will be, the April report to Cabinet has identified that savings in the order of</p>

	<p>£15-20m could be achieved. This will need to be validated as one of the first actions undertaken by our specialist partner once they are appointed. It would however be unreasonable to automatically assume that any or all of these savings could necessarily have been delivered earlier, particularly in the context of the organisation's focus on responding to the pandemic. Nevertheless, it is clear that savings at the level estimated would have a material impact on closing the 2023-24 Budget gap and therefore it is right to undertake this review now.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Steve Morpew Will the Cabinet open up the budget challenge process wider to include non-Cabinet members and report the options considered and conclusions for wider debate rather than bringing a single take it or leave it option to council in the budget?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance The budget challenge process enables Cabinet to explore the options available within different services to contribute to setting a balanced budget for the year. In this way the budget challenge meetings represent part of the Council's budget and strategy formulation process, and they are not decision-making meetings. As such it would not be appropriate to open these to a wider audience. There are however a number of other points within the budget setting process where wider member input is sought and welcomed. For the 2023-24 Budget this will include two instances of engagement with Select Committees (planned for May 2022 and November 2022), as well as opportunities to examine budget proposals within Scrutiny Committee. In fact, Scrutiny Committee has already had an opportunity to comment on the context for 2023-24 budget setting including the overall timetable and the proposed process at its last meeting in April 2022. In this context it is perhaps worth noting that the role of Cabinet is to recommend a balanced Budget to full Council, rather than putting forward a range of options.</p>
7.13	<p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby Why haven't the reports to this cabinet on FRS and carbon reduction in our companies been through select committees prior to coming to cabinet as these are surely worthy of greater member discussion and comment for cabinet to take account of?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy The role of Select Committees in shaping the Council's policies and strategies is very much valued.</p> <p>The report on the Fire and Rescue Community Risk Management Plan focusses on setting the timetable and overall process to develop a new three year plan. It is appropriate that Cabinet who are the Fire and Rescue Authority, approve the process to develop the new Plan. I agree it is important that the Select Committee has the opportunity to discuss this important strategy, and in the report it highlights that Infrastructure and Development Select Committee is programmed to consider the draft CRMP later this year; this will enable the Committee to comment on and shape it in advance of the start of a wider public consultation exercise. In addition, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships chairs a Strategic Development Oversight Group tasked with overseeing the work to develop the Plan. The group includes cross-party members as well as people from the Fire staff</p>

	<p>representative bodies. I understand you are a member of that group, which met during April to consider the proposals on the process and timetable before Cabinet.</p> <p>Carbon reduction in our companies is an important process which has been set in train as a result of our Net Zero Strategy and Environment Policy, both of which have had cross-party member input at Select Committee, Scrutiny Committee and the Environmental Members' Oversight Group.</p>
7.14	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett</p> <p>What discussion, where and what progress has been made to ensure the Integrated Care Partnership is subject to proper, well-resourced Scrutiny arrangements?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention</p> <p>Thank you for your question.</p> <p>As I am sure that you are aware, the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) is not a decision making body in respect of the commissioning and delivery of health and social care services within the ICS footprint of Norfolk and Waveney. That authority sits with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Chaired by Patricia Hewitt responsible for the NHS and the Cabinets of Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils for social care. Scrutiny of the ICB and the Cabinets is the responsibility of the Health Overview Scrutiny Committees and Scrutiny Committees of Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils.</p> <p>A briefing has been prepared for the Chairs of the Scrutiny and Health Overview Scrutiny Committees at Norfolk County Council and a further briefing for the wider membership of Norfolk County Council is being planned for June 2022.</p>
7.15	<p>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton</p> <p>Why didn't the cabinet member responsible for the sale of Holt Hall seek permission of the Secretary of State to sell it at a lower price so that it could be retained for the benefit of young people rather than sold to become a private home?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management</p> <p>When selling an asset which is no longer required, we are obligated to seek the 'best consideration' in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act. Seeking permission from the Secretary of State to accept a substantially lower bid would have introduced a delay with no certainty of an outcome and could be subject to lengthy and costly legal challenge.</p> <p>This sale secures a significant capital receipt for Norfolk Tax payers. The additional £1m the purchaser is donating to support the education of children across the county, will be used to improve the provision for children who cannot attend school, due to ill health, exclusion or for any other reason. This will ensure a lasting legacy.</p>