

# Norfolk County Council

## Annual General Meeting

Date: **Monday 24 May 2021**

Time: **10.00 a.m.**

Venue: **Norfolk Showground, NR5 0TP  
(situated just off the A47 Norwich  
Southern Bypass at the A1074  
Longwater Interchange.)**

**To: All members of the Council. You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council for the purpose of transacting the business set out in this agenda.**

### **Advice for members of the public:**

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

It will be live streamed on YouTube and, in view of Covid-19 guidelines, we would encourage members of the public to watch remotely by clicking on the following link: <https://youtu.be/oBHSaJIZVz8>

However, if you wish to attend in person it would be most helpful if, on this occasion, you could indicate in advance that it is your intention to do so. This can be done by emailing [committees@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:committees@norfolk.gov.uk) where we will ask you to provide your name, address and details of how we can contact you (in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak). Please note that public seating will be limited to 30 spaces.

Councillors and Officers attending the meeting will be undertaking a lateral flow test in advance prior to the meeting. They will also be required to wear face masks when they are moving around the room but may remove them once seated. We would like to request that anyone attending the meeting does the same to help make the event safe for all those attending. Information about symptom-free testing is available [here](#).

## Prayers

# AGENDA

1. **To elect a Chair for the ensuing year**

2. **Minutes**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 April 2021 (Page 5)

3. **To elect a Vice-Chair for the ensuing year**

4. **Vote of thanks to the outgoing Chair**

5. **Members to declare any interests**

If you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter. It is recommended that you declare that interest but it is not a legal requirement. If you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter.

In either case you may remain in the room where the meeting is taking place. If you consider that it would be inappropriate in the circumstances to remain in the room, you may leave the room while the matter is dealt with.

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an Other Interest in a matter to be discussed if it affects:

- your well being or financial position
- that of your family or close friends
- any body-
  - (a) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (b) directed to charitable purposes: or
  - (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);of which you are in a position of general control or management.

If that is the case then you must declare such an interest but can speak and vote on the matter.

6. **To receive any announcements from the Chair**

7. **Any items of business the Chair decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

8. **Election of Leader of the Council until May 2025**

The Leader elected will announce the names of the Deputy Leader and other Cabinet Members

9. **Questions to the Leader**

Procedure Note

(Page 19)

10. **Cabinet Recommendations**

Note: There are no recommendations because there has not been a meeting of the Cabinet since the previous meeting of the County Council.

11. **Committee Reports**

**Audit Committee**

(Page 21)

- Meeting held on 22 April 2021

**Planning (Regulatory) Committee**

(Page 25)

- Meeting held on 23 April 2021

12. **Proportional Allocation of Seats on Committees**

To Follow

Report by the Assistant Director of Governance

13. **Appointments to Committees, Joint Committees etc for 2021-22**

To Follow

Report by Assistant Director of Governance

14. **Appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the following Committees:-**

Scrutiny Committee

Corporate Select Committee

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee

People and Communities Select Committee

Planning (Regulatory) Committee

Audit Committee

Standards Committee

Employment Committee

Pensions Committee

- 15. **Appointment of Independent Persons** (Page 27)  
Report by Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer
- 16. **Notice of Motions** (Page 31)
- 17. **To answer Questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules (if any received)**

Tom McCabe  
Head of Paid Service  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 14 May 2021



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## Norfolk County Council

### Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 April 2021

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Tony <b>Adams</b>	Cllr Mark <b>Kiddle-Morris</b>
	Cllr Tim <b>Adams</b>	Cllr Brian <b>Long</b>
	Cllr Stephen <b>Askew</b>	Cllr Ian <b>Mackie</b>
	Cllr David <b>Bills</b>	Cllr Ed <b>Maxfield</b>
	Cllr Bill <b>Borrett</b>	Cllr Joe <b>Mooney</b>
	Cllr Julie <b>Brociek-Coulton</b>	Cllr Steve <b>Morphew</b>
	Cllr Penny <b>Carpenter</b> (Vice-Chair)	Cllr George <b>Nobbs</b>
	Cllr Mick <b>Castle</b>	Cllr Judy <b>Oliver</b>
	Cllr Chenery of <b>Horsbrugh</b>	Cllr Rhodri <b>Oliver</b>
	Cllr Stuart <b>Clancy</b>	Cllr Greg <b>Peck</b>
	Cllr David <b>Collis</b>	Cllr Graham <b>Plant</b>
	Cllr Ed <b>Colman</b>	Cllr Richard <b>Price</b>
	Cllr Edward <b>Connolly</b>	Cllr Andrew <b>Proctor</b>
	Cllr Emma <b>Corlett</b>	Cllr William <b>Richmond</b>
	Cllr Stuart <b>Dark</b>	Cllr Dan <b>Roper</b>
	Cllr Margaret <b>Dewsbury</b>	Cllr David <b>Rowntree</b>
	Cllr Nigel <b>Dixon</b>	Cllr Chrissie <b>Rumsby</b>
	Cllr Danny <b>Douglas</b>	Cllr Mike <b>Sands</b>
	Cllr Phillip <b>Duigan</b>	Cllr Eric <b>Seward</b>
	Cllr Fabian <b>Eagle</b>	Cllr Carl <b>Smith</b>
	Cllr Tim <b>East</b>	Cllr Thomas <b>Smith</b>
	Cllr John <b>Fisher</b>	Cllr Mike <b>Smith-Clare</b>
	Cllr Tom <b>FitzPatrick</b>	Cllr Sandra <b>Squire</b>
	Cllr Colin <b>Foulger</b>	Cllr Barry <b>Stone</b>
	Cllr Andy <b>Grant</b>	Cllr Margaret <b>Stone</b>
	Cllr Shelagh <b>Gurney</b>	Cllr Martin <b>Storey</b>
	Cllr Ron <b>Hanton</b>	Cllr Haydn <b>Thirtle</b>
	Cllr David <b>Harrison</b>	Cllr Alison <b>Thomas</b>
	Cllr Harry <b>Humphrey</b>	Cllr John <b>Timewell</b>
	Cllr Brian <b>Iles</b>	Cllr Karen <b>Vincent</b>
	Cllr Andrew <b>Jamieson</b>	Cllr Colleen <b>Walker</b>
	Cllr Terry <b>Jermy</b>	Cllr John <b>Ward</b>
	Cllr Brenda <b>Jones</b>	Cllr Brian <b>Watkins</b>
	Cllr Chris <b>Jones</b>	Cllr Fran <b>Whymark</b>
	Cllr Alexandra <b>Kemp</b>	Cllr Martin <b>Wilby</b>
	Cllr Keith <b>Kiddie</b> (Chair)	Cllr Sheila <b>Young</b>

## **Chairman's opening remarks in tribute to His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh who had died on 9th April 2021.**

At the start of the proceedings the Chairman paid tribute to His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh who had died on 9th April 2021. The Chairman said that Prince Philip would always be remembered with a special feeling of affection arising from his long and happy periods of residence at Sandringham with The Queen and other members of the Royal Family. The Duke served our country with great distinction throughout his life and graced many events in Norfolk with his presence over the years.

The Chairman said that he had written to Her Majesty The Queen expressing County Council's sincere condolences.

Councillors and officers joined in a minute's quiet reflection on the life of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, at the end of which the County Chaplain Revd Liviu Barbu offered prayers.

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Steffan Aquarone. Cllr Jess Barnard, Cllr Sarah Butikofer, Cllr Claire Bowes, Cllr Kim Clipsham, Cllr Graham Middleton, Cllr Bev Spratt, Cllr Marie Strong, Cllr Vic Thomson and Cllr Tony White.

## **1 Minutes**

- 1.1 The minutes of the Council meeting held on 22 February 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

## **2 Chairman's Announcements**

- 2.1 The Chairman said that on Friday 16 April 2021 he had attended an evening song service at Norwich Cathedral on behalf of the County Council that was dedicated to the memory and life of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

- 3.1 Cllr Alison Thomas declared an other interest as she had been personally affected by the flooding that had taken place across the county in December 2020.
- 3.2 Cllr Thomas Smith declared an other interest as he was appointed by the County Council to the Governing Body for the Queen Elizabeth hospital in King's Lynn.
- 3.3 Cllr Chenery of Horsbrugh declared an other Interest as a Trustee of NORAH (Norfolk Archives & Heritage Development Foundation).

## **4 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

## **5 Questions to Leader of the Council**

### **5.1 Question from Cllr Dan Roper**

Cllr Roper stated that despite the Conservative 2017 election manifesto promise to keep Council Tax increases as low as possible, Council Tax in Norfolk had risen by 18% in the last 4 years and much of this increase was due to Government cuts and reductions in funding. He asked if this meant that the Conservative Party was now the Party of Council Tax and if returned to be the Administration after the elections how much the Leader anticipated Council Tax would rise in the next 4 years.

The Leader replied that everyone recognised that in the last year, as in preceding years, difficult decisions arising from the level of local government funding were continuing to have to be made, however, net spending had risen significantly in Norfolk to deliver the services that people valued the most and a large part of the Council Tax increase of the last year was aimed specifically at the need to keep adult social care services going.

### **5.2 Question from Cllr Sandra Squire**

Cllr Squire asked if following the forthcoming elections a new Council would be an opportunity for the Council to have a fresh start, to listen to the residents of Norfolk rather than just say that it did and to put the people and the environment at the heart of future Council decisions.

The Leader replied that the Council already listened to what people had to say and placed an emphasis on the environment and environmental policies and supported all the people of Norfolk.

### **5.3 Question from Cllr Karen Vincent**

Cllr Vincent asked if the Leader would join her in praising all Council staff for the work that they had done over this past most challenging year and give some reassurances that the Conservative Administration would continue to support residents as the pandemic continued.

The Leader replied that over the last 12 months a lot of effort had gone into continuing the Council's operations during the pandemic and in achieving the high standards that everyone now came to expect from the County Council. The Leader gave examples of how the County Council had provided the leading role in the public health response to Covid-19 (including outbreak control and local test and track), maintained key services for vulnerable adults and children, expanded digital services and maintained the roads. The Leader added that the Council had worked with the District Councils and the voluntary sector to shield the community from the worst effects of Covid-19 and to provide food supplies and new Council improvement schemes such as the third Great Yarmouth river crossing. The Leader said that he planned to retain the Council's positive achievements of the last year that had led to stronger community spirit and investment in strengthening care and

community resilience and more economic development that would ensure a better future for all the people of Norfolk.

#### **5.4 Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp**

Cllr Kemp stated that the County Council had fought a campaign to keep the Fire and Rescue Service under its control. Cllr Kemp asked if the Leader would inform the Government that they were wrong to now be looking to force the transfer of the Fire and Rescue Service away from accountable elected Councillors.

The Leader said that a few years ago the County Council had reached the conclusion that there was no merit in the transfer of functions provided by the Fire and Rescue Service to the Police and Crime Commissioner. Opinion across the Council on this matter had not changed. The Police and Crime Commissioner already had a huge role and was unable to provide a better Fire and Rescue Service. Where Fire and Rescue Services were retained by Councils across the country they were under direct elected control. Norfolk had an excellent case for saying to the Government that the current arrangements did not need to be changed therefore why change it.

#### **5.5 Question from Cllr David Harrison**

Cllr Harrison asked if the Leader believed that the £500 self-isolation payment was an incentive to spread Covid-19.

The Leader said that he did not.

#### **5.6 Question from Cllr Mick Castle**

Cllr Castle asked if the Leader agreed with him that the continuing uncertainty about Government intentions for devolution was making long term strategic planning difficult for Norfolk and, if so, would he be making his views known to the Prime Minister.

The Leader said that he and others recognised the value that devolution could bring to this county and to other areas of the country. The uncertainty was in how devolution would work in practice; whether it required local government reorganisation first and the devolved powers and finance that went with it. The Leader said that he had made a strong case for devolution of powers and for ensuring that Norfolk got the maximum benefit it possibly could from devolution.

#### **5.7 Question from Cllr Carl Smith**

Cllr Carl Smith asked if the Leader could give examples of how the County Council could work better with its partners.

The Leader said that it was essential for local service partners to work better together. Over the last 12 months numerous new multi-partner partnerships were created such as the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance; regular meetings were held with Norfolk MPs, the Public Sector Leaders Board and improved arrangements were put in place for working with the NHS, amongst others.

#### **5.8 Question from Cllr Tim East**



Cllr East said that after 38 years as a local councillor for Costessey he did not want people with disabilities to be in a worse position now than when he started as a Councillor in 1997. The High Court had called the Council's MIG cuts irrational. Because many disabled people remained to be paid back in full or in part, did this mean that the Administration was cruel and callous.

The Leader said that he wished to congratulate Cllr East on his 38 years of service in public life. The Administration was not in any way cruel or callous. All the work that needed to be done to sort out the finances of those effected by the High Court judgement was being done carefully and this matter would be resolved as soon as possible.

## 5.9 **Question from Cllr Sandra Squire**

Cllr Squire asked a question on behalf of Cllr Maxfield who had indicated that he would be late attending the meeting. Cllr Squire stated that the Chair of Trimingham Parish Council awaited a reply from the Leader about the sale of County Council owned land in the parish. Cllr Squire asked if the Leader would commit to a review of the County Council's asset disposal policy so that it met the needs of the local community first as the most important consideration.

The Leader said that the sale of land at Trimingham was ongoing. The Council's asset sales policy aimed to make sure that the best sale value was obtained but equally recognised that there were times when it was important to place emphasis on community value. The asset disposal policy would be kept under review.

## 6 **Recommendations from Committees**

### 6.1 **Recommendations from the Cabinet meetings held on 7 December 2020, 12 January 2021, 1 February 2021 and 8 March 2021.**

The recommendations from the Cabinet meetings held on 7 December 2020, 12 January 2021, 1 February 2021 and 8 March 2021 were moved by the Cllr Andrew Proctor, Chair of Cabinet.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

- 6.1.1 1. **Approve** additional prudential borrowing of £0.030m to be available for the development of software to support the Card Payments programme, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of Capital Appendix 2 report to Cabinet.
2. **Approve** the Mid-year treasury management Monitoring report 2020-21.
3. **Approve** a further £17m being added to the capital programme for the Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus Project with £9 m of this being funded by prudential borrowing.
4. **Approve** the addition of £1.249m to the capital programme to address necessary improvements to the County Farms Estate, as set out in detail in capital appendix 2, paragraph 4 of the report taken to Cabinet.

### 6.2 **Recommendations from the Corporate Select Committee meeting held on 25 January 2021 and 15 March 2021.**

- 6.2.1 The recommendations from the Corporate Select Committee meeting held on 25

January 2021 and 15 March 2021 were moved by Cllr Karen Vincent, Chair of the Select Committee.

Cllr Morpew said that while he supported the recommendations, going forward the Council should give further consideration to how all councillors could become more engaged with the decision-making process, the member information protocols, the corporate board structure and the role of political groups in the decision-making process.

Cllr Roper said that the Council should consider its capacity to undertake scrutiny work.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

#### 6.2.2 **Proposed Amendments to the Council Constitution**

1. **To agree the amendments to Council Constitution as set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report presented to the Select Committee and to the Council.**
2. **To agree that the Director of Governance may make further amendments for proposal to Council, should the need for any arise, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Select Committee.**
3. **Note the amendments included in the report covered recommendations about the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 that were considered by the Standards Committee at its meeting on 18 January 2021.**

#### 7 **Cabinet Report (Questions to Cabinet Members)**

Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader and Chair of Cabinet, moved the report of the meetings held on 7 December 2020, 12 January 2021, 1 February 2021 and 8 March 2021 and the report of the meeting held on 12 April 2021 included with the supplementary agenda.

Council **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the reports.

#### 7.1 **Question from Cllr Brian Watkins to Cllr Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management.**

Cllr Watkins asked how when reflecting on how nice new refurbished facilities, including the car park might be at County Hall the Cabinet Member viewed the cuts to the minimum income guarantee, cuts to the funding of Childrens Centres and Holt Hall, the introduction of DIY household waste charges and cuts to the music service.

Cllr Greg Peck said that he had not been reflecting on how nice County Hall would be after refurbishment. All the approved expenditure on County hall was for spending on health and safety and access issues. The car park was to facilitate the use of the building and there was already interest from other public sector bodies should there be excess capacity.

#### 7.2 **Question from Cllr Mick Castle to Cllr Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult**

## **Social Care, Public Health and Prevention**

Cllr Castle asked if he agreed that the continuing delay in the Government's long heralded future plans for adult social care had become a major embarrassment and if he would impress on Government that they needed to tackle this issue as a priority in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Cllr Borrett said that he was personally disappointed that the County Council had not yet received a fuller response on the issue of the future of adult social care. He recognised that the Government had been presented with other very pressing issues over the last 12 months and said he would continue to press for Government time to be found to sort this issue out because it was one of the most pressing pieces of unfinished business and had a direct effect on a large number of Norfolk residents.

7.3

### **Question from Cllr Alison Thomas to Cllr Jamieson, Cabinet Member for Finance**

Cllr Thomas asked the Cabinet Member if he agreed with her that good financial management and decision making had put Norfolk in a strong position not only to face ongoing challenges with the pandemic but to support vulnerable people and be a good position not only to move forward but to respond to unexpected emergencies such as for example the flooding experienced across Norfolk last December.

Cllr Jamieson said that the main focus of the Administration would continue to be on ensuring the protection of vulnerable people, ensuring that children continued to have the best possible start in life and that Norfolk developed strong infrastructure that supported and add value to the local economy. In order to achieve this the Administration would continue to deliver balanced budgets that brought Norfolk's business transformation and smarter working programmes together at the heart of everything that the County Council did. The Council would continue to utilise national government assistance to deliver on its priorities and build a better future for Norfolk.

The Cabinet Member explained the specific reserves that had been set up by the County Council to respond quickly to further foreseeable pandemic related pressures that might emerge during the ensuing year. The Cabinet Member also explained the steps that were being taken to address the floods that took place in Norfolk in the winter and spring of this year. The Cabinet Member added that as Norfolk moved beyond the pandemic one of the main benefits of prudent financial management was that the Council would be able to pivot towards greater economic growth, greater protection of Norfolk's countryside as well as retaining and improving Norfolk's highly valued community services, libraries, museums and recycling centres. The Cabinet Member said that delivering on a growing and thriving economy for the County was the best way to support and improve the quality of life of Norfolk's residents so support for the delivery of the economic recovery into the future .

7.4

### **Question from Cllr Kemp to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Kemp stated that West Norfolk had a high carbon footprint and everything must

be done to encourage active travel and yet the Cabinet Member had personally signed an order to open Hardings Way to traffic even though he knew how strongly the local community were against this. Cllr Kemp asked if the Cabinet Member accepted that he was wrong and would commit to keep Hardings Way a bus and cycle lane as it was originally intended.

Cllr Wilby said that he did not accept that he had reached the wrong decision.

**7.5 Question from Cllr Dan Roper to Cllr Graham Plant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.**

Cllr Roper asked how confident people should be at Norfolk bouncing back effectively and economically if this Administration was returned given that during the last four years Norfolk's economic record at creating new jobs had fallen year on year and the level of wages had remained well below regional and national averages.

Cllr Plant said that the County Council was working hard with its partners to make sure that Norfolk got the maximum funding that it could from new government funds for economic growth. He explained the detailed funding that was being sought from the community renewal fund and other sources of government funding and the work to put in place a recovery plan after the pandemic that made sure Norfolk was well placed to help business plan for the future.

**7.6 Question from Cllr Squire to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Squire asked if the Cabinet Member agreed that it was time for a review of the Council's policy on speed limits and road safety measures in the County. She said that Cllr Maxfield had written to the Leader last month and had yet to receive a response. The current policy put in place in 2014 was too restrictive and did not take into account changing patterns of road use. Traffic surveys had shown that speed limits should be reduced on safety grounds, however, it was up to Parishes and local member funds to find the money to make the road safe.

Cllr Wilby said that he was fully aware of the concerns about speed limits and this was something that would be addressed after the election.

**7.7 Question from Cllr Richard Price to Cllr Graham Plant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.**

Cllr Richard Price stated that the Government had recently published guidance for the Levelling Up Fund that enabled counties to bid for funding for transport hubs. He asked what the County Council approach was to its own bid and to that of providing support at the district level.

Cllr Plant said that in March 2021 the Government launched two key strategies designed to help kick start economic growth after the pandemic and level up those areas in need of additional support. These funds were complementary to each other and the Council was marshalling its own resources as well as those of the Local Enterprise Partnership and District Council partners to help potential applicants to apply for funding. The Shared Prosperity Fund was a successor to the EU funding that had benefited Norfolk over the years. The Cabinet Member

said that these funds would be worth £1.5 billion a year from 2022. While all areas could bid for funds the government had identified 100 priority places for the funding, four of which were in Norfolk (Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn Norwich and North Norfolk). The whole of Norfolk was considered a priority place for countywide programmes such as skills and employment and business support. A shortlist of bids had to be submitted to the Government by 18 June 2021 and the outcomes should be known by the end of July 2021.

Cllr Plant added that the Levelling Up Fund was a £4 billion fund which ran until 2024/25. The first round of bids closed on 18 June 2021 and only included projects that were ready to start in this financial year. There would be several further bidding rounds until 2024 and the County Council was working with Norfolk MPs and partners to pull together a strong set of bids for the Autumn. Priorities would be small transport schemes, regeneration and town centre improvements and cultural assets with a focus on net zero emissions. Scheme should include cycle provision, public transport, enhancements to road networks and bridge repairs. The County Council could submit one transport bid over the lifetime of the fund and was examining the best package bid in collaboration with District Councils. The Government had published a priority list of areas most in need, including Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn in category 1, with other areas of the county in category 2, except Broadland which was in category 3.

**7.8 Question from Cllr Tim Adams to Cllr Graham Plant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.**

Cllr Adams said that the national picture on apprenticeship starts had shown a rise in starts in 2018-2019 after three years of falling numbers and yet Norfolk's numbers had continued to decline. He asked why it was that other Local Authorities had achieved success and yet Norfolk could not.

Cllr Plant said that he accepted that the Norfolk success rate on apprenticeships was not as good as it should be. This was not, however, entirely due to Norfolk County Council. Businesses were being encouraged to take on apprentices through the kick start scheme and other schemes that were in place. The Cabinet Member accepted that numbers had gone down in recent years but that this was part of a national drop in numbers that would change in Norfolk with the new schemes that were put in place. In a year's time there would be a completely different picture.

**7.9 Question from Cllr Barry Stone to Cllr Margaret Dewsbury, Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships**

Cllr Stone asked the Cabinet Member to outline the role that libraries had played during the past 12 months.

Cllr Dewsbury said that the Service had continued to support local communities following library closures on 21 March 2021. Staff had continued to provide books and magazines online and to support literacy projects such as the Norfolk reading pathway. Staff had also supported those digitally excluded to gain new digital skills and helped parents to educate children at home through the use of electronic devices. To encourage young people to go back into libraries overdue charges were being removed for the under sixteens. Furthermore, staff had supposed a programme of work to assist vulnerable people through food distribution across the

county. Services to local businesses had also been maintained.

**7.10 Question from Cllr David Harrison to Cllr Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention**

7.10 Cllr Harrison asked Cllr Borrett what he considered to be his biggest mistake during the current Administration.

Cllr Borrett said that he would have liked to have had notice of that question, however, he was very proud to have had a wide range of different roles within the Council that had enabled him to drive forward the policies of the Administration.

**7.11 Question from Cllr John Ward to Cllr Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management.**

Cllr Ward asked the Cabinet Member for an update on the role of Repton Homes and the affordable homes scheme.

Cllr Peck said that Repton was established in 2017 with the primary objective to undertake direct property development with the aim of maximising the financial returns for the Council in order to support service delivery. Repton Homes were delivering mixed communities of not just private housing but also shared ownership and social housing. The Cabinet Member gave an example of where work was expected to start on site later in 2021 to build 48 new affordable homes to be completed and handed over by quarter one in 2023.

**7.12 Question from Cllr Ed Colman to Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Colman asked if Cllr Wilby would like to join him in congratulating the County Council on a successful bid for £700,000 of funding to provide a new bus service in the Swaffham area. He also asked for an update on the County Council's bus strategy.

Cllr Wilby said that he was very pleased that the Council was awarded the £700,000 loan for community transport which would support around 20 villages in the Swaffham area. (This second question was not answered due to connectivity issues. It was noted that Cllr Colman could take the matter up directly with the Cabinet Member after the meeting and request a written response if he required one).

**7.13 Question from Cllr Fran Whymark to Cllr Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention.**

Cllr Whymark asked what plans the Cabinet Member had to support the care sector and especially care homes during the pandemic.

Cllr Borrett said that care homes and the care sector as a whole had faced a set of unprecedented challenges in the last 12 months and Norfolk care homes had shown very strong leadership in coping with those challenges. The County Council had done everything it could to help care homes staff to manage the pandemic. £22 million was allocated to provide support with infection control and a further £3 million for testing and just over £2 million to help with workforce issues. Also, a

further £6.4 million had recently been allocated to continue to support infection control and testing which would continue until June 2021. Norfolk could be proud of the daily contact that had been maintained with care homes and the high uptake in the vaccination rate of both care home staff and care home residents. The increase in Council's fee levels for the year ahead should support Care Homes and pay for salary increases above the national living wage. The Council's focus was on improving the image of care work and on trying to attract new people through a major recruitment campaign. The Council recognised that some care providers faced a period of instability. The Council would continue to work with providers at risk using discretionary financial support where appropriate and help to do all that it could to shape the future of the industry.

## **8 Committee Reports**

### **8.1 Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 14 December 2020, 27 January 2021 and 17 February 2021.**

Cllr Steve Morphew, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.2 Corporate Select Committee meetings held on 25 January 2021 and 15 March 2021.**

Cllr Karen Vincent, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.3 Infrastructure & Development Select Committee meeting held on 28 January 2021.**

Cllr Barry Stone, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.4 People & Communities Select Committee meeting held on 29 January 2021.**

Cllr Shelah Gurney, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.5 Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 8 October 2020.**

Cllr Penny Carpenter, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.6 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting held on 10 March 2021.**

Cllr Bill Borrett, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.7 Audit Committee meeting held on 21 January 2021.**

Cllr Ian Mackie, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### **8.8 Standards Committee meeting held on 18 January 2021.**

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.9 **Norfolk Records Committee meeting held on 5 February 2021.**

Cllr Chenery of Horsbrugh moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.10 **Joint Museums Committee meeting held on 5 February 2021.**

Cllr John Ward, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

8.11 **Planning (Regulatory) Committee meeting held on 5 March 2021.**

Cllr Colin Foulger, Chair, moved the report. Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

9 **Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees (Standard Item).**

9.1 Council **RESOLVED** to note the following changes made under delegated powers since the last meeting:

- Cllr Brian Watkins to take up the Liberal Democrat place on the Audit Committee.
- Cllr Danny Douglas to replace Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton on the Norfolk Local Access Forum.
- Cllr Danny Douglas to replace Cllr Jess Barnard on the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee.

10 **Notice of Motions**

10.1 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Mick Castle and seconded by Cllr Sandra Squire:

This Council recognises that a successful 2021 Summer Holiday Season will be critical if Norfolk is to avoid large-scale business closures and redundancies. The Cabinet – using earmarked balances - is urged to take a lead in bringing together the County's Tourist Boards, City and District Councils and Norfolk Attractions and Hospitality Businesses to promote Norfolk's holiday offer in a high profile co-ordinated campaign running through from May to September - including the County's outstanding Museums and drawing on the positive engagement of the Norfolk Media to enhance this mission to attract major spending in Norfolk this Summer.

Following debate and upon being put to the vote the motion was **LOST**, there being 5 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 21 abstentions.

10.2 The following motion was then proposed by Cllr Steve Morphew and seconded by Cllr Terry Jermy:

Council believes it is now time to end part time night lighting and turn back on street lights for those areas that have the lights switched off in the small hours. Recent disturbing events and reports from women who feel unsafe on our streets shows we must do whatever we can to reduce feelings of fear and opportunities



for malicious acts. This is one positive step Council can take now.  
Council recognises that since the introduction of part night lighting a decade ago many lights have been converted to LEDs that reduce the costs and emissions from leaving lights on through the night.

Council calls upon the Leader to use delegated powers to restore full night lighting in areas where it has been restricted and to reprioritise the LED replacement programme to ensure there is LED lighting where the lights will be switched back on.

The Chairman asked for it to be included in the minutes that there were sufficient Councillors present in the meeting who had indicated that they were in favour of a recorded vote being taken on the motion.

Following debate and upon being put to a recorded vote (Appendix A), with 22 votes in favour, 46 votes against and 2 abstentions, the motion was LOST.

- 10.3 The following motion was proposed by Cllr Brenda Jones and seconded by Cllr David Collis:

Council recognises that the QE hospital in Kings Lynn is no longer fit for purpose and must be rebuilt urgently.  
Council welcomes the campaign being run by the Eastern Daily Press to highlight the urgent need for a decision.  
Council urges the Secretary of State for Health to urgently approve a new build hospital for Kings Lynn to replace the Queen Elizabeth and to fast track its build and design.

The following amendment was proposed by Cllr Borrett:  
Council recognises that the QE hospital **building and its infrastructure** in Kings Lynn **has major structural issues** ~~is no longer fit for purpose~~ and must be rebuilt urgently.

Council welcomes the campaigns being run by the Eastern Daily Press **and the one being run by the Local MP James Wild** to highlight the urgent need for a decision.

**Council congratulates the Secretary of State for Health and the Government for the money for the rebuilding of the James Paget Hospital in Great Yarmouth which suffers from the same structural problems.**

**In the same way as this funding was provided** Council urges the Secretary of State for Health to urgently approve a new build hospital for Kings Lynn to replace the Queen Elizabeth and to fast track its build and design.

Before this amendment was seconded the mover of the original motion withdrew the motion with the consent of the seconder.

- 11 **To answer questions under Rule 8.3 of the Council Procedure Rules**

- 11.1 No questions were received.

- 12 **Chairman's Concluding Remarks**

The Chairman ended what was this final meeting of the current County Council by thanking all Councillors for the hard work that they had put into their respective

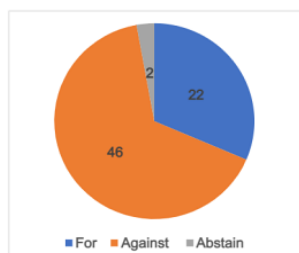
roles during their terms of office and by wishing those who were standing for re-election a safe campaign. He said that he wished to personally thank Cllr Brain Illes and Cllr Tim East for their invaluable support and guidance during his term of office.

The Group Leaders ended the meeting by placing on record thanks to the Chairman of the Council for the way in which he had chaired the on-line meetings during the pandemic and by expressing thanks to Councillors of all political parties who were not standing for re-election for all their hard work.

The meeting concluded at 1 pm

## Appendix A

For	22	31%
Against	46	66%
Abstain	2	3%



 Norfolk County Council

Adams, Anthony	Against	a
Adams, Timothy	For	
Aquarone, Steffan	NOT PRESENT	+
Askew, Stephen	Against	a
Barnard, Jess	NOT PRESENT	+
Bills, David	Against	a
Borrett, Bill	Against	a
Bowes, Claire	NOT PRESENT	+
Brociek-Coulton, Julie	For	
Butikofer, Sarah	NOT PRESENT	+
Carpenter, Penny	Against	a
Castle, Mick	For	
Chenery, Michael	Against	a
Clancy, Stuart	Against	a
Clipsham, Kim	NOT PRESENT	+
Collis, David	For	f
Colman, Ed	Against	a
Connolly, Edward	Against	a
Corlett, Emma	For	
Dark, Stuart	Against	a
Dewsbury, Margaret	Against	a
Dixon, Nigel	Against	a
Douglas, Danny	For	f
Duigan, Phillip	Against	a
Eagle, Fabian	Against	a
East, Tim	For	f
Fisher, John	Against	a
FitzPatrick, Tom	Against	a
Foulger, Colin	Against	a
Grant, Andy	Against	a
Gurney, Shelagh	Against	a
Hanton, Ron	Against	a
Harrison, David	For	f
Humphrey, Harry	Against	a
Illes, Brian	Against	a
Jamieson, Andrew	Against	a
Jermy, Terry	For	
Jones, Brenda	For	
Jones, Chris	For	
Kemp, Alexandra	For	
Kiddie, Keith	Abstain	
Kiddle-Morris, Mark	Against	a
Long, Brian	Against	a
Mackie, Ian	Against	a
Maxfield, Edward	Against	a
Middleton, Graham	NOT PRESENT	+
Mooney, Joe	Against	a
Morphew, Steve	For	
Nobbs, George	For	
Oliver, Judy	Against	a
Oliver, Rhodri	Against	a
Peck, Greg	Against	a
Plant, Graham	Against	a
Price, Richard	Against	a
Proctor, Andrew	Against	a
Richmond, William	Against	a
Roper, Daniel	For	
Rowntree, David	For	
Rumsby, Chrissie	For	
Sands, Mike	For	
Seward, Eric	For	
Smith, Carl	Against	a
Smith, Thomas	Against	a
Smith-Clare, Mike	For	
Spratt, Beverley	NOT PRESENT	+
Squire, Sandra	Abstain	
Stone, Barry	Against	a
Stone, Margaret	Against	a
Storey, Martin	NOT PRESENT	+
Strong, Marie	NOT PRESENT	+
Thirtle, Haydn	Against	a
Thomas, Alison	Against	a
Thomson, Vic	NOT PRESENT	+
Timewell, John	Against	a
Vincent, Karen	NOT VOTED	
Walker, Colleen	For	
Ward, John	Against	a
Watkins, Brian	For	f
White, Anthony	NOT PRESENT	+
Whymark, Fran	Against	a
Wilby, Martin	Against	a
Young, Sheila	Against	a

## Chairman



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**Procedure for Leader's Question Time**

In order to give as many people as possible the opportunity to put a question to the Leader, questions should be asked succinctly and in a business-like manner. They should not be preceded by lengthy preambles. Similarly, answers should be given succinctly, to make sure there is sufficient time for a reasonable number of questions to be dealt with. The Chair will be prepared to intervene if he considers this principle is not being adhered to.

**Agenda Item 5 – Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Questions to the Leader will be a 15-minute session for questions relating only to the role of Leader.

1. Questions to the Leader must be relevant to matters for which the Council has powers or duties. Members do not need to give prior notice of what they plan to ask and the Chair's ruling as to relevance of questions will be final. If the Leader cannot give an immediate answer or feels that a written answer would be more helpful or appropriate, then the questioner will receive a written reply and this will be published to all members and to the public via the minutes. The Leader may ask Cabinet Members to answer questions where appropriate.
2. The Chair will begin Leader's Question Time by inviting the Leader of the Labour Group to ask the first question. All Group Leaders may delegate the asking of their question to another member of their Group. There is no right to ask a supplementary question.
3. After the first question has been answered, the Chair will invite the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group to ask a question.
4. When the second question has been answered the Chair will invite the Leader of the Green Group to ask a question.
5. When the third question has been answered, the Chair will invite and select a member of the Independent Group to ask a question.
6. When the fourth question has been answered, the Chair will invite a Member of the Conservative Group to ask a question.
7. When the fifth question has been answered, the Chair will invite Cllr Alexandra Kemp (Non-aligned Member) to ask a question.
8. If the 15 minutes has not expired, the Chair will then invite questions from Group Members in the following order:

Labour Group  
Liberal Democrat Group  
Green Group  
Independent Group

Conservative Group

Following round:

Labour Group

Liberal Democrat Group

Green Group

Independent Group

Conservative Group

9. The session will be timed by Democratic Services officers. If a question is being asked at the point time is up, the Chair will allow the question to be completed and the answer to be given.

## **Report of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 22 April 2021**

### **1 Work in Support of the Norfolk response to the Covid-19 pandemic.**

1.1 The Chairman placed on record the Committee's thanks to the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) and Council staff for their work in supporting the Norfolk response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.2 The Committee noted that as part of the response:

- 14 NCC colleagues had provided support to hospitals, 3 colleagues had supported vaccination call centres, 2 qualified nurses had supported the vaccinations and 187 hours were provided to GP centres.
- NFRS staff had also provided a huge range of valuable support, including ambulance driving, delivery of essential items to vulnerable persons, delivering PPE and other medical supplies to NHS and care facilities.
- In the first lockdown a total of 982 shifts for East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) were provided, a total of 13,215 hours of work through the April to July 2020 period.
- In the Jan to April lockdown, a total of 89 staff had volunteered for NFRS NHS bank support. Staff had also provided 430 shifts and 5160 hours assistance with "face fit and swabbing" and 198 Shifts and 2376 Hours assistance with vaccination support.

### **2 Presentation on the work carried out by IMT on cyber security, anti-phishing, disaster recovery, etc.**

2.1 The Committee received a presentation (which could be found on the Committee pages website) from Geoff Connell, Head of IMT, that provided an update on the work IMT had completed on cyber security and disaster recovery; phishing exercise, etc.

2.2 At short notice during the pandemic a very successful campaign called "Every Child Online" was launched with the support of Norfolk schools, the EDP, charities and other partners, including private sector suppliers. As part of that campaign, IMT staff managed to provide laptops and help with connectivity issues approximately 5,500 digitally disadvantaged children and assisted hundreds of Norfolk's schools to tackle a very wide range of IT issues.

2.3 **The Committee RESOLVED to place on record thanks to Geoff Connell, Head of IMT, for the presentation on cyber security and disaster recovery; phishing exercise, etc. and for the work as part of the Every Child Online campaign.**

### **3 Norfolk County Council's Insurance Cover**

- 3.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which provided the Committee with assurance as to how the insurance provision was delivered for the County Council and how claims against the Council were managed by the Insurance Team.
- 3.2 **The Committee RESOLVED to agree that proper insurance provision existed where appropriate, as confirmed by external and internal reviews and accept the report.**
- 4 **Norfolk Audit Services Report for the Quarter ended 31 March 2021**
- 4.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which supported the remit of the Audit Committee in providing proactive leadership and direction on audit governance and risk management issues. The report updated the Committee on the progress with the delivery of the internal audit work and advised on the overall opinion on the effectiveness of risk management and internal control. The report also set out work to support the opinion and any matters of note.
- 4.2 The Chairman asked for the report to the next meeting to include a brief update on the position regarding each of the deferred audits.
- 4.3 **The Committee RESOLVED to agree the key messages featured in the quarterly report, that the work and assurance meet their requirements and advise if further information is required.**
- 5 **External Audits**
- 5.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which introduced the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter NCC and NPF and Certificate 2019-20, which were attached as appendices to the report. The report also introduced the External Auditor's Provisional Audit Plans for the Council and Norfolk Pension Fund 21-22, which were attached as appendices; and confirmed that the PSAA had published the 2021/22 audit fee scale, following consultation in January and February 2021.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that the pandemic had not resulted in a significant change in existing risk assessments. The approach to risk assessments had remained consistent throughout the pandemic. However, there was an additional risk associated with the accounting arrangements for government grants. This was because there had been a significant increase in the number of individual grants and a quantum increase in the value of these grants in money terms. The accounting arrangements for individual grants was not yet clear which meant that they posed an increased level of risk.
- 5.3 **The Committee RESOLVED to note the PSAA scale fees for 2021-22 and to agree:**
- **the External Auditor's Audit Letter and Certificate for 2019-20.**

- **the External Auditor's Provisional Audit Plans for the Council and Norfolk Pension Fund 20-21.**

## **6 Audit Committee Terms of Reference.**

- 6.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services which set out the Committee's terms of reference and recommended no changes.
- 6.2 **The Committee RESOLVED to agree the terms of reference for the Audit Committee with no changes.**

## **7 Risk Management.**

- 7.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which set out the corporate risk register as it stood in April 2021, following the latest review.
- 7.2 It was noted that the risks identified by the external auditors about the impact of new government grants for dealing with Covid-19 and where they should appear in the Council's accounts had yet to be fully assessed. This matter was currently subject to ongoing discussions with the external auditors.
- 7.3 The Chairman asked that the Committee have a further update at the next meeting to establish the scope of risk management in the context of reduction, mitigation, management or closure, as well as a longer-term review as to overall progress. The Chairmen felt that there had to be a balance between active risk management and risk avoidance in order to deliver key services, especially during the pandemic.
- 7.4 **The Committee RESOLVED to agree:**
- **The key messages as per section 2.1 of the report.**
  - **The key changes to the generic corporate risk register (Appendix A to the report),**
  - **The corporate risk heat map (Appendix B to the report).**
  - **The latest generic corporate risks (Appendix C to the report).**
  - **Scrutiny options for managing corporate risks (Appendix D to the report).**
  - **Background Information (Appendix E to the report).**

## **8 Governance, Control and Risk Management of Treasury Management.**

- 8.1 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which assured Councillors that there were effective governance, control and risk management arrangements in place in respect of Treasury Management.
- 8.2 **The Committee RESOLVED to agree the report, noting that it provided assurance to the Audit Committee as to the adequacy and effectiveness**

of the governance, control and risk management arrangements for Treasury Management.

9      **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Whistleblowing Update and Anti-Fraud and Corruption Annual Report 2020-21.**

9.1     The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services which set out Norfolk Audit Service (NAS) Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy which continued to direct the proactive anti-fraud work undertaken by NAS.

9.2     **The Committee RESOLVED to agree:**

- **The content of the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing report (Appendix A to the report), the key messages, that the progress is satisfactory, and arrangements are effective.**
- **the consequential changes to the content of the updated whistleblowing policy at Appendix B to the report.**
- **the consequential changes to the content of the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy at Appendix C to the report.**

10     **Work Programme**

10.1    The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services setting out the work programme that was **NOTED**.

**Ian Mackie**  
**Chairman, Audit Committee**



## Report of the virtual Planning (Regulatory) Committee Meetings held on 23 April 2021

### A: Meeting of 23 April 2021

1. **FUL/2020/0100 - Ormiston Victory Academy, Middleton Crescent, Costessey, Norwich, NR5 0PX**
  - 1.1 The Committee received the report setting out an application for the expansion of the existing 1200 pupil secondary school to a 1500 pupil school by construction of a new stand-alone three storey building, and refurbishment works to the existing school, improved secure fencing to the front of the school, an increase of 42 car parking spaces and 60 cycle storage spaces and relocation of the existing on-site temporary modular accommodation at the Ormiston Victory Academy, Middleton Crescent, Costessey.
  - 1.2 The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services be authorised to:
    - I. Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 11.
    - II. Discharge conditions where those detailed above require the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commences, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
    - III. Delegate powers to officers to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted
2. **FUL/2020/0088, Bridge End, Foulsham Road, Hindolveston, Norfolk, NR20 5BZ**
  - 2.1 The Committee received the report seeking Planning permission for the change of use of a residential property (C3 dwellinghouse use) known as Bridge End, situated on Foulsham Road, Hindolveston, to a residential children's home (C2 use). The property would offer a home for up to two children aged between 12-16, although it was anticipated only a single child would be accommodated at the property for the majority of the time. No external changes were proposed and a gravelled area within the site would provide parking spaces for staff/visitors. No members of staff would live permanently on site, instead staff would operate on a shift system providing 24/7 presence and care at the site.
  - 2.2 The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services be authorised to:
    - I. Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 11.
    - II. Discharge conditions where those detailed above require the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commences, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
    - III. Delegate powers to officers to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

**3. FUL/2020/0099, Harford Manor School, Ipswich Road, Norwich, NR2 2LN**

- 3.1 The Committee received the report seeking planning permission for the provision of a replacement 2 class base modular building for a temporary period of 5 years. Associated works include external lighting and provision of 6no car parking spaces. The applicant is Norfolk County Council, Children's Services.
- 3.2 The Committee unanimously **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** that the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services be authorised to:
- I. Grant planning permission subject to the conditions outlined in section 11.
  - II. Discharge conditions where those detailed above require the submission and implementation of a scheme, or further details, either before development commences, or within a specified date of planning permission being granted.
  - III. Delegate powers to officers to deal with any non-material amendments to the application that may be submitted.

**Colin Foulger**  
Chair, Planning (Regulatory) Committee

<b>Decision making report title:</b>	<b>Appointment of Independent Persons</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>24 May 2021</b>
<b>Responsible Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</b>
<b>Responsible Director:</b>	<b>Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer on behalf of the Standards Committee</b>
<b>Introduction and background</b> <p>The Localism Act 2011 specifies that every Council must appoint, through a proper recruitment process, at least one independent person. Independent persons play a key role in the Council's procedures for investigating complaints relating to ethical standards and their views are sought and considered before a decision is made on whether a Member has breached the County Council's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>In January 2021 the Standards Committee noted that the period of office of the previous Independent Persons was due to end and with their consent it was agreed to extend their appointment until the end of April 2021 to allow for a recruitment process to take place. On 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 a Member Panel met, supported by the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer, to interview for the recruitment of two new appointees for the 4-year period. The Panel unanimously agreed to recommend two candidates to the roles (Christine MacDonald and Tracy Colman) and now asks Council to approve these appointments.</p> <b>Recommendations</b> <p>That Council approves the recommendation from the Standards Committee Member interview Panel to appoint Christine MacDonald and Tracy Colman to be the County Council's Independent Persons.</p>	

## 1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 outlined the importance of retaining a proper degree of independence within the system for dealing with complaints relating to ethical standards. This was intended to ensure transparency, and provide assurance that complaints are dealt with effectively and at a distance from the political arena. For this reason, every Council must appoint, through a proper recruitment process, at least one Independent Person. In March 2016 the Standards Committee agreed that the appointment of one single person had given rise to difficulties at certain times and agreed to appoint two persons to ensure resilience in covering the duties of the role.
- 1.2. The Localism Act sets out very specific criteria for who can undertake the role. A person is not independent for these purposes if they are a "member, co-opted member or officer of

the authority" (or relevant parish council) or a relative or close friend of such person. Furthermore, an independent person may not be appointed "if at any time during the 5 years ending with the appointment" the person was a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority (or relevant parish council).

- 1.3. Independent persons need to be trusted, experienced and objective advisors from diverse backgrounds. They provide their services to the council on a voluntary basis and they:
- Do not have voting powers
  - Are not officers, Councillors or Standards Committee members
  - Are not co-opted onto the council
  - Their views must be taken into account by Standards Committee in any case where an investigation has been commissioned and the committee has to make a decision

The views of the Independent Persons may be considered by the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer at various stages during any informal processes. They may also give their opinions to a Councillor who has had a complaint made about them and who seeks advice. It is important to note that this role will not extend to advocacy. An independent person will remain objective, therefore, in the advice that he/she gives to members, the monitoring officer and Standards Committee.

## **2. Proposals**

- 2.1. On 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 a Member Panel met (consisting of Councillors Corlett, Kiddle Morris and White), supported by the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer, to interview for the recruitment of two new appointees for the 4-year period. A number of applications were received from which a shortlist of seven suitable applicants was agreed. Following the interviews, the Panel unanimously agreed to recommend to Council that two candidates be appointed as Independent Persons. The Panel's recommended candidates are Christine MacDonald and Tracy Colman. Brief resumes of the recommended candidates are attached at Appendix A.

## **3. Impact of the proposal and reasons for decision**

- 3.1. Appointing two Independent Persons will ensure that the County Council complies with the Localism Act 2011. It will also ensure that we have robust measures in place for dealing with complaints relating to ethical standards and transparency in our processes.
- 3.2. In appointing two people to the role the County Council will have access to more than one independent perspective and will provide continuity and resilience should one person not be available or need to stand down before the end of the term of their appointment.

## **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1. Independent persons are entitled to claim remuneration at a rate of £25 per hour for work carried out in respect of their duties.

## **5. Resource Implications**

- 5.1. **Staff:**

N/A

5.2. **Property:**

N/A

5.3. **IT:**

N/A

**6. Other Implications**

6.1. **Legal Implications**

Not appointing an Independent Person(s) would put the County Council at risk of not complying with the Localism Act 2011.

6.2. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)**

In considering the advertising and appointment of the Independent Persons the Council has sought to ensure that candidates were able to come forward from as diverse a background as possible.

**7. Recommendation**

- 7.1. That Council approves the recommendation from the Standards Committee interview Member Panel to appoint Christine MacDonald and Tracy Colman to be the County Council's Independent Persons.

**8 Background Papers**

[Localism Act 2011 – Codes of Conduct](#)

[Standards Committee Report – 18 January 2021](#)

**Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

**Officer name:** Karen Haywood

**Tel No.:** 01603 228913

**Email address:** karen.haywood@norfolk.gov.uk



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## **Appendix A**

### **Christine MacDonald**

Christine MacDonald has worked in several public sector organisations throughout her working life, most recently as an Operations Manager for Healthwatch Norfolk. Prior to this she was Corporate Governance Manager at NHS Norfolk (formerly known as Norfolk PCT) with responsibility for the handling and investigation of NHS complaints and joint NHS/social services complaints.

Christine has recently retired from full time employment and currently acts as an independent person for Norfolk County Council Children's Services Stage 2 complaints.

### **Tracy Colman**

Tracy Colman has worked in educational business leadership for nearly 25 years. She retired early in August 2020 from the role of Finance Director for the Aylsham Learning Federation. Prior to this Tracy was Business Manager at Reepham Primary School. She is currently also Vice Chair of Governors at her local primary school.

## Notice of Motions

Notice of the following motions has been given in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules:

- 1      Proposer: Cllr Alexandra Kemp**  
**Seconded: Cllr Ed Maxfield**

### **Rebuilding the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn**

West Norfolk cares passionately about its hospital. The nurses, doctors and support staff at the QEH worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic at great personal cost, in this 41 year-old hospital, built to last 30 years, with a roof constructed of defective concrete, which started to cave in this December. With the roof now being held up by 194 steel props across the hospital, the QE desperately needs a full and imaginative rebuild fit to serve the public in the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, the Govt has left the QE off the list to rebuild forty hospitals, but will rebuild hospitals that are not falling apart. This Council appreciates that the QE cares for patients in Norfolk, South Cambs and South Lincolnshire and is a focus for people with complex health needs and frailty in a retirement area, this Council also recognises its role and responsibility to drive up health services and outcomes within the new Integrated Care System, supports the effort of the management at the QE to secure funding and resolves to write to the Govt to ask it to fund the QE for an immediate rebuild.

- 
- 2      Proposer: Cllr Jamie Osborn**  
**Seconded: Cllr Ben Price**

i) This Council recognises the dangerous and accelerating effects of climate change and ecological destruction for Norfolk.

ii) Council resolves to declare a Climate Emergency as other councils and the UK Parliament have done.

iii) Council recognises that climate change in Norfolk is inextricably tied with social and economic inequalities which mean that climate change will disproportionately affect certain groups.

iv) Council recognises the evidence from scientists that, in order to meet legally-binding climate change targets, Norfolk must reduce its CO2 emissions by a minimum of 13.5% year on year.

v) Council resolves to ask Cabinet to adopt a carbon budget tool to allow Norfolk to track its emissions profile to 2030 and facilitate the adoption of measures by the council, the council's partners, Government, and the public to help meet evidence-based carbon-reduction targets.

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**3**      **Proposer: Cllr Borrett**  
**Seconder: To be decided**

Council recognises that the QE hospital building and its infrastructure in Kings Lynn has major structural issues and must be rebuilt urgently.

Council welcomes the campaigns being run by the Eastern Daily Press and the one being run by the Local MP James Wild to highlight the urgent need for a decision.

Council congratulates the Secretary of State for Health and the Government for the money for the rebuilding of the James Paget Hospital in Great Yarmouth, which suffers from the same structural problems.

In the same way as this funding was provided Council urges the Secretary of State for Health to urgently approve a new build hospital for Kings Lynn to replace the Queen Elizabeth and to fast track its build and design.