

People and Communities Select Committee

Date: **19 November 2021**
Time: **2pm**
Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich**

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://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyUrFjYNPfq5psa-LFIJA/videos?view=2&live_view=502

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 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.

Councillors and Officers attending the meeting will be taking a lateral flow test in advance. 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](#).

Persons attending the meeting are requested to turn off mobile phones

Membership:

Cllr Fabian Eagle (Chair)
Cllr Fran Whymark (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Claire Bowes	Cllr Julian Kirk
Cllr Tim Adams	Cllr Paul Neale
Cllr Ed Connolly	Cllr Alison Thomas
Cllr Michael Dalby	Cllr Mike Smith-Clare
Cllr Brenda Jones	Cllr Eric Vardy
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris	

**For further details and general enquiries about this Agenda
please contact the Committee Officer:**

Hollie Adams on 01603 223029
or email committees@norfolk.gov.uk

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A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2 Minutes

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2021

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3 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.

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, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - 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.

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

5 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Tuesday 16 November 2021**

For guidance on submitting a public question, please visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetingsdecisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-aquestion-to-a-committee

6 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm Tuesday 16 November 2021**

7 Adult Social Services Charging Policy for Non-Residential Care - update on engagement

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Report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services

8 Covid-19 Update

Verbal Update

9 Carers Charter Progress Report

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Report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services

10 Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23

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Report by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services

11 Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework

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Report by the Executive Director of Children's Services

12 Forward Work Programme

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Report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services

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Date Agenda Published 11 November 2021



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People and Communities Select Committee Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 September 2021 at 10am in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Fabian Eagle (Chair)

Cllr Tim Adams
Cllr Michael Dalby

Cllr Brenda Jones
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris

Cllr Julian Kirk
Cllr Paul Neale
Cllr Mike Smith-Clare
Cllr Alison Thomas

Substitute Members Present:

Cllr David Bills for Cllr Eric Vardy
Cllr Phillip Duigan for Cllr Ed Connolly

Also Present

Susanne Baldwin	Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage; Adult Social Services
Michael Bateman	Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness
James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Cllr Maxine Webb	County Councillor for Wensum
James Wilson	Director of Quality and Transformation

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Bowes, Cllr Ed Connolly (Cllr Phillip Duigan substituting) Cllr Eric Vardy (Cllr David Bills substituting) and Cllr Fran Whymark.
- 1.2 The Chair nominated Cllr Alison Thomas to take the role of Vice-Chair for the meeting, seconded by Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris. Cllr Thomas was duly elected to serve as Vice-Chair for the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4. Items received as urgent business

- 4.1 No urgent business was discussed.

5. Public Questions

- 5.1 No public questions were received.

6. Member Questions and Issues

- 6.1 Two Member questions were received; see appendix A.

- 6.2.1 Cllr Brenda Jones asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Jones did not feel reassured by the answer to her substantive question. She noted that the Managing Directors of the Jeesal Group were charging £1000 and above per day for care for vulnerable people but were unable to provide staff trained in basic life support or provide basic care. She asked if this company should still be making a profit or caring for vulnerable people and whether Norfolk County Council should continue to be involved with them. She **asked** for this issue to be added to the forward work programme for the Adult Social Services Review Panel.

- 6.2.2 The Executive Director of Adult Social Services acknowledged that this was an important question and item of public concern about provision of social care where issues had been identified regarding quality of healthcare in this provider's hospital services. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services explained that Adult Social Care had a duty to intervene to assure itself that quality of care was adequate and improving; where quality of care was inadequate and not improving, the department would take steps to cease contract arrangements for care with the company. There was a duty of care to the people living in homes owned by the company to ensure that the Council was not making decisions for them, noting that the setting in question was their home. It was important however to be assured that the home was safe, care was dignified and was what each individual wanted. Steps had been taken to ensure that the issues raised about care in the hospital service of the company had not been replicated in the care service and this was not the case. Officers from Adult Social Care were in regular contact with the provider and ensuring that the legal position of the Council was met. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services **agreed** to provide a fuller written description on the work being undertaken by the department with this provider.

- 6.2.3 The Assistant Director of Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Services, reported that a programme of audits and reviews were carried out systematically with providers which were targeted based on priorities and issues received to ensure the department was working proactively with providers. Officers had been working with the Jeesal Group for some time about issues raised in hospital audits and reviews and to understand the care aspect of the company. There were action plans in place with the company which they were working on closely with the Council across a wide range of issues, not related to care.

- 6.2.4 The Chair **requested** a briefing note on this issue to be circulated to the Committee.

- 6.3.1 Cllr Maxine Webb asked a supplementary question:

- It was good to know that the Department for Education had recognised the impact of the figures and that they would be provided in 2023; Cllr Webb queried why the promise made in January 2021 to provide data had not been kept.

- 6.3.2 The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness,

responded that work on the annual review data tool had taken longer than expected; this tool had been developed during the spring and summer term of 2021 and had now been launched. Headline figures were available, but officers were not yet assured of data quality so had not been able to provide data for this month's "Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework" Committee report; this data would be available for the November report. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, outlined the headline figures: Of all the reviews in progress, around 68% had the potential to be carried out on time with 32% in backlog; the team were prioritising reviews for families with children at risk of placement breakdown.

7. Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework

- 7.1.1 The Committee received the regular report providing a range of performance data regarding services and provision for Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND). Children's Services were reporting to Committee over a 2-year period (which began in November 2020) following recommendations by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in 2020 following their published investigation report. Subsequently it had been determined that this reporting, on the data set requested by the LGSCO, be expanded to take account of Norfolk's Area SEND Strategy and our Written Statement of Action response to the Area Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) SEND Inspection
- 7.1.2 The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, introduced the key changes to data since the last report to Committee in July 2021:
- The number of children out of education with an education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) had reduced from baseline
 - The average time taken to arrange alternative provision for children continued to reduce.
 - The average time taken to produce final EHCPs compared with statutory timescales had reduced and was closer to the statutory timescale.
 - Number of complaints received had reduced and the number of complaints that were upheld had also reduced.
 - EHCP performance within 20 weeks continued to improve and was currently at 52%, with a target of 60%.
 - This month the first of three new special schools, Bure Park Specialist Academy, had opened, with the remaining two due to open in 2023.
- 7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- A Committee Member queried the Committee's role in scrutiny of this data, noting that other groups also reviewed this data, some of whom met in private. Officers clarified that the dataset regularly brought to Committee as set out in appendix 1 of the report was data which had been determined should be reported to the Committee until November 2023 by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). The regular report had been broadened to include additional information, for example, around quality measures.
 - The risks which might impact on further performance improvements were queried. Officers reported that capacity could impact on improvement. For example, an increase in educational psychologists was needed to meet demand, and if referral rates continued to increase this would impact on capacity, even with the increased number of EHCP coordinators now in post.
 - A challenge for officers was giving confidence to families and schools that

children's needs could be met earlier with the resources available to them. The Chair **requested** a briefing note for the Committee on alternatives to EHCP. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, **agreed** to provide this and information on the Local Offer website.

- It was noted that the report did not include an update on performance of the Educational Psychology Team, noting the capacity issues they were experiencing. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness **agreed** to include this information in future reports..
- At the January Committee meeting, data on “the number of appeals lodged, the outcomes of these and comparison to previous years” for future reports. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, **agreed** to include this in future reports.
- Information was **requested** for future reports on transport and any issues it was causing for young people and learning. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, agreed to include this in future reports.
- It was **agreed** that information on short stay and on-track education could be provided in future reports to the Committee.
- Officers confirmed that the main trend from upheld complaints was around placement availability, which was being addressed through the opening of new special schools in Norfolk.
- The Vice-Chair suggested that a session for Councillors on resources available to parents in addition to alternative provision would be beneficial.
- A new team within learning and inclusion had responsibility for arranging provision for excluded children and working with mainstream schools to give advice and guidance on meeting children's needs. Schools could use delegated funding to arrange provision for children based on this guidance.
- The impact of remote learning for children in the SEND cohort was queried. Officers reported that over the last 18 months there had been concerns on the impact that virtual and distance would have on children, however it had been found that virtual learning worked well for some children in the SEND cohort and for children who were not in education. Members felt **information** on remote learning and the impact on young people would be helpful in future reports.
- 90% EHCPs completed within 20 weeks was the stretch target for 2022, and it was queried whether this would be reached. Officers didn't think this target would be reached due to staff capacity and rising numbers of cases. Performance was currently at 52%, with the 2021 target of 60% and a national average of 58%. The Department for Education and Ofsted would determine in their reinspection whether Norfolk County Council have shown significant progress and if there was capacity to maintain this progress.

7.3 The Joint Committee **RESOLVED**:

1. To note the ongoing content of the SEND performance framework and agree ongoing reporting at all subsequent meetings through to Summer 2022; complying with the outcome of the LGSCO report.
2. To agree that the range of performance measures will directly assist with decision making regarding any policy changes needed over time as part of the range of SEND improvement programmes.

8. **Care Quality and Market Position Task and Finish Group – record of work undertaken**

- 8.1.1 The Committee received the report summarising the work completed by the Care Quality and Market Position Task and Finish Group, set up to undertake a deep dive into how care quality and market stability could be improved.
- 8.1.2 The Committee heard a presentation by the Assistant Director of Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Services; see appendix B:
- The Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Services, thanked Members who had been involved in the Task and Finish group which was helpful in the challenge and discussion.
 - The spend on social care was the biggest area of spend for the Council and 75% of the Adult Social Care budget spend
 - The Task and Finish Group work had been put on hold during the pandemic but recommenced in January and was completed in April 2021.
 - The Council was challenging itself around meaningful market development and recognising rapid change in what people needed to get a market shift to deal with more complex needs and how people in care wanted to live their lives.
 - It was important to focus on areas for improvement, noting that Norfolk continued to rank at the bottom of Local Authorities in the East of England
 - Some actions had already been taken, looking at quality across social care by having an integrated quality service in place and ensuring providers were held accountable for quality services and working with them on this.
 - It was important moving forward for the Council to be robust about its policy for removal of services that were not improving and what steps it would go through for this.
 - Through a workforce grant received in February 2021, more work was being done to support the wellbeing of the social care workforce.
 - Demand for home support and social care had increased over the last 20 months as well as complexity of need, meaning more people who could provide enhanced care and less standard care was needed
 - There was an action for the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group to increase their ethical commissioning.
 - £27m had been invested into care for older people and £18m invested into supported living for younger adults.

The following points were discussed and noted:

- A Member was concerned about parity of esteem within the care sector and across age ranges, noting that the lowest level of pay in the NHS was £9.51 per hour, whereas 18–20-year-olds in care could receive £6.56. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services responded that NHS healthcare assistants, band 3, received £10.80; this role was equivalent to a healthcare assistant in social care and therefore for care employers to be competitive they should pay at least this rate. Norfolk County Council paid care providers £16.70 to encourage them to pay their employees the living wage, however, were not legally able to enforce that employers paid a certain percentage of this money or a set minimum rate to their employees. The Council could take action if employers paid below the national minimum wage.
- The Chair discussed the benefits of and opportunity for carers to be self-employed, and queried support available to self-employed carers from the Council. Officers reported that the direct payment support service helped personal assistants and individuals as employers undertake employment responsibilities such as receiving payments. The Chair queried whether self-employment was promoted as an option for those wishing to go into care.

- The Executive Director of Adult Social Services **agreed** the wider performance issues from Cawston Park should be considered by the Adult Social Services Performance Review Panel.
- The workforce strategy approach in collaboration with employers would give a joint approach to recruitment and aim to change public image of the sector.
- The national funding announcement from Government the week before the meeting would provide funding towards means tested care for individuals. It would also provide funding to train staff which would impact on quality of care. In October 2023, the Council would become responsible for how much people were paying for care until they reached the cap, which would impact on the social care market.
- The implications for care providers with staff who did not wish to receive the Covid-19 vaccination were queried. Officers confirmed that there were 11,000 staff working in care homes in Norfolk of whom 95% had received their first vaccination, leaving 586 staff who had not. Calls were being made to care homes to work with them to encourage staff to get vaccinated and address vaccine hesitancy. GPs had gone into some homes to support this work.
- Officers had been making calls to care providers to identify the percentage staff shortage. The underlying vacancy rate in the social care workforce was 20% with a turnover of around 30% in home care and 20% in residential care.
- A recruitment campaign to encourage people to take up a career in social care was being developed for autumn 2021, including a mix of media, TV, radio and social media, with individuals across social care having made videos about their journey into social care and through their career for the social media campaign. Officers were looking at what could be done to promote the care sector in the media, noting that media often focussed on issues in the sector rather than the positive work carried out by staff and providers.
- The amount of practical work in the health and social care courses at college was queried and how many students went on to work in the care sector after graduating. The department worked with schools and colleges however this was a limited resource and therefore more work was needed in this area.
- The Chair noted that many social care staff worked long hours, making it difficult for them to take up training courses. Officers responded that as part of the work of “developing skills in health and social care” programme, officers were looking at how level 1 maths and English courses could be provided more flexibly. It was also important to ensure career pathways were in place to encourage people to remain in the sector.
- The Executive Director of Adult Social Care **agreed** to bring information to a future meeting on work undertaken as part of the workforce plan. He would discuss with the Chair after the meeting the idea of having a Care Champion in place.
- The Chair would **discuss** with the Executive Director of Adult Social Services on a further report to be brought back to the Committee at a later date on the issues raised in the discussion.
- The Chair discussed the idea of providers providing perks to encourage younger workers to work in care.

The Committee:

- **AGREED** that the Performance Review Panel further considers the findings of the task and finish group as part of its assurance and performance monitoring role.
- **REQUESTED** further information to be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

9. Forward Work Programme

9.1 The Committee received and considered the forward work programme.

9.2 The Committee **AGREED** the forward plan with the following additions:

- Information was requested in the Workforce Strategy report to the November Committee meeting about young people entering employment in health and social care and collaborative work with colleges to encourage young people to enter this employment pathway.

The Meeting Closed at 12:15

**Cllr Fabian Eagle, Chair,
People and Communities Select Committee**



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**People and Communities Select Committee
17 September 2021**

Item 6; Member Questions

Question from Cllr Brenda Jones

I understand that Norfolk County Council purchases 83 beds from 10 care homes owned and run by the Jeasal Group.

The Jeasal group ran Cawston Park Hospital, in the national news concerning the deaths of three people with learning difficulties in their care.

Whilst this is the social care arm of the group it is the same directors that manage social care.

One of Jeasal's care homes "requires improvement" and another is "inadequate." What evidence do we have that Jeasal are any more concerned about the social care beds they provide and why shouldn't the Council cancel contracts with the Jeasal group given their appalling conduct at Cawston Park

Response from the Chairman:

We currently have 32 people being supported in 10 care homes run by the Jeasal Residential Care Services Ltd (JRCS) , a further 32 people are supported but through contracts placed by other local authorities. We have not cancelled these contracts, but as with any provider, we will not hesitate to do so, should we consider this to be in the best interests of the people we support in these particular homes.

Our Integrated Quality Service has been working with JRCS to improve quality since late 2018 – with overall improvements noted (8 of the 10 care homes became fully compliant during this time). Since April 2021 the Service turned attention to issues identified at Cawston Park Hospital; to ensure these were not replicated in the residential provision. Concerns regarding care delivery at the hospital were not evident in the care homes. We have brought together a dedicated team across operational and commissioning directorates who have carried out both planned and unannounced visits and reviewed care for each individual. Each care home has been audited and inspected both by CQC and our Integrated Quality Service and we have sought assurance from these visits. The homes themselves are working with us and cooperating to provide the assurance we and people's families need. During this time one setting has been closed and all individuals have been found appropriate alternative care.

Closing someone's home and moving them somewhere new can be extremely damaging for people, particularly if it has been their home for some years. Individuals will have built up relationships and friendships with staff and other people living in the home and any changes or moves need detailed and careful work – with individuals and their families.

Alongside the intense monitoring we have put in place, our first priority is to weigh up what is in the best interests of each individual – and that is exactly what we are doing.

Question from Cllr Maxine Webb:

At January's Committee, after a request by members, it was agreed that "Annual review figures would be included in the next report". At July's Committee, it was reported that this data was not yet complete and would be provided "within subsequent reports" but there are still no details in September's report. An EHCP is a working document which the law requires the LA to review at least annually. When will this data be available to members to reassure us that the changing needs of children and young people with SEND are being reviewed and met?

Response from the Chairman

We are confident that the report to Committee in November this year will contain the first data set and commentary regarding EHCP annual reviews.

The Children's Services data team have now produced the initial annual review backlog reporting tool and this has been launched with the EHCP operational teams since the start of the new academic year. They are trialling it to ensure that it provides them with the management information needed to target cases that are a) on time and could be at risk of going outside of timescale and b) those already out of timescale that require prioritisation. With 7500+ annual reviews taking place each year the data model has taken longer than expected, alongside the other EHCP improvement work, ie, initial assessments.

Also, we know now that the annual statistical report to DfE for EHCP, known as 'SEN2', which is run each January will for the first time require all LA's to provide information regarding annual reviews. Therefore, the initial reporting to Committee in November will be further enhanced in January and March 2022 with the output of the report to DfE.

The Assistant Director for SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness will be able to provide a verbal update on this progress at Committee this Friday, for example the current backlog rate and initial trends over the summer months whilst the model was being tested.

Care Quality and Market Position Task and Finish Group – record of work undertaken

People and Communities Select
Committee
17th September 2021



Background to the Task and Finish Group

- Following a report to this committee in January, Members agreed to set up a Care Quality and Market Position Task and Finish Group to undertake a deep dive into how care quality and market stability could be improved.
- This work was put on hold during the earlier stages of the Covid-19 pandemic and work was completed between January and April 2021.
- The decision to undertake this work was driven by the following issues and challenges:
 - Continued concern about the quality of care across care provision in Norfolk compared to East of England and England averages
 - Increased demand for social care markets to support greater complexity of needs
 - Increased labour costs and workforce shortages, including in key skills
 - Funding pressures
- Adult social care is the Council's biggest area of spend and 75% of the ASC budget is spend directly on care services – c£350m in 2021-22
- The service has required savings of £79.294m in the last four years, with a further target of £17.858m in 2021-22

Focus for the deep dive

- The March 2020 People and Communities Select Committee agreed the scope of the Care Quality and Market Position Task and Finish Group. The focus of the work was to:
 - Carry out a deep dive, examining best practises and other initiatives and consider how the adult social care market position in Norfolk could be improved
 - Consider how to ensure quality in the market
 - Consider how to ensure financial viability within the market
 - Consider how to make working in the social care sector in Norfolk more attractive
- The task and finish group set up three sessions, focusing on quality, workforce and financial viability. The presentations for each of these sessions are included within the background documents. Each session included member and officer discussion, with the key areas for further focus included in the final presentation.

The care landscape in Norfolk

- Norfolk has:
 - 366 care settings comprising 9,639 beds across working age and older adults services.
 - 19 Extra Care Housing Schemes offering 741 tenancies.
 - 195 Supported living schemes offering 811 tenancies
 - 76 Home care framework providers of which 8 are block providers delivering care to circa. 3,500 council funded clients.
- The availability of provision is impacted upon by geographical location – securing staff in rural and coastal localities is far harder.
- Like all business, a change in circumstances such as changes in demand, rising costs aligned to business models and pressures such as staffing shortages can lead to the need to transform business or businesses that are no longer viable.
- NCC has a role set out within the Care Act to ensure its market shaping and commissioning activity:
 - Focuses on outcomes and wellbeing
 - Promotes quality services; including through workforce development and remuneration and ensuring appropriately resourced care and support
 - Supporting sustainability
 - Ensuring choice
 - Co-production with partners

Key Findings - quality

Context

Legacy of resource limited contract management, with poor quality care market provision and responsive management of concerns

Gaps in meaningful market development, little growth in services fit for the future needs of people meeting the eligibility criteria for funded care

During COVID-19, Infection Control outcomes improved over time, but overall quality standards are understood to have been impacted negatively

As at July 21 Norfolk compliant services (Rated CQC Good/Outstanding): 74%

Continues to rank at the bottom of the local authorities in the East of England

Risk based systematic audit introduced

Providers held accountable for quality deficits AND supported to improve

Collaborative work with regulator and integrated working with health

Proportionate and measured removal of provision where service fail to demonstrate capacity to improve

Recommended proactive Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) audits at an enhanced rate, is necessary to respond to legacy and COVID-19-rated quality deficits

Actions underway

Key Findings - workforce

Context

Attracting sufficient skilled staff, is critical to encouraging care providers to feel confident to develop businesses

Low pay, and poorer terms and conditions compared to other sectors is a national concern

Current lack of parity of esteem

People priced out of large areas of the county and therefore places in Norfolk where it is difficult for key workers to afford to live or work

Recruitment campaigns have had a positive impact during the pandemic, but this is against the rising challenge of significant staff shortages

Mandatory vaccination in care homes by 11th November 2021

A need to encourage more younger people into social care

Developing a skilled adult social care workforce has a key role to play in delivering high quality care

Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy implemented in 2021

Knowing our workforce

Support and information on workforce matters

Attraction, recruitment and retention

Business reliance, workplace practice and employee wellbeing

System wide education and training

Developing Skills in Health and Social Care programme

Spring/Summer recruitment campaign

Wellbeing support for the social care workforce

Actions underway

Key Findings - sustainability

Context

The sector was already struggling pre pandemic and this position has been exacerbated as a result of COVID-19. Where future demand is not needed, businesses will need to reshape services

As a Council we are not going to be able to support all at risk providers – some are delivering services that are no longer delivering what is needed

A need to be clear about commissioning intentions through the Market Position Statement, to enable providers to plan

Better understanding of the self-funder market and care intentions for people in Norfolk could help market shaping

In addition to PAMMS audits, some key providers for care in Norfolk may need more direct support to regain resilience and improve quality across their business and workforce

Cost of care exercise to ensure we understand the current costs of delivering care in Norfolk

Continuing to provide financial support via Government grants to support some of the additional costs associated with the pandemic

Development of a provider at risk dashboard

Developing the market position statement

Increasing provider engagement

Supporting the ongoing development of the Norfolk Care Association, which was formed in 2019

Developing a digital strategy for social care provision

Investment to shape the market – i.e. independent living for older people and working age adults

Actions underway

The range of actions that NCC can take

Influence

Market position statement –to help meet future demand and shape service

Promoting the care sector and social care workforce and careers

Supporting a digital strategy including piloting new technologies

Engage and Communicate

Early involvement of providers with policy changes and communication on new ways of working

Providing advice and guidance and working across the health and social care sector

Developing strategies to help engage, prioritise and coordinate improvement agenda i.e. workforce strategy

Direct support

Being a good commissioner/ customer

Quality reviews to help address issues

Supporting campaigns, wellbeing support, ensuring advice and guidance and networks

Ethical commissioning with strong contracts that promote quality provision

Annual uplift and fair price for care

Direct action to meet statutory responsibilities and ensure continuity of care

Investment to shape the market – i.e. housing

Training

Actions and recommendation

The task and finish group supported a range of action areas to help address the issues identified. These have been developed and the following work areas have been set out to enhance quality of care and market development in Norfolk. Some of these actions have already been implemented, others are underway or require further investment

- a) Strengthening the Integrated Quality Team to support permanent placements for temporary staff and increase the number of Quality Monitoring Officer roles to enable some catch up of assessment work following the pandemic
- b) A coordinated contract management approach, working with procurement, to ensure easy access to contract information, oversight of provider performance and a shared evidence base
- c) Review of contracts to strengthen quality and workforce measures and develop an ethical commissioning approach
- d) Implementing a quality improvement and escalation policy
- e) Strengthening roles to enable oversight of compliance

Actions and recommendation

- f) Embedding a quality culture across all adult social care teams to ensure that quality is a focus in all roles and all staff understand the role that they can play through induction, training, forums and communications
- g) Undertaking the cost of care reviews and adopting tools to support this
- h) Clarifying the financial parameters for providing temporary support
- i) Ensuring adequate wellbeing and reliance support for providers
- j) Implementing the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy

People and Communities Select Committee

Item No: 7

Report Title: Adult Social Services Charging Policy for Non-Residential Care - update on engagement

Date of Meeting: 19 November 2021

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Borrett (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention)

Responsible Director: James Bullion (Executive Director Adult Social Services)

Executive Summary

In December 2020, a Judicial Review identified that changes to Norfolk County Council's charging policy had unintentionally discriminated against a group of people the judge identified as severely disabled. As a result we amended our Charging Policy for non-residential care to address the findings of the High Court. We contacted everyone affected and repaid any money that we owed because of this change. Alongside reimbursing those affected, we undertook to work closely with disabled people in recognition that to rebuild trust following the Judicial Review we needed to approach engagement differently.

For some months now we have been engaging with the disabled community and are part way through that journey. The community told us that Disability Related Expenses (DRE) was a key area for them, so we have focussed initially on that. Some of the key issues we have heard about are presented in this paper which updates the Committee on our engagement work to date and sets out work planned for the coming months.

Recommendations

The Select Committee is asked to:

- a) **Note the completion of reimbursement**
- b) **Note the update on the work currently in progress**
- c) **Agree to receive a further report on the engagement at a subsequent meeting, including clarity on national reforms and the implications for charging and next steps**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 In December 2020 a Judicial Review identified that changes to Norfolk County Council's (the Council) charging policy had unintentionally discriminated against a group of people the judge identified as severely disabled.
- 1.2 As a result, we made an interim amendment to our charging policy for non-residential care to address the findings of the High Court.

- 1.3 We contacted all 2366 people affected and repaid any money that we owed to people as a result of this change. As of 12 May 2021, we have either sent a bank payment, a cheque, or reduced the direct debit of all clients where we owed funds.
- 1.4 We also wrote to the people affected that we do not owe money to.
- 1.5 Alongside this reimbursement, we undertook to work closely with disabled people to review and better understand the impact of our policy and processes for charging people for their care.
- 1.6 This paper updates the Committee on our engagement work to date and sets out the work planned for the coming months.

2. Progress to date on engagement

- 2.1 We recognised that to rebuild trust following the Judicial Review, there was a need to approach engagement differently. For this reason, rather than designing and leading engagement from within the Adult Social Services Department, we commissioned external expertise to bring independence to the work.
- 2.2 The commissioned partner, ThePublicOffice, has a track record in working with communities to design and deliver meaningful engagement.
- 2.3 We invited groups and organisations who represent the communities affected by our policies to form a reference group which would work with ThePublicOffice to design how we engage with others.
- 2.4 The Engagement Reference Group includes:
 - a) Carers Voice
 - b) Disability Network Norfolk Group
 - c) Equal Lives
 - d) Family Voice Norfolk
 - e) Healthwatch
 - f) Judicial Review Implementation and Monitoring Group (no longer members of the group but contributing to the work)
 - g) Making It Real
 - h) Norfolk Autism Partnership Board
 - i) Opening Doors
- 2.5 The Engagement Reference Group was very concerned that the Council might want this engagement to ask disabled people and carers the same questions that have been asked before. The Reference Group feels that that the Council's officers and members need to understand much better the challenges and extra expenses of living with a disability in Norfolk.
- 2.6 Initial discussion through the reference group highlighted that Disability Related Expenses (DRE) was an area which the group felt needed change and improvement.
- 2.7 The group wanted to get across to the Council how difficult, stressful and upsetting it can be working with and being supported by the Council. The DRE workshops

designed by the Engagement Reference Group and ThePublicOffice seek to address some of these things.

- 2.8 The Engagement Reference Group invited people to come to the DRE workshops through their own networks and contacts to reach disabled people and carers who the Council might not otherwise hear from.
- 2.9 The first DRE workshops were an opportunity for the Council's officers to listen to people who use social care services and carers, to hear their experiences and understand how they feel.
- 2.10 The commitment the Council's officers have made to this work is to:
- a) listen to the experiences and ideas of people using social care services and their carers
 - b) come with creativity and an open mind to explore new ideas together
 - c) bring our knowledge of the Council's responsibilities under the Care Act
 - d) use what we learn to provide evidence as part of decision for Members to confirm or amend the interim charging policy
 - e) check any proposed changes with the community in early 2022 before they are implemented
 - f) inform everyone who takes part about what changes as a result of the work we do together

3. Learning from workshops

- 3.1 The things we heard at the first workshops about DRE were:

"I don't know what I can claim for ...so I never know if my claim will be accepted or not"

"I asked a question months ago and did not get a reply"

"Making a big purchase of something I need is too risky because I have to pay up front and then the claim may be refused"

"I don't have the time or emotional energy to make the claims and I have to pick my battles to survive"

"The process doesn't make me feel good so I would rather not claim"

"Every interaction with the Council feels like a potential for them to cut back. It's better to avoid them"

- 3.2 The next workshops will bring the Council's officers and disabled people/carers together to explore possible solutions looking at both simple and complex answers. We will update the Committee on this action planning at the meeting.

4. Further engagement and listening

- 4.1 Alongside the DRE workshops, the Engagement Reference Group are also helping ThePublicOffice to design a diaries exercise to engage the wider disabled community in Norfolk.
- 4.2 The diaries are a different way for disabled people and carers to tell us what life is like and to share their stories and experiences in a way that will help the Council's officers and members to learn.
- 4.3 The Engagement Reference Group are using their networks to invite disabled people and carers to keep a diary for a week to record their experiences and show what life is like. These will be gathered together to provide material to support learning experiences for the Council's about a range of disabled experiences.
- 4.4 ThePublicOffice are also working with the Council's social care colleagues to offer disabled people who live in supported accommodation the chance to participate in the diary exercises as we think it's important to reach disabled people who live in different settings.
- 4.5 As part of the work to date, our Client Services Finance team put themselves forward in readiness for the DRE workshops for training around active listening skills. This was delivered by ThePublicOffice and was designed to help staff apply their learning in a setting where others are sharing their lived experience of disability, caring and accessing the Council's services including the DRE process.
- 4.6 This was a powerful process and one which the Council is looking to extend to other staff across Adult Social services, and to members who would be interested in taking this up.
- 4.7 We are also in the early stages of planning – through the Reference Group – a community learning event in the new year which will bring together people with lived experience, council staff, partners where relevant and members. We think this would be an opportunity to share the findings from the engagement work, listen to people's experiences and work collectively on ways to strengthen support and services for disabled people who rely on Adult Social Services.

5. White Paper on Reform of Adult Social Services

- 5.1 In September 2021 the Government released Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care and a new funding plan.
- 5.2 Build Back Better confirms some far-reaching changes for how people who need social care support will pay for that and be charged. Central to the changes will be the setting up of individual Care Accounts against which people will record money spent on care. There will be a lifetime 'cap' of £86,000 on the cost of "personal care", and there will be other changes which affect how people's contribution to the costs of their care are calculated.
- 5.3 The publication did include an increase in line with inflation of the Minimum Income Guarantee and Personal Expenses Allowance from April 2022, but it was light on

other detail about the charging regime. A more detailed White Paper on social care reform later in the year and we expect this in December.

- 5.4 Links to the Government's Build Back Better plan and a Local Government Association briefing on the plan can be found in Section 11 – Background papers.

6. Next steps

- 6.1 We do not want the work of the Reference Group, facilitated by ThePublicOffice, to be a one-off engagement. Our ambition is to find a way to continue to sustain the dialogue and work constructively on both the reforms that will be coming, and other practical improvements we can make to services and processes for disabilities.
- 6.2 As well as the issue of charging for care, there are a number of other barriers which have been raised with us which over the course of the next year we would want to address.
These include:
- a) Direct Payments – we want to increase the use of direct payments and would need to understand how we can encourage greater use
 - b) Transport – the pandemic has severely disrupted transport
 - c) Communications – how accessible we are to disabled people, and how we make our communications clear and easy to understand. Where there are complex issues, how we ensure people have good advocacy and independent advice to help them
- 6.3 Our intention is to return to this Committee with an update on what we've learned from listening to disabled people and carers, clarity on national reforms and the implications for charging and next steps.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None at this stage.

8. Resource Implications

8.1 Staff / Property/ IT:

- 8.1.1 None at this stage

9. Other Implications

9.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):

- 9.1.1 The work we are doing which has been described in this paper involves engaging with, and listening to, disabled people and carers to hear their experiences.
- 9.1.2 Listening to and understanding these experiences is an important part of gathering evidence about the impact on disabled people of accessing services and experiencing the Council's financial processes.

- 9.1.3 This evidence along with other types of evidence will inform our EqIA if changes to the DRE process or our charging policy are proposed in the future.

10 Recommendations

10.1 The Select Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the completion of reimbursement
- b) Note the update on the work currently in progress
- c) Agree to receive a further report on the engagement at a subsequent meeting, including clarity on national reforms and the implications for charging and next steps

11 Background papers

- 11.1 The Government's plan can be found online here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care>
- 11.2 The Local Government Association briefing on Build Back Better can be found online here:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-response-build-back-better-our-plan-health-and-social-care#introduction>

Officer Contact

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

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Engagement work on our Charging Policy



Norfolk County Council



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Contents



**What is this
report about?**



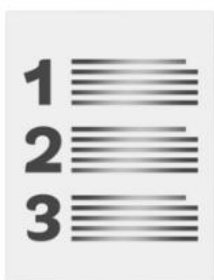
**Engagement
work so far**



White Paper



**What will we
do next?**



Recommendations

What is this report about (1)?



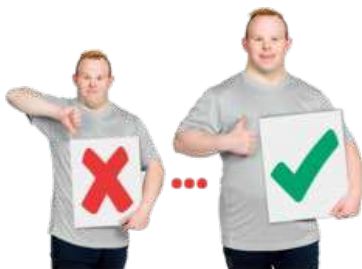
We have a **charging policy**.
This says how we work out how much people have to pay for their care.



In December 2020 a judge at the High Court decided that our charging policy discriminated against severely disabled people.



The judge said that we didn't mean to be unfair and we couldn't have known that our policy was going to be unfair.



We then made changes to our charging policy to make it fairer.

What is this report about (2)?



We have now contacted all the 2,366 people who were affected. We had paid back everyone who we owed money to by 12 May 2021.



We also wrote to the people affected who we did not owe money to.



We promised to work more closely with disabled people regarding our charging policy.



This report is about our engagement work so far and the work planned for the future.

Engagement work so far (1)



We asked an independent organisation called 'ThePublicOffice' to work with us.



We invited groups and organisations who represent the communities affected by our policies to form a **reference group**. This group worked with ThePublicOffice to design how we engage with others.



The **Engagement Reference Group** includes:

- Carers Voice
- Disability Network Norfolk Group
- Equal Lives
- Family Voice Norfolk
- Healthwatch
- Judicial Review Implementation and Monitoring Group
- Making It Real
- Norfolk Autism Partnership Board
- Opening Doors

Engagement work so far (2)



The Engagement Reference Group wanted to make sure that Norfolk County Council's staff and Councillors better understand the challenges and extra expenses for people living with a disability in Norfolk.



The group decided to talk about **Disability Related Expenses** (DRE) first. They used their own networks and contacts to invite disabled people and carers who the Council might not otherwise hear from.



Staff promised to listen carefully to what was said and to talk to everyone regarding any changes before they happen.

Engagement work so far (3)



The things that people told us include:

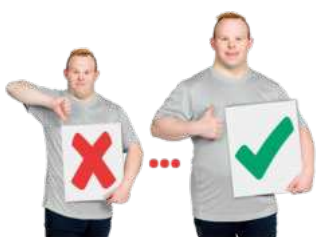
I can claim for ...so I never know if my claim will be accepted or not"

"I asked a question months ago and did not get a reply"

"The process does not make me feel good so I would rather not claim"

"Making a big purchase is risky because I have to pay up front and my claim maybe refused"

I don't know what I can claim for ...so I never know if my claim will be accepted or not"



At the next workshops, the Council's officers, disabled people and carers will think about possible answers to these issues.

Engagement work so far (4)



The Engagement Reference Group is also helping ThePublicOffice to design a diaries exercise.



The diaries are a different way for disabled people and carers to tell us what life is like. Disabled people and carers are being invited to keep a diary for a week to record their experiences and show what life is like. This includes people living in supported accommodation.



These diaries will enable people to share their stories and experiences in a way that will help the Council's officers and members to learn.



Our Client Services Finance team has received training in active listening. We are also planning a community learning event in the New Year.

White Paper



In September 2021 the Government a report called 'Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care. This is the government's new plan for health and social care.



It includes possible changes to charging for care in the future. We hope to find out more information in December 2021.

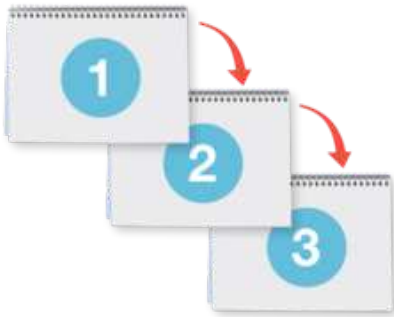


Therefore we may need to change our charging policy again in the future.

What will we do next?



We want to find a way for our engagement work to continue.



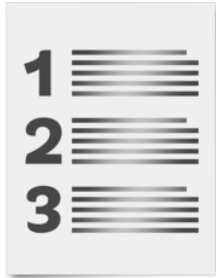
As well as our charging policy, there are other issues that disabled people and their carers tell us are important. These include:

- Direct payments
- Transport
- Communications



We plan to return to this Committee in the future with a further update on what we have learned from disabled people and carers in Norfolk.

Recommendations



What do we want the People and Communities Select Committee to do?



1. Understand that we had paid back everyone who we owed money to by 12 May 2021.



2. Understand the engagement work we have completed so far.



3. Agree to receive a report in the future regarding the further engagement work we plan to do.

People and Communities Select Committee

Item No: 9

Report Title: Carers Charter Progress Report

Date of Meeting: 19 November 2021

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Bill Borrett (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention)

Responsible Director: James Bullion (Executive Director Adult Social Services)

Executive Summary

Norfolk County Council (The Council) launched the Norfolk Carers Charter in October 2018, with the clear intention to raise the profile of the almost 100,000 unpaid carers who play a key role in the health and wellbeing of our county, improving the support available to them through partnership work and promoting carer friendly communities. The Charter was produced by Members and carers working as a task and finish group.

Since the Charter's launch the Council has worked towards the commitments made, and our 2021 progress report from the Carers Charter Working Group is enclosed as an appendix to this report, to showcase the work completed in this area over the past year.

This report sets out the important work completed across 2021 towards the Council's commitments in the Carers Charter. Identifying and supporting carers is vital to the health and wellbeing of carers and our county.

Working with partners across Norfolk we have made significant progress in raising awareness of young carers in education, strengthening support for carers in the community, commencing and scoping support for Parent Carers, to aid them with navigating their way through Children's to Adult Social Services and, as an employer in our own right, leading the way in becoming a carer friendly employer.

There is still work to do to raise the profile of unpaid carers in our county, in the workplace and in education, and the Carers Charter Working Group continues to respond to the challenges of caring through Covid-19 and beyond.

Recommendations:

The Select Committee is asked to:

- a) **Endorse the 2021 Carers Charter progress report**
- b) **Review the working group's focus areas for 2022**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Carers play an essential role supporting people of all ages in Norfolk. There are currently an estimated 99,419 unpaid carers who look after a family member or friend.

Nearly 24% of those carers provide over 50 hours care a week, 78% identify as female and 60% are between 45-64 years old. The support that unpaid carers provide is estimated to be worth between £500 million and £1.9 billion per year.

- 1.2 Becoming a carer impacts on many aspects of a person's life, therefore it is essential that everyone 'ThinksCarer'. There are almost seven million carers in the UK. three in every five people will become a carer at some point in their lives. One in seven of all workers juggle work and care – compared to one in nine eight years ago. 5% of UK adults have given up work to provide unpaid-care, while a further 4% have reduced their working hours in order to provide care. Over the next 30 years, the number of carers will increase by 3.4 million. ([Carers UK](#)).
- 1.3 In October 2018 the Council launched the Norfolk Carers Charter. This was borne out of a recognition that carers are first and foremost people in their own right. Also, that its essential they have the opportunity for a life outside of caring and should be supported by their employer to remain in work. Through the Carers Charter we work to promote carer friendly communities so that our county 'ThinksCarer'.

2. Work Through 2021

- 2.1 The creation of the Charter marked a major development in raising awareness of unpaid carers throughout Norfolk. Since its launch the Council has worked towards the pledges it made in the Charter and undertaken extensive work towards the commitments made within the Charter's three pillars:
 - a) Carers in work
 - b) Young carers and young adult carers in education
 - c) Carers in the community
- 2.2 The progress report attached to this paper sets out how work has moved forward this year, highlighting some of the important developments that have strengthened how we identify and support carers:
 - a) In March 2021, Adult Social Services worked extensively with our health partners to identify and encourage Carers to receive their vaccine; we had over 2000 Carers register on our online portal
 - b) In July 2021, Adult Social Services launched an updated emergency planning webform, which was created in conjunction with Carers, to enable Carers to register emergency plans, so we could respond accordingly in an emergency
 - c) Adult Social Services have also committed funding to support the development of an All Age Carers strategy, which will be delivered by Carers Voice
 - d) Adult Social Services continues to deliver the first social impact bond in the country focusing on carers, securing £4.1 million to increase support for Norfolk's unpaid carers through a strengthened carer support service that went live in September 2020. Since it's inception over 2000 new Carers have been registered with the service
 - e) Parent Carers have also been included in the Charter commitments and work has been underway this year to support Parent Carers across a number of areas, including reviewing and updating the Parent Carer Assessment tool, Transition Parent Carer Assessments and creating a Parent Carer Emergency Planning tool
 - f) Children's Services have also launched a Young Carers Emergency Planning tool and work is underway to create a joint protocol between Children's and Adult Services to support Young Adult Carer Transition Assessments
- 2.3 Covid-19 has increased the burden on carers. 81% of carers surveyed by Carers UK report that they provide more care since the pandemic began, 74% of carers report

feeling exhausted and worn out from caring during the pandemic and 64% report that their mental health has worsened as a result ([Carers UK, 2020](#)).

- 2.4 Since the outbreak, the Council has responded to support carers by:
- a) Providing check in calls
 - b) Prioritising carer emergency planning (contingency planning); including updating the Carers Emergency Planning webform
 - c) Encouraging uptake of the COVID-19 vaccination for carers
 - d) Promoting the carer support service
 - e) Distributing 4000 wellbeing packs
 - f) Securing funding for 40 Alcove Devices, for Carer support service to utilise to support digitally excluded Carers
 - g) Raising awareness of the Local Assistance Scheme with partners
 - h) Working with partners to develop communications and engagements for Carers Rights Week in June 2021

3. Focus for 2022

- 3.1 The Carers Charter Task and Finish group, which reports into People Select Committee, continues to meet, recognising the important role they play in promoting the Charter's principles and monitoring the progress of the work.
- 3.2 Among the areas to focus on over the next twelve months are:
- a) Promoting digital inclusiveness and confidence
 - b) Reviewing and improving our replacement care offer
 - c) Reviewing transition pathways for Young Adult & Parent Carers
 - d) Working in liaison with the Council's dementia lead to improve Dementia support for Carers and their cared for
 - e) Carer support within armed forces families
 - f) Working with district and parish councils to promote carer friendly communities and employers
 - g) Engaging health partners in collaborative work to build greater awareness and identification of carers including the D2A redesign
 - h) Workforce project - Work is underway to map out support and training available and explore how this can be utilised to support Carers to learn vital skills in respect of their caring role
 - i) Employment support - Reviewing intranet content and establishing Carers Advisory Group to make recommendations to support employee Carers, including a Carers passport
 - j) Reaching minority Carers - Undertaking scoping work across organisations to find out how we can reach and engage minority carers. This work is also going to be taken forward as part of All Age Carers strategy
 - k) Chamber of Commerce to explore receiving Carer Friendly Tick award.
 - l) Development of ALL Age Carers Strategy

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None identified

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 None identified

6. Resource Implications

6.1 Staff:

6.1.1 None identified

6.2 Property:

6.2.1 None identified

6.3 IT:

6.3.1 None identified

7. Other Implications

7.1 Legal Implications: Non Applicable- this is a Carer Charter and as such is around various services pledges to support carers moving forward over the coming year; through a range of services and support.

7.2 Human Rights Implications: Non Applicable - This is a Carer Charter NCC have supported with the creation of and discusses progress over the past year in key areas and pledges for support over the coming year for Carers across a range of areas e.g. Parent Carers, Adult Carers etc. and minority carers.

7.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The Carers Charter aims to improve the support available to unpaid carers of all ages through partnership work and promoting carer friendly communities in Norfolk. It will support organisations throughout Norfolk to improve their carer awareness and look at how they can better support carers.

Carers will receive an improved service, which means the proposals should not have an adverse effect on anyone, including anyone with a protected characteristic.

Carers in Norfolk are more likely to identify as:

- Female
- White British
- Aged 45 – 64

This means that these groups are most likely to benefit from improved services, though carers with other protected characteristics, or with no protected characteristics, will also benefit.

7.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): NA- this does not contain any sensitive or revealing information.

7.5 Any Other Implications:

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Select Committee is asked to:

- a) Endorse the 2021 Carers Charter progress report**
- b) Review the working group's focus areas for 2022**

Officer Contact

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

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Carers Charter Progress Report

October 2021

www.norfolk.gov.uk/thinkcarers

#ThinkCarers

Facts & Figures:

Adult Carers



Carers UK, 2021

Young Carers



In the last census, 600 young carers and young adult carers in Norfolk reported they provided over 50 hours of care a week

Caring Together, 2021.

Facts & Figures:

Parent Carers

52%

of families with a disabled child are at risk of experiencing poverty

76%

of families don't visit the GP about their child's disability or condition

The following are from the Parent Carer Survey completed locally in April:

31%

of parent carers were caring for multiple children with support needs

85%

feel they are not able to take a break from their caring role

53%

not in work of any kind

Caring Together, 2021.

Locally

Carers provide an essential role in supporting people of **ALL** ages

24% provide **50+ hours** of carer per week

There are an estimated **99,419** unpaid Carers in Norfolk

78% identify as female and **60%** between 45-64 years old

It is estimated the support they provide is worth between **£500 million to £1.9 billion per annum**

Carers in Work:

At Norfolk County Council, supporting carers in work remains a high priority. Particularly within the context that over a third of our workforce identified themselves as a Carer in the recent 2021 employee survey. Based on those that responded, 8.31% (2020 - 7.6%) confirmed that they are a working carer and 33.12% (2020 - 29.5%) responsible for children under the age of 18.

Also, as part of our recent employee survey, we have a 'balance of the deal' score. This brings together responses to all the questions to show overall, how happy NCC colleagues are with the balance between the employer and employee contribution (sometimes called, the psychological contract). The 2021 survey showed that colleagues with parental caring responsibilities scored the same as colleagues without any caring responsibility. The score for working carers, whilst the score was not poor, it was two points below the score for non carers/parental carers and our future plans will focus on working carers".

NCC also has the Carer Friendly Tick (Employer) accreditation and are committed to renewing our application for this when our current one expires in July 2022.

We continue to make progress in respect of our Carer Charter commitments and have used the learning from the past year, during the pandemic to take this forward. We have continued with our established approach to supporting carers, by providing a swift, agile and positive response; attempting to engage a larger audience of staff and enabling them to continue balancing their home and work commitments.

Key developments over the past year include:

- **Increased Flexibility** - recent events (COVID19) may have made balancing the work and home life even harder so in response to this, a revised temporary policy framework was implemented to increase the flexibility available to our employees, including:
 - Suspension of core working hours
 - Option to purchase additional annual leave
 - Option to temporarily reduce working hours
 - Flexible pay options for unpaid leave
 - Guaranteed pay

Communications Plan – Key dates such as Carers Rights Day and Carers Week continue to be highlighted in terms of our commitment and support to carers. Work is regularly underway with our communications and change and engagement teams to ensure information reaches as wide an audience as possible.

Supporting those with caring responsibilities has also featured heavily in all methods of communications around COVID19 which includes daily/bi-weekly employee/manager updates as well as weekly updates/BLOGs from the Head of Paid Service. These continue to take place.

Intranet - refreshed information for carers – We continue to review our information available to staff on Carers. With the key aim to ensure information is easier to find and accessible. We are about to commence work in this area, to explore updating information.

We continue to support managers to have discussions with their team members about their caring needs. This included holding a virtual Zoom event during Carers Week, for both employees who have caring responsibilities and managers, sharing information on real life situations and information about available support. This was supported by a range of internal communications, including the Head of Paid Service Blog and a refresh of our Intranet pages for Carers and managers, including information on wellbeing support available. It was clear from the responses that most felt able to do their job and care for their loved ones with the flexibility NCC has provided people to set their working hours, including catching up during evenings and weekends.

The Carers Advisory Group had just been set up when last year's update was produced. Since then this group has continued to develop, meeting monthly and has grown to 48 members. This group reports directly to the Head of Paid Service and Director for People and has made a number of recommendations which are now being implemented. This includes the development of a Carers passport which will make it easier for carers when they change roles within NCC. We are also registered with Employers for Carers and are exploring how we can develop training for staff and managers in this area. Our Operational Business Lead for Carers has attended a session and made staff aware of the Carers Matter Norfolk service and their legal right to a Carers Assessment; they also promoted the Carers Emergency Planning offer and encouraged them to register with this.

We are also a member of the Norfolk and Waveney Inclusion leads group which is made up of Health and social care employers. Covid response had led to a delay in introducing Caring Together to the group however this will happen during 2021.

Our updated Online learning manager kit now includes guidance for managers on supporting carers within their teams.

We are also a member of Carers UK Employers for Carers resource and are exploring how we can promote this among managers and staff.

Progress will continue into next year with further work planned around engagement and communications as we continue to review the support options available.



Young Carers in Education:

A continuing campaign from September 2019 initiated by the previous Chairman of the Council, Harry Humphrey, promotes the Carer friendly tick in Schools, for example through Management Information sheets to schools and through awareness raising sessions. As of May 2021, 19 schools were awarded Friendly Tick Award and 65 are actively working towards this.

There has been a large amount of training for school staff delivered through webinars with safeguarding and support leads in schools, the training was designed to help schools to upskill staff in being able to identify and support Young Carers and their families. These workshops have been very well attended and we have received fantastic feedback and requests from schools to continue as the training has enabled them to share good practice and proactively identify and support the young carers.

In November 2020, a Carer Awareness and Voice Co-ordinator from Caring Together met with a group of advisers and officers from Learning and Inclusion to provide information and raise awareness. Following this, a further session was arranged with representatives from the Norwich Opportunity Area. A Carer Awareness and Voice Co-ordinator from Caring Together provided a similar session for attendees of the CEO network.

As more routine visits and meetings with schools and academy trusts resume following the pandemic, conversations will include promotion of Carer Friendly Tick Award and schools' understanding of and provision for Young Carers

Other developments & ongoing work:

- Representative from Caring Together has attended DSL network meetings to raise awareness
- Representative from Caring Together has met with advisers and officers across Learning and Inclusion teams to raise awareness
- When visits/meetings with schools and academy trusts resume, conversations will include promotion of Carer Friendly Tick Award and schools' understanding of and provision for Young Carers.

Young Carers in the Community:

We continued to develop our multi agency working, which commenced as part of our COVID-19 response for young carers, which has proved invaluable to help us improve our support to young carers and their families.

We also have a commitment to continue to encourage uptake of the Carer Friendly Tick award for Education amongst education providers.

Also, the multi agency partnership working around young carers has been shortlisted for a national award- Young Carer award in the CYP Now Awards 2021.

Other areas we have worked on include:

- We have improved the pathways and access to services for children and young people and their families in partnership with our providers and operational teams.
- We have continued to review our information and toolkit for the multi-agency partnership with the key aim to ensure information is easier to find and accessible. This work is ongoing.
- Support for children, young people and their families has continued throughout COVID virtually with additional support offered where needed.
- We have also worked with Young Carers and Carer organisations to develop the Young Carers Emergency Planning tool and this continues to be promoted.
- We have put in place agreements using Data Protection Impact Assessments with approximately 80 schools enabling us to share data of Young Carers in need. This helped Children Services to reach out to every known young carer household in writing and offer support.



Following the successful awareness campaign launched last year and the improved pathways has resulted in increases in young people accessing support and services.

Progress next year will focus on:

- Continued Joint multi-agency working to ensure needs are met
- Continued work to develop our tool kit and accessible information
- Developing the Education Achievement and Vulnerable Groups Access Services; which is a GDPR compliant system that collects information about the educational attendance, and needs of Norfolk's young carers and young adult carers.
- Multi-agency Professionals Tool kit for identifying and supporting young carers, including key tools such as 'emergency plans' co-produced with young carers and partner agencies jointly.
- Streamlined pathway for schools to access support both via commissioned service (Carers Matter Norfolk) and within Children's Services.
- Supporting above will include a young adult transition assessment and support framework (14-25) jointly between Children's and Adults Services.

Parent Carers in the Community:

Significant work has commenced in this area over the past 12 months; with Children's and Adult Social Services committed to supporting Parent Carers, particularly in respect of navigating the Health & Social Care system and transition between Children's and Adult Social Services. It is recognised that much more work is needed to support Parent Carers and this work continues. Parent Carers have also been included in the Carers Charter moving forward.



Progress includes:

- Work completed by Children's Services, in particular from the Children with Disabilities Service, to review their service and redesign this accordingly.
- This includes working with Parent Carers to identify areas of positive and negative practice and use their input as experts, to help shape and design services & support.
- In conjunction with Caring Together and Family Voice, sub groups have been formed to work on designing a new Parent Carer Assessment form and Parent Carers Emergency Planning offer and explore the current transition offer for Parent Carers.
- Work also includes scoping and mapping out of current services and exploring how this can be communicated to Parent Carers, across a range of forums.
- Our Preparing For Adult Life Team has also been central to this work and the Operational Business Lead for Adult Carers has worked closely with them, to ensure they #Think Carer and offer and complete Carers Assessments for Parent Carers, as part of transition planning for their child/young person.
- Work is also underway to review the short breaks offer as well and Parent Carers are being consulted on this.
- As part of Carers Week this year, Caring Together, in conjunction with Family Voice arranged a session for Parent Carers, which was attended by NCC representatives from Childrens Services, PFAL and Adult Social Services, to provide an overview of support available for Parent Carers and enable Parent Carers to ask a range of questions.

Progress in the coming year will focus on:

- Developing a Parent Carers Emergency Plan.
- Developing the support offer for carers, including short breaks, parent carer needs assessments, access to welfare rights advice, information and support and review of the front door offer.
- Designing a Parent Carer Assessment form.
- Exploring the wider support offer from children's services, when they do not meet the PFAL criteria.
- Considering how to provide advice, information and support to those supporting their child under a home schooling arrangement.
- Refreshing the Parent Carer Assessment and Parent Carer Transition pathways.

Adult Carers in the Community:

Norfolk County Council remains committed to supporting adult carers. This includes enabling Carers to self-identify, recognising the importance of early identification and facilitating good quality conversations with carers. These conversations cover topics from their life and aspirations, caring role and ensuring they have access to good quality advice, information and support.

A key area is ensuring our social care workforce can effectively engage with carers, from raising awareness of carers' legal rights, including a right to a Carers Assessment, to signposting carers to valuable support. In the past year we have updated our carer related practice guidance.

Another area we have worked on is developing our carers webpages on the Norfolk County Council website. This has included:

- Adding a carer specific page on the Norfolk Community Directory with signposting information for all carers, which was agreed through co-production with carers.
- Updating the carer pages to ensure they are up to date, informative and relevant, without being overwhelming.
- Our Carers Emergency Planning offer has also been updated, with an improved online webform and a key fob added to the Carers Emergency Card, following feedback from Carers.

We are also exploring other ways in which we can promote information, particularly for those who are not able to access the internet, struggle with literacy etc. In the past year, we have done the following:

- Sent text messages to ALL registered Carers via their GP surgery, promoting Carers Matter Norfolk and Carers Emergency Planning.
- Used Carers Voice's newsletter, which is sent via post to carers without access to email, to share key messages with carers.
- Worked to support carers with digital literacy through use of Alcove devices, with the ambition to increase their confidence in accessing services online.

We continue to recognise the importance for carers to have a life outside of caring, including the fact carers should be regarded as experts in their own life's and that carers are people first and should be supported to achieve what matters to them. This has been evidenced in ongoing co production work with carers. We have met with carers to seek their views about Carers Emergency Planning, Safeguarding and Hospital Discharge. The aim is to take their views, suggestions and experiences and use these to inform service developments. There are plans later this year to develop a focus group with Carers, to seek their views and suggestions about Replacement Care.

Enhanced Support:

- Following extensive Carer engagement and analysis of our Carer support offer, the enhanced Carers support offer delivered by Carers Matter Norfolk has been in place for over a year now.
- This service can deliver Carers Assessments on behalf of the council and has access to short term carers' breaks services and a Health & Wellbeing grant. This means carers can receive a lot more support from one service, only needing to tell their story once; unless in specific circumstances they require support from NCC.
- Since its inception over 2500 Carers have been referred to the service and there is ongoing work to promote the service across Norfolk. Assessments continue to be audited regularly, to ensure the service is delivering good quality assessments and outcomes for Carers.
- We have also managed to secure 40 Alcove Devices (a more simplified version of an I-Pad), for the service to provide to digitally excluded Carers, to reduce social isolation and enable them to sustain their caring role.
- Alongside this, we are continuing to develop our replacement care offer, arranged by Norfolk County Council, which we want to make more straightforward for eligible carers to access and book. A focus group is going to be set up to seek the inclusion and views of Carers.
- We have also distributed 4000 wellbeing packs to Carers during the pandemic, which include PPE and 'pick me up' items. Carers have said that these packs have made them feel valued and supported during the pandemic.
- In the past year we also worked closely with our health partners to launch and deliver the 'Call to Carers' campaign, to raise awareness among Carers of the COVID vaccine. Over 2000 Carers registered with the online portal to arrange their vaccine, and over 700 provided consent to be sent information about carer support available for them in Norfolk. We have sent them an initial email communication including information about: Carers Matter Norfolk; Emergency Planning; Wellbeing Packs; and access to PPE.
- We have also updated our emergency planning offer, redesigning the webform to enable more key information to be recorded; so more effective support can be provided in the event of an emergency. Over 2000 Carers have registered a plan since early 2021.

- Our Operational Business Lead is also working closely with our Norfolk Adult Safeguarding Board and Carers, to explore how we can ensure Carers are considered and supported in respect of Safeguarding. Another area we are considering is how we can raise awareness among Carers, staff and other organisations about abuse, the different forms of abuse and how to get support, to ensure a holistic and unified approach. Carers are also going to be incorporated into our Safeguarding Strategy.
- Our Operational Business Lead is also working closely with our front door redesign project leads, to ensure there is a focus on Carers and they have access to good quality advice, information and support.
- Another area we continue to work on is the redesign of the government mandated Discharge to Assess model. Our Operational Business Lead is working closely with the project lead and wider health system, including and most importantly Carers, to aid with the design of this and ensure Carers are involved and their views sought throughout this.
- We are also working with our voluntary sector, Health and District Council partners, to consider how we can identify carers, particularly carers with disabilities, carers of a black, Asian or other minority ethnic background and LGBT+ carers, who may experience barriers to accessing services and are looking to incorporate this into the All Age Carers strategy that is being developed.

Carers Champion:

In addition to the Member Champion role for Carers, in Adult Social Care we continue to deliver a “Carers Champion” approach, meaning each locality and service area has a champion with expertise in working with and supporting carers, who will be able to advise and guide their teams.

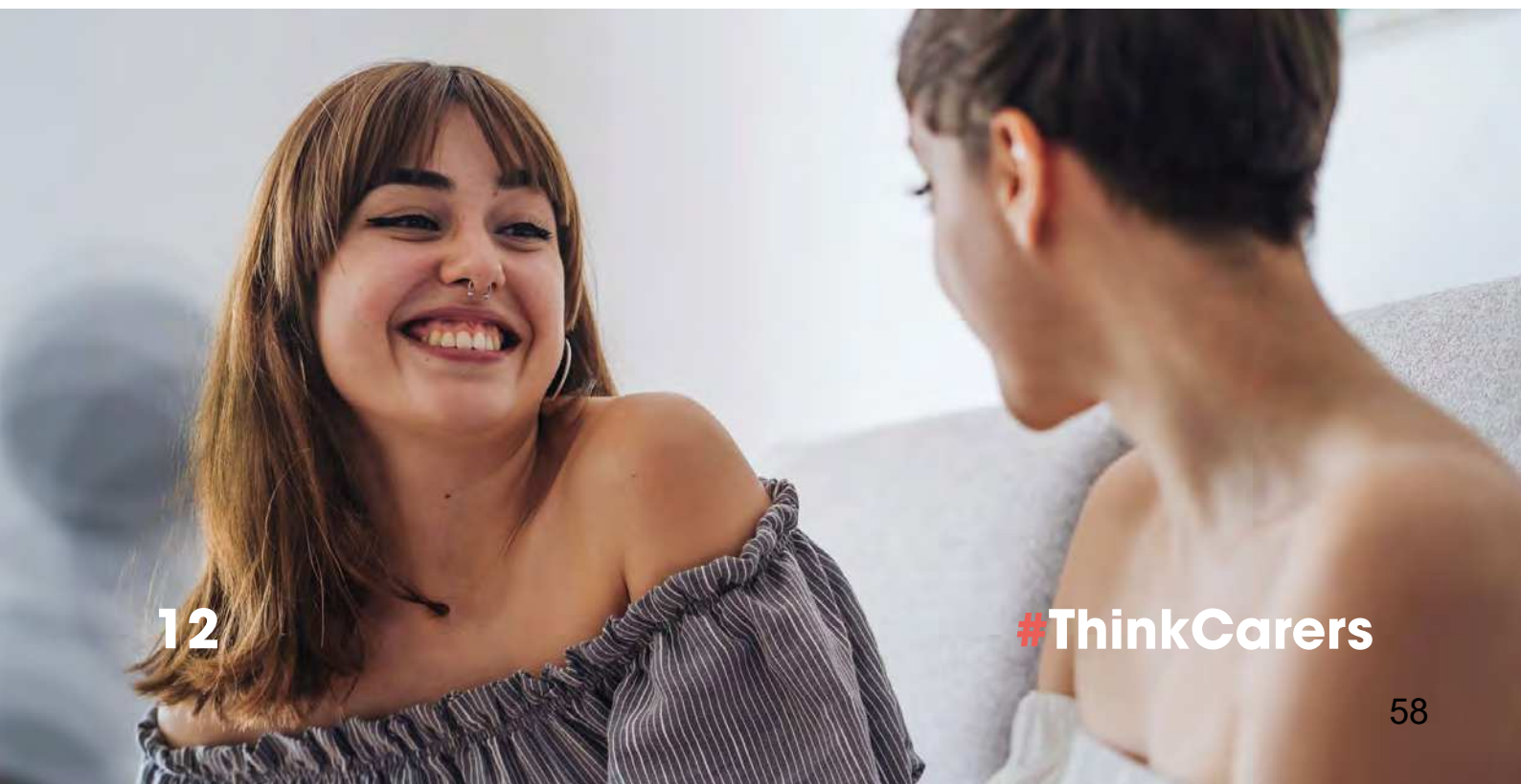
- This will mean carers continue to receive the high-quality support and help they need, no matter who they meet within our service.
- The Carers Champion also continues to collate any operational issues practitioners face when supporting carers and feed this back to our Operational Business Lead for Adult Carers, who will be able to support and address these via training, coaching etc.
- They continue to link with Community Engagement Officers from the new service, to share expertise and knowledge about support available for carers in their specific locality area.

Training:

- Our Operational Business Lead continues to deliver training to front line staff about our legal and statutory duties to carers.
- This ensures they are aware of how to identify, engage and support carers.
- Our Operational Business Lead is also developing an e-learning module, which ALL staff in Adult Social Services will be able to access.
- The Business Lead is also liaising with Children's and Young People's services to redesign our Enabling Disabled Parents protocol; to ensure we can offer a consistent & holistic approach to the families we work with.
- Our Business Lead is also working closely with Children's Services and Carer organisations to review transition planning from Children to Adult Services for Young Adult Carers and Parent Carers, to ensure there is an agreed and consistent approach for these key cohorts.

All Age Carers Strategy:

We are also working to develop an All Age Health and Wellbeing Board Carers Strategy. Adult Social Services have funded Carers Voice to independently lead the engagement about this and this is taking place over the course of late 2021 into early 2022. Carers Voice are keen to engage with Carers of all ages, and are working to identify how to reach minority carers as well. The next stage will be to co-produce a plan of action in response to the engagement findings, and take this for partner sign-up through the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Wellbeing Board.



Britain Thinks Social Research work with Carers-Learning from the results:

- In summer 2020 Adult Social Services commissioned a piece of work, to qualitatively track the experiences of 15 social care services users over a x6 month period, to understand how experiences evolved and explore the impact of COVID- 19 on them and their cared for.

- There were x3 research objectives:

*Explore the impact of changes in services arising from the pandemic.

*Explore experiences of communication, including what Carers were hearing & from whom.

*Identify lessons in relation to resilience and future service delivery.

Key findings included:

1 / Amongst service users & carers, understanding about how social care works is low.

2 / A desire to avoid being a burden and a sense the social care system is overstretched and under funded to prevent service users from seeking additional support.

3 / Only a minority of information carers in the sample received support. For many, there were concerns about cost and doubts services would be available locally; all acted as barriers to seeking support.

4 / The majority of social care users consulted, have reported positive experiences of the carer system; they considered the package of support in place was meeting their needs and they felt well supported by their care workers/ providers.

5 / On balance, Social Care is felt to have adapted well in it's response to the pandemic.

6 / However, most social users have noticed at least some disruption to their care as a result of the pandemic.

7 / The long term impact of the pandemic on the provision of social care is not a 'top of mind' issue for service users; however, when asked for views, opinions are divided.

Progress will continue into next year with further work planned around training and reviewing how we support carers, particularly following the survey results.

People and Communities Select Committee

Item No: 10

Report Title: Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23

Date of Meeting: 19 November 2021

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Simon George (Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services)

Executive Summary

The process to develop the 2022-23 Budget is underway in line with the details set out in the report to Select Committees in July 2021. The latest update on budget-setting, incorporating initial details of the implications of the Spending Review 2021, is provided in the November Cabinet report *Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23*, appended to this report.

This report responds to feedback from Select Committees in July 2021 and provides an opportunity for the Select Committee to provide its views on the detailed budget proposals for the services within its remit which are being taken forward to public consultation (subject to Cabinet decisions 8 November 2021). As such this report forms an important part of the process of preparing the 2022-23 Budget, and will enable the Select Committee's views on proposals to form part of the Cabinet's considerations when it makes recommendations about the Budget to Full Council in February 2022.

Action Required

The Select Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and comment on the budget proposals for the services within its remit which are being taken forward to public consultation, to inform Cabinet's recommendations to County Council on the 2022-23 Budget in February 2022.
2. In light of the requirement for a further £5m savings, identify any further areas which the Select Committee consider should be explored to deliver 2022-23 saving proposals.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. Cabinet has previously agreed that Select Committees have a role in the 2022-23 budget process and requested that Select Committees consider the areas for savings in the services falling within their remit. Cabinet has therefore now invited Select Committees in November 2021 to comment on the detailed saving proposals set out in the *Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23* Cabinet report.
- 1.2. The appended Cabinet report sets out the latest information about the 2022-23 Budget, including details of the initial assessment of the Spending Review and Autumn Budget 2021. Specific implications will be confirmed in the provisional settlement, expected in early December. The Cabinet report also provides an update about the financial strategy for each service Department and details the savings proposals currently being brought forward in each area, to support Select Committee discussion and enable them to provide input to future meetings of Cabinet to inform budget decisions.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. The appended report to November Cabinet provides an update on the developing 2022-23 Budget and associated MTFS. To inform Select Committee discussion of the budget position it also:
 - Provides an initial summary of announcements made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget.
 - Summarises the latest position in relation to some of the significant uncertainties facing local government finances as a result of COVID-19 and other issues.
 - Sets out details of risks to the MTFS position for 2022-23 onwards. This position will continue to be kept under review and updated throughout the remainder of the Budget process.
 - Provides an overview of some of the key issues facing services in relation to their financial strategy, pressures, risks and uncertainties and details the saving proposals identified by each Service in order to contribute to meeting the targets agreed by Cabinet in July.
- 2.2. The Select Committee's views are sought in relation to the services within its remit on (1) key issues for 2022-23 budget setting and (2) the savings proposed for 2022-23, in order to help shape budget and saving proposal development for 2022-23, assist in the identification of key pressures and priorities for the 2022-23 Budget, and (ultimately) to inform the budget proposals to be considered by October Cabinet prior to consultation.
- 2.3. Select Committees may wish to particularly focus on the service strategy and saving proposals within the following sections of the appended Cabinet report:

Select Committee	Service area(s)	Cabinet report section
Corporate Select Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and Transformation • Governance • Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General 	Section 10 Section 11 Section 12
Infrastructure and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and Environmental Services 	Section 9
People and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Services • Children's Services 	Section 7 Section 8

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1. Select Committee commentary on saving proposals will help to ensure proposals are fully considered and Cabinet recommendations are informed by wide consultation and engagement. Further impacts are set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1. Select Committee input will support scrutiny of budget proposals and thereby contribute to Cabinet's recommendations in relation to the 2022-23 budget setting process. Further details are as set out in appended Cabinet report.

5. Alternative Options

5.1. In light of the requirement set out in the appended Cabinet report for a further £5m of savings, Select Committee may wish to identify and propose additional areas for savings which could be explored. Further details of alternative options are set out in the appended Cabinet paper.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. As set out in appended Cabinet report.

7. Resource Implications

7.1. **Staff:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.

7.2. **Property:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.

7.3. **IT:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.

8. Other Implications

8.1. **Legal Implications:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.

- 8.2. **Human Rights Implications:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.
- 8.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** As set out in appended Cabinet report.
- 8.4. **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** As set out in appended Cabinet report.
- 8.5. **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** As set out in appended Cabinet report.
- 8.6. **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** As set out in appended Cabinet report.
- 8.7. **Any Other Implications:** As set out in appended Cabinet report.

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

- 9.1. As set out in appended Cabinet report.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. The Select Committee is asked to:
1. Consider and comment on the budget proposals for the services within its remit which are being taken forward to public consultation, to inform Cabinet's recommendations to County Council on the 2022-23 Budget in February 2022.
 2. In light of the requirement for a further £5m savings, identify any further areas which the Select Committee consider should be explored to deliver 2022-23 saving proposals.

11. Background Papers

- 11.1. Background papers as set out in appended Cabinet report, plus:

[Strategic and financial planning 2022-23, Corporate Select Committee, 12/07/2021, agenda item 10](#)

[Strategic and financial planning 2022-23, Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, 14/07/2021, agenda item 11](#)

[Strategic and financial planning 2022-23, People and Communities Select Committee, 12/07/2021, agenda item 10](#)

Officer Contact

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

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Cabinet

Item No: 17

**Decision making report title:
Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23**

Date of meeting: 08 November 2021

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Cabinet Member for Finance)

Responsible Director: Simon George (Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services)

Is this a key decision? ~~Yes~~/No

If this is a key decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions: N/a

Introduction from Cabinet Member

This report represents a key milestone in the development of the 2022-23 Budget and provides an opportunity for Cabinet to consider saving proposals prior to wider consultation.

For 2022-23, budget planning is once again being undertaken in highly challenging circumstances. In the current year, 2021-22, the Council continues to deal with the service and financial implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. It remains to be seen precisely what the longer term impact of COVID-19 will be on local government cost pressures, but they are certainly likely to be significant over the medium term. As set out later in this report, the Spending Review 2021 announcement on 27 October has given some clarity about additional funding for local government, council tax and adult social care precept referendum thresholds, the overall trajectory for local government funding, and some limited further indications about the Government's funding plans for social care. Nevertheless, in this context, the timing of the Local Government settlement, which will be crucial to provide detailed information on individual allocations, remains to be announced.

Although it is to be welcomed that Government in September published an outline of its [plans to reform social care](#), it remains a vital concern that most of the additional funding within the package will not be available to local government (as the NHS has been prioritised in the first three years), and this has been confirmed in the Spending Review. In addition, other key reforms to local government funding including the Fair Funding Review, and reforms to Business Rates retention / localisation have been repeatedly delayed. With no mention of these being made at the Autumn Budget, it appears likely that they will be postponed again beyond 2022-23.

It is in this context of continuing uncertainty that the Council has developed proposals for the 2022-23 Budget. A range of issues are at this stage unknown with the potential to have a material impact on the level of resources available to Norfolk County Council to deliver services in the future. It therefore remains the case that it will be critical to bring forward balanced, sustainable budget proposals which will enable the Council to continue to deliver the key services which are relied on by all Norfolk's people, businesses and visitors.

Executive Summary

As in previous years, this report forms a key part of the budget planning process for 2022-23, setting out an overview of the new saving proposals which have been developed to support in closing the Council's overall gap position as forecast in the Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed by Full Council in February 2021. It summarises the proposed approach to public consultation on, and equality impact assessments of, the 2022-23 Budget and describes the emerging service budget pressures which have been identified to date, alongside a summary of the budget strategy for each service, and details of key areas of risk and uncertainty. The Strategic and Financial Planning report should be read in conjunction with the latest Financial Monitoring report for 2021-22 as set out elsewhere on the agenda. Together, these two reports provide an overview of the Council's current and future financial position.

As set out throughout this report, significant uncertainty remains around the planning position for 2022-23, and this report therefore also summarises the next steps required in the process leading to budget-setting in February 2022. The Budget planning process for 2022-23 has been developed to provide a degree of flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. In this context, the report provides the latest details of key areas of wider risk and uncertainty for Cabinet to consider. The MTFS position will continue to be updated in light of future government funding announcements, and as the scale of the impact of both social care reform announcements and any implications of winter pressures (COVID or otherwise) on the Council become clearer. This will be reported to January 2022 Cabinet and considered by Scrutiny Committee as the budget setting process progresses to its conclusion at Full Council in February.

Cabinet decisions based on the information in this report will ultimately help to support the development of a robust, balanced 2022-23 Budget for the Council.

Recommendations:

- 1. To consider and comment on the County Council strategy as set out in section 2 and how the Budget process is aligned to the overall policy and financial framework;**
- 2. To consider the potential implications of Government announcements about Social Care, the considerable uncertainty remaining in respect of these, which may result in additional cost pressures in the medium to longer term, and agree that these should be reflected, where possible, in the 2022-23 Budget;**

3. To consider the latest details of announcements made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget 2021, and note that the outcome of these national funding announcements, alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement, will have potentially significant impacts on the 2022-23 Budget position, which will not be fully known until later in the process;
4. To consider and agree for planning purposes the latest assessment of significant areas of risk and uncertainty around emerging budget pressures for the 2022-23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which remain to be resolved and which may have a material impact on budget planning (paragraph 13.4);
5. To confirm that Cabinet's intention is to seek, as planned, a total council tax increase of 2.99% for 2022-23 made up of 1.99% general council tax and 1.00% adult social care precept deferred from 2021-22;
6. To direct Executive Directors to seek to identify further recurrent savings of £5.000m and to report to Cabinet in January 2022;
7. To agree to undertake a full review of how the Council operates to deliver its future services and strategy;
8. To have regard to the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' advice about the sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy position (section 13), noting the wider uncertainty about funding levels and cost pressures for 2022-23 and 2023-24, and therefore to agree to consult the public on a range of council tax increases including the maximum increase available within the referendum threshold, in order to provide Full Council with the scope to use the full range of Council Tax flexibility, if required, when setting the 2022-23 Budget in February 2022;
9. To consider and agree the proposed savings as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10) to be taken forward in budget planning for 2022-23, subject to final decisions about the overall Budget in February 2022, noting the level of savings already included from the 2021-22 Budget process (table 2);
10. To agree that public consultation (as set out in section 5) and equality impact assessment (as set out in section 21) be undertaken on the 2022-23 Budget and saving proposals as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10), and the level of council tax and Adult Social Care precept for 2022-23, as set out in section 14 and table 11;
11. To note the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services under section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 and section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to comment on the robustness of budget estimates as set out in section 13, and having regard to the level of savings required for 2023-24, to direct Officers to bring forward proposals to support early development and identification of saving proposals for 2023-24 with a focus on transformational activity;

- 12. To agree the proposed next steps in the Budget planning process for 2022-23, and the remaining Budget planning timetable (Appendix 1); and**
- 13. To note and thank Select Committees for their input into the Budget development process for 2022-23 in July, and to invite Select Committees to comment further on the detailed saving proposals set out in this report when they meet in November 2021 (section 23).**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. The County Council agreed the 2021-22 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2024-25 at its meeting 22 February 2021. This report provides an update on the developing 2022-23 Budget and associated MTFS. To inform discussion of the budget position it also:
 - Provides an initial summary of announcements made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget.
 - Summarises the latest position in relation to some of the significant uncertainties facing local government finances as a result of COVID-19 and other issues.
 - Sets out details of risks to the MTFS position for 2022-23 onwards. This position will continue to be kept under review and updated throughout the remainder of the Budget process.
 - Provides an overview of some of the key issues facing services in relation to their financial strategy, pressures, risks and uncertainties and details the saving proposals identified by each Service in order to contribute to meeting the targets agreed by Cabinet in July.
- 1.2. This report represents the next important stage in the Council's 2022-23 Budget setting process and brings together a range of information, to enable Cabinet to consider the emerging saving proposals and to agree the approach to public consultation and equality impact assessments for 2022-23. Ultimately, it is intended to support the Council in developing the 2022-23 Budget and considering savings proposals which will assist in delivering a balanced budget for the year.
- 1.3. The content of the report is based on circumstances that are changing frequently and therefore some areas may become superseded by new information on an ongoing basis.

2. Strategic Context

COVID-19

- 2.1. Over the past 18-months, COVID-19 has presented local government with new and unprecedented challenges, and Norfolk County Council has taken a leading role in the ongoing local response, working in partnership with national government and local partners to meet community needs.

2.2. Some of the main issues we faced before COVID-19 have been exacerbated, including population changes, social, economic and health inequalities, rising demand for services and support, workforce challenges in key sectors such as the care market, funding reductions and constraints.

2.3. Whilst the country moves into a process of recovery, challenges arising from COVID-19 continue, and responding to this effectively and helping individuals, communities, and businesses to recover is critical.

Policy context

2.4. The Government's plans for building back better post-COVID, aims to:

- support growth through investment in infrastructure and connectivity, skills and innovation;
- level up the whole of the UK;
- deliver world leading health and social care;
- support the transition to net zero; and,
- strengthen the vision of a Global Britain.

2.5. The Government plans to introduce a Levelling Up White Paper this year. For us, levelling up is about creating the conditions for people to have good and healthy lives, regardless of who they are or where they live. It is about removing discrimination and barriers to equal lives, and enabling all people to participate in their communities. And it is about ensuring that Norfolk claims its fair share of investment to drive growth and prosperity, and is not left behind. County councils are expected to play a leading role in delivering these better outcomes, and we are keen to pursue the prize of a deal with government, drawing together a county wide strategic plan with partners to leverage more money and powers into the county, for the benefit of the county.

2.6. A Health and Care Bill laid before Parliament in July 2021 brings the opportunity to shape a joined-up health, wellbeing and social care system to improve the health and wellbeing of communities, alongside tackling inequalities. In September 2021, the Prime Minister introduced further plans for health and social care, announcing a new Health and Social Care Levy and reforms to the way social care is charged. The pandemic has reinforced the need for a long-term plan for social care and these announcements are an important step towards changing the way social care is funded and paid for. Whilst we await further information on funding allocations to local government and the forthcoming Social Care White Paper, due in Autumn 2021, which will set out further detail on the proposed reforms to social care, our ambition is to strengthen the council's role in the integrated care system and embed prevention across all our strategies.

2.7. The UK Government has published its net zero strategy, introduced a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, outlined a 10-point plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, and an Environment

Bill is currently making its way through parliament. Councils will play a crucial role in translating these national climate ambitions into transformative action.

County Council Strategy and Transformation

2.8. Our *Better Together, For Norfolk* strategy builds on our previous [council plan](#), sharpening our focus for the next four years to support recovery and renewal. The strategy sets out the Council's strategic priorities and provides the platform for the Council to drive a whole-system approach to delivering a better future for Norfolk.

2.9. The strategy sets out five, interlinked, priorities:

- **A vibrant and sustainable economy**
- **Better opportunities for children and young people**
- **Healthy, fulfilling and independent lives**
- **Strong, engaged and inclusive communities**
- **A greener, more resilient future**

2.10. Our strategy will be underpinned by a corporate delivery plan containing the projects that will move us towards our objectives and the measures to track our progress.

2.11. The Council's transformation programme is core to these ambitions. In all that we do, we will continue to be guided by four core principles that frame our work:

- Offering our help early to prevent and reduce demand for specialist services;
- Joining up work so that similar activities and services are easily accessible, done once and done well;
- Being business-like and making best use of digital technology to ensure value for money; and
- Using evidence and data to target our work where it can make the most difference.

2.12. This report sets out an approach for the budget process that takes account of this context.

3. National financial context, Spending Review 2021 and Social Care funding reform

3.1. On 7 September, the Government launched the Spending Review 2021, which concluded alongside the Chancellor's announcement of the Autumn Budget 2021 on 27 October 2021. The Spending Review launch set out several priorities to "Build Back Better," including:

- a) Ensuring strong and innovative public services – making people's lives better across the country by investing in the NHS, education, the criminal justice system and housing;

- b) Levelling up across the UK to increase and spread opportunity; unleash the potential of places by improving outcomes UK-wide where they lag and working closely with local leaders; and strengthen the private sector where it is weak;
- c) Leading the transition to Net Zero across the country and more globally;
- d) Advancing Global Britain and seizing the opportunities of EU Exit;
- e) Delivering our Plan for Growth - delivering on our ambitious plans for an infrastructure and innovation revolution and cementing the UK as a scientific superpower, working in close partnership with the private sector.

3.2. A summary of the County Council's response to SR21 was reported to Cabinet in October. As has been the case with previous announcements, it was a major concern that Local Government appeared as though it would be largely "unprotected" and therefore anticipated to contribute as part of the wider requirement to make efficiencies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said *"At the Spending Review...I will set out how we will continue to invest in public services and drive growth while keeping the public finances on a sustainable path."*¹ In launching the Spending Review, the Chancellor asked Government Departments to identify *"at least 5% savings and efficiencies from their day-to-day budgets."*

3.3. Also on 7 September, Government published the [Build Back Better plan for health and social care](#)², including a £36bn funding commitment shared between both systems across the UK over three years starting in 2022-23. This was to be followed by a White Paper for Social Care in the Autumn, although this now appears as though it will be delayed until towards the end of the year. The Government intends to consult on a National Plan for integration of Health and Care.

3.4. The £36bn represents £12bn per year for three years for Health and Care to be funded by 1.25% increases in National Insurance (which is ultimately to become a "Health and Care levy"), and dividend tax from April 2022. The plan states that Government intends to compensate public sector employers at the Spending Review for the increased cost of the Levy. The Council awaits the detail to understand how this will be distributed and whether it will be adequate to cover the associated cost pressure.

3.5. In the short (and potentially longer) term, most of the funding will go to the NHS but £5.4bn over the three years has been committed for social care to fund reforms. Further details were provided in the Autumn Budget and are set out below.

3.6. Government intends to consult on funding distribution and charging reforms. In spite of these recent announcements, significant uncertainty remains, particularly around funding levels for 2022-23 and the longer term share of funding between social care and health. Significantly, the Build Back Better plan set out that Government expects that *"demographic and unit cost*

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-launches-vision-for-future-public-spending>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care>

pressures” will be met “*through council tax, social care precept, and long-term efficiencies.*”³ This is a key issue which requires funding, and each year broadly represents an £18-20m cost pressure for Norfolk.

3.7. The Chancellor [announced](#) the outcome of SR21 alongside the Autumn Budget 2021 on 27 October.⁴ At the time of writing this report, the key financial headlines for local authorities and initial budget implications identified for Norfolk County Council include:

- SR21 has set out details of departmental allocations for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25. This may provide the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) with scope to set out a long term Local Government finance settlement covering the same time period. The Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021 document states: “*SR21 provides a multi-year settlement to enable local authorities to support the ambition to level up communities across the country, with an estimated average real-terms increase of 3% a year in core spending power.*”⁵
- SR21 confirms that £5.4bn of funding for adult social care reform is being provided from the changes to national insurance announced as part of the Build Back Better plan. **SR21 sets out that £3.6bn of this will be routed to Local Authorities** as part of the settlement to implement the cap on personal care costs and changes to the means test, and “*support local authorities to better sustain their local care market by moving towards a fairer cost for care. Further detail will be set out by the government in due course.*”⁶ It appears that the £3.6bn will be heavily weighted towards 2023-24 and 2024-25 in line with the timing of the associated reforms. The remaining funding of £1.7bn is held within the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) budget to be deployed over three years “*to improve the wider social care system, including the quality and integration of care. At least £500 million of this will be allocated to improve qualifications, skills and wellbeing across the adult social care workforce.*”⁷ It is important to note that **this funding will have significant additional cost pressures associated with it.** These remain to be fully understood as the Government provides further details. The distribution methodology for the funding is also unknown at this stage.
- SR21 provides £4.8bn of “new grant funding”, which will be distributed as £1.6bn in each of the next three years. This is in addition to the funding to implement social care reform. The document states that this funding “*ensures the government can reform social care, increase investment in supporting vulnerable children and enable local authorities to continue to*

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care#our-plan-for-adult-social-care-in-England>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-budget-and-spending-review-2021-documents>

⁵ Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, paragraph 2.30, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1028814/Budget_AB2021_Web_Accessible.pdf

⁶ Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, paragraph 4.56

⁷ Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, paragraph 4.8

*provide the other local services that people rely on.*⁸ Some of this funding is earmarked for specific initiatives (including £200m for supporting families, £37.8m for cyber resilience) leaving an estimated £1.5bn to be distributed to Local Authorities in the settlement each year. It is unclear at this stage how the £1.5bn will be distributed including what proportion will be allocated for social care specifically and on what basis. This could have a material impact on the amount received by Norfolk. Further details are awaited but from Government announcements so far, this is expected to bring in additional funding for the Council. Two areas of concern that need to be recognised are::

- SR21 indicates a front loaded uplift in funding of £1.5bn in 2022-23 but no further increases in this funding for the remainder of the period. This would imply that cost pressures from 2023-24 onward will need to be met entirely through council tax increases (within the 3% threshold), and cost savings. In other words, the funding of £1.5bn will be repeated each year until 2024-25 but will not be increased. The sustainability of this, and longer term implications, will need to be reviewed when details are published at the Settlement.
 - SR21 appears not to include any separate funding to meet the cost pressure of the national insurance increase / health and social care levy of 1.25%. It is understood that this is to be covered by the “new grant funding” and represents a cost of approximately £3m to the Council which will erode some of the uplift in funding which ultimately flows through.
- SR21 confirms that the core council tax referendum threshold is expected to remain at 2% per year over the period. In addition, local authorities with social care responsibilities are expected to be able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 1% per year to 2024-25.⁹ This is understood to be a new precept flexibility which would be distinct from any scope for a deferred increase in the precept from 2021-22 which individual authorities may have (the County Council deferred 1%).
 - While the [Chancellor's speech](#) acknowledged that the “*Budget does not draw a line under Covid; we have challenging months ahead*,”¹⁰ there was no new funding for 2022-23 announced for any additional COVID-19 pressures within local government.
 - The Budget included a number of other funding announcements with implications for local authorities (reference to Autumn Budget document in brackets), including:
 - Public Health grant will be maintained in real terms “*enabling local authorities to invest in prevention and frontline services like child health visits*” (4.7)
 - Children's Services:

⁸ Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, paragraph 2.31

⁹ Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021, paragraph 4.59

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/autumn-budget-and-spending-review-2021-speech>

- £560 million in youth services in England over the next three years (2.129)
- £500 million over the next three years to transform ‘Start for Life’ and family help services in half of the council areas across England. This will include £18 million in 2024-25 to create a network of family hubs to improve access to services for families, £20 million in 2024-25 for parenting support (4.14) and an extra £200m in the Supporting Families programme. (2.130)
- £170 million by 2024-25 to increase the hourly rate to be paid to early years providers, to deliver the government’s free hours offers. (4.14)
- Schools and education:
 - An additional £4.7 billion by 2024-25 for the core schools’ budget in England, over and above the SR19 settlement for schools in 2022-23. (2.20)
 - A new package of £1.8 billion over the SR period for education recovery. This includes a £1 billion Recovery Premium for the next two academic years to help schools to deliver evidence-based approaches to support the most disadvantaged pupils. It also provides £324 million in 2024-25 for additional learning hours for 16-19 year-olds.
 - The holiday activities and food programme will also continue to receive funding of around £200 million a year. (4.57)
 - The government is increasing capital investment to create 30,000 school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in England with £2.6 billion over the SR21 period. (2.21)
 - There was no announcement in relation to addressing accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant deficits.
- Employment and skills:
 - The government will raise government spending on skills and training by £3.8bn over the parliament, an increase of 42%. This will be used to expand access to high-demand Level 3 courses and Skills Bootcamps; invest £2.8 billion of capital investment in skills; and increase apprenticeship funding, including extending the £3,000 apprenticeship hiring incentive until 31 January 2022 (2.92)
 - The government will cut the taper rate on Universal Credit (effectively, how much UC payment a claimant receives as they earn from work) from 63% to 55%. (2.94)
 - The government will launch a UK-wide numeracy service called Multiply which will help 500,000 adults improve their numeracy. (2.55)
- Infrastructure and housing:
 - £21bn on roads and £46bn on railways to improve journey times between cities.
 - £2.7 billion over the next 3 years for local roads maintenance. (4.64)

- Reconfirms £11.5bn to build up to 180,000 new affordable homes. This includes a previously announced £1.8 billion to deliver new homes on 15,000 hectares of brownfield land. (2.132)
- £1.7bn of funding in the first grants from the Treasury's Levelling Up Fund, for towns and cities including Stoke-on-Trent, Leeds, Doncaster and Leicester. (2.144)
- Continuing the £5 billion investment in Project Gigabit to support the rollout of gigabit capable broadband in hard-to reach areas across the whole of the UK. The government will also provide £180 million over the next three years as part of its £500 million investment in the Shared Rural Network, to deliver 4G mobile coverage to 95% of the UK. (3.35)
- £639 million resource funding by 2024-25, a cash increase of 85% compared to 2019-20 as part of the government's commitment to end rough sleeping. (2.26)
- In Norfolk:
 - £39 million of investment for Norwich, including funding for a new mobility hub at Norwich Rail Station through the Transforming Cities Fund (pre-existing commitment)
 - Land Release Fund: £2.3 million towards the 'Heart of Greenstead' regeneration project in Colchester; and almost £860,000 towards the Middlegate Estate in Great Yarmouth (pre-existing commitment).
 - £2.6 billion (nationally) for local road upgrades over this Parliament including the Great Yarmouth Third Crossing, A140 Long Stratton Bypass in Norfolk as well as the Lake Lothing Third Crossing in Suffolk (pre-existing commitment).
 - £24 billion (nationally) for strategic roads investments including the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet and six A47 dualling and upgrade schemes (pre-existing commitment).
- In relation to Business Rates, the government has published the [final report](#) as part of the Fundamental Review of Business Rates. The Chancellor announced:
 - A number of new reliefs including a freeze in the multiplier in 2022-23; and a further 50% discount for retail, hospitality, and leisure businesses in 2022-23. SR21 confirms local authorities will be fully compensated for all measures announced in the review. (4.61)
 - A shift to more frequent revaluations taking place every three years starting in 2023.
- Some of the announcements made at SR21 are likely to give rise to additional cost pressures for local authorities. Aside from the significant risks and pressures associated with social care reform detailed above, these include:

- The impact of the ending of the public sector pay freeze “*as the recovery in the economy and labour market allows a return to a normal pay setting process.*” (1.83). While not directly impacting local government pay awards, wider public sector pay increases are likely to put further pressure on local government pay negotiations.
- A 6.6% increase to the National Living Wage (NLW) from £8.91 to £9.50 an hour, starting on 1 April 2022 (2.96). In broad terms every 1p increase equates to a £0.200m pressure for Adult Social Care via increased provider costs. Increases in the NLW therefore represent a major driver of the council’s cost pressures which will need to be met through the additional grant funding, council tax, or savings.
- SR21 included Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts for inflation (CPI) to run at 4% in 2022 before dropping back to around 2% by 2025. The Council’s current budget planning assumes CPI of 2% and increases represent a material pressure.

3.8. It is likely that further details will emerge over the next few days and weeks leading up to the announcement of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (currently expected in early December), which may have further impacts upon the Council’s budget setting assumptions. These will be reflected in future reports to Cabinet as appropriate.

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy and key assumptions

4.1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) agreed in February 2021 reflected the following assumptions:

- COVID-19 pressures cease after 2021-22;
- 2021-22 funding levels continue in 2022-23 (excluding COVID-19 funding);
- Pay inflation assumed at 3%;
- 1.99% council tax increase in all years, 1% ASC precept increase (2022-23 only);
- Limited tax base growth (0.5% in 2022-23, 0.75% 2023-24 and 1.0% thereafter);
- Collection fund deficit £2.4m 2022-23, £0.6m 2023-24, £0 2024-25.

4.2. The starting point for 2022-23 budget setting is the MTFS gap of £39m, as shown below.

Table 1: MTFS gap 2022-23 to 2025-26

	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
Cost pressures and funding decreases	58.164	45.629	40.522	31.372	175.687
Change in forecast council tax income	-16.882	-14.390	-14.822	-14.604	-60.697
Existing planned savings in 2021-22 MTFS	-2.245	-1.600	-2.500	0.000	-6.345
Gap as reported to July 2021 Cabinet	39.037	29.639	23.200	16.768	108.645

4.3. Planned savings already included in the 2021-25 MTFS agreed by Council in February total £47.524m. Savings to close the forecast 2022-23 MTFS gap of £39.037m are required in addition to existing savings of £2.245m, as well as successful delivery of the savings of £41.179m which are included for 2021-22.

Table 2: Existing MTFS savings planned for 2021-22 to 2024-25

	2021-22 £m	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	Total £m
Adult Social Services	-17.858	4.275	2.000	0.000	-11.583
Children's Services	-11.300	-6.900	-3.500	-2.500	-24.200
Community and Environmental Services	-8.288	-0.466	0.000	0.000	-8.754
Strategy and Transformation	-0.553	-0.180	0.000	0.000	-0.733
Governance	-0.353	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.353
Finance and Commercial Services	-1.927	0.026	-0.100	0.000	-2.001
Finance General	-0.900	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.100
Grand Total	-41.179	-2.245	-1.600	-2.500	-47.524

4.4. The forecast gap is kept under continuous review through the Budget process. However, it is not proposed to update the forecast budget pressures from the MTFS position at this point, taking into account the wider uncertainty about local authority finances and both government funding announcements and the lack of updated forecasts for local income streams including council tax and business rates. It is nevertheless important to note that as at November 2021, further significant revenue budget pressures are beginning to emerge in relation to items such as specific Government funding ceasing, the National Living Wage, further service specific pressures, and pressures linked to COVID-19. Further details of these are provided in section 13. This overall

increasing gap position reflects the fact that local authorities continue to face a growing shortfall between funding and service pressures, which is caused in large part by a combination of demographic changes, unfunded burdens, policy decisions, and the needs of vulnerable social care users becoming increasingly complex.

5. Proposed consultation process for 2022-23 budget

- 5.1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022-23 agreed in February 2021 assumed that core council tax will increase overall by 1.99%, and that the Adult Social Care precept will be increased by 1% (reflecting the deferred increase from 2021-22). The report also set out that if the referendum threshold were increased in the period 2022-23 to 2024-25 to above 1.99%, or any further discretion were offered to increase the Adult Social Care precept (or similar), then it is likely that the Section 151 Officer would recommend the council take full advantage of any flexibility in view of the council's overall financial position.
- 5.2. As part of the Spending Review 2021 (SR21) announcement 27 October, the Chancellor set out the expectation that for each year of the SR21 period, a referendum threshold of 2% would be set for core council tax, along with scope for a 1% increase in respect of the Adult Social Care precept. In 2022-23 this is understood to be in addition to any deferred ASC precept flexibility from 2021-22. This would mean Norfolk County Council has the option to increase council tax by up to 4% in 2022-23 and 3% each year thereafter to 2025-26. Government has historically assumed that councils will raise the maximum council tax available to them and this has been repeated in the core spending power assumptions published as part of SR21. In light of the announcements at SR21, and the overall financial position, it is proposed to consult the public to understand views about potential council tax and adult social care increases of 2.99% and 4% in total, in order to support Member decision making in February 2022. It should be noted that the level of council tax is a decision for Full Council each year; it is therefore prudent to consult on the full range of available options to inform Member decision-making. As in previous years we are inviting comments on the level of council tax through our consultation hub on Citizen Space.
- 5.3. We will publish our budget consultation, including details of all new saving proposals for 2022-23 on the Council's online consultation hub, Citizen Space. We will produce large print, downloadable and easy read versions as standard and make any consultation documents available in other formats on request.
- 5.4. As well as alerting key stakeholders to the consultation, we will promote opportunities for people to have their say on budget proposals and council tax through news releases, online publications and social media. We will also be sharing our consultation with members of the Norfolk Residents' Panel and inviting parish councils to a webinar where they can find out more about our proposals and invite them to provide feedback.
- 5.5. Our consultation will take place in the autumn. Consultation feedback on both budget proposals and council tax will be available for Cabinet in January 2022

and Full Council in February 2022. We will make extra effort to find out the views of people who may be affected by our proposals, including people with protected characteristics.

5.6. We will also report on the findings of the equality impact assessments we are undertaking. For information about this please see Section 21.

6. Service strategy and new saving proposals for 2022-23

6.1. New saving proposals for this year's budget process total £31.144, of which £24.483m relate to 2022-23.

Table 3: Summary of MTFs savings proposals for 2022-23 to 2025-26

2022-23 Target £m		2022-23 £m	% of 2022-23 Target	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
-17.700	Adult Social Services	-12.440	70%	-2.975	-3.700	0.000	-19.115
-8.700	Children's Services	-4.315	50%	-1.400	0.000	0.000	-5.715
-8.700	Community and Environmental Services	-2.961	34%	0.214	0.000	0.000	-2.747
-0.500	Strategy and Transformation	-0.307	61%	0.050	0.000	0.000	-0.257
-0.400	Governance	-0.285	71%	0.100	0.000	0.000	-0.185
-3.100	Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General	-4.175	135%	0.800	0.250	0.000	-3.125
-39.100	Total savings target	-24.483	63%	-3.211	-3.450	0.000	-31.144

6.2. The following sections of the report set out details of the financial and savings strategy for each Department, along with details of the new savings proposals being put forward for 2022-23. These will be subject to consultation and further validation work to ensure that they are robust and deliverable prior to being included in the Budget presented to Full Council for consideration in February 2022. None of the proposals have been identified as requiring specific public consultation.

6.3. All saving proposals remain subject to further validation work to ensure that they are fully robust and deliverable, and no final decisions on the implementation of savings will be made until February 2022 when the County Council considers the Cabinet's proposed Budget for 2022-23, including the findings of public consultation and equality impact assessments.

7. 2022-23 Budget proposals - Adult Social Services

Financial Strategy

7.1. We have of course welcomed the recent national Government announcements relating the future of Adult Social Services. However, at this stage it appears that there is insufficient detail to provide us with confidence that any funding, especially in the immediate future, will be sufficient to fully fund the financial pressures experienced by the sector. In particular, the government announcement specifically describes that *“we expect demographic and unit cost pressures will be met through Council Tax, social care precept, and long-term efficiencies”*. It is therefore of vital importance that we continue to have a robust plan to manage the pressures being experienced by Adult Social Services.

Adult Social Care pressures for 2022-23: Market Prices (including the Cost of Care review):

7.2. Adult Social Care commissions and purchases over £330m of care services each year. The majority of this care is provided by the independent sector in the form of services such as Residential and Nursing Care, Home Support, Supported Living/Housing with Care and Day Opportunities. In addition, people who require our support have the opportunity to embrace a wider array of choice and commission their own care arrangements through Direct Payments.

7.3. Section 5 of the Care Act: “Promoting diversity and quality in provision of service” outlines a Local Authorities duties in regards to local care markets. In particular, *“A local authority must promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs with a view to ensuring that any person in its area wishing to access services in the market”*. In achieving this a Local Authority must effectively shape local care markets and commission care that:

- Focuses on outcomes and wellbeing
- Promotes a quality services
- Is sustainable and offers value for money services
- Offers choice through a wider array of diverse providers
- Has been co-produced with the people who wish to access these services

7.4. Chapter 4 of the Care Act Statutory guidance states *“When commissioning services, local authorities should assure themselves and have evidence that contract terms, conditions and fee levels for care and support services are appropriate to provide the delivery of the agreed care packages with agreed quality of care. This should support and promote the wellbeing of people who receive care and support, and allow for the service provider ability to meet statutory obligations to pay at least the national minimum wage and provide effective training and development of staff. It should also allow retention of staff commensurate with delivering services to the agreed quality, and encourage*

innovation and improvement. Local authorities should have regard to guidance on minimum fee levels necessary to provide this assurance, taking account of the local economic environment. This assurance should understand that reasonable fee levels allow for a reasonable rate of return by independent providers that is sufficient to allow the overall pool of efficient providers to remain sustainable in the long term.”

- 7.5. In order to meet these duties, NCC commits resource to undertake both annual reviews of our care fee levels, but also a wider programme of engagement with our care providers to understand the changing cost of Norfolk Care. Never before has our care markets seen such uncertainty in the demand for, and cost of, its provision of care. national shortages of care staff have equally been applicable in Norfolk, with specific capacity constraints in key markets. Recognising the current wage structure of these markets, we must note the Chancellor’s recently announced movement in the National Living Wage, which moves the minimum hourly rate for over 23 year olds from £8.91 to £9.50 from April 2022. Furthermore, inflation on costs, as indicated by the Office of Budget Responsibilities (OBR) Consumer Price Index (CPI), continue to increase. For 22/23 our budget is proposed to recognise any required fee uplifts to continue to meet the broader duties outlined above. A standalone report will be taken to the January 2022 Cabinet meeting to outline the specific details of our proposed fee structure for the upcoming year.

Adult Social Care pressures for 2022-23: Demand for services:

- 7.6. The other key element of budgetary pressure relating to Adult Social Care is the demand for its services.
- 7.7. It is widely recognised, and indicated by both the following [Norfolk Insight](#) graphics and [Institute of Public Care](#) population projections, that the demography of Norfolk represents a higher proportion of Adults over the age of 65 than both the East of England and National averages.

APPENDIX 1

Figure 1: Population estimates by age, 2020 and 2040

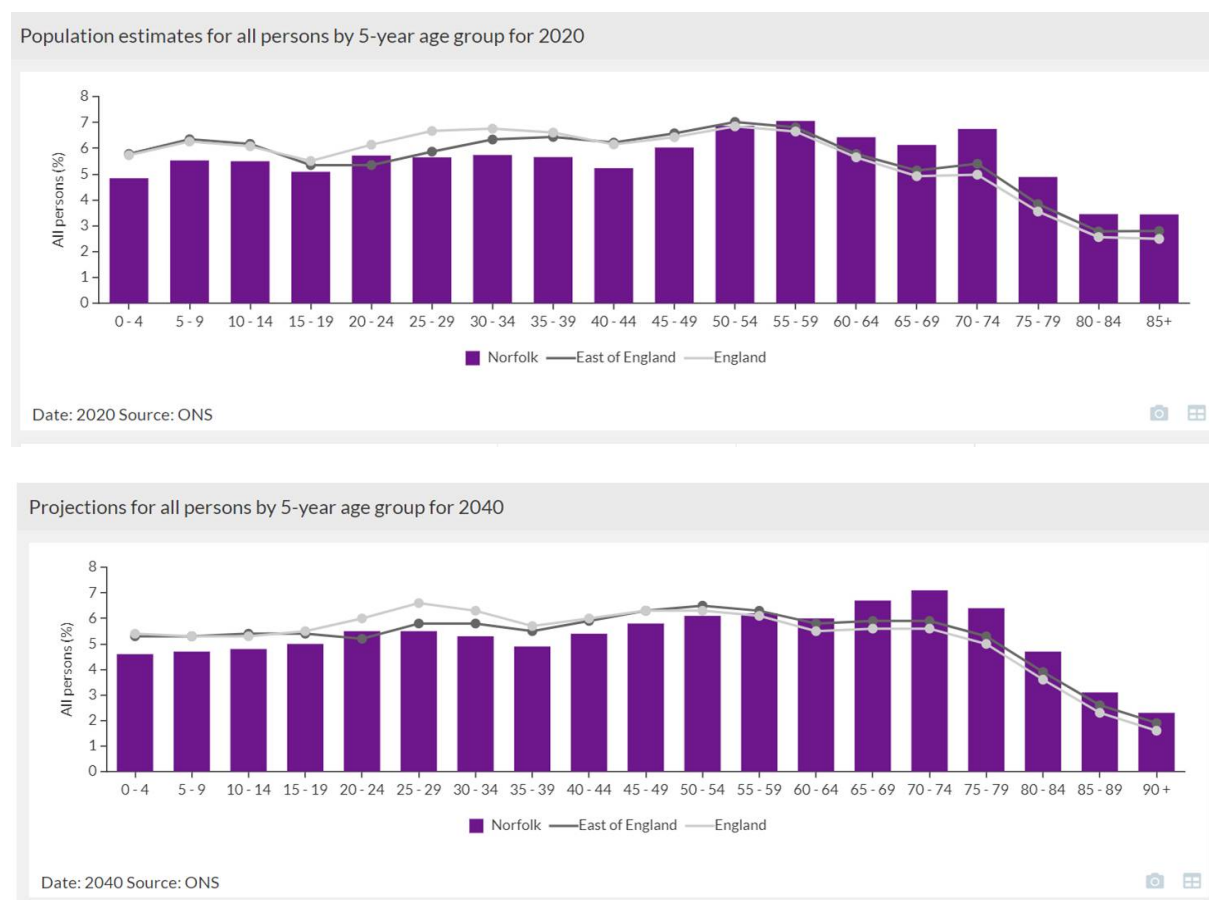


Table 4: Population aged 65 and over, projected to 2024

Population aged 65 and over, projected to 2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Norfolk: People aged 65-69	56,300	56,600	57,400	58,300	59,500
Norfolk: People aged 70-74	62,000	61,800	58,100	56,300	55,700
Norfolk: People aged 75-79	44,600	47,300	52,600	55,100	55,900
Norfolk: People aged 80-84	31,700	31,700	32,300	33,500	35,400
Norfolk: People aged 85-89	19,800	20,200	20,700	21,400	21,900
Norfolk: People aged 90 and over	11,700	11,900	12,200	12,300	12,500
Norfolk: Total population 65 and over	226,100	229,500	233,300	236,900	240,900

www.poppi.org.uk version 14.0 (Institute of Public Care)

7.8. At the same time, we know that improvements in our Health and Care services means that people are now more likely to live longer with the most complex of disabilities. This is of course a most welcome improvement but does mean that the underlying demand for our services continues to grow year on year. Equally, the social care support people with the most complex needs require continues to rise with underlying complexity of care increasing year on

year. We recognise this in our budget by providing for an underlying growth in our care budgets.

7.9. A more recent factor is the potential latent demand impacts driven by Covid-19 pandemic which we are beginning to see in areas such as Safeguarding and Mental Health. Our Promoting Independence Transformation programme was detrimentally impacted by the pandemic and some opportunities to deliver transformation was inevitably delayed, whilst other preventative opportunities for people will potentially have been missed and will never be wholly recovered. During the pandemic, national guidance on hospital discharge changed and a rapid acceleration of Discharge to Assess was rolled out. During the last 18 months we have worked as a Health and Care system to implement this process and have been supported to do so with national funding. For 22/23 onwards there remains a real financial risk for the local Health and Care systems to continue to implement this national policy without the associated funding.

7.10. At present, Social Care remains under pressure with Norfolk's holding lists, interim care lists, overdue reviews and safeguarding referrals all seeing spikes ahead of a winter period that is likely to be very challenging.

Promoting Independence Strategy

7.11. The Adult Social Care (ASC) financial strategy is firmly intertwined with both the services vision "to support people to be independent, resilient and well", as well as the departments Promoting Independence strategy. To date, Promoting Independence has largely focused on managing demand. Through a changed model of social work, investment in reablement and assistive technology, we have slowed the rate of admissions to residential care for all ages, bringing the council closer in line with its family group, and achieving £61m of savings over the last 5 years. Looking ahead these gains will be sustained through a step change in prevention, based on risk stratification, and targeted interventions to address known life risks, and a re-purposed 'front door' for adults. Alongside this, we will continue to lead and shape independent providers to develop choices for people at all stages of life – disabled people who want to leave the family home, people who want support at home which fits their lives, people who want access to training, learning and employment. Looking forward, Promoting Independence phase two is about Living Well and Changing Lives.

Promoting Independence: Living Well and Changing Lives



7.12. We know our Promoting Independence approach has helped, and will continue to help, the service to deliver the significant financial savings needed to continue to meet the increasing demands for social care across Norfolk. Within the overall strategy, our specific financial strategy for achieving savings and financial sustainability is focussed on:

- **Investing in early intervention and targeted prevention:** Using specific services and being responsive and proactive in order to prevent need or prevent the escalation of need to keep people independent for longer.
- **Focusing and building upon people's strengths:** Investing in excellent social work and therapy which focuses on people's strengths and helps people regain and retain independence, and reduces, prevents and delays the need for formal social care
- **Provide services that focus on the future potential of the person:** Commissioning services which enable and re-able people so they achieve and maintain as much independence as they can and reducing the amount of formal social care they need
- **Driving housing solutions:** Stimulating a market to provide alternative choices to permanent residential and nursing care; including focusing on wider housing options alongside care, for older and younger adults
- **A prosperous care economy:** Leading and developing the care market for social care so that it can offer people choice from a collective of good quality providers, within an efficient, stable and sustainable care economy, whose ambitions aligns with those of Promoting Independence.
- **A healthy Integrated Care System:** Working with health partners in a refreshed Integrated Health and Care system, that seeks to reduce system demand, whilst also focusing on improving long term health and care outcomes for the people of Norfolk. This includes both the alignment to localised Primary Care but also an efficient and sustainable system of supporting people upon leaving hospital and into the community.
- **Digital by default:** Seeking innovation and creating a culture that strives to embrace the efficiencies afforded by technology, when suitable, without losing the focus on the customer.
- **Maximising value for money:** Continuing to get the basics right by using our resources to their full extent, questioning and challenging ourselves in areas of

improvement, reducing inefficiencies and strengthening the contract management of our commissioned contracts to ensure we both get, and utilise, what we are paying for.

7.13. More so than ever, our strategy focuses our work alongside our partners in supporting thriving local communities and within micro economies. Both internally, with the Council's service departments, and externally with Norfolk Councils, health partners, voluntary sector and private partners, we work to improve the infrastructure that enables and promotes jobs, education, housing, health and wellbeing. Our integrated arrangements with our Health colleagues allow us to jointly pursue models of health and care that build upon a person's strengths, abilities and support networks (current or potential). With our joint 'home first' culture, we continue to recognise the importance, and stability, of a person's home, whether it's a person's ability to stay there, or return there, should they require the support of Norfolk's Health and Social Care system.

7.14. We are proud of how Norfolk's care market has responded to the recent challenges we have all faced. During the last 18 months we have worked closely with the care market, and its care association, to ensure a consistency of safe and quality provision of care. We know Norfolk, like many Local Authority areas, is presently suffering some capacity shortages in certain critical care markets. It therefore remains one of our key priorities to support the sustainability of Norfolk's care market, including helping the market to respond to the changes to demand that the pandemic has created and helping to ensure that care workers are properly rewarded for the work they do.

Saving proposals 2022-23

7.15. As referred to above, our 2022-23 savings proposals are a continuation, and evolution, of our existing Promoting Independence strategy. Within this we propose to:

- Continue to build and realise the financial benefits of 2800 new units of Independent Living (Extra Care) housing, moving into the 3rd year of our 10 year, £29m capital programme
- Continue to drive forward our new sister housing programme for younger adults that will offer homes to people to prevent them living in residential care before they truly need it.
- Continue to work with our Norse Care provider of Residential and Housing with Care to transform the services we commission and they provide
- Continue to work more proactively with people by focusing on early help and prevention, and seek to have a stronger connection to local communities they enhances how we support people when they first contact us.
- Continue to work closely with people with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities to reshape our services, and review their care needs, in order to enable them to lead the lives they want to live and live-in places they can call home.

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- Work with the NHS to provide shared, and equitably funded, services when its appropriate to do so.
- Increasing the scale to which we provide Direct Payments, where its an appropriate choice in meeting needs and is cost effective to do so.
- Use the talent and skills of our therapists to review existing, or potential, care packages, that require the attendance of two care workers, to see if opportunities exist to support the care provider and enable the care package to be delivered with only one carer.

Table 5: Adult Social Services gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
ASS-22-23-001	Recognising additional benefits from our existing savings programme. Linked to our existing saving ASC044: Extra care housing programme - delivering savings by building 2,800 units of extra care housing for older adults.	-0.090	-0.475	-1.100	0.000	-1.665
ASS-22-23-002	Delivering a saving through an accelerated Supported Housing Programme. Providing 183 units of supported housing for younger adults over a three year period, which is expected to increase independence and help in fewer people needing to be supported early in residential care.	-0.900	-0.700	0.000	0.000	-1.600
ASS-22-23-003	Recognising additional benefits from our existing savings programme. Linked to existing saving ASC024: Contract renegotiation, ensuring the requirements of commissioners are reflected in the Norsecare contract. Future years of existing programme to transform the Norse Care Older People Residential and Housing with Care estate.	-1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.000
ASS-22-23-004	Recognising additional benefits from our existing savings programme. Linked to our existing saving ASC018: Working with our partners to reshape our approach to supporting people on their initial contact with Adult Social Care (the "Front Door"). We will review our process and how we support people early on in the social care pathway and help their care needs before they escalate.	-2.000	-1.500	-2.000	0.000	-5.500
ASS-22-23-005	Improving market utilisation and delivering efficiencies. Strengthening our contract and performance management by getting better value for money in services we purchase by targeting the funding we have available to us.	-2.000	-1.500	-0.500	0.000	-4.000

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
ASS-22-23-006	Learning Disabilities transformation. Continued implementation of Norfolk's Learning Disability strategy. This sees the continued development of more choices and alternatives to residential care and access to community based activities.	-2.500	-1.500	0.000	0.000	-4.000
ASS-22-23-007	Mental Health Care Model Review. Seeking to improve the independence of those people supported with Mental Health conditions by reviewing their care packages and exploring the potential for alternative housing tenure. This will be done in partnership with health to ensure the balance of care between health and social care is appropriate.	-0.250	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.250
ASS-22-23-008	Expansion of Self Directed Support. Delivering a saving by utilising more Direct Payments rather than commissioned services, particularly when Direct Payments offer individuals more choice and are cost effective.	-0.100	-0.100	-0.100	0.000	-0.300
ASS-22-23-009	Use of ASC reserves. One-off release of reserves to offset budget pressures.	-3.000	3.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
ASS-22-23-010	Bad debt reduction. Increased recovery of debt leading to less bad debt write-off.	-0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.300
ASS-22-23-011	Recruitment and Retention Strategy. Delivering a saving by having a targeted approach to recruitment and retention.	-0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.100
ASS-22-23-012	Double up care reviews. Using therapists to lead reviews on care packages requiring two carers to attend, in order to consider alternatives to having two carers on site.	-0.200	-0.200	0.000	0.000	-0.400
		-12.440	-2.975	-3.700	0.000	-19.115

8. 2022-23 Budget proposals – Children's Services

Financial Strategy

8.1. Children's Services core strategy and transformation approach is working; our success in keeping families together and reducing numbers in care has delivered significant financial benefits to the County Council (avoided cost pressures and savings) alongside improved outcomes for children and families. Therefore, our core approach remains unchanged and, despite the ongoing and considerable uncertainty still being faced, the service continues to project benefits from existing schemes and major new schemes, such as New Roads, in the same strategic areas. Specifically, these are:

- Inclusion;
- Prevention and Early Intervention;
- Quality of Practice;

- Edge of Care and Alternatives to Care; and
- Re-shaping the care and specialist support market.

8.2. However, Children's Services continues to operate in a challenging context; high levels of need across numerous areas of service continues to be experienced and, in particular, in relation to children with special educational needs and children at risk of harm. The service also continues to respond to newer issues within society, and the range of responsibilities for the department continues to widen to tackle issues such as child sexual and criminal exploitation and the threat of radicalisation.

8.3. Key financial drivers experienced by the service are:

- Market forces, beyond the Council's control, are significantly impacting our ability to purchase the right placements at the right cost;
- An unhelpfully rigid approach from the regulator (Ofsted) - challenging care settings in a way which makes them unwilling to work with young people with complex needs or drives a demand for very large packages of additional support;
- An unprecedented worsening of emotional wellbeing and mental health amongst children, young people and parents;
- A significant rise in 'extra familial harm', including county lines and exploitation of young people
- An underlying trend of increasing special educational needs and disabilities, including some children with complex disabilities surviving into later childhood as a result of medical advances
- An additional strain on families as a result of the pandemic and hidden harm with families locked down together

8.4. We know that the pandemic has had a significant impact on children, families as well as our services and those of our partners. Norfolk has seen a persistent increase in demand for Family Support resulting from the impact of the pandemic, which has placed those teams under significant pressure. More recently, we have also seen an increase in the number of children looked after and increase in the cost of care for children over recent months, with the longer-term impact of the pandemic beginning to be seen. The situation remains highly uncertain and, whilst attempts have been made to financially plan for these circumstances, the situation is fluid and is likely to continue to be so into 2022-23.

8.5. Additionally, a range of other, less obvious, impacts on demand have been identified, including hidden need, trauma, and economic factors. It is hard to know what the experiences of children will have been during lockdown and how that will play out in the medium to longer term. Some key external markets are also under major strain, for example transport, early years, the voluntary sector as well as care. This includes some specialist provision from external providers that has been reduced during the pandemic and, in some cases, on an ongoing basis, to ensure that they are 'COVID secure.' That, alongside lengthy absences from school-based educational provision, may result in additional demand.

- 8.6. As a result of the pandemic, the expectations upon the Council with respect to its leadership role within the whole education sector in Norfolk has significantly changed. This has led to staff being redeployed to support the significantly increased workload, with major disruption to the normal work of some staff. It is still not clear what the Government's expectations are of local authorities with respect to support and leadership to the education sector in the medium-to-long-term, and so a 'watching brief' will be kept.
- 8.7. The core strategy and transformation approach is an ongoing programme of work for the service with work ongoing to enable the identification of further new initiatives that could deliver substantial transformation. The service has continued to drive this work forward, including increasing strategic partnership working that is generating and driving system change in Norfolk that, as the County Council alone, could not be delivered.
- 8.8. The services' core financial strategy for achieving savings is on an invest to save basis that aligns with this strategic approach, enabling the service to respond to the changing needs within communities and the current and future financial challenges by developing innovative new approaches, in particular:
- Prevention, early intervention and effective social care – investing in an enhanced operating model which supports families to stay together and ensures fewer children need to come into care;
 - Alternatives to care – investing in a range of new services which offer alternatives to care using enhanced therapeutic and care alternatives, combined with a focus on support networks from extended families keeping families safely together where possible and averting family crises; and
 - Transforming the care market and creating the capacity that we need – creating and commissioning new care models for children in care – achieving better outcomes and lower costs.
- 8.9. In recent years, the service has been supported to invest in staffing to enable transformation of services. The people who deliver our services to children and families are the most important asset that the service has, whether these be directly employed staff or indirectly employed through partners and commissioned providers. Having the right people in the right roles delivers the outcomes needed for Norfolk's children whilst also delivery good value for money. That said, where appropriate, technology and automation are being exploited to delivery committed efficiency savings.
- 8.10. Whilst improving outcomes for children and families, this approach has helped the service to limit the pressures being faced by the Council as a result of increasing levels and complexity of need through the delivery of financial savings aligned with the service's strategy, with c.£18m of recurrent budget savings expected to be delivered since 2018-19 by the end of 2021-22, with the projected benefit having already exceeded the investment. Successes include:

- New 'Front Door' – Children's Advice and Duty Service – so the right cases go into case-holding teams;
- Family Values – In-House Fostering Recruitment and Service Redesign – reducing reliance on external fostering agencies;
- In-House Semi-Independent Provision Phase 1 – reducing reliance on residential and external provision;
- Enhanced Fostering Phase 1 – reducing reliance on residential care;
- Stronger Families Therapeutic Service – edge of care support;
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People team – tailored support for vulnerable cohort;
- Family Group Conference team and Family Networking Approach – building resilience;
- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Process Review – new approach to EHCPs to deliver timeliness and quality;
- Pre-proceedings work – successful work with and before Family Court, reducing legal costs;
- Valuing Care – new needs framework driving smarter commissioning;
- Social Care Operating Model Phases 1 and 2 – keeping families together; and
- Target Youth Support Service – dedicated response for young people at risk of exploitation.
- New Roads hubs – new approach to achieve good and improving outcomes at lower long-term cost for the children with the most complex needs

Saving proposals 2022-23

8.11. Children's Services saving proposals for 2022-23 are extensions of our existing programme of work, complementing, and in addition to, the savings already within the 2021-24 MTFS. The proposals comprise of individual but related projects that, together, will continue to deliver significant transformation needed to provide financial sustainability as well as to deliver financial savings:

Prevention, early intervention and effective social care:

- Investing in an enhanced operating model which supports families to stay together and ensures fewer children need to come into care.
- To date, this investment has enabled an increase in permanent social care staff and, thus, a reduction in the usage of agency staff. The ongoing anticipated financial benefit has been reflected in the MTFS for future years.
- For 2022-23, the additional saving reflects: an expansion of support to mothers with the aim of supporting them to make alternative choices to reduce the number of repeat removals required; further development of the workforce to gain specialist social care housing knowledge to ensure housing support is provided at the right time by the right people; expansion of existing Support for Success teams to ensure sufficient capacity to work with newly accommodated children and young people can return home or have placements stabilised; redesigning support for children with disabilities to deliver more effective care and support and helping more

families to stay together through reducing escalation of need and families reaching crisis point, thus avoiding children coming into care and costly placements and support; and, further reduction in legal costs reflecting the reduced activity due to earlier intervention and more effective practice.

Alternatives to care:

- Investing in a range of new services which offer alternatives to care using enhanced therapeutic and care alternatives, combined with a focus on support networks from extended families keeping families safely together where possible and averting family crises.
- Through the transformation programme to date, the Council has already invested in Stronger Families (social impact bond), which has delivered significant financial benefits, and New Roads, whose projected financial benefits are already built in to the MTFS.
- For 2022-23, the additional savings reflect the expansion of the Norfolk Assisted Boarding Programme offer, which is a scheme that Norfolk led the way with nationally, that has been evaluated both to provide significant benefits to the educational outcomes of each young person as well as keeping families together and significantly reducing costs for NCC

Transforming the care market and creating the capacity that we need:

- Creating and commissioning new care models for children in care – achieving better outcomes and lower costs. We are continuing the transformation of the care market to keep children and young people who require placements close to home and based in Norfolk wherever possible and appropriate to do so.
- Through the transformation programme to date, the Council has made capital and revenue investment in a range new provision, including the semi-independent accommodation and solo / dual placements, with financial benefits already delivered and built into the MTFS for future years.
- For 2022-23, the additional savings reflect: development, in conjunction with health partners, of edge of mental health in-patient provision to support, in a therapeutic way, young people to step down from, or avoid, hospital stays and / or expensive, external placements / support, which leads to better outcomes for young people whilst also providing cost savings; review of our strategic commissioning approach to expand existing transformation delivery and the robustness of our negotiations; and, enhanced review process for Special Guardianship allowances.

Inclusion:

- The Council has significantly invested capital monies in the development of additional places in existing special schools, new special schools that are being built, and expanding specialist resource base provision throughout the County. This provision will enable more children and young people with Special Educational Needs to access appropriate provision closer to home and in the state sector, which will significantly reduce the pressures on the Dedicated Schools Grant forecast if we 'do nothing'. Additionally, investment in the support in mainstream schools is intended

to reduce the escalation of needs enabling more children and young people to remain in the mainstream sector where it is appropriate for them to do so.

- Linked to this investment we are, and will continue, to deliver savings in relation to the home to school transport costs associated with long journeys for children with Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision requirements.
- For 2022-23, we are proposing additional home to school transport savings that expand upon those already in the MTFS and, in particular, will be delivered through promoting a wider range of opportunities for home to school travel, focus on tightening controls and ensuring good financial grip.

8.12. In addition to the core financial strategy, we also continue to have a major focus on modernisation, efficiency and capturing the financial benefits of smarter working opportunities. Our 2022-23 budget proposals include:

Rationalisation and relocation of office accommodation:

- The office accommodation needs of the department are being reviewed in light of smarter working (accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and enabled through use of IT) with the view to rationalising accommodation whilst still meeting ongoing service needs.
- We are developing a Building Assets Strategy to deliver savings from reduced spend on leases and associated revenue costs; this proposal is focussed on a review of current Children's Services occupied buildings, to reduce usage or release space that is no longer required. Test and learn pilots will inform future requirements, along with engaging with partners to establish their future plans and explore co-location opportunities

8.13. As we work through the budget setting process, the department continues to focus upon potential transformation within our overall strategy, as described above, that could maximise outcomes for children and young people, whilst mitigating the challenges resulting from the pandemic and also delivering financial benefits to alleviate the pressures facing the County Council.

Table 6: Children's Services gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
CHL-22-23-001	Extending our existing savings programme to deliver additional benefits. Proposal is to expand our 2019-20 saving CHS001: Prevention, early intervention and effective social care – Investing in an enhanced operating model which supports families to stay together and ensures fewer children need to come into care.	-1.775	-0.900	0.000	0.000	-2.675

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
CHL-22-23-002	Extending our existing savings programme to deliver additional benefits. Proposal is to expand our 2019-20 saving CHS002: Alternatives to care – Investing in a range of new services which offer alternatives to care using enhanced therapeutic interventions, combined with a focus on support networks from extended families keeping families safely together where possible and averting family crises.	-0.500	-0.250	0.000	0.000	-0.750
CHL-22-23-003	Extending our existing savings programme to deliver additional benefits. Proposal is to expand our 2019-20 saving CHS003: Transforming the care market and creating the capacity that we need – Creating and commissioning new care models for children in care – achieving better outcomes and lower costs.	-0.675	-0.250	0.000	0.000	-0.925
CHL-22-23-004	Extending our existing savings programme to deliver additional benefits. Proposal is to expand our 2021-22 saving CHS007: Inclusion (Home to School Transport) by finding school places closer to home for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision requirements. We will reduce transport costs associated with long journeys and ensure that children are supported towards more independent travel where appropriate.	-1.200	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.200
CHL-22-23-005	Extending our existing savings programme to deliver additional benefits. Proposal is to expand our 2021-22 saving CHS008: Smarter Working – continued modernisation through a shift to different ways of working to deliver savings from reduced spend on leases and associated revenue costs.	-0.165	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.165
		-4.315	-1.400	0.000	0.000	-5.715

9. 2022-23 Budget proposals – Community and Environmental Services

Financial Strategy

9.1. Community and Environmental Services (CES) has responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services; there is no hierarchy as each area has a vital role to play in achieving better outcomes for Norfolk and we have a key role to play in supporting the delivery of the *Together, for Norfolk* strategy.

9.2. Our services are delivered across the county in the heart of local communities. The common factor is that CES services impact on residents, visitors and businesses in Norfolk every day. They are also crucial to the successful recovery from the impacts of Covid-19.

9.3. We play a key role in keeping Norfolk communities safe, healthy and independent; including responding to emergencies, developing skills, tackling social isolation and providing the advice and support people need to stay safe and healthy. There is also a focus on Norfolk as a place, including looking after our unique heritage and environment as well as ensuring that key infrastructure improvements can be delivered.

9.4. We are investing in some key service areas to ensure critical activities to support local communities and businesses can continue to be delivered and developed further:-

- Delivery of the Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control, including testing and tracing, vaccination support and a range of other activities to control the spread of Covid-19, focussing on reducing harm and protecting vulnerable people
- Supporting economic bounce-back and growth, including delivery of the Norfolk and Suffolk Renewal Plan and development of the Norfolk Investment Framework
- Supporting community recovery and development of social infrastructure, including through the Social Infrastructure Fund and Community Renewal Fund
- Providing the digital and physical infrastructure individuals and businesses in Norfolk need to thrive, including enabling the best possible Broadband infrastructure we can secure for Norfolk
- Work to reduce our impact on the environment and deliver the action plan supporting the Council's Environmental Policy, including the new Electric Vehicle Strategy
- Investing in services to help keep Norfolk Communities safe and healthy
- Working with partners and stakeholders to further develop the visitor economy

9.5. A key part of our strategy for some time has been to reduce our reliance on revenue funding which continuing to make significant investment in key improvements and activities for Norfolk. We have achieved this through successfully securing funding from alternative sources, including grants, competitively bidding for funding and generating income; less than half of the workforce in CES is revenue funded.

Saving proposals 2022-23

9.6. The service continues to look for opportunities to deliver budget savings whilst trying to minimise the impact on vital front line services which local communities, businesses and visitors rely on. The range of services and outcomes means that a single approach would not be beneficial. Instead, CES is focussing on service redesign across the following broad approaches:

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- A focus on Core service provision - Protecting, developing and enhancing the core services at the heart of local communities, including those supporting the work to respond to Covid-19 and the bounce-back of the economy
- Continuing to maximise alternative funding sources, including opportunities to generate income
- Investing in new facilities and equipment that mean we can be more efficient and reduce our operating costs
- Smarter Working - Efficiency and cost reduction – this includes putting new ways of working in place for our directly employed workforce, as well as working with our contractors to enable efficiencies from our commissioned services

Table 7: Community and Environmental Services gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
CES-22-23-001	Buying rather than leasing fire service vehicles. This would bring savings while keeping the same number of vehicles on the road. [Fire Engines]	-0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.100
CES-22-23-002	Buying rather than leasing fire service vehicles. This would bring savings while keeping the same number of vehicles on the road.	-0.150	-0.111	0.000	0.000	-0.261
CES-22-23-003	Charge for some of the expert planning advice and services we provide. This proposal requires that some of the costs for environment planning advice and information be transferred from the County Council revenue budget to a charge to the planning system. Enacting this change will require engagement with Tier 2 Local Authorities for those planning functions they cover.	-0.075	-0.075	0.000	0.000	-0.150
CES-22-23-004	Efficiency savings (Planning Service). A number of small savings from across the department to reflect various changes in processes, practice, and ways of working with no impact on service delivery.	-0.026	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.026
CES-22-23-005	Contract efficiencies. Working with contractors to deliver lower costs from the arrangements at waste transfer stations.	-0.070	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.070
CES-22-23-006	Charges for trade waste disposal. Updating principles for dealing with costs of trade waste collected by some district councils.	-0.025	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.025

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
CES-22-23-007	Review of estimates for waste budget increases. Budgets can be adjusted to reflect new contracts with a lower unit cost.	-0.200	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.200
CES-22-23-008	Reduce recycling centre management costs. Working with a contractor to deliver lower costs of service delivery.	-0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.100
CES-22-23-009	Two brand new recycling centres will cost less to run. Savings made as the operating costs of the two new recycling centres (Norwich North and Norwich South) will be lower than the existing sites at Mile Cross and Ketteringham.	-0.200	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.200
CES-22-23-010	Identifying contract efficiency savings. Working with highways contractors to deliver savings from management overheads.	-0.035	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.035
CES-22-23-011	Fixed Penalty Notices. Income from fines if utilities and other companies do not comply with the roadwork permits they have been issued.	-0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000
CES-22-23-012	Fines for overrunning roadworks. Income from fines if utilities and other companies do not comply with the roadwork permits they have been issued. Section 74 of the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) allows highway authorities to charge undertakers if street works are unreasonably prolonged i.e. take longer than previously agreed.	-0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.000
CES-22-23-013	Create new streetworks technician post. A new streetworks technician post would help strengthen the team that have oversight of roadworks carried out by utility companies across the county. The role could help bring in additional income by improving the management of temporary traffic orders .	-0.030	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.030
CES-22-23-014	Restructure the highways services team. This would affect the back office team and no redundancies would be expected.	-0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.020
CES-22-23-015	Maximise efficiency of winter gritting by using the latest technology. New navigation systems in all gritters will automatically control salt spread rates to best suit precise locations and conditions.	-0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.100
CES-22-23-016	Increase the Highway Design Team charge rates for work on major infrastructure delivery. This will increase the design team fees charged to internal	-0.150	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.150

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
	and external clients and ensure full cost recovery.					
CES-22-23-017	Fund part of the Council's economic projects budget from an alternative source. Use the County Council's share of income from existing Enterprise Zone sites within Norfolk to fund economic projects.	-0.089	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.089
CES-22-23-018	New library operations centre to cut costs. The new operations centre at Hethersett provides streamlined distribution and enables efficiencies.	-0.125	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.125
CES-22-23-019	Efficiency savings (Community Information and Learning). A number of small savings from across Adult Learning to reflect various changes in processes, practice, ways of working, and additional external funding, with no impact on service delivery.	-0.090	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.090
CES-22-23-020	Restructure back office support team. Some processes are more efficient and therefore the structure of the team could be amended to reflect that.	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.075
CES-22-23-021	Reduce software costs. Switching to a new provider of design software will meet required needs while also saving money.	-0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.020
CES-22-23-022	Capitalisation of IT costs to bring revenue savings. Capitalising the cost of some IT systems e.g. those used by highways as part of their work to develop the asset.	-0.080	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.080
CES-22-23-023	Additional Streetworks income. Employing an additional Streetworks Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) Officer would result in additional income.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
CES-22-23-024	Increase the Infrastructure Projects charge rates for work on major infrastructure delivery. This will increase the design team fees charged to internal and external clients and ensure full cost recovery.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
CES-22-23-025	Increased income and lower costs for the street lighting and traffic signals Electrical Services Team. This will see savings achieved from increased recharges and system optimisation / efficiencies. In addition, income would be raised by introducing charging for developer advice.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
CES-22-23-026	Increased income and lower costs for the Transport Team. This proposal will see savings achieved from increased recharges and system optimisation / efficiencies achieved through changing the way services are delivered.	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.075
CES-22-23-027	Reduced highways equipment costs. Following the transfer to NORSE Highways, we have been able to reduce the cost of equipment.	-0.070	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.070
CES-22-23-028	Income generation from highways assets. Increase income from additional highway advertising and sponsorship sites - for example new signs on verges.	-0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.020
CES-22-23-029	Increased income generation by Trading Standards. Further work to generate income through the metrology service, in addition to the existing income generation targets.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
CES-22-23-030	Seeking alternative funding sources for the Library and Information Service. Review of external funding and staff structure options.	-0.090	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.090
CES-22-23-031	Cost Recovery for the American Library: The American Library based in the Millennium Library operates in partnership with the Second Air Division Memorial Trust. This proposal seeks to permanently remove the NCC contribution towards staffing costs and requires third party approval. The library would continue to operate at current levels if agreed.	-0.013	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.013
CES-22-23-032	Customer Services efficiency savings. This proposal reflects removing or changing courier arrangements across the Council. The introduction of a new logistics hub means this saving is possible.	-0.015	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.015
CES-22-23-033	Education Library Service: this proposal removes the subsidy to maintain an Education Library Service and would cease the service to schools in its current format.	-0.060	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.060
CES-22-23-034	Review software and rationalise functionality within other existing systems. This proposal will save money by the Council ceasing to use two current systems replacing them with alternative, lower cost solutions.	-0.013	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.013
CES-22-23-035	Restructuring some back office support teams. Savings from increased in manager self-service enabled by the Council's new	-0.075	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.075

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
	HR and Finance system (MyOracle), and other changes in ways of working.					
CES-22-23-036	Review of Museums budgets to reflect process and ways of working efficiencies. This proposal reflects additional partnership income, plus additional staffing budget savings including vacancy management, with no change in the service delivered.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
CES-22-23-037	Income generation by the Norfolk Record Office. This proposal reflects an increase in income through the launch of a new online service for ordering digital images and an anticipated increase in revenue from licenced images following the launch of the 1921 census.	-0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.010
CES-22-23-038	Additional costs for advisory work met through the planning system.	-0.025	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.025
CES-22-23-039	Environment and waste budget savings. Savings from planning application work being dealt with in house at the County Council.	-0.015	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.015
CES-22-23-040	Reduction in existing budget pressure for Fire Service. This saving reflects a reduction in the anticipated required pension contributions for Fire Service currently provided for in the budget.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
CES-22-23-041	Finalising a restructure of the [Fire Service] senior management team and strategic operational command arrangements.	-0.020	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.020
		-2.961	0.214	0.000	0.000	-2.747

10. 2022-23 Budget proposals – Strategy and Transformation

Financial Strategy

10.1. The Strategy and Transformation department provides a continuum of services from strategy development, organisational development and upskilling, HR and H&S core services and professional advice, innovation and transformation delivery, insight and performance, strategic communications and resource stewardship.

10.2. The department's key functional areas are Human Resources, Transformation, Communications and Insight & Analytics. As well as providing a service to operational departments they also enable the delivery of change and benefits within those departments.

10.3. To ensure best value for money, we continue to investigate and explore opportunities for a coordinated spend approach across the council in these areas:

- Communications
- Training and development

Saving proposals 2022-23

10.4. The department's strategic approach to developing budget proposals is intended to:

- Work to drive our professional leads model and organisation design, in providing support across the organisation to maximise efficiency, and effectiveness
- Ensure the realisation of benefits identified in the Business Transformation and Smarter Working programmes
- Maximise any saving opportunities arising from changed expectations and working practices as a result of COVID-19
- Provide clarity on HR and H&S core service delivery post MyOracle implementation
- Acknowledge the role of manager capability and capacity in good people practice with reduced HR intervention and advice

10.5. The department responded to the pandemic by providing extra support and services to the wider organisation. The financial impact of this has been expenditure in temporary staff.

10.6. Any further local or nationally imposed demands that are not able to be funded through covid monies or go beyond the covid funding duration would add to cost pressures. However, that is not anticipated at this stage.

10.7. The current proposals of £0.307m are additional to the gross savings of £0.480m previously identified for 2022-23.

10.8. Together they make 6% of the gross annual budget.

Table 8: Strategy and Transformation gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

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Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
S&T-22-23-001	Reduction in HR budgets. Savings to be delivered through a range of measures including efficiency savings arising from the new HR and Finance system (MyOracle). Approach will include revised service delivery model and savings from central rationalisation of HR functions (Fire HR transfer into central HR budget), as well as savings from reduced mileage, printing etc as a result of new ways of working.	-0.150	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.150
S&T-22-23-002	Insight & Analytics budget saving and additional income. Deliver a saving by delaying recruitment and seeking alternative sources of funding for currently vacant posts.	-0.097	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.097
S&T-22-23-003	One off use of Strategy and Transformation reserves.	-0.050	0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000
S&T-22-23-004	Reduction in Transformation budgets. Deliver a saving from a reduction in advertising posts and external fees.	-0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.010
		-0.307	0.050	0.000	0.000	-0.257

11. 2022-23 Budget proposals - Governance

Financial Strategy

11.1. The Governance department brings together Democratic Services, Regulatory Services and Legal Services and provides:

- essential face to face public services
- quality legal services to external partners and NCC departments
- support to Council to be an effective organisation.

Saving proposals 2022-23

11.2. Strong governance keeps the organisation safe and legally sound and supports elected members to shape and deliver the Council's key priorities. The department's strategic approach to developing budget proposals is intended to:

- Ensure that we keep the organisation safe and legal as efficiently and effectively as possible
- Balance opportunities to maximise income for genuine fee earning services against cost savings, without deviating from our core service offering
- Maximise any saving opportunities arising from changed expectations and working practices as a result of COVID-19

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11.3. The pandemic financial impact within the department has mainly related to loss of income and extra expenditure in temporary staff. Any further local or nationally imposed demands that are not able to be funded through covid monies or go beyond the covid funding duration would add to cost pressures. However, that is not anticipated at this stage.

Table 9: Governance gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
GOV-22-23-001	Efficiency savings. Implementing Smarter Working practices across Nplaw, including moving from paper based bundles to electronic bundles, which reduces core costs.	-0.080	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.080
GOV-22-23-002	Reduction in Monitoring Officer budget. Remove capacity from Monitoring Officer budget.	-0.023	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.023
GOV-22-23-003	Reduction in Governance budgets. Saving to be delivered from reducing training and removing Governance estate and site management budgets.	-0.012	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.012
GOV-22-23-004	Reduction in Governance budgets. Saving to be delivered by reducing Governance budget for rents and hire, while <u>retaining</u> the Coroner's budget for inquests that cannot be accommodated at County Hall.	-0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.010
GOV-22-23-005	Use of Governance reserves. One-off release of reserves to offset budget pressures following review of all reserves held.	-0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000
GOV-22-23-006	Income generation. Recognising the potential for growth in Nplaw, including external income generation.	-0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.010
GOV-22-23-007	Reduced spend on barristers.	-0.050	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.050
		-0.285	0.100	0.000	0.000	-0.185

12. 2022-23 Budget proposals – Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General

Financial Strategy

12.1. Finance and Commercial Services provides capacity to enable the Council to act swiftly, innovatively and effectively in the context of rapid change. The Department is focused on delivering the following key objectives:

- Enhancing financial performance;
- Supporting and training service managers;

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- Effective management of property assets to make best use and maximise the return on investments;
- Efficient and effective contract management;
- Providing information which supports good decision making;
- Reducing the costs of our services whilst improving their effectiveness, utilising new technology and implementing smarter ways of working; and
- Rolling out technological infrastructure, improving customer service and saving money.

Saving proposals 2022-23

12.2. The objectives set out above inform an approach to identifying budget proposals which seeks to minimise the impact on front line services.

Table 10: Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General gross new saving proposals 2022-23 to 2025-26

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
FIN-22-23-001	One off release from Organisational Change Fund. Annual budget provision is made for organisational change and redundancy costs. An assessment of the amount required to be held against organisational need(s), experience of actual costs incurred, and the likely organisational and staffing impact of emerging saving proposals for 2022-23, indicate that it would be possible to release £0.750m from this budget on a one-off basis.	-0.750	0.750	0.000	0.000	0.000
FIN-22-23-002	Increase in income budget to reflect actual grant funding. Allocations of Extended Rights to Free Travel grant are not confirmed until after the budget for the year has been set. Following review, the income budget for the grant can be increased to reflect the actual level of grant received in recent years.	-0.625	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.625
FIN-22-23-003	Reduce budgetary provision for grants to other public bodies. Reducing the budget held corporately to support partnership work with other public bodies following a review of recent funding needs.	-0.300	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.300
FIN-22-23-004	Review of employer pension pressure provision. Revising the budget provided to reflect the actuarial valuation of the pension fund and the level of lump sum payment required 2022-23.	-1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.000
FIN-22-23-005	Review of treasury management requirements. Review of borrowing needs	-0.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	-0.500

Ref	Saving Proposal	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	Total £m
	and interest rates will enable a saving to be delivered from interest payable budgets.					
FIN-22-23-006	Benefits realisation from the HR & Finance system replacement (MyOracle) project. Recognising efficiency and other savings to be achieved within Budgeting and Accounting service from 2023-24.	0.000	-0.200	0.000	0.000	-0.200
FIN-22-23-007	Delaying planned contributions to the General Fund. Review of the level of the General Fund compared to Net Budget forecasts and risks enables an element of planned contributions to be delayed and reduced while maintaining the balance at the required target level.	-1.000	0.250	0.250	0.000	-0.500
		-4.175	0.800	0.250	0.000	-3.125

13. Robustness of the Budget and compliance with the Financial Management Code

13.1. The Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services is required by section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to report to Members if it appears that the expenditure the authority proposes to incur in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources available to it to meet that expenditure. In addition, duties under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 establish a requirement to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculation of the precept (and therefore in agreeing the County Council's budget).

13.2. As a result, these duties require a professional judgement to be made by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services as the officer ultimately responsible for the authority's finances. The Executive Director takes a view of the robustness of the Council's budget across the whole period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy and this will be fully reported to Members as part of the budget setting process in February 2022.

13.3. At this stage of the budget setting process, and with reference to the new saving proposals developed for 2022-23 and set out in this report, the initial assessment by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services in relation to this duty is that a balanced budget can be proposed for 2022-23. This reflects the following key considerations and assumptions:

- The new savings proposals developed to date for 2022-23, alongside the £5m additional savings to be identified for Cabinet in January 2022, will help to establish a solid foundation for the development of a robust budget in future years, but a number of key risks remain.
- The current monitoring position for 2021-22 indicates an overspend outturn position, although work is underway to achieve a balanced position by the

end of the financial year. This will allow £18m of one-off resources held as a contingency pressure to be released so that they would therefore become available to support the 2022-23 Budget.

- Initial forecasts from District Councils suggest that the council tax base and collection position may be more resilient than previously forecast and may provide additional funding to support the 2022-23 gap. This will be confirmed as forecasts are developed through the remainder of the year.
- Contingent on the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement and without additional deliverable, recurrent savings, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services recommends that a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy will require an increase in line with the maximum referendum threshold of 2% in core council tax, 1% Adult Social Care Precept (2022-23), and the deferred 1% increase in Adult Social Care precept.
- Significant risks remain around the scale of the likely gap for 2023-24 and future years, subject to the level of one-off options required to balance the 2022-23 budget.
- The assessment of the robustness of the Budget remains highly sensitive to the detail of Government decisions about funding made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget 2021 (as announced 27/10/2021) and also the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022-23.

13.4. In addition, the judgement takes into account the fact that work is underway to quantify and validate significant emerging pressures which will need to be included in the final Budget proposals in February 2022 where they are shown to be appropriate and unavoidable.

- Pressures within adults and children's social care including growth in demand, additional cost of purchasing care provision and delays in delivery of savings (in part linked to COVID-19 impacts);
- Risks linked to hospital discharge activities for which funding is only confirmed until March 2022;
- Potential cost pressures linked to Government social care reforms;
- Other demographic pressures including home to school transport;
- Impact of policy decisions (e.g. ongoing revenue budget for flood prevention);
- Cost pressures in areas such as Trading Standards;
- Property cost pressures in particular ongoing PPE warehouse costs;
- Government funding ceasing;
- Pressures linked to the National Living Wage;
- Exceptional inflation pressures including for energy, fuel, and utilities; and
- Other decisions with cost implications, legislative and other changes.

13.5. Further risks are also emerging around long term economic impacts of issues including the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, any disruption to the food supply chain could result in additional costs related to the need to provide support to vulnerable members of society. Any resulting pressures in this area will be identified through the remainder of the budget process. Children's services, in both social care and education (particularly the High Needs Block),

continue to be under very significant stress. There remains a risk, as previously highlighted to Cabinet, that many of these pressures continue to increase in the medium-term partly as a result of additional needs driven by the impacts of COVID-19.

13.6. Taking the above into account, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' current advice is that the Council needs to continue to develop the 2022-23 Budget in a way which offers flexibility to respond to changes in the wider environment and operating context. This includes a further process to identify deliverable recurrent savings for 2022-23 to be undertaken in November / December and to report in January 2022. The overall Budget position will be kept under review as budget planning continues through the remainder of the year. As part of setting the 2022-23 Budget, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services will also consider the adequacy of the overall General Fund balance, the need for a general contingency amount within the revenue budget, uncertainty about Government funding, and the further implications of Brexit, COVID-19, and the Council's wider value for money position.

13.7. As in previous years, the 2022-23 Budget needs to be prepared with reference to the Financial Management Code (the FM Code) published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The FM Code provides guidance about the principles of good and sustainable financial management, and requires authorities to demonstrate that processes are in place which satisfy these principles. It identifies risks to financial sustainability and sets out details of a framework of assurance which reflects existing successful practices across the sector. In addition, the Code establishes explicit standards of financial management, and highlights that compliance with these is the collective responsibility of elected members, the chief finance officer and the wider Corporate Board. Further details of how the Council considers it achieves compliance with the FM Code will be set out in the February Cabinet Budget report.

14. Council tax and Adult Social Care precept

14.1. As set out above, the MTFs approved by Members in February 2021 assumed a 1.99% increase in council tax for 2022-23 and subsequent years, plus a 1.00% increase in the Adult Social Care precept for 2022-23 (deferred from 2021-22). At the Spending Review 2021, the Government has announced that it intends to set the referendum thresholds for 2022-23 to 2024-25 for core council tax at 2%, and offer further flexibility to raise the Adult Social Care (ASC) precept by 1% in each year. After reviewing the currently available information, the Section 151 Officer anticipates recommending that Members agree the maximum council tax increase available within the referendum threshold, plus the deferred amount from 2021-22. The pressures within the current budget planning position are such that, unless mitigated by additional savings or government funding, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services considers that the Council will have very limited opportunity to vary these assumptions, and in the event that the Government offered the discretion for larger increases in council tax, or further increases in

the Adult Social Care precept, this would be the recommendation of the Section 151 Officer in order to ensure that the council's financial position remains robust and sustainable. This judgement reflects:

- the levels of emerging service pressures balanced against saving proposals identified;
- consideration of the robustness of the Council's overall 2022-23 budget;
- the risks for the longer term financial position, and in particular the need to ensure that a resilient budget can be set in future years,
- reliance on one-off measures to support the 2022-23 Budget which will need to be addressed in 2023-24.
- the considerable remaining uncertainty around risks, funding and cost pressures in 2022-23 and beyond.

14.2. When we next update Cabinet we will have greater clarity as to the actual sums of money the spending review announcements equate to in the local government settlement; this could ameliorate some of the pressures outlined above. Similarly a fundamental review of how the Council operates (with resultant savings) would also have a bearing on the above advice if it enhanced the robustness of the Council's MTFS. The precise final level of any change in council tax will be confirmed in February 2022 and is subject to Member decision making annually.

Table 11: Current Council Tax assumptions in MTFS and for consultation

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
General council tax	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%
Adult Social Care precept	2.00%	1.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total increase	3.99%	2.99%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%
<i>Alternative level for consultation following SR21</i>					
General council tax	n/a	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%
Adult Social Care precept	n/a	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Adult Social Care precept (deferred)	n/a	1.00%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total increase	n/a	3.99%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%

15. Impact of the Proposals

15.1. This paper sets out further details of the Council's budget planning process for 2022-23, while recognising that significant risks and uncertainties remain. The proposals in this report will:

- set the context for public consultation on and equality impact assessments of the 2022-23 Budget proposals;
- provide an opportunity for Cabinet to comment on and provide guidance about the departmental saving proposals and emerging pressures; and
- determine the next steps which will contribute to the Council setting a balanced budget for 2022-23.

16. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

16.1. The County Council continues to engage with Government, MPs and other stakeholders to campaign for adequate and sustainable funding for Norfolk to continue to deliver vital services to residents, businesses and visitors. The Council looks forward to Government issuing guidance on financial planning assumptions, particularly indicative funding allocations for 2022-23, as soon as possible. The Council's MTFS planning builds on the position agreed in February 2021 and this continues to be updated as more reliable information about cost pressures and funding impacts emerges through the process. The proposals in the report reflect a prudent response to the challenges and uncertainties present in the 2022-23 planning process and will ultimately support the Council to develop a robust budget for the year.

17. Alternative Options

17.1. This report forms part of the framework for developing detailed saving proposals for 2022-23 and at this stage no proposals have been agreed, meaning that a range of alternative options remain open.

17.2. In addition, there are a number of areas where Cabinet could choose to consider different parameters for the budget setting process, such as:

- Considering alternative approaches to the development of savings from those proposed.
- Adopting an alternative allocation of targets between services, or retaining a higher or lower target corporately.
- Considering an alternative timetable within the time constraints required to develop proposals, undertake public consultation, and meet statutory deadlines for the setting of council tax.
- Changing assumptions within the MTFS (including the level of council tax) and therefore varying the level of savings sought.

17.3. Final decisions about the overall shape of the 2022-23 Budget, savings, and council tax will not be made until February 2022, when they will be informed by Local Government Finance Settlement figures, forecasts supplied by District Councils, and the findings of EQIA and public consultation activity.

17.4. The deliverability of all saving proposals will continue to be kept under review by the Section 151 Officer as further detailed implementation plans are developed and up until final budget setting proposals are presented to Cabinet in February 2022.

18. Financial Implications

18.1. Financial implications are discussed throughout the report. This paper sets out the initial savings proposals developed to address the targets agreed in July and which will need to be delivered by each department to contribute to

closing the 2022-23 and future year budget gap, subject to formal approval by Full Council in February 2022. If ultimately approved in the Budget, the proposals in this paper will require departments to deliver further significant savings.

18.2. The Council is legally required to set a balanced Budget annually and should plan to achieve this using a prudent set of assumptions. However, as previously set out, Members could choose to vary the allocation of indicative targets between Directorates, establish an alternative approach to identifying savings, or substitute proposals brought forward. Work to deliver additional Government funding could also have an impact on the overall budget gap to be addressed. As a result, the budget setting process and savings targets will continue to be kept under review as budget planning progresses.

18.3. The scale of the budget gap and savings required over the MTFs are such that if the Council is required to deliver savings at this level there is a risk that it could result in the Council failing to fulfil its statutory responsibilities. As such the Government's response and decisions about Council funding in 2022-23 will be hugely significant. The continuing pandemic recovery, Spending Review, Fair Funding Review and others may all offer opportunities to adequately fund local authorities to provide vital services and contribute towards the national recovery. While initial indications are that the recently announced Social Care funding reform may not represent the panacea which might have been hoped for, further details and implications remain to be fully understood.

18.4. Any changes in Government funding could have a material impact on both the level of savings to be identified, and the Council's wider budget process. Fundamentally there is a need for a larger quantum of funding to be provided to local government to provide a sustainable level of funding for future years.

19. Resource Implications

19.1. **Staff:** There are no direct implications arising from this report although there is a potential that staffing implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed. These will be identified as they arise later in the budget planning process.

19.2. **Property:** There are no direct property implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to property budgets and assumptions around capital receipts to be achieved. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver property related savings.

19.3. **IT:** There are no direct IT implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to IMT budgets. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver savings through activity related to digital and IMT initiatives.

20. Other Implications

- 20.1. **Legal Implications:** This report forms part of the process that will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2022-23 in line with statutory requirements, including those relating to setting council tax, and undertaking public consultation.
- 20.2. **Human Rights implications:** No specific human rights implications have been identified.
- 20.3. **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** None.
- 20.4. **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** None.
- 20.5. **Sustainability implications (where appropriate):** There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report although existing 2022-23 budget plans include funding for activities which may have an impact on the environmental sustainability of the County Council through the delivery of the Environmental Policy. These issues were considered in more detail within the February budget report to Full Council. The MTFS currently assumes that cost pressures and capital schemes to achieve 2030 carbon neutrality as set out in the Environmental Policy are sufficient, however as set out in the report *“Natural Norfolk: Progress on delivering the Environmental Policy”* elsewhere on the agenda, proposals to support the Council’s move towards decarbonisation will have financial implications for the County Council. Further work will be undertaken so that as far as possible any cost pressures linked to environmental policy and carbon reduction activities are reflected in the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to Cabinet in January 2022. Sustainability issues in relation to any new 2022-23 budget proposals will need to be further considered once initiatives are finalised as part of budget setting in February 2022.
- 20.6. **Any other implications:** Significant issues, risks, assumptions and implications have been set out throughout the report.

21. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Introduction

- 21.1. Local authorities are required by the Equality Act 2010 to give ‘due regard to equality’ when exercising public functions, such as setting the annual budget.¹¹

¹¹ The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

21.2. Many local authorities summarise their efforts to give 'due regard to equality' in a document called an '**equality impact assessment**' – because this is an accessible way to analyse and evidence the different ways a proposal might impact on people with protected characteristics.

21.3. If the assessment identifies any detrimental impact, this enables mitigating actions to be developed.

21.4. It is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the interests of people with protected characteristics. However, giving 'due regard to equality' enables informed decisions to be made that take every opportunity to minimise disadvantage.

How the Council gives due regard to equality on the budget savings proposals

21.5. Due regard to the equality has been given to the savings proposals set out in this report. This includes ensuring that:

- The proposals are compliant with the Equality Act 2010
- Information about the proposals is accessible
- Arrangements for public consultation are inclusive and accessible
- The proposals are informed by the Council's equality impact assessments of COVID-19 and Digital Inclusion.

21.6. Following confirmation (or any changes made) by the Cabinet at this November meeting that the proposals will be taken forward for budget planning for 2022-23, further analysis in the form of equality impact assessments will take place of each proposal, to consider the impact on people with protected characteristics.

21.7. Equality impact assessments cannot be completed until the public consultation is concluded. This is because the Council must ensure that it has fully understood the impact of each proposal on service users, particularly service users with protected characteristics.

21.8. The findings of equality impact assessments will be published for consideration by the Cabinet in the Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23 report of January 2022, and in advance of the final decision by the Full Council about the overall Budget in February 2022.

22. Risk Implications/Assessment

22.1. A number of significant risks have been identified throughout this report. Risks in respect of the MTFS were also set out within the February 2021 report to Full Council. Uncertainties remain which could have an impact on the overall scale of the budget gap to be addressed in 2022-23. These include:

-
- This is called the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'. [The full Equality Act 2021 is available on legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk).

- The ultimate impact of COVID on the budget in 2022-23, including in particular:
 - any ongoing cost pressures within service delivery and contracted services which have not currently been provided for, including the financial impact of any future lockdowns and/or where services resume but need to be operated on reduced numbers (for example adult day care)
 - ongoing pressures on income particularly in relation to business rates and council tax
 - the implications of any measures implemented by Government to restore the national finances in the medium to longer term
- Ongoing uncertainty around local government (and wider public sector finances) including:
 - the full implications of SR21 announced 27 October 2021
 - Government decisions about the council tax referendum limit or further ASC precept flexibilities for 2022-23
 - the need for a long term financial settlement for local government
 - delivery of reforms to local government funding including the Fair Funding Review, Adult Social Care funding, reforms to the Business Rates system, changes to other funding streams including the New Homes Bonus
 - Further decisions about Local Government reorganisation.

22.2. The Council's Corporate Risk Register provides a full description of corporate risks, including corporate level financial risks, mitigating actions and the progress made in managing the level of risk. A majority of risks, if not treated, could have significant financial consequences such as failing to generate income or to realise savings. These corporate risks include:

- RM002 – The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams.
- RM006 – The potential risk of failure to deliver our services within the resources available for the period 2021-22 to the end of 2023-24.
- RM022b – Implications of Brexit for a) external funding and b) Norfolk businesses
- RM031 – NCC Funded Children's Services Overspend

22.3. Further details of all corporate risks, including those outlined above, can be found in Appendix C of the September 2021 Risk Management report to Cabinet. There is close oversight of the Council's expenditure with monthly financial reports to Cabinet. Any emerging risks arising will continue to be identified and treated as necessary.

22.4. The Council is currently in the process of implementing a new HR and Finance System (MyOracle), following approval of the business case presented in May 2019. The current budget makes provision for the revenue and capital costs associated with the system, which is expected to deliver some savings during 2022-23, with full benefits achieved from 2023-24, based on implementation in April 2022. As a result, the 2021-22 Budget incorporates

some early savings realised within Finance and Commercial Services in 2021-22, with the majority of savings now assumed in the planning position from 2022-23, which assists in closing the MTFS gap position in future years. The assumed level of annual savings in the original business case was £3m. The effective delivery of this programme may therefore have implications for the 2022-23 Budget both in terms of (1) the level of savings assumed within the MTFS and (2) the underlying impact of a new system on the budget setting process. The latest details about the progress of this major project are provided in the *MyOracle programme update* report to Corporate Select Committee in November 2021.

23. Select Committee comments

- 23.1. Select Committees previously considered the Council's budget setting process in July, and requested a further opportunity to comment on detailed proposals for the 2022-23 Budget. It is therefore proposed that this report is presented to November Select Committee meetings in order to provide them with an opportunity to comment on proposals which relate to the areas within their remit. Any comments from Select Committees will be reported to Cabinet to inform budget-setting decisions in January 2022.

24. Recommendations

- 24.1. Cabinet is recommended:

- 1. To consider and comment on the County Council strategy as set out in section 2 and how the Budget process is aligned to the overall policy and financial framework;**
- 2. To consider the potential implications of Government announcements about Social Care, the considerable uncertainty remaining in respect of these, which may result in additional cost pressures in the medium to longer term, and agree that these should be reflected, where possible, in the 2022-23 Budget;**
- 3. To consider the latest details of announcements made at the Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget 2021, and note that the outcome of these national funding announcements, alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement, will have potentially significant impacts on the 2022-23 Budget position, which will not be fully known until later in the process;**
- 4. To consider and agree for planning purposes the latest assessment of significant areas of risk and uncertainty around emerging budget pressures for the 2022-23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, which remain to be resolved and which may have a material impact on budget planning (paragraph 13.4);**
- 5. To confirm that Cabinet's intention is to seek, as planned, a total council tax increase of 2.99% for 2022-23 made up of 1.99% general council tax and 1.00% adult social care precept deferred from 2021-22;**

6. To direct Executive Directors to seek to identify further recurrent savings of £5.000m and to report to Cabinet in January 2022;
7. To agree to undertake a full review of how the Council operates to deliver its future services and strategy;
8. To have regard to the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' advice about the sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy position (section 13), noting the wider uncertainty about funding levels and cost pressures for 2022-23 and 2023-24, and therefore to agree to consult the public on a range of council tax increases including the maximum increase available within the referendum threshold, in order to provide Full Council with the scope to use the full range of Council Tax flexibility, if required, when setting the 2022-23 Budget in February 2022;
9. To consider and agree the proposed savings as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10) to be taken forward in budget planning for 2022-23, subject to final decisions about the overall Budget in February 2022, noting the level of savings already included from the 2021-22 Budget process (table 2);
10. To agree that public consultation (as set out in section 5) and equality impact assessment (as set out in section 21) be undertaken on the 2022-23 Budget and saving proposals as set out in sections 7-12 (tables 5-10), and the level of council tax and Adult Social Care precept for 2022-23, as set out in section 14 and table 11;
11. To note the responsibilities of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services under section 114 of the Local Government Act 1988 and section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to comment on the robustness of budget estimates as set out in section 13, and having regard to the level of savings required for 2023-24, to direct Officers to bring forward proposals to support early development and identification of saving proposals for 2023-24 with a focus on transformational activity;
12. To agree the proposed next steps in the Budget planning process for 2022-23, and the remaining Budget planning timetable (Appendix 1); and
13. To note and thank Select Committees for their input into the Budget development process for 2022-23 in July, and to invite Select Committees to comment further on the detailed saving proposals set out in this report when they meet in November 2021 (section 23).

25. Background Papers

- 25.1. Background papers for this report are listed below:

[Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2021-22 to 2024-25, County Council 22/02/2021, agenda item 5](#)

[Finance Monitoring Report 2020-21 Outturn, Cabinet, 07/06/2021, agenda item 13](#)

[Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23, Cabinet, 05/07/2021, agenda item 17](#)

[Risk Management report, Cabinet, 06/09/2021, agenda item 14](#)

Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P6, Cabinet, 08/11/2021 (on this agenda)

[Budget Book 2021-25](#)

Officer Contact

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Appendix 1: Budget setting timetable 2022-23

Activity/Milestone	Time frame
Review of budget pressures and development of detailed savings proposals 2022-26: Budget Challenge 2 – detailed proposals	10 to 14 September 2021
Spending Review 2021 and Autumn Budget announcement	27 October 2021
Cabinet considers full savings proposals and agrees proposals for public consultation	8 November 2021
Scrutiny Committee 2022-23 Budget scrutiny	24 November 2021
Select Committee comments on 2022-23 saving proposals	15, 17, 19 November 2021
Public consultation on 2022-23 Budget and council tax and Adult Social Care precept options	25 November to 30 December 2021 TBC
Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced including provisional council tax and precept arrangements*	TBC around 5 December 2021
Confirmation of District council tax base and business rate forecasts	31 January 2022
Cabinet considers outcomes of service and financial planning, EQIA and consultation feedback and agrees revenue budget and capital programme recommendations to County Council	31 January 2022
Final Local Government Finance Settlement*	TBC January / February 2022
Scrutiny Committee 2022-23 Budget scrutiny	16 February 2022
County Council agrees Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26, revenue budget, capital programme and level of council tax for 2022-23	21 February 2022

*Dates TBC

Cabinet decision 8 November 2021

In respect of the Cabinet Strategic and Financial Planning 2022-23 report discussed 8 November 2021 (set out as presented to Cabinet at Appendix 1), Cabinet agreed an alternative recommendation to replace the original recommendation 8.

Cabinet agreed:

- 8. To note the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' advice about the sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy position (section 13), noting also the wider uncertainty about funding levels and cost pressures for 2022-23.**

Recommendation 5 sets out Cabinet's intention to seek, as planned, a total council tax increase of 2.99% for 2022-23 made up of 1.99% general council tax and 1.00% adult social care precept and therefore in that context to agree to consult the public on that level of increase.

People and Communities Select Committee

Item No. 11

Report title:	Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework
Date of meeting:	19 November 2021
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Fisher (Cabinet Member for Children's Services)
Responsible Director:	Sara Tough (Executive Director Children's Services)

Introduction from Cabinet Member

This is the regular report to the People and Communities Select Committee providing a range of performance data regarding services and provision for Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND). We are reporting to Committee over a 2 year period (which began in November 2020) following recommendations by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in 2020 following their published investigation report.

The report to Committee this month updates those data sets (**within Appendix 1**) and illustrates ongoing improvement across the majority of these elements of our SEND services. There are of course ongoing challenges to maintain current improvements and to improve even more, in particular due to the ongoing increase in EHCP referrals and our operational team capacity. However, there are also issues related to ongoing budget pressures and in this report we provide Committee with the context of High Needs Block and Home to School SEND transport budgets.

Executive Summary

This is the fifth report on a developing SEND performance framework in a series of reports scheduled for each Committee meeting over a 2 year period. The first report, in November 2020, followed on from recommendations by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in their 2020 published investigation report. Subsequently it has been determined that reporting on the data set required by the LGSCO is expanded to take account of Norfolk's Area SEND Strategy and our Written Statement of Action response to the Area Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) SEND Inspection.

The report to Committee this November marks a full year of reporting on the core data set (**within Appendix 1**) with the areas for improvement in line with the LGSCO recommendations. In addition we have provided an update on Written Statement of Action progress and set out initial responses to further information regarding SEND in Norfolk as requested by Members at the September Committee. The key themes remain from previous reports, EHCP performance improvements are continuing, however, the ongoing increase in EHCP referrals is impacting capacity of teams to maintain these improvements. In addition, the development of new special schools and specialist

resource bases continues positively leading us to increase specialist places by 500 in total at the end of the transformation programme in 2023/24.

The report today also provides initial information for Members regarding budget pressures within SEND; High Needs Block funding (funding for special schools, mainstream inclusion and specialist services) and also Home to School SEN Transport. These budget pressures have been reported separately via Cabinet and Schools' Forum, however, inclusion within this report ensures that Members are able to assess SEND improvements within the financial context for Children's Services also.

Actions required

- 1. To note the ongoing content of the SEND performance framework and agree ongoing reporting at all subsequent meetings through to Summer 2022; complying with the outcome of the LGSCO report.**
- 2. To agree that the range of performance measures will directly assist with decision making regarding any policy changes needed over time as part of the range of SEND improvement programmes.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Provision and services for children and young people, age 0-25, with Special Educational Needs (SEND) has been the subject of significant reporting to various council committees in recent years as part of the council's overall transformation of special educational needs services and provision.
- 1.2 There are currently three elements to our SEND strategic improvement work, each of which constitutes major programme management, these are:
 - Area SEND Strategy (2019-2022)
 - SEND & Alternative Provision Transformation Programme (2019-2024)
 - Ofsted/CQC Written Statement of Action (2020-2022)
- 1.3 A common theme across all three of these SEND strategic improvement programmes is the focus on improvement in Education Health & Care Plan performance and quality, alongside our focus on building more specialist provision and ensuring that local mainstream inclusive education options are increased for families across early years, schools and colleges.
- 1.4 The report to Committee this November marks a full year of reporting on a data set determined by the LGSCO which, overall, illustrates progress in relation to EHCP timescales, arranging provision and dealing with associated complaints. Over the course of the last year this regular reporting has been developed to ensure that, in addition to the LGSCO prescribed data set, we are also providing updates on the outcome of the Ofsted/CQC Area SEND Inspection.
- 1.5 The outcome of the National SEND Review from the Department for Education still has not been published, previously planned for reporting and consultation in the spring of 2021 and subsequently extended to the autumn of 2021. Conferences with the lead civil servants from

the DfE for SEND have now been planned for March 2023 and, therefore, we have to assume that any consultation on the national review will now not occur until the spring at the earliest. This delay causes ongoing uncertainty and we need to continue our own local plans for SEND improvement and assess these in the context of any DfE announcements at the time they occur.

2. Proposals

2.1 The LGSCO recommended that the Committee receive updates that cover the following data sets:

- number of children out of education;
- average time for arranging alternative education provision for children who have been out of education;
- average time taken to produce final EHC plans and EHC plan reviews compared with statutory timescales;
- and number of upheld complaints about EHC plans and education provision from both the Council's own complaints process and us.

2.2 **Appendix 1** provides the full table of data for each category requested by the LGSCO; including context data regarding the overall pupil population for the county and month my month comparison.

2.3 The latest full data set is for end of September 2021 and below is the latest summary which illustrates improvement across the main data sets:

<i>Measure Description</i>	<i>Baseline July 20</i>	<i>Baseline March 21</i>
<i>School Numbers - All (Mainstream & specials)</i>	116,617	117,596
<i>School Numbers - EHCP (Mainstream & specials)</i>	3,435	4,019
<i>School Numbers - % EHCP</i>	2.9%	3.4%
<i>School Numbers - Stat School Age - All (Mainstream & specials)</i>	107,793	108,565
<i>School Numbers - Stat School Age - EHCP (Mainstream & specials)</i>	3,222	3,795
<i>School Numbers - Stat School Age - % EHCP</i>	3.0%	3.5%

- Number of Children 'out of education' with EHCP, has increased in September 2021 following a trend of overall reduction during the 2020/21 academic year. The original baseline figure of 66 at November 2020 had reduced to 49 by July 2021. The subsequent increase to 57 in August and then 76 in September is attributed to the movement of some children and young people between school roll and a time lag in clarifying the new education provision roll (for example in September 2020 the figure was 96 prior to dropping to 66 that November). Therefore, the next set of data will confirm if this is part of the annual cycle. However, the LA have a duty within 'Section 19' to provide tuition support in the interim to ensure that children and young people are not without any education during transition between formal education providers.

- Average time in days for arranging alternative education provision for children who have been out of education (All CME cases), continues to reduce month on month, noting the original baseline figure of 30.1 days at November 2020, with 18.5 days in July 2021 and 16.5 days in latest data available for September 2021 (note, as above the actual number of pupils in this category, 147, is due to the lag in processing cases at the start of the academic year and is not a reflection of a high number of unmet pupil need)
And,
- Average time for EHCP cohort continues to reduce from 77 days within initial baseline in November 2020. However, an explanation of the apparent high figure for September 2021 within Appendix 1 full data set is needed. The cohort for September 2021 was very small, just 6 cases, and one of these had a very large average time count, however, the other 5 cases had a very small average time count. Therefore, whilst the overall figure for the month is 74 days the average days figure for the 5 pupils was actually only 19 days.
- Average time taken to produce final EHC plans (and EHC plan reviews) compared with statutory timescales continues to reduce from the original baseline figure of 261 at November 2020, however, the September 2021 figure of 203 is an increase from the last report to Committee where the figures for July was 194. We have experienced another increase in referrals for EHCP which has impacted on the capacity of the team to maintain the EHCP performance improvements [noting that the statutory timescale is 139 days]. Further on in this report is the latest overall EHCP performance information.

New to this summary part of the report are figures for EHCP including Annual Reviews and for LAC within the cohort also, set out within the overall data set (Appendix 1)

- Average time taken to produce (final EHCP and) EHC plan review compared with statutory timescales: increased from 54% in January 2021, within timescale, for all EHCP children and young people (including LAC) to 67% in September 2021. Further on in this report is more information regarding EHCP annual reviews.

However,

- Number of "Local Outcome" Total Number of complaints about EHC plans and education provision from NCC complaints process is showing an ongoing increase. At the end of the last financial year the cumulative complaints totalled 111, year to date we have 71 complaints. Therefore, last year the monthly average was 9 and this year to date the monthly average is 12.

2.4 In addition to the data requirements set out by the LGSCO we are also required to produce a range of data to support our SEND improvement plan in response to the Ofsted/CQC Area SEND inspection earlier this year. The requirement, from that inspection, was the creation of a Written Statement of Action and, within that, we have set out a range of performance measures.

2.5 The Executive Board (WSoA SEND Improvement Board) which includes cross-party Members, continues to meet on a monthly basis alongside senior leaders across NCC, the CCG, education and health providers and the Chair of the parent carer forum (Family Voice Norfolk). On a bi-monthly basis the Board is attended by representatives from the Department for

Education and NHS England as part of their ongoing scrutiny, support and challenge on behalf of Ofsted/CQC prior to re-inspection in spring/summer 2022.

2.6

At the time of our Ofsted/CQC SEND inspection, which took place in March 2020, a total of 8% of EHCP's were completed within the required 20 week timescale. The SEN2 data set, submitted to DfE in January this year and published nationally in May this year, confirms Norfolk's published performance for the 2020 calendar year as 21%. As can be seen from the table below we have been able to sustain the improvement that was reported to the September Committee, with 53% cumulative calendar year to date.

Final EHCP - 2021														
2021	Month by Month				Quarterly				Cumulative				Days	
	Number Including Exception	On Time Including Exception	% On Time Including Exception	% On Time Excluding Exception	Number Including Exception	On Time Including Exception	% On Time Including Exception	% On Time Excluding Exception	Number Including Exception	On Time Including Exception	% On Time Including Exception	% On Time Excluding Exception	Average number of days to issue Final	
January <i>(All - Old & New)</i>	62	25	40.3	43.1	213	108	50.7	54.8	62	25	40.3	43.1	226	
February <i>(All)</i>	63	36	57.1	63.2					125	61	48.8	53.0	224	
March <i>(All)</i>	88	47	53.4	57.3					213	108	50.7	54.8	203	
April <i>(All)</i>	90	46	51.1	54.1	269	129	48.0	51.2	303	154	50.8	54.6	227	
May <i>(All)</i>	80	36	45.0	50.7					383	190	49.6	53.8	233	
June <i>(All)</i>	99	47	47.5	49.0					482	237	49.2	52.8	224	
July <i>(All)</i>	93	56	60.2	63.6	268	152	56.7	59.1	575	293	51.0	54.6	193	
August <i>(All)</i>	71	45	63.4	65.2					646	338	52.3	55.8	188	
September <i>(All)</i>	104	51	49.0	51.0					750	389	51.9	55.1	206	
October <i>(All)</i>	70	44	62.9	62.5	70	44	62.9	62.5	820	433	52.8	55.7	179	
November <i>(All)</i>														
December <i>(All)</i>														
Year 2021									820	433	52.8	55.7		
Target											90.0			

2.7

Therefore, as we head into the final quarter of the year we are working hard to maintain performance at 50%+ to year end, and this is in the context of the position during the Ofsted/CQC Area SEND Inspection for EHCP performance within 20 weeks:

- 2019 Norfolk Performance = 8%
- 2020 Norfolk Performance = 21%
- 2020 National Average = 58%
- **2021 Norfolk Performance (to date) = 53%**
- 2021 Norfolk Target = 60%
- 2022 Norfolk Target = 90%

2.8

With only 3 months remaining of the year it is now unlikely that we will achieve 60% and there are two main reasons for this: 1) the ongoing increase in referrals for new assessments and our staffing capacity, and 2) the fact that as we issue a combination of new assessments and 'backlog' assessments the performance is 'depressed'. A good example of this is the latest figures for September. As can be seen above, in September we issued the highest number of

EHC plans in a single month this year, a total of 104, however, a significant number of these were from the backlog and these do not count towards our 20 week performance target. Clearly it is good for families to finally get plans that have been delayed but this does decrease the percentage in time for that month.

- 2.9 The blue line, within the graph below, illustrates the rise in referrals over the course of the past two calendar years:



- 2.10 The issue of capacity for the operational teams (EHP co-ordinators and Educational Psychologists in particular) is not only an issue for the initial assessment for EHCP but also for the ongoing work related to the annual review of EHCPs. In 2019 the number of new assessments was 655 and this rose to 1253 in 2020, with the total number of EHCP's increasing from 6689 to 7753 across those two years.

- 2.11 The operational team with responsibility for this area of work (High Needs SEND Service) are increasingly focussed on reducing annual review backlog, to build on the current success of improving EHCP initial assessments.

Total EHCP CYP September 2021	
	8355

Upcoming or Backlog	CYP
Upcoming	5194 (62.2%)
Backlog	3161 (37.8%)
Total	8355

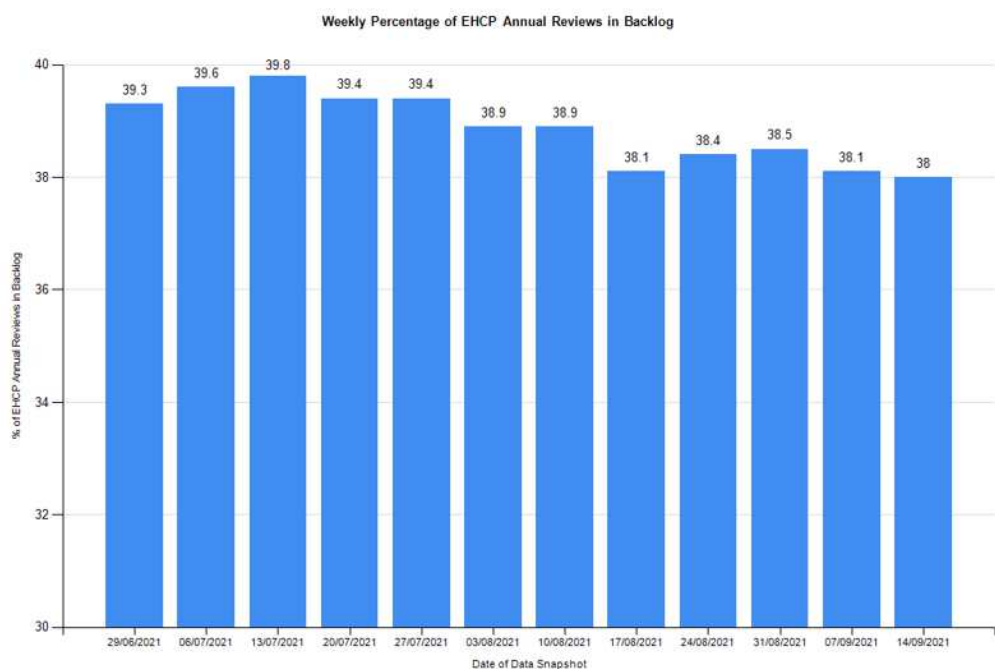
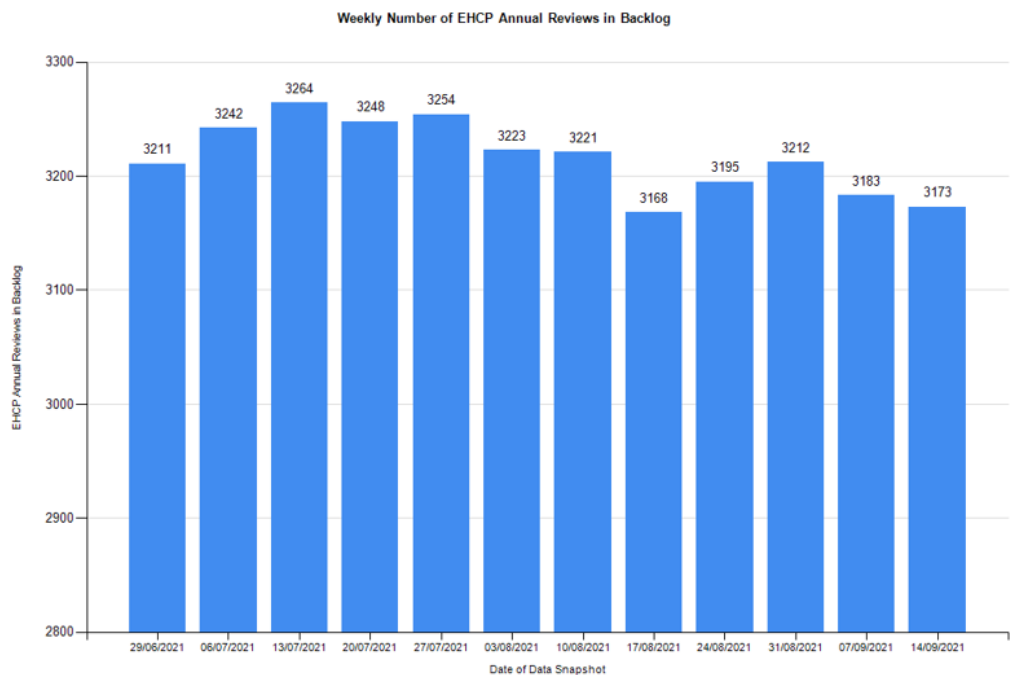
Year Group	CYP
School Age	4897 (58.6%)
Post 16	3390 (40.6%)
Early Years	68 (0.8%)
Total	8355

- 2.12 This table confirms that currently there is a total of 8355 EHCP cases managed by the High Needs SEND Service. This includes new assessments this year which will result in the first annual review within the next 12 month period. As can be seen there are at least 38% of EHCP's already within a backlog and this number increases if the 'upcoming' reviews are

delayed either due to late submission from early years, schools or colleges and/or as a result of delays once received within the LA.

2.13 The data teams within Children’s Services are working directly with the operational team to ensure that, in addition to ‘counting’ the reviews for reporting trends and current performance, they are producing management information to assist managers to target team resource to cases prior to going into backlog:

2.14 The graphs above show the backlog over the past 3 month period and illustrate fluctuations month to month. In future reports to Committee we will track this progress quarterly and provide commentary on the cohorts that are being targeted for review.



- 2.15 During the discussion on the content of the last report to Committee, in September, a number of additional information requests were requested by Members. These will feature fully in subsequent reports to Committee from January, however, there are some initial updates provided today to start the process of expanding the scope further of this report:

Theme	Included in Committee reports		
	November	January	And subsequent
It was noted that the report did not include an update on performance of the Educational Psychology Team, noting the capacity issues they were experiencing. The Assistant Director of SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness agreed to include this information in future reports.	✓		✓
At the January Committee meeting, data on “the number of appeals lodged, the outcomes of these and comparison to previous years” for future reports. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, agreed to include this in future reports.	✓		✓
Information was requested for future reports on transport and any issues it was causing for young people and learning. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, agreed to include this in future reports.	Initial SEN transport budget context provided, however, commentary on children and young people within January report. (Section 4)	✓	
It was agreed that information on short stay and on-track education could be provided in future reports to the Committee.	✓		✓
Members felt information on remote learning and the impact on young people would be helpful in future reports. *		✓	

** To date there has not been any national research that enables a view to be taken on the experience of remote learning during COVID. We continue to monitor to see progress in this so that we can map this onto our ‘on the ground’ experience in Norfolk. Therefore, future reports will set this context when it is available. It would be possible to also set out commentary regarding those children and young people who require on-line learning due to issues such as medical needs etc, noting, however, that we must not conflate this cohort with those children with special educational needs and disability.*

- 2.16 **It was noted that the report did not include an update on performance of the Educational Psychology Team, noting the capacity issues they were experiencing. The Assistant Director of SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness agreed to include this information in future reports.**

- 2.17 Education Health & Care Plan assessments and annual reviews rely on the specialist reports from a range of professionals. However, Educational Psychology does play a key role in assessments for EHCP as they feature in all assessments and not just where they have been previously involved with an individual child within ‘SEN Support’.

2.18 We have 12 full time equivalent Educational Psychologist in the Service and also 4 FTE within the Principal EP and Senor EP roles. This is alongside the 37 Education Health & Care Plan Co-ordinators (an increase from 21 over the past year) and 12 EHCP Reviewing Officers (an increase from 9).

2.19 In simple terms EP assessments, as with all professional assessments for EHCP, must be submitted within a 6 week period within the overall 20 week assessment timescale. Therefore, when these assessments are submitted on time it gives EHCP co-ordinators the best opportunity to complete the whole assessment on time.

2.20 The table below illustrates the performance during this sub-element of the EHCP assessment and illustrates EP performance (line 1.9b) alongside other key reports from social care and health (line 1.9c and 1.9d):

1.9a % of EHC Needs Assessment requests that result in a decision being made within statutory timescale (6 weeks)

2020 - Nov	2020 - Dec	2021 - Jan	2021 - Feb	2021 - Mar	2021 - Apr	2021 - May	2021 - Jun	2021 - Jul	2021 - Aug	2021 - Sep
100.0%	100.0%	96.9%	97.5%	98.2%	96.8%	97.1%	97.8%	94.1%	91.3%	79.6%
91	80	97	79	113	124	138	137	203	150	54

1.9b % of Educational Psychology professional reports/responses available for next stage of EHCP assessment within statutory timescale (6 weeks).

2020 - Nov	2020 - Dec	2021 - Jan	2021 - Feb	2021 - Mar	2021 - Apr	2021 - May	2021 - Jun	2021 - Jul	2021 - Aug	2021 - Sep
100.0%	87.0%	55.1%	63.4%	66.7%	45.0%	30.6%	28.1%	41.9%	27.0%	35.1%
2	23	49	41	57	60	62	89	74	63	57

1.9c % of Health professional reports/responses available for next stage of EHCP assessment within statutory timescale (6 weeks).

2020 - Nov	2020 - Dec	2021 - Jan	2021 - Feb	2021 - Mar	2021 - Apr	2021 - May	2021 - Jun	2021 - Jul	2021 - Aug	2021 - Sep
100.0%	93.0%	88.9%	87.5%	90.5%	81.2%	58.5%	87.2%	83.1%	90.9%	91.4%
28	43	45	56	84	101	94	86	59	88	58

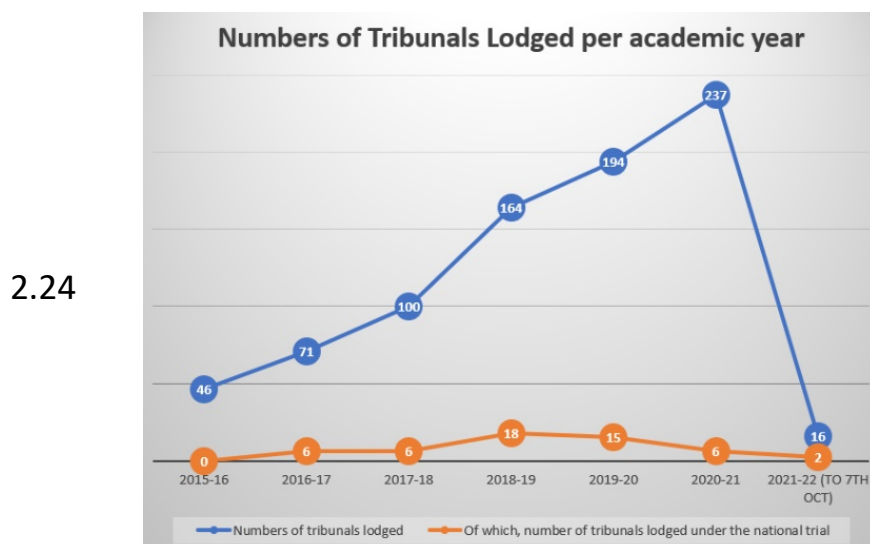
1.9d % of Social Care professional reports/responses available for next stage of EHCP assessment within statutory timescale (6 weeks).

2020 - Nov	2020 - Dec	2021 - Jan	2021 - Feb	2021 - Mar	2021 - Apr	2021 - May	2021 - Jun	2021 - Jul	2021 - Aug	2021 - Sep
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%	83.3%	43.8%	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	85.7%	100.0%
6	2	4	3	6	16	5	2	7	7	5

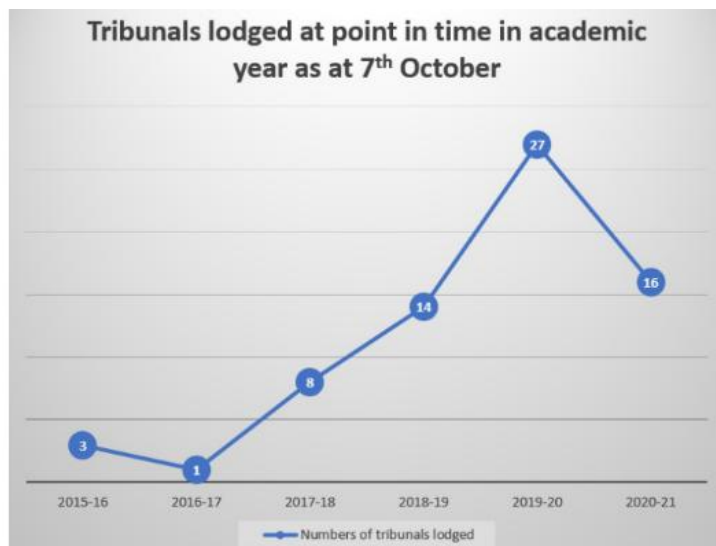
2.21 As can be seen EP assessment performance has fluctuated during the past 12 months from a low of 27% and a high of 87%. A key reason for this is that EP's, like EHCP Co-ordinators, are also involved in annual reviews and addressing backlog within both new assessments and reviews.

2.22 As mentioned at the previous Committee, we are continuing with our business case planning to increase the number of EP's and in the meantime we have identified funding to secure 3 more FTE EP's and are now recruiting to these posts.

2.23 At the January Committee meeting, data on "the number of appeals lodged, the outcomes of these and comparison to previous years" for future reports. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Early Effectiveness, agreed to include this in future reports.

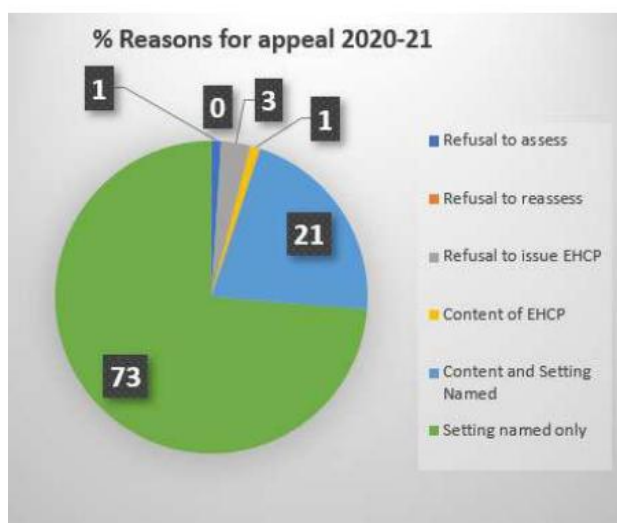


This graph shows the year on year increase in tribunals with an average of 20 cases per month last year. With the same EHCP team working on assessment and annual review improvements holding case responsibility and preparation for tribunal also.



At the current point in the first half of the autumn term we are not experiencing the same level of tribunals as last year but remain above the average for the past 5 years.

- 2.25 The key issue for the LA is to understand the reasons for parents appealing to the Tribunal and the following information shows that the vast majority, 73%, relate to the school named in the final EHCP.



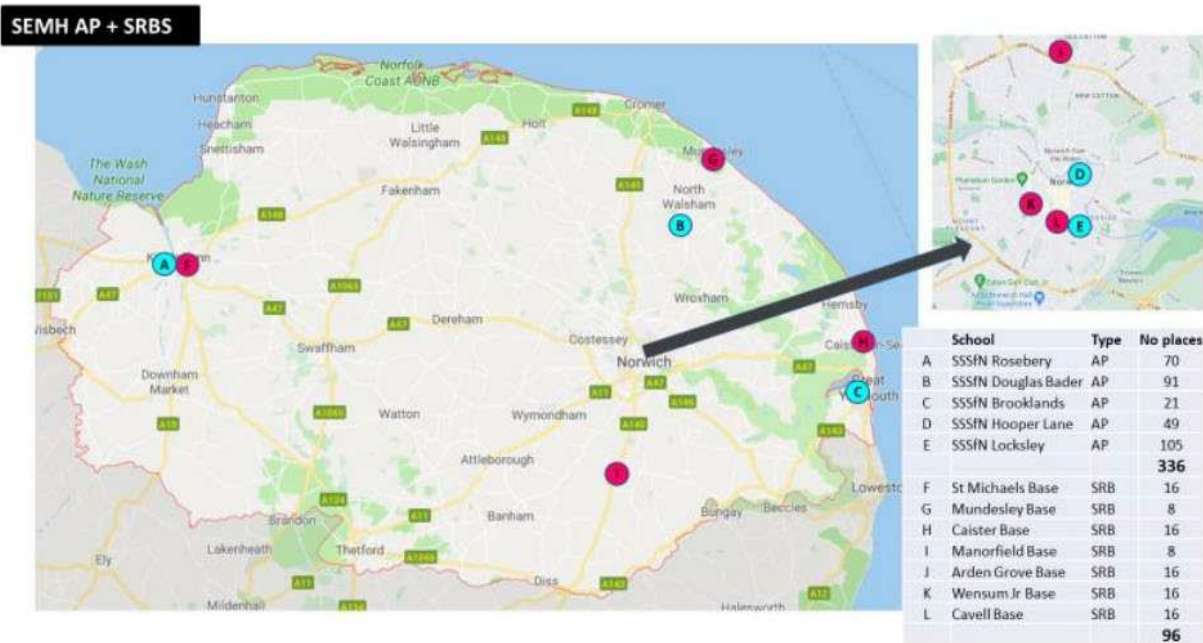
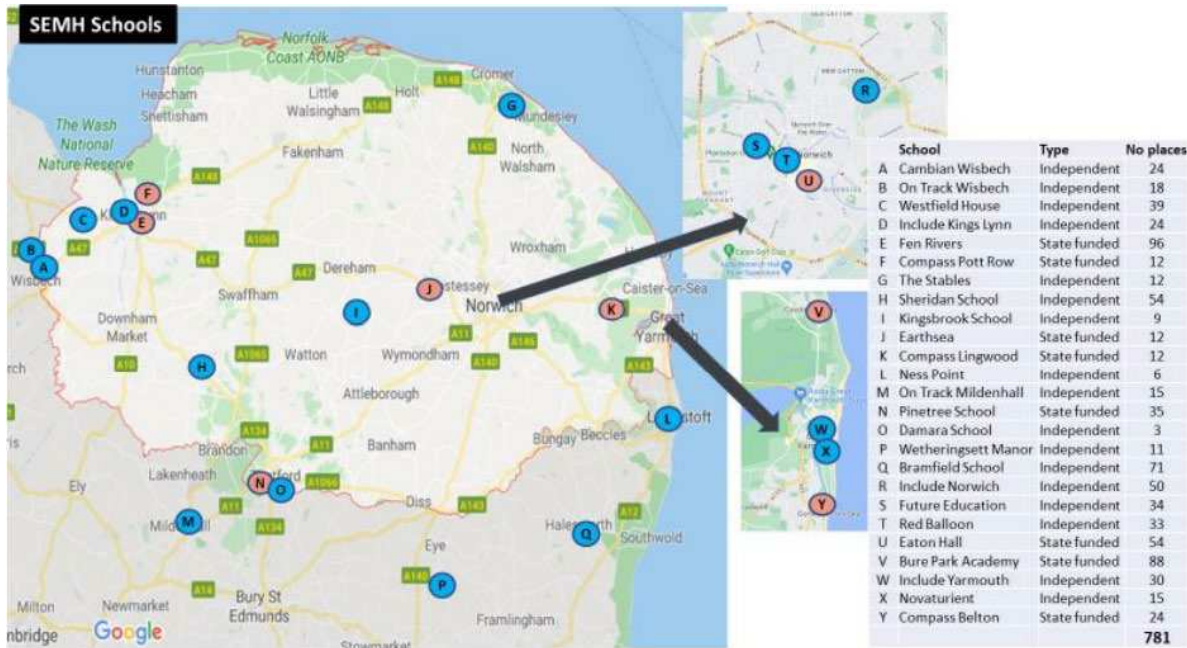
Over the past 5 years the mix of reasons for appeal to the Tribunal has changed, with 55% relating to the named school in 2015/16 and an equal proportion also relating to either a refusal to assess for an EHCP or the content of the final plan.

The 'named school' usually relates to special school and related capacity, hence, this is one of the reasons for the building of new schools.

- 2.26 It was agreed that information on short stay and on-track education could be provided in future reports to the Committee.

- 2.27 The Short Stay School for Norfolk and 'On-Track' are examples of Alternative Provision (AP) and provision for children and young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH). There is a wide range of provision for AP and SEMH and not all of the funded places are for children and young people with an EHCP. However, the majority of this provision is funded by the LA within the High Needs Block; individual schools do also arrange AP in specific circumstances for their own pupils.

Future reports to Committee will set out future commissioning plans and recommendations based on a current sufficiency strategy refresh across SEND and AP provision, however, to set out the context of AP and SEMH provision to enable initial discussion the following maps show the range of provision in Norfolk:



3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1 The data that has been provided, as a direct recommendation from the LGSCO, ensures that we are compliant with those recommendations by providing this information at all Select

Committee meetings until Spring/Summer 2022. This data will also provide an additional opportunity for Members to provide support and challenge regarding the cohorts that have been highlighted, namely those within the Children Missing Education and Education Health & Care Plan cohorts. In addition, by providing the data from the EHCP 'dashboard' that is being developed within the Written Statement of Action work for DfE, NHSE and Ofsted/CQC, will enable Members to monitor progress prior to re-inspection in the spring of 2022.

- 3.2 Further, that analysis of these range of performance measures will directly assist with any decision making regarding any policy changes needed over time as part of the overall SEND improvement programme.

4. Financial Implications – Supply & Demand

- 4.1 In all previous reports to Committee we have stated that there are no direct financial implications relating to the development of a new SEND performance framework. Also stating that if the performance framework highlights areas of service and provision that need to be addressed, these will be considered as part of the overall Children's Services Transformation Programme (for example, additional capacity for the Education High Needs SEND Service, which oversees EHCP's, has already been identified and secured). However, as the scope of this regular report has now broadened to take account of the range of SEND strategic improvement work it is now appropriate to include budget context for SEND.

- 4.2 Clearly the key driver for the range of SEND strategic improvement work is to ensure that our SEND assessment, services and provision are able to meet the needs of children and young people and their families. However, there is also the reality of funding available to enable NCC Children's Services to create effective staff teams and to be able to provide services directly, to commission services and provide funding for education providers.

- 4.3 In addition to staffing budgets the two main budgets for SEND within Norfolk are the High Needs Block and the Home To School Transport (SEND) budgets. In future reports we will provide updates regarding recovery planning across both budget areas, in advance of that we wanted to ensure that Members had the initial context information ahead of more details in the January and March 2022 reports.

4.4 High Needs Block (Dedicated School Grant)

- 4.5 The High Needs Block is one of four 'blocks' which make up the ring-fenced grant from the DfE for education funding within all local authority areas: Early Years Block, Schools Block, Central Schools Services Block, and High Needs Block (HNB).

4.6 In the current financial year, the HNB funding is c. £104million prior to an agreed transfer from the Schools Block of c. £2million. As has been widely reported in recent years, there is acute pressure on the High Needs Block creating a cumulative overspend of c. £32million on the Dedicated Schools Grant at the end of the 2021/22 financial year, and a current in year forecast deficit of £21million. Examples of the main elements of this forecast are:

- Special Schools = c.£40million
- Independent Special School = c.£40million
- 'Alternative Provision' = c.£2million
- Mainstream school = c.£14million*
- Speech & Language Therapy = c.£1million

4.7 The pressure, and cumulative overspend, of the HNB is not unique to Norfolk, the majority of LA's are experiencing overspends and a number reporting larger overspends than Norfolk (both in total amounts and as a % of their overall HNB). Also, the pressure is not a recent occurrence; our 2018 business case to the council's 'policy and resources' committee which resulted in the £120million capital investment to build new special schools and specialist resource bases was based on a core value for money proposal:

- State funded special schools = £23,000 average cost per pupil per year + routinely are judged by Ofsted as 'Good' and 'Outstanding'
- Independent special schools = £47,000 average cost per pupil per year + do not demonstrate the same level of quality as the state funded sector

**note: this is in addition to the notional £36million delegated directly to all mainstream schools within the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant*

4.8 **Home to School Transport Budget (SEND)**

The overall Home To School Transport budget in Norfolk is made up of 3 main elements:

- 4.9
- Mainstream School = £14.4million
 - SEND = £25.5million
 - Post 16 = £0.7million

The SEND element is comprised of 6 categories:

- 4.10
- Special Schools (including post 16) = £11.8million
 - SEN Mainstream = £0.4million
 - Alternative Provision = £2.5million
 - Independent = £6.1million
 - Specialist Resource Bases = £2.3million
 - Post 16 Mainstream = £2.5million

4.11 In recent years, due to demographic and supply side changes/pressures, the budgets have been increased significantly and a range of savings targets have been set to manage the

pressure. Our strategy to ensure that we can continue to meet individual children and young people need and use the budget effectively is to reduce the reliance on individual taxis and to promote opportunities for independent travel as part of other preparation for adult life strategies.

- 4.12 In addition there is a direct link between the DSG recovery plan and the Home to School SEND Transport budget; by creating a greater density of specialist provision we increase the likelihood of placing children closer to home address, reducing travel time and travel costs.

5. Resource Implications

Staff: / Property: / IT

n/a

6. Other Implications

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)

The SEND performance framework and related Written Statement of Action will be in line with equality requirements as they must be agreed by both DfE and CQC/Ofsted.

7. Actions required

- 7.1 To note the ongoing content of a new SEND performance framework and agree ongoing reporting at all subsequent meetings for a period of two years in total; complying with the outcome of the LGSCO report.
- 7.2 To agree that the range of performance measures will directly assist with decision making regarding any policy changes needed over time as part of the range of SEND improvement programmes.

8. Background Papers

Appendix 1 – November Data Set for EHCP Performance

Officer Contact

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

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**Assistant Director, SEND
Strategic Improvement
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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

People & Communities Select Committee November 21 : SEND Performance Framework Appendix 1

Serial	Measure Description	Jul-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Mar-21	May-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sept-21
-	School Numbers - All (Mainstream & specials)	116617	-	116572	-	117596	-	-		
-	School Numbers - EHCP (Mainstream & specials)	3435	-	3758	-	4019	-	-		
-	School Numbers - % EHCP	2.9%	-	3.2%	-	3.4%	-	-		
-	School Numbers - Stat School Age - All (Mainstream & specials)	107793	-	108593	-	108565	-	-		
-	School Numbers - Stat School Age - EHCP (Mainstream & specials)	3222	-	3401	-	3795	-	-		
-	School Numbers - Stat School Age - % EHCP	3.0%	-	3.1%	-	3.5%	-	-		
1a	Number of children out of education - ALL CME	521	702	595	542	525	431	387	426	577
1b	Number of children out of education - EHCP	-	66	65	56	65	51	49	57	76
1c	Percentage - EHCP in cohort of all CME	-	9.4%	10.9%	10.3%	12.4%	11.8%	12.7%	13.4%	13.2%
1d	Number of children out of education - LAC	-	-	-	11	11	8	10	14	18
1e	Percentage - LAC in cohort of all CME	-	-	-	2.0%	2.1%	1.9%	2.6%	3.3%	3.1%
2a	Average time in days for arranging alternative education provision for children who have been out of education - Specific CME categories All cases - number of pupils	41.0	132	51	80	128	96	67	8	147
2a	Average time in days for arranging alternative education provision for children who have been out of education - Specific CME categories All cases - average number of days	37.1 days	30.1 days	22.8 days	23.3 days	19.8 days	25.9 days	18.5 days	15.1	16.5
2b	Average time - EHCP-issued cases only. EHCP - number of pupils	4	23	4	7	11	9	6	nil	6
2b	Average time - EHCP-issued cases only. EHCP - average number of days	98.3 days	76.9 days	44.5 days	38.7 days	46.1 days	84.1 days	24.3 days	-	74.5

People & Communities Select Committee November 21 : SEND Performance Framework Appendix 1

3	Average time taken to produce final EHC plans (and EHC plan reviews) compared with statutory timescales	263.3 days 37.6 weeks	260.9 days 37.3 weeks	229.6 days 32.8 weeks	215.9 days 30.8 weeks	205.6 days 29.4 weeks	235.2 days 33.6 weeks	193.5 days 27.6 weeks	188.4 days 26.9 weeks	203.1 days 29.4 weeks
4	Average time taken to produce (final EHC plans and) EHC plan reviews compared with statutory timescales	(12/08/2020 - 56% in time)	55% in time	56% in time	54% in time	55% in time	59% in time	63% in time	66% in time	67% in time
3a	<i>Average time taken to produce final EHC plans (and EHC plan reviews) compared with statutory timescales. For LAC pupils only</i>	-	-	-	NA (Only 2 LAC in calc)	NA (Only 3 LAC in calc)	NA (No LAC in calcs)	NA (No LAC in calc)	173 days (only 2 LAC in calc)	122.3 days (only 2 LAC in calc)
4a	<i>Average time taken to produce (final EHC plans and) EHC plan reviews compared with statutory timescales. For LAC pupils only</i>	-	-	-	54% in time (248 LAC in calc)	53% in time (255 LAC in calc)	57% in time (247 LAC in calc)	68% in time (254 LAC in calc)	73% in time (254 LAC in calc)	67% in time (256 LAC in calc)
5a	Number of "Local Outcome" Total Number of complaints about EHC plans and education provision from NCC complaints process Cumulative - FY (April-March)	34	63	73	83	111	22	53	62	71
5a	Number of "Local Outcome" Upheld complaints about EHC plans and education provision from NCC complaints process Cumulative - FY (April-March)	24	37	42	47	61	12	26	30	35

5b	Number of "LGO Outcome" Total Number of complaints about EHC plans and education provision from NCC Accumulative - FY (April-March) LGO Outcomes are not published in the public domain until 3 months after the final decision is made.	1	3	4	4	5	1	2	4	4
5b	Number of "LGO Outcome" Upheld complaints about EHC plans and education provision from NCC Cumulative - FY (April-March)	1	3	3	3	4	1	2	2	2

***Note : Children Missing Education (CME) Definition:**

2. Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.
4. Local authorities have a duty under section 436A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise. This duty only relates to children of compulsory school age².

Date	Report	Issues for consideration	Cabinet Member	Exec Director
21 January 2022	Workforce Strategy	Retention and recruitment of staff in Adult's and Children's Services; review of what can be done to support recruitment and retention of staff across the two departments. Including information on young people entering employment in health and social care and collaborative work with colleges to encourage young people to enter this employment pathway	Cllr Bill Borrett Cllr John Fisher	James Bullion Sara Tough
	Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework	Performance data as required by the local government ombudsman to bring certain data to the Committee for the next 2 years and information on Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs) as prescribed by Ofsted.	Cllr. John Fisher	Sara Tough
	District profiles; understanding the health perspective		Cllr Bill Borrett	Louise Smith
18 March 2022 (time tbc)	Special Educational Needs (SEND): Performance Framework	Performance data as required by the local government ombudsman to bring certain data to the Committee for the next 2 years and information on Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs) as prescribed by Ofsted.	Cllr. John Fisher	Sara Tough
	Looked after children and care leavers not in education, employment or training		Cllr John Fisher	Sara Tough
	Integration between health and social care - reform, integration and the ICS		Cllr Bill Borrett	Louise Smith
	Music Service - TBC		Cllr John Fisher	Sara Tough

Items also to be scheduled:

- SEND transformation programme and new SEND units - **month TBC**
- Report on response to mental health and bereavement provision across council services. - **Month TBC**
- Virtual school update – **Month TBC**