

Cabinet
4 April 2022
Public & Local Member Questions

Agenda item 6	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question from Tina Johnson Many Councils throughout England have adopted the 50-point Climate Action Plan. A step-by-step plan that Councils and Local Authorities can use to guide how they tackle the climate and nature emergencies and coronavirus recovery. Why is Norfolk County Council not using this Climate Action Plan to underpin its Environmental Strategy?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste We have been aware of the Friends of the Earth 50-point plan for some time. We feel we align already with much of what is listed, given previous efforts within the authority. Others we will align with where we can.</p> <p>The Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update Paper at this Cabinet meeting proposes the production of a Climate Action Plan. Officers will take account of the checklist in developing it.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Tina Johnson How is Norfolk County Council developing a clear and detailed strategic climate action plan, and how is it mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste The Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update Paper at this Cabinet meeting outlines some of the work the County Council are doing on climate change mitigation, including building decarbonisation, business travel and reducing our emissions within our supply chains. Regarding climate change adaptation, this work covers a number of strands across a wide range of services. For example, as the Lead Flood authority, the County Council has a role to ensure that major risks, such as from flooding and extreme weather events are addressed. . The Climate Action Plan proposed in the Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update Paper, would bring together these climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts into one public facing document.</p>
6.2	<p>Question from Sarah Burston Has Norfolk County Council reviewed its investment strategy, supply chains and procurement models to give due consideration to climate change impacts?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Climate risk is a significant focus for governments and society.</p> <p>In respect of investment: The Norfolk Pension Fund (of which Norfolk County Council is the Administering Authority) treats this risk as a serious concern for the future sustainability of the Fund and the ability to maintain pension payments in the future.</p> <p>The Pensions Committee considers a detailed climate risk analysis of its public equity holdings every six months as part of its regular investment review and a summary is published on the Fund's website.</p>

	<p>The Fund's equity holdings have been consistently less carbon intensive than the equivalent benchmark investment over the last five years. The Fund believes that this is a consequence of the requirement it places on its investment managers to integrate Environmental, Social and Governance matters into their investment processes, together with the push to actively engage with the companies in which they invest.</p> <p>In its wider investment portfolio, the Pension Fund is an active investor in infrastructure assets, including substantial amounts of renewable power generation and the required supporting infrastructure alongside many social assets.</p> <p><u>In respect of procurement and supply chains</u></p> <p>The Council has for many years included environmental requirements in its specifications and, where appropriate, evaluation criteria.</p> <p>To inform its next steps, the council has commissioned the Carbon Trust to produce a carbon footprint. This will help to focus procurement activity on the most carbon-intensive sectors and contracts</p> <p>Supplementary question from Sarah Burston How does Norfolk County Council integrate sustainability and resilience into its transport and energy plans?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste For some years, the road maintenance approach encapsulated within the Transport Asset Management Plan, has sought to address the likely impacts of climate change, so that the road network is suitably resilient. The Local Transport Plan seeks to adopt an approach that assists the transition to more sustainable modes of transport. Aligned to this is work in support of the County Electric Vehicle Strategy, which is working with partners to plug any gaps in infrastructure as we meet the government's target date for the banning of Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles. As far as the wider energy agenda is concerned, NCC is working with District colleagues and the New Anglia LEP through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership to explore the opportunity to develop a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP). This would provide a clear actionable pathway of what the transition to achieve net zero carbon emissions is likely to require in terms of infrastructure and investment in a particular locality over time. A successful LAEP facilitates a coordinated transition to the area becoming net zero, provides an evidence-based pathway, ensures stakeholders are working collectively to a common goal and incorporates energy and climate change mitigation measures.</p> <p>NCC is also a statutory consultee on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) where we support projects that make a significant contribution to renewable energy targets and objectives relating to clean growth. We also highlighted in our response to the Government's Planning for New Energy Infrastructure Draft National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure consultation the need for new infrastructure to demonstrate its long-term resilience and supported the proposed requirement for projects to be assessed on their ability to be "future proofed" both in terms of being able to provide for new technological advancements and resilience to climate change and environmental risks.</p>
6.3	<p>Question from Peter Offord Is Norfolk County Council treating the climate crisis as an emergency? Or is it prioritising its immediate business?</p>

	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>The County Council, as outlined in its 2019 updated Environmental Policy, has a commitment to reach net zero on our estates by 2030 as well as working with partners to achieve carbon neutrality more widely.. An update on progress towards these targets is in the Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update Paper presented at this Cabinet meeting. This highlights the practical steps that Norfolk County Council is making to reach net-zero emissions on our estates by 2030.</p>
6.4	<p>Question from Paula Evans</p> <p>How is Norfolk County Council influencing District Councils within Norfolk to ensure that all new housing development is zero carbon by 2025 at the very latest?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>The County Council is a statutory planning consultee and works closely with district councils who determine new housing developments to ensure planned growth appropriately addresses its impacts. In terms of the infrastructure to support new housing developments, as the transport authority we are particularly keen to promote opportunities to support more active lifestyles, public transport enhancements, together with requirements to provide more charging infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (EVs). To aid this NCC is currently reviewing its guidance which will place a greater emphasis on these measures to help reduce the reliance of the private car in new developments. The County Council also responds to Local Plan consultations promoting policies that encourage sustainable development. NCC also supports the <u>Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework</u> (NSPF) providing guidance on housing, economic growth, infrastructure, and the environment. The NSPF sets out the collective agreements made by Norfolk Planning Authorities to ensure the most appropriate actions are being undertaken to support climate change initiatives and is exploring the production of a county-wide climate change best practice guide/design guide.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Paula Evans</p> <p>Does Norfolk County Council agree that all new housing must be built to extremely high energy efficiency standards, using the Passivhaus standard or similar?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste</p> <p>The requirement for building standards is a district council function and while we do not have any powers to ensure that this standard is achieved, the County Council is fully supportive of measures to improve energy efficiency, which can also benefit in reducing household bills.</p> <p>The Future Homes Standard published in 2021 sets out the changes to building regulations to reduce Carbon emissions by 75-80%, by 2035 – accompanied by interim measures. This sets out a number of measures, many of which are already being seen across the County in a number of new developments.</p> <p>This strategy provides a measured pathway to providing more environmentally friendly homes, whilst also recognising wider issues around supply chain and the housing market.</p> <p>The report also notes the need to decarbonise the overwhelming majority of housing stock, much of which performs poorly (for example when measured on an EPC). New homes are one small element of addressing carbon emissions in housing stock in Norfolk.</p>

6.5	<p>Question from Elizabeth Traverse What measures are Norfolk County Council taking to ensure that health and social care systems, in particular mental health systems , will be resilient with the extra pressures they will come under due to climate change?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. The Council undertakes a large range of support measures to ensure that the Social Care and Health systems in Norfolk are resilient to pressures and have an escalation route for when they arise. We do this through our Strategy, Promoting Independence – Living Well, Changing Lives, our Commissioning strategies, and Market Position Statements, and through monitoring financial and operational pressures in the Risk Registers.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Elizabeth Traverse How does Norfolk County Council identify those who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change and what is being done to assist the most vulnerable?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. The Council uses its statutory powers within the Care Act to identify individuals at risk and respond to their social care needs, irrespective of the cause.</p>
6.6	<p>Question from Verna Salter In the context of climate action and biodiversity, how will Norfolk County Council involve citizens in the existing decision-making processes and ensure that the voices of all citizens and communities are represented and heard?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste In the context of climate action and biodiversity, decision making processes will continue to be conducted through the appropriate Norfolk County Council Committees. Elected Members sitting on those committees are elected by, represent and speak on behalf of the citizens of Norfolk.</p>
6.7	<p>Question from Linda Tansley Taking into consideration Norfolk County Council's Environmental Strategy, what additional decision-making approaches for complex or contentious choices, such as representative citizen assemblies or citizens' juries, participatory mapping, and budgeting, etc, have been introduced?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Outside of Norfolk County Council's own committee meetings and decision making processes no additional decision-making approaches have been introduced. Beyond its own committee structure Norfolk County Council also works closely through a number of networks including the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.</p> <p>Elected Members sitting on those committees are elected by, represent and speak on behalf of the citizens of Norfolk.</p>
6.8	<p>Question from Cliff Goodman Does Norfolk County Council understand its responsibility to urgently take climate</p>

	<p>action locally, as identified in the most recent international Panel on Climate Change report?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council recognises its responsibilities and is working with urgency towards meeting its Environmental Policy commitments. This includes developing a Climate Action Plan for Norfolk and working with relevant partners to meet our commitments, including as a key member of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.</p>
6.9	<p>Question from Jenny Walker What measurable targets has Norfolk County Council set to rapidly grow the green economy and achieve climate and nature goals?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste The Offshore Wind Operations & Maintenance Campus at Great Yarmouth is a flagship project to support renewable energy jobs in the county. This centre, which is set to finish construction this Spring, is set to provide 650 jobs and seeks to take advantage of the £59.4bn due to be invested in offshore energy and engineering by 2040.</p> <p>More broadly, we are developing a proposal for a Green Skills Market Analysis, to provide a strong evidence base and rationale for future interventions in the Green economy. The analysis should provide a clear roadmap for green jobs/skills, aligning with key associated plans and projects: Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Strategy and Decarbonisation Academy and the Government's Green Industrial Revolution 10 Point Plan, and Plan for Growth.</p> <p>Norfolk County Council is preparing to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Norfolk. This will set nature recovery targets measured against the current baseline identified in the Norfolk and Suffolk Natural Capital Evidence Compendium.</p>
6.10	<p>Question from Charles Martin How is Norfolk County Council supporting and working with all relevant private and civic actors in the area towards climate change mitigation and adaptation?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council recognises that it has an influencing role to play, to support mitigation and adaption measures to the effects of climate change. Norfolk County Council works as part of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership which addresses some the wider challenges facing the county. Within this partnership approach, we are exploring collaborative solutions to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change within the county.</p>
6.11	<p>Question from Patrick O'Brien How is Norfolk County Council planning to understand and act on the need to adapt existing properties and estates to address the impacts of climate change – and to plan for new housing stock which is resilient to these impacts?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council is already working to adapt its existing properties and wider estate to meet the challenge of climate change. Norfolk County Council also works with other Local Authorities in Norfolk to ensure that, through the Planning System,</p>

	<p>new developments are resilient to the impacts of climate change. The Net Zero and Natural Norfolk Progress Update Paper at this Cabinet meeting outlines some of the work being done by the County Council to decarbonise existing building stock and retrofit if necessary to reduce carbon emissions.</p> <p>The requirement for building standards is a district council function and while we do not have any powers to ensure that this standard is achieved the County Council is fully supportive of measures to improve energy efficiency, which can also benefit in reducing household bills.</p> <p>The Future Homes Standard published in 2021 sets out the changes to building regulations to reduce Carbon emissions by 75-80%, by 2035 – accompanied by interim measures. This sets out a number of measures, many of which are already being seen across the County in a number of new developments.</p> <p>This strategy provides a measured pathway to providing more environmentally friendly homes, whilst also recognising wider issues around supply chain and the housing market.</p> <p>The report also notes the need to decarbonise the overwhelming majority of housing stock, much of which performs poorly (for example when measured on an EPC). New homes are one small element of addressing carbon emissions in housing stock in Norfolk.</p>
6.12	<p>Question from Emma Gooch Please could you let me know what customer service standards Councillors abide by, are they the same as NCC staff?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance Officers and councillors strive to provide the standards set out in the council's customer service charter</p> <p>Supplementary question from Emma Gooch I contacted Mr John Ward and Mr John Fisher 14th June 2021, 6th December 2021, and 6th December 2021. I have still not a reply to the queries that I have raised. Is this normal practise not to reply to constituents, and what does a member of the public need to do in order to get a reply? Many thanks</p> <p>Response from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member Strategy and Governance Thank you for your question. It is highly unusual that either Cllr Fisher or Cllr Ward would not respond to a constituent so after checking with them they have confirmed that this matter has been responded to and actioned.</p>
6.13	<p>Question from James Harvey How does Norfolk County Council intend to raise funds, such as via Community Municipal Investments (CMI's), for low-carbon infrastructure and for measures that speed up carbon emissions reductions, such as energy efficiency and converting roads or car parks to public green space?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council will proactively pursue all appropriate funding opportunities</p>

	available to help deliver its net zero and nature recovery agenda.
6.14	<p>Question from Willem Buttinger The Government in its report 'UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022' states "the evidence shows that we must be prepared for global warming of up to 4°C". It is predicted that sea levels will rise by up to 2 metres by 2100. What action is Norfolk County Council taking to prepare as advised by the Government?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council continues to work closely and productively with Government and local stakeholders to play its part in helping to respond to the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment. We will demonstrate this through the development of our Climate Action Plan later on this agenda.</p>
6.15	<p>Question from Jason Greves In what ways does Norfolk County Council's leadership champion and direct action on climate change?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council, outside of addressing its own climate change impacts, works as part of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership which addresses some the wider challenges facing the county. Within this partnership approach we seek to lead and champion to leverage maximum impact. Norfolk County Council committee meetings, which include a Member Oversight Group, is a forum for cross party members to consider actions being taken on climate change and other related environmental issues. Much of this will be demonstrated in the production of our Climate Action Plan later on this agenda.</p>
6.16	<p>Question from Nicola Maunders What action is Norfolk County Council taking to promote climate education, diversifying the labour market to the green economy, and focusing on sectors that are sustainable?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Norfolk County Council recognises the need to develop long-term skills and employment opportunities which support green, clean growth – see the Green Skills Market Analysis mentioned under 6.9. The current focus is on engaging with employers and the education sector to identify ways to best support sustainable businesses, thereby providing new employment opportunities and career paths. Norfolk County Council have supported numerous green economy initiatives, for example through the EXPERIENCE project by focusing on sustainable, off-season tourism.</p>

**Cabinet
4 April 2022
Local Member Questions**

Agenda item 7	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Steff Aquarone Can you tell us how much it has cost to maintain Holt Hall during the last year to include the costs of the security for the hall and how many incidents there have been of people breaching the security of the hall?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management Holt Hall is a listed building with extensive grounds – it is important to NCC to ensure that these were protected during the disposal process. A number of active and passive security measures are in place, alongside a maintenance regime to protect the building.</p> <p>Through Norse £3,980 has been spent on security with no reported incidents and a figure of £3,261 on maintenance. Additionally there are staff costs that total £47,267. This is for the regular maintenance, safety and security checks during the week and grounds maintenance.</p>
7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins How much of the council's allocation of the Government's Household support funding did it spend last year and what analysis was done to ensure that the funding was reaching the people who needed it the most?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance Thank you for your question. We have received significant funding from central government in the last two years which has enabled us to support Norfolk residents and families through Covid and the immediate after effects. Most recently this comprised of a £6.697m Household Support Fund, which we have worked on proactively with partner organisations to make sure it was targeted at those who need it most. The scheme closes to applications at the end of March 2022, and a final report will be issued to the Department for Work and Pensions on 22 April 2022. At the recent Spring Statement it was confirmed that the Household Support Fund would be continued into 2022-23; details of this, including the individual local authority allocations, are awaited.</p> <p>As at the 22 March 2022, we have supported 52,385 households over a six month period (42,000 with children 10,385 without children). Our provision of Eden Red vouchers to children on Free School Meals (FSM) (£25 per week, with a bonus payment at Christmas) has helped 29,000 children outside of term time.</p> <p>Support was provided to families and individuals either directly through School Holiday Free School Meal support and through applications to the Norfolk Assistance Scheme as well as support through partner organisations including District Councils and a range of Voluntary Sector Organisations. Assessments were undertaken to ensure those in receipt of financial support were in financial need.</p>

7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Rob Colwell Can you provide an update on the situation with the Ukrainian refugees in Norfolk including what active role the Council will be taking?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy We are ready to welcome refugees in Norfolk. At the county council we have been working closely with our partners to get ready for our newest residents.</p> <p>We are expecting to welcome at least 450 people in Norfolk under the Homes for Ukraine scheme</p> <p>We are organising a number of welcome events in our libraries that will help new arrivals get access to the services and help they need. That might mean registering with a GP surgery, signing up to their local school, getting English language course from Adult Learning or helping them get access to benefits. In the longer term there will be a range of activities to support wellbeing and community integration.</p> <p>Where there are more vulnerable arrivals with additional needs such as care or disabilities, our people from abroad team will work closely with children's services and adult social care to provide specialist support.</p> <p>Children arriving in Norfolk will be taught in schools local to where they live. Headteachers, teachers and the school community will help them to settle in and support their learning, based on their individual needs.</p> <p>Norfolk's schools are experienced in supporting children from a range of different backgrounds and cultures and they will continue to do all they can to help refugees in the Norfolk.</p> <p>We have a dedicated page set up on our website for information on how residents can help support Ukrainian refugees arriving in Norfolk. I would encourage Members to direct people to this for guidance https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/migrants-refugees-and-asylum-seekers/ukraine</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Rob Colwell Are Norfolk County Council concerned that their recommendations outlined in a letter dated 26 October 2021 to King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council for £921,908 funding for 62 school places have been ignored in connection to a newly approved housing development application know as Parkway, Gaywood?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We have been working closely with our colleagues at KLWNBC regarding this planning application and understand there have been challenges to secure this scheme. It is the role of the relevant planning authority to secure commitments for the required public infrastructure. We had amended our request for secondary place funding only (£454k) as updated data revealed that primary children can be accommodated in existing schools. Unfortunately, KLWNBC has not secured this contribution as part of the process and this will result in further pressure on NCC resources.. We continue to work with local schools to secure sufficient school places.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires Douglas is in his 70s, has a visual impairment and diabetes, where he is required to wear an insulin pump and blood sugar monitor. Until December, the council paid a contribution</p>

	<p>to his Internet provider to enable the medical professionals, that treat Douglas, access his blood sugar and insulin levels online. What has changed since to mean that somebody suffering from a chronic illness is no longer receiving support from the council, is this a response to budget cutting?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. Nothing has changed. I can confirm that there have been no specific policy changes that would affect funding or individual support in this situation. We would of course be happy to pick up an individual enquiry through the proper channels where the specific facts of an individual's personal situation could be looked at.</p> <p>Supplementary question from Cllr Lucy Shires Roy is in his early 90s, he lives in the caravan without a working boiler which means he has no access to heating or hot water. Roy has been waiting months for a social care assessment in order for him to move into suitable accommodation with access to the support he needs. How much longer must Roy wait without access to basic things like heating and hot water before this council will support him?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question, I'm sorry to hear about Roy's situation. Housing and homelessness in your division is the responsibility of North Norfolk District Council so this question may be better made to their Cabinet Member with responsibility in this area, Cllr. Wendy Fredericks. Social Care will of course always respond in partnership with the relevant housing authority to ensure that care needs are met alongside housing needs.</p>
7.5	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare With the sale of Holt Hall to a private buyer, can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services explain how the profits raised will be used to provide essential extended outdoor learning opportunities to Norfolk's children and young people?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services The sufficiency of good outdoor learning provision in Norfolk and our approach to move away from direct delivery was confirmed prior to the decision to sell Holt Hall. As per NCC policy any proceeds from sales are invested in our capital programme, which secures a wide range of public benefits including new SEND schools for Norfolk Children.</p>
7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy Can the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management confirm what restricted covenants have been placed on the Holt Hall site to stop future developments, or whether uplifts have been agreed so Norfolk County Council benefits financially in future if any of the land is redeveloped?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management The details of the sale are commercially confidential, until completion. It is therefore inappropriate for me to respond to this question in public – I am however happy to brief Cllr Jermy directly.</p> <p>We would however note that the site has been extensively and publicly marketed, with a substantial receipt for Norfolk Tax payers from a highly competitive bidding process</p>

	<p>In terms of future development we would note that there are several planning protections for Holt Hall, including that it is a rural location, it is not allocated, the listed nature of the building, and that much of the land is covered in mature woodland.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Julie Brociek-Coulton Can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services confirm how many vouchers were issued to children in receipt of free school meals over the Christmas 2021 school holidays and how many places are available on the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun Scheme this Easter?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services We are pleased to confirm that Norfolk issued 28969 vouchers to families with children eligible for free school meals during the Christmas break. These were issued via schools, colleges, early years providers, independent special schools and directly to eligible families educating their children at home. Norfolk has either used or exceeded its full allocation during the previous three school holidays. For Easter this year we are working with approximately 70 providers to provide just over 21,000 activity days for around 4000 children and young people.</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Brenda Jones At the Council meeting last week, we were told there is no need to have a Mental Health Member Champion as mental health is a "golden thread" running through everything. Can Cabinet Members give an example of how they have considered mental health as part of any of the decisions they have made in the last nine months?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for The Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance Mental Health plays a vital role in all of Norfolk County Council's operations and is a high priority, reflected in the increasing of Member Champion roles to 12. All relevant portfolio holders are working closely with all Member Champions to drive this work forward. In November Cabinet endorsed the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report, which provided analysis and reflection on Safeguarding Practices, with both Adult and Children and Young Peoples mental health being a critical part. Additionally, in October, in order to build resilient, safe and supportive communities in Norfolk, the Safer Norfolk Plan 2021-24 was discussed by Cabinet, which fully appreciated that understanding childhood traumatic events are a crucial factor in order to build such communities. In September, when discussing Norfolk in an Integrated Care System (ICS) Cabinet understood that NCC adapt and embrace an ICS, there are significant benefits that could derive from it, that will ultimately contribute to delivering our strategic aims and improving our resident's lives; in particular those increasing mental health services in order to respond to mental health challenges of Children and Young People's mental health and emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>As mental health is the golden thread, we haven't just limited our consideration of it to just Adults and Children's Services. In September, when discussing the Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy 2021-2036, we understood that we need to plan on the basis that we will encourage people to stick with their new habits of walking and cycling, which bring benefits including better physical and mental health for people participating. Our ambitious climate plan and clean transport options delivered improves air quality and thus physical and mental health through active travel. Finally, by adopting policies to improve quality of place and conserving and enhancing our built and historic environments we recognise these enhanced positive physical and mental health outcomes.</p>

	<p>So, as you can see, we take the mental health extremely seriously throughout the wide range of our services in order to build a better future for Norfolk.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett With a move to the gig economy and more people not having a fixed workplace, can either the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management or the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport confirm whether the Council will consider providing 24-hour toilet and shower facilities at our park and ride sites for workers and hauliers to access, so everyone can have dignity at work regardless of whether they have a workplace?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Whilst we understand the issues, we have no intention of providing 24-hour toilet and shower facilities at our park and ride sites. The sites are closed overnight and this would incur additional costs in utilities, cleaning, maintenance and security that any potential income would be unlikely to cover. However, if there was a commercial interest in doing so from a third party then we would be happy to reconsider.</p>
7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb The SEND Review Green Paper identifies “a vicious cycle of late intervention, low confidence and inefficient resource challenges” as “the driver of challenges facing the SEND system”. The Minister has said that the system needs to be “less adversarial for families” built on “a spirit of co-production”. Does the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services agree with this summary and what new steps has the Council already taken to address these issues since the paper was published last week?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services The long awaited outcome of the national SEND review sets out a range of proposals and we will be providing a response in advance of the consultation deadline of 1st July. Our response will be informed by our close working across the SEND ‘system’ in Norfolk which, whilst led by the council through Children’s Services, will include our work with the Parent Carer Forum (Family Voice Norfolk) and other parent/carers groups along with colleagues in the CCG, Adult Social Services and professionals within our education and health providers.</p> <p>As is well known, we have been challenged by Ofsted/CQC to improve our communication and co-production with parents/carers following the area SEND inspection in 2020 and our subsequent response through the Written Statement of Action. We have made significant progress since then with, for example, the refreshed SEND Local Offer website, new SEND bulletin newsletter and a collective understanding of definitions of co-production, engagement and consultation. In addition, within our Area SEND Strategy, we have recently co-produced a SEND survey which will inform (on an annual basis) our SEND strategy refresh; we are pleased to confirm that we have had over 1200 responses to this survey and within these responses over 700 were from parents/carers.</p> <p>We are continuing to digest the detail of the national SEND review and we will certainly be working with all our partners, including parent/carers, during the coming weeks to ensure that we can seize the opportunities within it for Norfolk and to ensure that the implementation of the finalised national reform changes complement our ongoing SEND strategic improvement programme. The ambition of the national SEND review is summarised as Right Support, Right Place, Right Time, and this certainly matches</p>

	Norfolk's SEND improvements which has already been informed significantly by listening to children, young people and their families as evidenced with our £120 million capital investment and the new staff within ECHP teams.
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Chrissie Rumsby</p> <p>In the past week we have learned no provision has been made for additional costs in the construction of, or against the bill for the failure of the NWL, millions of pounds have been spent without authority on schemes under Transport for Norwich and the Parking Partnership didn't have the power to increase parking charges.</p> <p>So far Cllr Wilby has shown no concerns at this cavalier disregard for good governance or the way public money is being raised, managed and spent.</p> <p>Will he reassure the public by asking the Council's external auditors to review the decisions taken without authority and the corporate risk register as a matter of urgency?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>The March 2022 NWL Cabinet report set out that work is ongoing in relation to the project budget and that this is planned to be reported to Cabinet in June 2022. This reporting forms part of the project governance and is part of the important decision making process as the project is delivered. The March Cabinet report also sets out the current expenditure to date on the project. The March NWL report, along with the Capital Programme and Risk Management reports (where they referred to the NWL), were the subject of Scrutiny Committee on 23 March and none of the reports were referred back to Cabinet. It was confirmed that at this stage the Council has the ability to deal with the implications of the project failing to be delivered. However, the position of the Council is also clear; that there is a strong case for the project and it is expected that the necessary funding and approvals will be forthcoming. It is not unusual for the Council to accept the risk of capital investment in such projects and it has held those risk for other major infrastructure that it has delivered, such as for the Broadland Northway and the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing.</p> <p>I don't agree with the statement that millions of pounds have been spent without authority under Transport for Norwich. We have approved through Cabinet the spending and programme of projects that for part of the Transforming Cities Fund, and Cabinet also approves the Capital Programme (that includes Active Travel and a range of other projects). The Transport for Norwich Joint Committee was set up to provide enable wider input to the delivery of individual projects by elected representatives from Norwich City, South Norfolk and Broadland Council's. All reports, with the exception of the recent Ipswich Road project, have received either unanimous or majority support from the sitting joint committee members. The Ipswich Road report was the first that has seen a split decision and as the chair of the meeting, and as Cabinet Member, I used my casting vote. This was then submitted under the Council's delegated decisions reporting process, and has also since been considered by Scrutiny Committee on 23 March (and again was not referred back and the decision is now confirmed). The terms of reference of the Transport for Norwich Joint Committee were discussed when it met on 24 March and the details are being updated so that the remit of the Committee is clear.</p> <p>With regard to the Norfolk Parking Partnership Joint Committee decision, a report went to the Committee regarding numerous matters, and these were joined up as one report, however a separate decision notice was needed for the specific item regarding charges and this is currently being dealt with.</p> <p>I do not consider therefore that there is a need for any specific requests for external auditors to be appointed.</p>

7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp</p> <p>In order to show a good example of how local democracy is working in Norfolk, with the proper checks and balances, can County undertake a review about increasing and lengthening full Council Meetings, so opposition Motions are debated at the start of meetings again, and making the public feel more welcome attending debates at County Hall in support of important local issues?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The Council Constitution provides guidance around the length of meetings, which allows for a three hour period before Members are requested to take a vote to extend. It is my opinion that this is correct and that Council meetings should focus on Council business and not be prolonged, which results in members needing to leave or becoming uncomfortable. This process is known by all Groups and should be considered when submitting large volumes of motions and what are considered priorities for them.</p> <p>We continuously review the constitution will monitor this but I feel that the current arrangements are fit for purpose</p>