

**Norfolk County Council
Minutes of the Meeting Held at 10 am on
Monday 29 November 2021**

Present:		
	ADAMS Timothy	KEMP Alexandra
	ADAMS Tony	KIDDIE Keith
	ANNISON Carl	KIRK Julian
	AQUARONE Steffan	LONG Brian
	ASKEW Stephen	MACKIE Ian
	BAMBRIDGE Lesley	MASON BILLIG Kay
	BILLS David	MAXFIELD Ed
	BIRMINGHAM Alison	MIDDLETON Graham
	BLUNDELL Sharon	MORPHEW Steve
	BORRETT Bill	NEALE Paul
	BOWES Claire	OLIVER Judy
	BROCIEK-COULTON Julie	OSBORN Jamie
	CARPENTER Graham	PECK Greg
	CARPENTER Penny	PENFOLD Saul
	COLMAN Ed	PLANT Graham
	COLWELL Robert	PRICE Ben
	CORLETT Emma	PROCTOR Andrew
	DALBY Michael	RICHMOND Will
	DARK Stuart	REILLY Matthew
	DAUBNEY Nick	ROPER Dan
	DAWSON Christopher	SANDS Mike
	DEWSBURY Margaret	SAVAGE Robert
	DIXON Nigel	SHIRES Lucy
	DUFFIN Barry	SMITH Carl
	DUIGAN Phillip	SMITH-CLARE Mike
	EAGLE Fabian	STOREY Martin
	ELMER Daniel	THOMAS Alison
	FISHER John	THOMSON Vic
	FITZPATRICK Tom	VARDY Eric
	GRANT Andy	VINCENT Karen
	GURNEY Shelagh	WALKER Colleen
	HORSBRUGH Michael Chenery of	WARD John
	JAMES Jane	WATKINS Brian
	JAMIESON Andrew	WHITE Tony
	JONES Brenda	WHYMARK Fran
		WILBY Martin

Present: 71

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Stuart Clancy, Cllr Ed Connolly, Cllr Lana Hempsall, Cllr Terry Jermy, Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, Cllr Jim Moriarty, Cllr Richard Price, Cllr Chrissie Rumsby, Cllr Barry Stone, Cllr Maxine Webb, Cllr Rhodri Oliver and Cllr Steve Riley.

1. Minutes

- 1.1** The minutes of the Council AGM meeting held on 27 September 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

In confirming the minutes of the previous meeting, the following points were noted:

1. The Chair held the final say on matters of proceedings of Council.
2. Future minutes should refer to a gender-neutral term “chair” in line with the constitution.
3. Minute 15.3.2 on page 22 of the agenda stated that Cllr Grant agreed to refer this matter to the Environmental Services Working Group in anticipation that it would be reported back to the next meeting of Council. Councillors required an update and explanation on this matter.

2 Chair’s Announcements

- 2.1** The Chair said that it was a pleasure to have continued to receive invitations to in-person events during the Autumn as Coronavirus restrictions were eased. All the engagements could be found listed on the Norfolk County Council website, on the Chair’s page.
- 2.2** The Chair said that she was pleased to point out that Norfolk County Council was awarded a gold award as part of the Employer Recognition Scheme for its commitment at the national level to the Armed Forces Covenant.

2.3 The late Sir David Amess

Councillors joined the Chair in a minute’s silence as a mark of respect for Sir David Amess whose funeral was held earlier this month after being fatally stabbed while undertaking constituency duties as the MP for Southend.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1** Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton declared an “other Interest” in the report at item 6.1.1 in that she worked out of a County Council owned building.
- 3.2** Cllr Emma Corlett declared an “other Interest” in the report at item 6.1.1 in that she was Chair of Trustees of a charity that worked out of a County Council owned building.
- 3.3** Cllr Tin Adams declared an “other Interest” in the report at item 6.1.1 in that

he was Chair of Cromer Skate Park, a charity which leased land from the County Council.

3.4 Cllr Chenery of Horsburgh declared an “other Interest” in the report of the Records Committee as a Trustee of the Norfolk Record Office Charity.

3.5 Cllr Lucy Shires declared an “other Interest” in the motion about Member Champions as the mental health champion for North Norfolk District Council.

3.6 Cllr Alison Thomas declared an “other Interest” in the question that she asked of the Leader regarding flooding in that she had been personally impacted by the floods in December 2020.

4 Any items of business which the Chair decides should be considered as a matter of urgency

4.1 There were no items of urgent business

5 Questions to Leader of the Council

5.1 Question from Cllr Matthew Reilly

Cllr Matthew Reilly said that the Executive Director of Adult Social Services had this morning sounded the alarm that social care services were deteriorating rapidly, and older and disabled people were suffering. He asked if the Leader shared his frustration that the Prime Minister’s 2019 promise to “fix social care once and for all” had not materialised and we were facing a dangerous situation. Since the last meeting of Council what discussions had the Leader had with the government to sound the alarm on behalf of Norfolk?

The Leader replied that Norfolk’s concerns about adults and children’s services were raised with a government minister at last week’s meeting of the County Council network conference which he had attended. The funding situation would become worse if it were not for the 1.25% increase in the National Insurance contribution from April 2022. In the first two years this money would go towards the NHS but from year three would include a social care element.

5.2 Question from Cllr Brian Watkins

Cllr Brian Watkins said that good quality debate and public engagement were crucial to local democracy. However, the intimidation and abuse of councillors, particularly women, could have a huge detrimental and psychological impact on their ability to perform their role effectively. This behaviour could range from annoying to threatening and could take away valuable time from the vital work of representing our communities. The LGA had established a programme of work to promote civility in public life, positive debate, and support the wellbeing of elected members. Politics needed to be kinder and more respectful. How did the Leader think that we could set a better example on Norfolk County Council?

The Leader replied that he hoped everyone felt that Norfolk County Council already took appropriate steps to prevent intimidation and abuse and that Norfolk County Councillors were respectful to each other in debate. There would, however, always be room for improvement in working relationships. The LGA was doing a fair amount of work about civility in public life, and he was involved as a member of a peer group within the LGA tasked with helping authorities in other parts of the country tackle abuse. Lessons learnt from the work of the LGA peer group would be applied to this Council.

5.3 Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn

Cllr Jamie Osborn said that in August 2021 he had asked the Leader if he would support a carbon tax, to make polluters pay for the damage they caused and to raise as much as £80bn in revenue to fund a green transition. The Leader did not answer the question. Recently, the largest ever poll of people's attitudes to climate policies found that 94% of the British public supported a carbon tax. Did the Leader admit that his administration was behind the times in not supporting such a tax?

The Leader replied that the Council was in the delivery phase of the work to implement its environment policy. To say we needed another tax was not necessarily the best way forward with any type of activity. The level of positive activity that the Administration was taking to reduce carbon emissions clearly showed that the County Council was taking this matter very seriously.

5.4 Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield

Cllr Ed Maxfield said that the Administration had previously argued that the benefits of Sure Start Centres were inconclusive and yet the Chancellor had recently said that he would be spending half a billion pounds on family centres. Since Norfolk had closed its centres would the Leader be writing to the Chancellor to tell him that would be making a mistake in spending that money and more importantly telling Norfolk families and taxpayers how much this change of policy would cost having closed the previous centres to now reopen new ones?

The Leader replied that the Council always had to work from the position in which it placed by the government. The Council's early childhood family service had reached out to a lot more people than was the case in the past, this work was proving to be a great success and that success story would continue in the future whatever policy model was introduced.

5.5 Question from Cllr Alison Thomas

Cllr Alison Thomas said that at a recent meeting of the Scrutiny Committee Councillors had heard that there were still challenges surrounding who had enforcement powers in relation to riparian drainage responsibilities. Would the Leader agree to discuss the possible transfer of enforcement powers with District Leaders to ensure someone had the power to get the work done

before winter fully set in? Norfolk communities needed us to demonstrate that action would be taken on outstanding issues to protect their homes and businesses from repeated flooding.

In reply the Leader said that the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance was set up to provide a coordinated response and a common strategy for dealing with incidents of flooding: through General Lord Dannatt, the Chair of the Alliance, the Alliance were taking up all matters of concern with the Government. Furthermore, as Leader of the County Council, he was continuing to raise the issue of the exercise of enforcement powers for dealing with flooding with District Leaders to make sure this matter was sorted out.

5.6 Question from Cllr Brenda Jones

Cllr Brenda Jones said that Council had agreed as part of its Black Lives Matters motion that all staff and Councillors would receive training in structural racism and unconscious bias. Could the Leader update Council on progress on this work and give a timescale for when we would receive this training given that the intention was for the training to be ready for the new cohort of Councillors last May.

In reply the Leader said that was confident that all that was required of Norfolk County Council for everyone on the issue of racism would be done and that he wanted to place the issue in a wider context. The Leader then explained some of the steps that were being taken in the world of sport to show that racism had no part in society and pointed out that there were lots of things going on in Norfolk to prevent racist activity.

5.7 Question from Cllr Lucy Shires

Cllr Lucy Shires said that at the previous Council meeting the Leader had said that there was no need for a further lockdown due to Covid yet there had now been more than 100,000 people in Norfolk who have tested positive for Covid-19 since the pandemic began and with a case rate rise of almost 11% in the last week was it not time to do more to prevent unnecessary deaths over the winter?

In reply the Leader said that he looked at the issue of keeping people safe in a pandemic from a slightly different angle. While the number of cases of people who had tested positive for Covid 19 continued to grow the vaccination process was working well and saving lives and hospitalisations continued to drop. There were people still dying and everyone as individuals and collectively needed to continue to make sure that were taking all appropriate and reasonable steps to protect themselves and others.

5.8 Question from Cllr Ben Price

Cllr Ben Price said that with energy prices rising, as well as an urgent need to cut carbon emissions from homes, retrofitting Norfolk's homes to make them better insulated and to ensure they were powered with renewable energy must be a priority. Despite this, neither the County Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, nor any district councils in Norfolk had a strategy for

how to support the retrofit industry. What was the Leader doing to make retrofitting a priority?

- 5.9 In reply the Leader said that Broadland Council had in the past undertaken some significant work on the issue of retrofitting. It was important to make sure that what was planned for the future worked for everybody, that there was a proper business case, and that people could afford to pay for the action that needed to be taken.

- 5.10 **Question from Cllr Alexander Kemp** (*it was acknowledged that Cllr Kemp should have been given an opportunity to ask this question earlier*)

Cllr Alexander Kemp said that the guiding principle behind the Council's incinerator policy was to protect the health of the people of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. What was the Leader going to do to protect Norfolk people from the impact of the construction of an incinerator at Wisbech just upwind from King's Lynn and West Norfolk?

The Leader replied that at the previous Council meeting it was made clear that comments about the proposed energy from waste plant would be made as and when the planning application came before the County Council.

- 5.11 **Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield**

Cllr Ed Maxfield said that a resident in his division who had moved to Norfolk from Cornwall had pointed out that Cornwall had a more generous scheme to support residents to make improvements to protect their properties from flooding than was the case in Norfolk. Would the Leader agree to increase the level of support available in Norfolk?

The Leader replied that this was a matter for the Alliance to take a view on.

6 **Recommendations from Committees**

6.1 **Recommendations from Cabinet**

- 6.1 The recommendations from the Cabinet meetings held on 4 October 2021 and 8 November 2021 were moved by Cllr Andrew Proctor, Chair of Cabinet.

- 6.2 With reference to paragraph 2.2 of the report Cllr Mike Smith Claire asked where the Statement of Purpose for the Norfolk Adoption Service appeared in the Cabinet papers and Cllr Fisher said that he would be happy to speak with Cllr Mike Smith Claire at the end of the meeting about this matter.

A **Meeting held on 4 October 2021:**

Council RESOLVED

A.1 **Strategic Property Asset Management framework 2021/22 -2026/27**

This matter was considered at item 6.1.1 on today's agenda.

A.2 Annual Review of Norfolk Adoption Service 2020-21

To endorse the Statement of Purpose for the Norfolk Adoption Service for year 2020/21 for adoption as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

A.3 Annual Review of Norfolk Fostering Service

To adopt the Statements of Purpose for Norfolk Fostering Service as part of the Council's Policy Framework and to comply with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Regulations 2011.

A.4 Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P5: August 2021

- 1. The addition of £3.952m to the capital programme to address the capital funding requirements as set out in detail in Capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.2 in the report, as follows**
 - £3.952m for the 2021-22 Local Full Fibre Network funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)**
- 2. To delegate:**
 - 2.1) To the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any) and the award criteria; to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions (in consultation with the Chief Officer responsible for each scheme); to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary;**
 - 2.2) To the Director of Property authority (notwithstanding the limits set out at 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 of Financial Regulations) to negotiate or tender for or otherwise acquire the required land to deliver the schemes (including temporary land required for delivery of the works) and to dispose of land so acquired that is no longer required upon completion of the scheme;**
 - 2.3) To each responsible chief officer authority to:**
 - (in the case of two-stage design and build contracts) agree the price for the works upon completion of the design stage and direct that the works proceed; or alternatively direct that the works be recompeted**
 - approve purchase orders, employer's instructions, compensation events or other contractual instructions necessary to effect changes in contracts that are necessitated by discoveries, unexpected ground conditions, planning conditions, requirements arising from detailed design or minor changes in scope**
 - subject always to the forecast cost including works, land, fees and disbursements remaining within the agreed scheme or programme budget.**

- That the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Policy Framework, with the approach to Social Value in Procurement endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 6 July 2020, and with the approach set out in the paper entitled "Sourcing strategy for council services" approved by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting of 16 July 2018.
- 3. To note the update on the budget setting process for 2022-23 as set out in Appendix 4 of the report.
- 4. To agree in principle to submit a request to form a Business Rates Pool with Norfolk District Councils for 2022-23 as set out in Appendix 4 section 2.3 in the report, and delegate a final decision on pooling for 2022-23 to the Leader in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services.
- 5. To note the period 5 general fund forecast revenue balanced position, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services.
- 6. To note the COVID-19 funding available of £72.466m, including £19.274m brought forward from 2020-21;
- 7. To note the period 5 forecast 95% savings delivery in 2021-22, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
- 8. To note the forecast General Balances as at 31 March 2022 of £23.763m.
- 9. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes, including the update from the Better Broadband project in Appendix 3, section 1.11 in the report; highlighting the receipt of rebates to date which will effectively remove the need for the £11m external borrowing earmarked to fund this project. Next month's report will reflect this reduction in external borrowing requirement in Appendix 3 of the report.

B Meeting held on 8 November 2021

Council RESOLVED

B.1 Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25

This matter was considered at item 6.1.2 on today's agenda.

B.2 Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P6: September 2021

1. To fund the following Highways projects:
 - a. £10m for the new Pot Hole Fund for Highways spread across 4 years (as set out in Appendix 3 – Table 1)
 - b. £1m for the Road Safety Community Fund to be funded by the County Council (as set out in Appendix 3)

2. the net addition of £1.724m to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.1 of the report to Cabinet.
3. To delegate:
 - 3.1) To the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any) and the award criteria; to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions (in consultation with the Chief Officer responsible for each scheme); to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary;
 - 3.2) To the Director of Property authority (notwithstanding the limits set out at 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 of Financial Regulations) to negotiate or tender for or otherwise acquire the required land to deliver the schemes (including temporary land required for delivery of the works) and to dispose of land so acquired that is no longer required upon completion of the scheme;
 - 3.3) To each responsible chief officer authority to
 - a. (in the case of two-stage design and build contracts) agree the price for the works upon completion of the design stage and direct that the works proceed; or alternatively direct that the works be recompleted
 - b. approve purchase orders, employer's instructions, compensation events or other contractual instructions necessary to effect changes in contracts that are necessitated by discoveries, unexpected ground conditions, planning conditions, requirements arising from detailed design or minor changes in scope
 - c. subject always to the forecast cost including works, land, fees and disbursements remaining within the agreed scheme or programme budget.
 - d. That the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Policy Framework, with the approach to Social Value in Procurement endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 6 July 2020, and with the approach set out in the paper entitled "Sourcing strategy for council services" approved by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting of 16 July 2018.
4. To recognise the period 6 general fund forecast revenue net overspend of £3.379m, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
5. To note the COVID-19 funding available of £84.027m, including £23.381m brought forward from 2020-21;
6. To recognise the period 6 forecast of 95% savings delivery in 2021-22, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;

7. To note the forecast General Balances as at 31 March 2022 of £23.763m.

8. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes.

6.1.1 **Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 - 2026/27**

6.1.1.1 Cllr Graham Peck introduced the report and moved the recommendation for adoption of the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 - 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

6.1.1.2 Cllr Steve Morphey moved, seconded by Cllr Brenda Jones, to add at the end of the recommendation,

after 'County Council is asked to adopt the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 - 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix 1',

the following:

'and request the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management and Director of Property to take a report with recommendations to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee within six months setting out

1. A baseline for carbon emissions for the council estate starting from the date of adoption of this strategy, together with plans within the time frame of the strategy for increasing energy efficiency and carbon emissions, taking account of the fluctuating size of the estate and transfer of emissions as a result of increased home working.
2. What criteria are used to determine whether any council asset has a social value or use that might add more value or otherwise add to the achievement of council objectives before any decision to dispose of the asset.
3. Ways of increasing members contributions to decisions that affect their division and how services are delivered to their residents; whether there is social value that should be considered before decisions to dispose of assets and how council assets in their area can be better utilised.'

6.1.1.3 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 45 votes against, 22 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

6.1.1.4 In response to questions that were raised in the subsequent debate on the substantive motion that followed, Cllr Peck made the following points:

- There was currently a public consultation on the future of King's Lynn Library.
- Arising from Councillors concerns, the local member protocol would be adhered to more closely in future.
- The sale of Council property mainly took place by tender and Council valuations were commercially confidential. Prospective purchasers were expected to come up with their own valuations.

- There was a long-term plan for the use of Repton's services and new sites were continually being opened.
- The Council's environmental policy included a lot of detail about what the Council was doing on the county estate in terms of producing green energy.

6.1.1.5 On being put to the vote it was **RESOLVED (by 44 votes in favour, 21 votes against and 2 abstentions)** that Council approve the adoption of the Strategic Property Asset Management Framework 2021/22 - 2026/27 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

6.1.2 **Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025 – our Council strategy**

6.1.2.1 The Leader moved the recommendation in the report for the adoption of the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

6.1.2.1 Cllr Steve Morphey moved as an amendment seconded by Cllr Emma Corlett to read:

'To defer adoption of the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework to allow for consideration of the four crises Norfolk is facing

- Care
- Cash for council services and wider investment in our county
- Climate change
- Covid management and recovery

Council resolves to:

1. Refer back to cabinet Together for Norfolk and request them to review the strategy to include a clear objectives, targets, and milestones relating to those fundamental challenges we face as a county and council a clear statement of what success will look like and how it will be measured.
2. Request the Corporate Select Committee to review Together for Norfolk before it returns to council to ensure all county councillors have had the opportunity to comment on it and to reflect their comments to council and ensure it reflects our choice to manage the transition to a sustainable, 'green' economy that addresses deep-seated inequalities and transforms our local economy, bringing life back to our communities and reducing our damaging impact on the planet.
3. Return to Together for Norfolk as part of the budget setting process, and, if necessary, to ask the Chair to agree a special meeting in order members can properly consider Together for Norfolk prior to setting the budget in February 2022.

6.1.2.2 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 45 votes against, 20 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.

6.1.2.3 It was then moved by Cllr Emma Corlett seconded by Cllr Colleen Walker

Adopt the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework subject to adding to the section titled 'Our Strategic Priorities for the next four years' after 'To effect sustainable change in Norfolk, we must work across the council and with our partners to take a whole-system approach to our collective challenges and the levelling up agenda' the following

'Climate challenge

Norfolk County Council has committed to the county becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Underpinning this strategy is a commitment to review every aspect of Norfolk activity, establish our baseline emissions, set carbon budgets and challenge every assumption that has historically underpinned our priorities, and measure the impact of everything we do.

We will set out a quantified route map to achieve net carbon zero by 2030 during 2022 with clear and measurable milestone to reduce our carbon emissions by 60% by 2025 and establishing timed targets for subsequent years, recognising that the sooner we achieve our targets the greater our contribution to tackling the climate emergency.

Norfolk will become and exemplar of transforming the way we meet the climate challenge. By 2025 we will be recognised as the leading upper tier authority for our actions in combatting the climate crisis'

6.1.2.4 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 22 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 1 abstention.

6.1.2.5 It was then moved by Cllr Brenda Jones seconded by Cllr Mike Smith-Clare

Adopt the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework subject to the adding at the end of the section titled 'Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives'

'We are committed to continue to pressure the government to deliver a properly funded solution to the care crisis, including proper workforce planning and the real living wage for care workers. We also recognise the huge contribution of unpaid carers and families and the importance of supporting them.

We will ensure the Local Enterprise Partnership economic strategy gives priority to the care sector as a major economic drive and provider of jobs in Norfolk. We will promote careers in care and support training to encourage advancement in the caring profession. By 2025 we want to see a clear career pathway and recognition of the skills of carers throughout the care sector in Norfolk.

The care market in Norfolk is systemically unable to cope without huge injections of public money to support it. It is time to fundamentally review how care services are provided to ensure high standards of care, value for money, reduced management and transaction costs. Providers unable to meet at least Good standards after CQC inspection will not be commissioned to provide care services to the county council.

During 2022 we will undertake a fundamental review of care services to assess whether more should be directly provided in house or through wholly owned companies, and commit to extend to co-production with service users, families and disabled people's organisations with a view to adopting a new service delivery model with full implementation by 2025.'

6.1.2.6 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 22 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 1 abstention.

6.1.2.7 It was then moved by Cllr Steve Morpew seconded by Cllr Julie Brociek Coulton

Adopt the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework subject to adding at end of 'Our Guiding Principles'

'Norfolk is not getting a fair share of funding from government for investment in infrastructure, recovery from the Covid pandemic or to meet the increasing demands on services essential for our residents. We will continue to press government directly and through Norfolk MPs for fair funding that reduces the need to increase the burden of council tax and the adult care precept on council taxpayers in Norfolk and helps make our county more prosperous and carbon net zero.'

6.1.2.8 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 20 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 1 abstention.

6.1.2.9 It was then moved by Cllr Matthew Reilly seconded by Cllr Alison Birmingham

Adopt the refreshed strategy Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-25 as part of the Council's Policy Framework subject to adding to 'Our Role'

'During 2022 we will engage partners in a whole system review of Norfolk's response to the Covid pandemic, to identify what lessons we can learn and apply to all aspects of life in our county. There were many excellent examples of communities coming together, and innovation in partnership, service delivery and working methods that should be evaluated and embedded. The pandemic also showed how important it is for communities to be resilient and have access to local facilities. We will use the outcome of the review to inform future plans and publish the outcomes of the review in Autumn 2022 in time to shape the budget priorities for 2023 -2025.'

6.1.2.10 Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and **LOST** there were 22 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 1 abstention.

6.1.2.11 Following debate on the substantive motion, it was then **RESOLVED** with 43 votes in favour 21 votes against and 2 abstentions

1. To approve the Norfolk County Council strategy "Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025" as set out in Appendix 1 of the report

2. To approve that the strategy be adopted as part of the County Council Policy Framework.

Council took a break at this point in the proceedings of 20 minutes.

When Council reconvened the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair, said that she was planning to use her discretion for today's meeting to be extended to end at 2.30 pm.

Cllr Steve Morphey said that he wished to withdraw motions 2, 3 and 8 on the agenda.

The Chair used her discretion to alter the order of business so that Council considered item 6.2 followed by items 7, then 11 and 8.

**6.2 Recommendation from Cabinet meeting of 2 August 2021
Local Transport Plan**

6.2.1 Cllr Wilby (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport) moved the recommendation in the report concerning the Local Transport Plan. Council was asked to adopt LTP4, incorporating relevant changes required since the draft was presented to Select Committee and Cabinet in the summer.

6.2.2 Following debate, the recommendation was put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED (with 44 votes in favour 21 votes against and 2 abstentions)

That Council adopt Local Transport Plan 4 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report.

7 Recommendations from Corporate Select Committee

7.1 The recommendations from the Corporate Select Committee meeting held on 15 November 2021 were moved by Cllr Andrew Proctor (in the absence of Cllr Ed Colman, Chair of Corporate Select Committee). The recommendations were set out on page A33 of the supplementary agenda.

7.2 Council RESOLVED:

A Proposed Constitutional Amendments – Policy Framework and Local Choice Functions

With reference to the amendments as outlined in Appendix A to the report to:

- 1. Agree the local choice functions and decision maker and**
- 2. Agree the policy framework list.**

B Financial Regulations 2021 Update

- 1. To agree proposed amendments to Financial Regulations as**

outlined in Appendix B to the report.

2. To agree the further amendments required in line with Cabinet decisions in respect of the *Natural Norfolk: Progress on delivering the Environmental Policy* report. (Noted these were also now reflected within Appendix B).

The Council considered item 11 on the agenda next.

8 **Review of Norfolk County Council Members' Allowances Scheme**

8.1 The Leader of the Council, Andrew Proctor, moved in their entirety the recommendations in the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel (at item 11 on the agenda) seconded by Cllr Graham Plant.

8.2 Council then debated the report on the review of allowances and considered the recommendations contained within it. During the debate Mr Steve Morphew said that he wished to point out the Labour Group supported recommendation 1, opposed recommendations 2 and 3 and supported the other recommendations subject to the Corporate Select Committee being asked to examine the issues identified about the use of cars.

8.3 The Chair said that she would be taking the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel to the vote in their entirety.

8.4 Council then **RESOLVED** (with 43 votes in favour, 11 votes against and 10 abstentions)

To agree the recommendations in the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

9 **Cabinet Report (Questions to Cabinet Members)**

Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader and Chair of Cabinet, moved the report of the Cabinet meetings held on 4 October 2021 and 8 November 2021.

Council **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the report.

9.1 **Question from Cllr Brenda Jones to Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Cllr Brenda Jones asked that since most of the SEND tribunals had ruled in favour of families what steps were being taken to address the concerns and stop that happening again?

In reply Cllr John Fisher said that some 95% of tribunal decisions went against the County Council. He would be attending a meeting later this week to discuss the process for dealing with this issue going forward as this was not a good figure for the Council to have to defend.

9.2 **Question from Cllr Tim Adams to Cllr Greg Peck, Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management**

Cllr Tim Adams asked where the carpet in the marble hall at County hall was sourced from and how much it cost the Council?

In reply, Cllr Greg Peck said that this would require a written answer.

9.3 Cllr Jamie Osborn to Cllr Martin Wilby Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport

Cllr Jamie Osborn asked if based on government data Cllr Wilby accepted that building the Northern Distributor Route had resulted in a significant net increase in carbon emissions?

In reply Cllr Martin Wilby said that the NDR was a big asset for the county and did what it was intended to do to reduce congestion.

9.4 Question from Cllr Ed Maxfield to Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Cllr Ed Maxfield asked in view of the announcement in the budget by the Chancellor of £2.6m of spending for SEND school places how much of this would be coming to Norfolk and what his priorities were for creation of further SEND placements in the county.

In reply Cllr John Fisher said that he did not yet know how much of this money would be coming to Norfolk. He was examining ways in which this money could be spend and continued to lobby Norfolk MPs for further support.

9.5 Question from Cllr Lesly Bambridge to Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Cabinet Member for Finance

Cllr Lesly Bambridge asked if given the financial pressures already affecting families the Cabinet Member felt that it would have been more appropriate to have taken the advice of the Section 151 Officer to raise council tax to the maximum to fill any gap in the budget?

In reply Cllr Andrew Jamieson said that it would have been possible to have consulted on a maximum of nearly 4% council tax increase this year, however, within the context of all the additional financial pressures that were currently affecting a whole range of household expenditure Cabinet did not believe that this would be the right approach for an Administration driven by the need to keep taxes low and services well managed and had to look at making further management savings within services as its first priority.

9.6 Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp to Cllr Andy Grant Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Cllr Kemp referred to correspondence she had received earlier in the year from Cllr Andrew Grant that had led her to believe that the Cabinet Member thought that there should be an incinerator in the Fens near to the West Norfolk border and asked for clarification as to his view on this matter.

In reply Cllr Andy Grant said that at no time had he expressed this point of view to Cllr Kemp. He was of the view that there was an oversupply of incinerators in the East but did not wish to comment further on any specific plans for an incinerator in the Fens or elsewhere in advance of the Council having been formally asked to do so.

9.7 Question from Cllr Colleen Walker to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention

Cllr Colleen Walker asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention to lobby the government to make a reasonable adjustment to the legislation on council meetings to allow hybrid meetings, so that those of us who were extremely vulnerable, or cared for someone, did not have to choose between their health and their democratic duties?

9.8 In reply Cllr Bill Borrett said that he fully understood and shared Cllr Walker's concerns on this issue. He had raised this matter at the Health and Wellbeing Board to try to get the position changed through the work of the LGA so that Council meetings were treated in the same way as NHS meetings and for the duration of the pandemic did not need to be held in person.

9.9 Question from Cllr Brian Watkins to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention

Cllr Brian Watkins said that we were told that what had happened at Cawston Park would be considered at the Health Overview and Scrutiny meeting yet the discussion at that meeting was curtailed and no wider debate was allowed. There were serious lessons that all Councillors should have a right to consider in public and come up with ideas on improvements. Without that the public would continue to have low confidence in Norfolk's social care system. Would you allow this to happen at a council committee?

In reply Cllr Bill Borrett said that Cawston Park was a facility commissioned by the NHS, monitored by the CQC and beyond his remit as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care. The NHOSC was not a body on which he served. The Safeguarding Adults Board which had asked for the Serious Adults Review (SAR) reported on an annual basis to the Health and Wellbeing Board which included all the senior people in the NHS. At the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board there was a request for an update on the current position regarding this specific SAR from the independent chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Cllr Alison Thomas added that the NHOSC had received an update on the current position and would be following this up as part of its future work programme and would receive updates on changes as they were made.

9.10 Cllr Ben Price to Cllr Andy Grant Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Cllr Ben Price said that recent data showed that the degradation of peatland in West Norfolk was a massive source of carbon emissions. What was the

County Council doing to try to restore and protect peatlands?

- 9.11 In reply Cllr Andy Grant said that he was aware that peatlands were good at storing large amounts of carbon, but he was not aware of the specific position in West Norfolk. Officers were preparing a scheme in association with Council partners for the protection of peatland and he would be happy to supply Cllr Price with specific information on this issue outside of the meeting.

9.12 **Cllr Stuart Dark to Cllr Andy Grant Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste**

Cllr Stuart Dark asked if in view of the comments made by the Leader at the previous Council meeting the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste had anything to add regarding the Administration's view on waste incineration given the significant public interest in the West of the county on this matter and the considerable amount of misinformation that there was on the position being taken by the Administration.

In reply Cllr Andy Grant said that the position remained as stated previously by the Leader. The Council would respond to any planning submission after a submission was received and this had not yet happened. It would be wrong of him as the Cabinet Member to provide an in-depth analysis on points of concern at this point in time, The Administration recognised and understood however that there were very serious concerns being expressed by residents and by other local authorities who were pointing out that there was already sufficient capability in the waste disposal chain and ambitious environmental plans aimed at reducing the amount of waste still further in the coming years.

9.13 **Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Claire to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention**

Cllr Mike Smith-Claire said that listening to the recent heartfelt feedback from the Disability Network Norfolk Group regarding the lack of personal communication and contact with them, can the Cabinet Member now highlight what he has done to personally address their concerns and repair the obvious broken bridges?

In reply Cllr Bill Borrett said that in response to the concerns of the Disability Network Norfolk Group he had asked Cllr Shelagh Gurney to take on this matter and she was already leading on the work.

9.14 **Cllr Saul Penfold to Cllr Graham Plant, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.**

Cllr Saul Penfold said that West Norfolk's employment rate for people aged 16-64 has dropped from 80% in the first quarter of last year to 74.6% by the end of quarter two in 2021. The second-worst figure in the East of England, second only to Luton. Whilst in North Norfolk there has been a 10% increase isn't it time this council looked to learn from work NNDC on how to improve Norfolk's economy?

In reply Cllr Graham Plant said that various schemes were in place throughout Norfolk aimed at increasing the expectations and skills base of people aged 16 to 24. These schemes included a coordinated approach between Children's Services, other areas of the Council's work and other public bodies to make for a coordinated approach.

9.15 **Cllr Paul Neale to Cllr Martin Wilby Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Paul Neale said that Coventry City Council were piloting a scheme under which residents could exchange their older polluting cars for £3000 worth of mobility credits which could be spent on public transport. Would the Cabinet Member support a similar pilot for Norfolk?

In reply Cllr Martin Wilby said that he had no such plans.

9.16 **Cllr Ian Mackie to Cllr Martin Wilby Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Ian Mackie asked if the Cabinet Member would explain the preparations that were underway to prepare Norfolk roads for the winter?

In reply Cllr Martin Wilby explained the work that the County Council was doing to prepare for the winter and said details could be found on the County Council website.

9.17 **Cllr Mike Sands to Cllr Martin Wilby Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport**

Cllr Mike Sands said that he appreciated that highways had cut back on cutting/trimming hedges and verges however in the context of his division of Bowthorpe, which was criss-crossed by many pedestrian and cycleways, residents and himself constantly complained about the extent of and quality of cutting. Brambles and other foliage from hedges etc hanged over pathways and cycleways in locations too many to count, catching adult pedestrians and cyclists, often in darkness. More dangerous still where brambles extended catching children and babies, often in prams and push chairs. Earlham Green Lane, between Lady Smock Way and Bowthorpe Centre, much of its length was more than 50% overgrown and with no lighting at all. Did the Cabinet Member agree that the situation described was unacceptable and would he look to rectify these matters?

In reply Cllr Martin Wilby explained the process by which Councillors should take up such matters with officers outside of this meeting.

9.18 **Cllr Stephan Aquarone to Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention**

Cllr Stephan Aquarone said that it was scandalous that under the Conservatives NHS dentistry was more inaccessible than ever before. Norfolk was well behind the Toothless in Suffolk Campaign. When would the cabinet member show some action to help the toothless in Norfolk campaign,

so that people could actually go and see an NHS dentist?

In reply Cllr Bill Borrett said that this issue was an NHS responsibility and was something that the Health and Wellbeing Board had highlighted as a matter of concern.

10 **Committee Reports**

10.1 **Scrutiny Committee meetings held on meetings held on 22 September 2021 and 20 October 2021**

10.2 Cllr Steve Morphew, Chair, moved the report.

Cllr Jamie Osborn said that in October 2021, Cllr Ben Price had asked whether the Chair of Scrutiny would agree that it was in the interests of effective Scrutiny for the full risk register of the Norwich Western Link project to be made available to the Scrutiny Committee. At the October Scrutiny meeting itself, councillors repeatedly asked for sight of the risk register but were denied access. Did the Chair of Scrutiny share Green councillors' concern that the Council's refusal to provide the full NWL risk register to Scrutiny was undermining effective scrutiny of the project and undermining public trust in the council's handling of this road-building project?

In reply Cllr Steve Morphew said that when the risk register was updated it should be made available to all Councillors.

Council **RESOLVED** to note the report.

11 **Monitoring Officer Comments regarding Member Allowances**

At the end of the meeting the Monitoring Officer clarified the position on Members allowances which had been a cause of some confusion and misunderstanding amongst Councillors when the matter was discussed earlier in the meeting. The allowances were set out in Appendix 23 of the constitution and were based on a proportion of the Leader's allowance. The Council website would be updated to reflect the current position and avoid further confusion.

12 The Chair then ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.

13 It was noted that some of the business that was due to have been considered at this meeting was not dealt with in the time available which can be seen as an addendum to these minutes.

The meeting ended at 2.30 pm.

Chair



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Addendum to the minutes

The following reports were not considered at this meeting:

ITEM

- 9.2 Corporate Select Committee**
Meeting held on 15 November 2021
- 9.3 Infrastructure & Development Select Committee**
Meeting held on 17 November 2021
- 9.4 People and Communities Select Committee**
Meeting held on 19 November 2021
- 9.5 Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Meeting held on 4 November 2021
- 9.6 Health and Wellbeing Board**
Meeting held on 29 September 2021
- 9.7 Audit Committee**
Meeting held on 14 October 2021
- 9.8 Norfolk Records Committee**
Meeting held on 29 October 2021
- 9.9 Joint Museums Committee**
Meeting held on 29 October 2021
- 9.10 Planning (Regulatory) Committee**
Meeting held on 5 November 2021
- 9.11 Employment Committee**
Meeting held on 28 October 2021
- 10. Appointments to Committees, Sub-Committees and Joint Committees (Standard item).**
- 12 Notice of Motions**
 - Member Champions**
 - Future Olympic Success from Norfolk**
 - Business rates for offshore installations**
 - Offshore Wind Benefits to Norfolk**
 - Transport for Norwich**

Reviewing the Pandemic Response
Future Letting of County Hall
Corporate Board
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)
Environmental Policy
Reduction of Sewage Discharges