

Cabinet
Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 13 January 2020 at
10am in the Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chairman. Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention.
Cllr Margaret Dewsbury	Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships.
Cllr John Fisher	Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
Cllr Tom FitzPatrick	Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance.
Cllr Andy Grant	Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste.
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management.
Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Other Members Present:

Cllr Steve Morphew
Cllr Alexandra Kemp
Cllr Bev Spratt
Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton
Cllr Vic Thomson

Executive Directors Present:

Tom McCabe	Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services and Head of Paid Service.
James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Abdus Choudhury	Deputy Monitoring Officer (for the Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer)
Simon George	Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services
Fiona McDiarmid	Executive Director of Strategy & Governance
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Children's Services

Also Present:

Lorne Green	Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (For item 7 only)
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1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Minutes

The minutes from the Cabinet meeting held on Monday 2 December 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations made.

4 Items of Urgent Business

4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5 Public Question Time

5.1 The list of public questions and responses is attached at Appendix A.

5.2 Mrs Marilyn Heath asked the following supplementary question on behalf of Ms Sara Heath.

Mrs Heath stated that Sara was also a Norfolk resident who required services and today Sara should have been starting the second week of supported work experience, which wasn't happening as no PA had been supplied by the County Council, despite provision in her care plan and funding being available. She continued that also, on Friday 10 January, many PA's had not been paid their wages by Norfolk County Council and carers or disabled people had spent most of the day phoning payroll for information, with some people remaining unpaid at the end of the day. Mrs Heath added that these were the services we should be receiving as part of our care plans and personal budgets so when the response to the substantive question talked about all Norfolk residents requiring services, where are our services as we are not getting a service.

In response, the Chairman said that regarding the specific points raised he would ask the Executive Director of Adult Social Services to speak with Ms Heath outside of the meeting to address the issues and added that Norfolk County Council was trying, with finite resources, to cater for all residents and businesses in Norfolk.

5.3 As a supplementary question, Mr Taylor said the Care Minister had stated that further cuts to adult social care should be unnecessary as the funding provided should stabilise the situation. However, alongside failing to rule out further allowance rises for yourselves, you insist cuts are still necessary for adult social care. He asked who we should believe and how can we have sufficient faith to campaign for additional funding with you, particularly when you see support for debt management for service users as a positive thing.

In response, the Chairman said that Norfolk County Council had already confirmed it wanted to campaign for additional funding with users. Regarding the specific point raised he asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention to respond.

The Cabinet Member responded that the Chairman had already confirmed that Norfolk County Council would like to campaign with users for further funding for Norfolk because, even though the amount of money being spent was rising every year, the demand for services was going up purely because people were living longer and therefore the demographic demand in Norfolk for social care was increasing. Therefore, even though we were spending more money, demand was going up even more and Norfolk was more adversely affected by the good news that people were living longer and because we had more people in that age range than in other parts of the country.

6 Local Member Questions/Issues

6.1 The list of Local Member questions and the responses is attached at Appendix B.

6.2 Cllr Alexandra Kemp stated that following the tragic death of a young Norfolk woman, the Domestic Homicide Review recommended ongoing training for front-line professionals across Norfolk, to spot the signs of domestic abuse, ask the question and save women's lives. As a supplementary question, Cllr Kemp asked why the Home Office ending funding in March for the Domestic Abuse Champion Trainers had slipped beneath Cabinet's radar and urged Cabinet to save the service, put Domestic Abuse at the top of the Agenda, and bring the Equalities Working Group back

The Chairman deferred the question to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services who reassured Cllr Kemp that funding would continue for the next 12 months and that the staff involved would be receiving a letter soon informing them of the decision.

6.3 Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton said she was glad the assessment near George White Primary School was going to be taking place soon and asked that consideration be given to the fact that another school crossing guard had already been removed and this guard was going to be looking after two schools. Cllr Brociek-Coulton added that she had already spoken to the Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service but reiterated it was essential the crossing guard for George White School and Mousehold Avenue School was retained.

Although not a specific question, the Chairman asked if the Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships had anything to add in response. The Cabinet Member reiterated that the crossing guard service would be assessed this week and the matter was in hand.

7 Norfolk Fire & Rescue Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-2023

7.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services setting out the revised IRMP following the public consultation.

7.2 The Chairman welcomed Lorne Green, Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk to the meeting.

7.3 The Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships introduced the report, highlighting the findings from the public consultation set out in Appendix B; the

Equalities Impact Assessment set out in Appendix C and the Integrated Risk Management Plan set out in Appendix D. The Cabinet Member added that the following proposals supported the “Together for Norfolk” ambition and were aimed at keeping Norfolk safe.

- Proposal 1 – Strengthening Fire Protection Resources.
- Proposal 2 – Developing a new concept of operations.
- Proposal 3 – We will explore the potential for co-responding.
- Proposal 4 – Maintain our specialist water rescue capability.
- Proposal 5 – We will adopt a national way of measuring emergency response.

- 7.4 The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Norfolk recognised the importance of public consultation and saluted Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service for carrying out a consultation to capture public opinion. He added that he was currently consulting on raising the precept for policing next year and read the responses with interest. The PCC also recognised that Norfolk was a rural county which provided a challenge when everyone paid the same level of tax for services.
- 7.5 In response to the questions raised by the PCC, the following points were noted:
- 7.5.1 Norfolk County Council had sufficient resources to fund the IRMP and the proactive delivery of fire protection services across Norfolk. Funding was also available for retained fire-fighters.
- 7.5.2 Smoke alarms were provided by a community interest company who had contributed £5k for the initiative, although some smoke alarms were provided by the Rotary Club.
- 7.5.3 Co-responding across Norfolk was seen to be working well with the majority of members of the public seeing the initiative as positive.
- 7.5.4 The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services stated that Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service had, in the past, had a dive team although the majority of work they had undertaken was outside of Norfolk, with Norfolk subsidising the costs. Norfolk County Council had made a decision to support water rescue rather than a dive team, and Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service continued to provide mutual aid to other authorities.
- 7.5.5 As the first anniversary of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding collaboration had recently passed, the PCC issued a formal invitation to the Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships to join him in visiting other areas to carry out a study of other councils to see what could be learned and whether it would provide a valuable insight into their work. In reply, the Cabinet Member said that visits had been made to other areas before the collaboration had commenced but, although she would make no promises, she would consider the invitation carefully.

The Chairman reiterated that Norfolk County Council was content with the current collaboration arrangement.

7.6 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services welcomed the thorough report and particularly welcomed the initiative to introduce additional fire control measures to reduce the risk of fire starting and to provide early detection at blocks of flats in Norwich. The Cabinet Member congratulated the Fire Service on the way it had handled the risk assessments for those blocks of flats which had been found to have the same cladding as the flats involved in the Grenfell Tower fire and the introduction of an enhanced operational response whilst waiting for a long-term solution.

7.7 The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy identified that £100,000 of funding would be used to deliver fire prevention services for vulnerable people in Norfolk and the fitting of smoke detectors where required.

7.8 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services, Public Health and Prevention particularly welcomed the specialist water rescue service in Norfolk, one of which was available in Dereham near his division. He added that this was an important piece of the Strategy and that he fully endorsed the proposals in the report.

7.9 **Decision**

Cabinet considered and reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Note** the changes to the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2020-23 as a result of the feedback from the public consultation, as set out in Appendix B of the report.
2. **Note** the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment, as set out at Appendix C of the report.
3. **Recommend to full Council** that they approve the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2020-2023, as set out in Appendix D of the report.

7.10 **Alternative Options**

No alternative options were proposed, given that the proposed IRMP had been developed over some time and had been subject to public consultation.

7.11 **Reasons for Decision**

The IRMP was a requirement of the National Framework. The outcomes of the consultation had informed the development of the final version of the IRMP.

8 **Finance Monitoring Report 2019-20 P8: November 2019**

8.1 Cabinet received the report (including the exempt Appendix) by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services, giving a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2019-20 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2020, together with related financial information.

8.2 The Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services highlighted Table 1 of the report which set out the over/underspends by department; the Children's Services overspend of £12.2m and asked Cabinet to bear this information in mind when they considered the Norfolk County Council Revenue 2020-21 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. (Item 13 on the agenda).

- 8.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that, as a result of continued pressure within Adult Social Care and Children's Services, Norfolk County Council was reporting an overspend of £3.7m, although officers were confident measures had been put in place to mitigate the overspends and achieve a balanced budget at the end of the financial year.

Regarding the Capital Programme, the Cabinet Member advised that there were no significant changes to funding other than a minor reprofiling of expenditure.

- 8.4 The Chairman drew Cabinet's attention to the exempt Appendix containing commercially sensitive information which all Cabinet Members had received a copy of. Cabinet **agreed** not to discuss the exempt appendix in the meeting.
- 8.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention advised that the overspend in Adult Social Care department mainly related to the demand on purchase of care costs due to the changing demographic of the county. He added that work was being carried out to support people and try to mitigate the demand, also adding that for next years budget the department would be looking at ways to manage and support the independence agenda adopted by Norfolk County Council in 2019.
- 8.6 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised that Children's Services department was aware of the financial pressures it faced, particularly regarding special guardianship orders which although beneficial to families had financial pressures attached. He added that the Government had recognised that more money was required for education services and that the final Dedicated Schools Grant funding was still awaited.

8.7 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

- **Recommend** to County Council an addition to the capital programme to fund Scottow Enterprise Park deferred purchase costs, as set out in the exempt Appendix 3.
- **Note** the period 8 forecast general fund revenue overspend of £3.696m noting also that Executive Directors will take measures throughout the year to reduce or eliminate potential overspends.
- **Note** the period 8 forecast shortfall in savings of £4.916m, noting also that Executive Directors will take measures throughout the year to mitigate savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
- **Note** the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2020 of £19.623m, before taking into account any over/underspends;
- **Note** the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2019-22 capital programmes.

8.8 **Alternative Options**

In order to deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in the report.

8.9 **Reason for Decision**

Two appendices are attached to the report giving details of the forecast revenue and capital financial outturn positions:

Appendix 1 summarises the revenue outturn position, including:

- Forecast over and under-spends
- Changes to the approved budget.
- Reserves.
- Savings.
- Treasury Management and
- Payments and debt performance.

Appendix 2 summarises the capital outturn position, and includes:

- Current and future capital programmes.
- Capital programme funding.
- Income from property sales and other capital receipts.

9 Social Infrastructure Fund

- 9.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services setting out proposals to establish a capital social infrastructure fund with an annual budget of £1m, together with information about how the council would manage the fund and proposing criteria for eligibility and expenditure.
- 9.2 The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance introduced the report, highlighting that the County Council had received a number of requests to support community projects which had previously been funded on an ad hoc basis and added that it was now the intention of Norfolk County Council to formalise the process to help develop community capacity by establishing a £1m capital only Social Infrastructure Fund.
- 9.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport fully supported the initiative, adding that communities often found it difficult to obtain funding and this could assist them in having the confidence to seek funding.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention said that the schemes in the past had achieved a positive impact on communities. He added that he fully supported the initiative which would help communities plan schemes, knowing the fund was available and would also allow democratisation of the process which was valuable in delivering projects within communities.
- 9.5 The Chairman highlighted that this scheme would be available on an annual basis.
- 9.6 The Cabinet Member for Finance said he looked forward to sitting on the Board, adding that this was an initiative all Councillors could broadcast to their communities and small groups to encourage them to apply for a share of the fund. The Cabinet Member also referred to the proposal that the fund would be managed within the Finance & Commercial Services directorate, with Audit oversight provided by Norfolk Audit Services, both of whom usually charged fees

for undertaking the work. The Chairman added that given the direction of the grant, he considered that the fees should be waived.

9.7 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

1. **Approve** earmarking £1m in the annual capital budget starting in 2020/21 for a social infrastructure fund.
2. **Approve** the proposed internal management arrangements set out in the paper.
3. **Approve** the proposed criteria and rules for a social infrastructure fund set out in the Appendices to the report.
4. **Invite** officers to develop the detailed application processes, paperwork and timetables.

9.8 **Alternative Options**

Refer to Cabinet Report.

9.9 **Reason for Decision**

Setting up a Social Infrastructure Fund is considered to be the most effective way of supporting community and voluntary sector groups in a clear, auditable and transparent way.

10 **NCC Nurseries Limited Business Plan**

- 10.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services providing details of the Business Plan for NCC Nurseries Limited to 31 March 2021.
- 10.2 The Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services introduced the report, highlighting that this was the first Business Plan, which would develop over time. He added that officers had worked quickly to respond to the sudden closure of the Great Yarmouth Community Trust and provide a service for the children and parents affected.
- 10.3 The Chairman advised that the scheme had been successful to date and asked for his thanks to be recorded to all the staff involved in getting the company established. The Chairman added that the day to day running of the company was now the responsibility of the Board of NCC Nurseries Limited and it was expected that a break-even position would be achieved by the end of the 16 month contract in March 2021.
- 10.4 The Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy also wished to record his thanks, on behalf of the community in Great Yarmouth, to the officers involved in the initiative, adding that the 315 children and their parents involved in the sudden closure welcomed the initiative. He continued that Norfolk County Council, in responding to the sudden closure of the Great Yarmouth Community Trust had shown it could react quickly to an emergency situation to keep the nurseries running.

- 10.5 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services also recorded his thanks to the staff in Children's Services who had been involved in the scheme and in getting the units running again quickly. He also reiterated how quickly Norfolk County Council had responded to the emerging situation.
- 10.6 The Executive Director of Children's Services advised that she had personally visited the nurseries involved before Christmas 2019 and had spoken to the staff and families who had praised the positive way Norfolk County Council had worked to support the affected staff and families.
- 10.7 The Chairman particularly recognised the team effort involved within the short timescale.

10.8 **Decision**

Cabinet reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve the NCC Nurseries Limited Business Plan to 31 March 2021 to ensure they reflect the aspirations of the shareholder.

10.9 **Alternative Options**

The County Council, as Shareholder, could set alternative objectives for the newly created company and request a revised Business Plan.

10.10 **Reason for Decision**

NCC Nurseries Limited Board has approved a Business Plan and is subsequently seeking Cabinet's consent to operate the Company in accordance with the Business Plan.

11 NCC HH Limited Business Plan

- 11.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services providing details of the Business Plan for NCC HH Limited to 31 March 2021.
- 11.2 The Chairman introduced the report for the company to provide alternative educational provision to meet the needs of existing pupils on the school roll of Horatio House until year 10 students had found alternative placements and year 11 students had completed their GCSE examinations in June 2020.
- 11.3 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance commended the work carried out by NCC officers which would give the GCSE students the stability and ability to study for their exams.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services highlighted that this project had again shown what NCC could do in an emergency situation and that Horatio House was now in position to enable it to allow those year 10 and year 11 children to continue with their education.

11.5 **Decision**

Cabinet reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve the NCC HH Limited Business Plan to 31 March 2021 to ensure they reflect the aspirations of the shareholder.

11.6 **Alternative Options**

The County Council, as Shareholder, to set alternative objectives for the newly created Company and to request a revised Business Plan.

11.7 **Reason for Decision**

NCC HH Limited Board has approved a Business Plan and is subsequently seeking Cabinet's consent to operate the Company in accordance with the Business Plan.

12 **Fee Levels for Adult Social Care Providers 2020/21.**

12.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services setting out the proposal to implement fee uplifts for the 2020/21 financial year in accordance with specific contractual obligations where they exist and otherwise as set out in the report.

12.2 In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention highlighted the fact that last year an inflation busting increase to reflect the difficulties in the care market had been implemented, adding that one of the key issues was the impact of paying a living wage. He added that he was keen to support the care market and the living well initiative.

The Cabinet Member drew attention to Table 1 (Inflation Uplifts by Sector) on page 242 of the report, adding that providing for the uplift percentage increases shown amounted to an additional £12m cost to Norfolk County Council for the next year.

The Cabinet Member continued by highlighting that the current minimum wage was £8.21 per hour. The Department had been working on an assumption that this would increase to £8.67 per hour, however the confirmed amount had been notified as £8.72 per hour which was +5p more than expected. He added that every 1p in the cost of the living wage added £200k in costs to Norfolk County Council resulting in an unexpected extra pressure of almost £1m. The Cabinet Member advised that efforts would be made to meet the cost pressure when the budget was set in February 2020 but he wished to flag up the additional pressure at this stage to reassure service users and lessen any further worries created by uncertainty.

The Cabinet Member endorsed the report and moved the recommendations.

12.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance endorsed the comments of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention, adding that every effort would be made to address the additional cost pressures.

12.4 **Decision**

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

Agree the approach to fee uplifts for the 2020/21 financial year as set out below:

- a) In respect of contracts where an inflation index or indices are references an uplift is implemented to match any changes in the relevant index or indices.
- b) In respect of contracts where there is a fixed price for the duration of the contract, no additional uplift in contract prices takes place.
- c) In other contracts, where the Council has discretion in relation to inflationary uplifts, that uplifts are considered in line with those set out in the report.
- d) In the case of residential and nursing care any final uplift including other adjustments is subject to formal consultation with implementation being through the use of Chief Officer delegated powers following that process.

12.5 **Alternative Options**

Cabinet could seek further savings from elsewhere in order to meet all assumed pay and price increases for the care market. However, due to the late stage in the budget planning process, and the extent of savings already required for 2020-21, it is felt that this could present additional risks and is not recommended.

12.6 **Reasons for Decision**

Refer to paragraphs 2.1 to 2.12.14 of the Cabinet report.

13 **Norfolk County Council Revenue Budget 2020-21 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2020-24.**

- 13.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and the Executive Director of Strategy & Governance setting out the council's budget setting process for 2020-21.
- 13.2 The Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services referred to the recommendations under section 8(g) which were to note the advice of the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services on the financial impact of an increase in council tax. The Executive Director also highlighted that the proposed 2020-21 Revenue Budget was balanced but there was a forecast MTFS gap of £35m in 2021-22.
- 13.3 The Chairman reiterated that the recommendations under item 8 were for Cabinet to recommend to full Council and to **note** the advice of the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services as the Section 151 Officer under 8(g).

The Chairman also reiterated that the budget for 2020/21 was being formed on the basis of delivering a balanced budget and that hard choices were necessary. He added that the £1.4bn overall Budget and the separate Capital Programme was designed to be used across all communities and residents in Norfolk.

The Chairman continued by saying that the spend within Adult Social Care and Children's Services was continually increasing and now formed almost 70% of the budget spend, adding that finite resources needed to be spent in response to the pressures and using a council tax increase and social care precept was necessary to help ease those pressures.

- 13.4 The Cabinet Member for Finance gave a comprehensive introduction to the report, during which the following points were noted:
 - 13.4.1 The budget proposals had been set during a period of unprecedented uncertainty and the need to respond to demographic changes to provide the best possible services to Norfolk people; making transformational changes in service delivery.
 - 13.4.2 Investment in Adult Social Care would increase by £35m to meet the cost pressures and the ambition of promoting independence for vulnerable adults.
 - 13.4.3 The net budget was proposed to increase from £409.3m in 2019-20 to £427.7m in 2020-21.
 - 13.4.4 £23m was being invested in Children's Services.
 - 13.4.5 £900k additional funding in Community & Environmental Services Department had been allocated for the Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service with further resources to help deliver the programme of environmental policies agreed by Council in November 2019.
 - 13.4.6 The Revenue Budget had focused on supporting the sustainability and transformation programme set out in the Plan "Together for Norfolk" to deliver on Council priorities and lead to a better quality of life for Norfolk residents.
 - 13.4.7 The Cabinet Member highlighted that within Service Departments there were economic and infrastructure pressures of approximately £15m, as well as £7m for legislative requirement including the national living wage, together with demographic pressures of £19m. The Cabinet Member highlighted the fact that with the additional cost pressures Norfolk County Council needed to make additional savings just to remain at its current position.
 - 13.4.8 The Cabinet Member also advised that he believed the proposed budget was robust and achievable and although the final settlement announcement had not yet been made, this was expected in late January/early February. Work was being carried out, with both local MPs and the Government to lobby for a positive outcome from the Fair Funding Review. It was expected that Spending Review announcements would be made later in 2020.
 - 13.4.9 Adult Social Care and Children's Services departments remained under pressure and the proposed Council Tax increase of 3.99% (incorporating a 1.99% general increase and 2.0% for the Adult Social Care precept) would help to address the shortfall in the budget for Adult Social Care.

- 13.4.10 The Cabinet Member for Finance stated that a robust and sustainable budget could be delivered to maintain services in the future, while remaining financially sound.
- 13.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention congratulated the Cabinet Member and the Finance Department for their hard work in producing the report, adding that given that local government finances were under pressure, the fact we were still able to produce a robust budget should be commended. The Cabinet Member added that he was aware Adult Social Care placed great demand on the budget and thanked Members for supporting the service. The Cabinet Member continued by saying that he hoped to continue to work with the NHS to focus the whole of the health and social care economy on prevention rather than just intervention when people were already in crisis to try to find a long-term solution to the pressures.
- 13.6 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance congratulated the Cabinet Member and the Finance team on the work carried out, saying that challenges had been faced over the past few years. He added that he awaited the result of the spending review with interest.
- The Cabinet Member continued that transforming services allowed the Council to make efficiencies and improve services for residents, for example changing the way people worked to free up time and empowering people through the better broadband initiative.
- 13.7 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services thanked the Cabinet Member for the budget, adding that Children's Services department would be supporting savings and inputting into the budget and if families could remain together the budget would benefit, for example one looked after child less in care had a significant positive impact on the budget.
- 13.8 The Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy congratulated the Cabinet Member for the report, although he wished to record his frustration at the failure of Highways England to deliver on the improvements on the A47 which the business case had identified would have helped towards achieving a balanced budget by increasing income into the county. The Cabinet Member expressed his pleasure at the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing project commencement.
- 13.9 The Cabinet Member for Finance thanked Cabinet for its comments and said he fully endorsed the comments made by other Cabinet Members, all of which would help improve the lives of Norfolk residents by offering better services.
- 13.10 The Chairman highlighted that, as set out in paragraph 9.2 of the report, the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020-21 had not been confirmed. The Chairman also highlighted the results of the public consultation, where the majority of people who had responded had been supportive of the proposals.

13.11 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** :

- 1) To **note** the statements regarding the uncertain planning environment, robustness of budget estimates, assumptions and risks relating to the 2020-21 budget, and (due to the unique level of uncertainty for budget setting this year) authorise the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, to make any changes required to reflect Final Local Government Finance Settlement information (if available), or changes in council tax and business rates forecasts from District Councils, in order to maintain a balanced budget position for presentation to Full Council.
- 2) To **note** the findings of public consultation as set out in Appendix 5, and consider these when recommending the budget changes required to deliver a balanced budget as set out in Appendix 1.
- 3) To **note** the council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4) To **delegate** authority to the Leader of the Council to approve a response to the consultation undertaken on the provisional Settlement.
- 5) To **note** the budgetary implications of the latest advice from the Government in relation to deficits on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant as set out in section 5 of Appendix 1.
- 6) To **note** the decision by Norfolk Leaders, acting as the Pool Board, in respect of the membership of the 2020-21 Business Rates Pool, use of 2018-19 funds available, and the associated risks, as set out in section 8 of Appendix 1.
- 7) To **note** the potential implications of the new CIPFA Financial Management Code as detailed in section 14 of Appendix 1, and agree to develop an action plan to enhance the council's compliance with the code for the 2021-22 financial year to be presented to Cabinet for approval during 2020-21 as part of the budget setting process.
- 8) To **agree to recommend to County Council**:
 - a) The level of risk and budget assumptions set out in the Robustness of Estimates report (Appendix 4), which underpin the revenue and capital budget decisions and planning for 2020-24.
 - b) The principle of seeking to increase general fund balances in 2020-21 and that any additional resources which become available during the year should be added to the general fund balance wherever possible.
 - c) The findings of public consultation (Appendix 5), which should be considered when agreeing the 2020-21 Budget (Appendix 1).
 - d) An overall County Council Net Revenue Budget of £427.660m for 2020-21, including budget increases of £110.148m and budget decreases of -

£91.781m as set out in Table 11 of Appendix 1, and the actions required to deliver the proposed savings.

- e) The budget proposals set out for 2021-22 to 2023-24, including authorising Executive Directors to take the action required to deliver budget savings for 2021-22 to 2023-24 as appropriate.
- f) With regard to the future years, that further plans to meet the remaining budget shortfalls in the period 2021-22 to 2023-24 are developed and brought back to Cabinet during 2020-21.
- g) To **note** the advice of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services (Section 151 Officer), in section 6 of Appendix 1, on the financial impact of an increase in council tax, and confirm, or otherwise, the assumptions that:
 - i) the council's 2020-21 budget will include a general council tax increase of 1.99% and a 2.00% increase in the Adult Social Care precept, an overall increase of 3.99% (shown in section 6 of Appendix 1) based on the current discretions offered by Government and as recommended by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services.
 - ii) the council's budget planning in future years will include council tax increases of 1.99% for planning purposes, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS Table 4 in Appendix 2). These council tax assumptions have regard to the level of referendum threshold expected to be set for the year, and take into account the Government's historic assumptions that local authorities will raise the maximum council tax available to them. The final level of council tax for future years is subject to Member decisions annually.
 - iii) no future increases in the Adult Social Care precept in 2021-22 onwards are assumed based on current Government policy but that these will be subject to Member decisions annually within and informed by any parameters defined by the Government.
 - iv) if the referendum threshold were increased in the period 2021-22 to 2023-24 to above 1.99%, or any further discretion were offered to increase the Adult Social Care precept (or similar), then it is likely that the Section 151 Officer would recommend the council take advantage of this flexibility in view of the council's overall financial position as set out in the assumptions in section 5 of Appendix 1.
- h) That the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services be authorised to transfer from the County Fund to the Salaries and General Accounts all sums necessary in respect of revenue and capital expenditure provided in the 2020-21 Budget, to make payments, to raise and repay loans, and to invest funds.
- i) To **agree** the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-24 as set out in Appendix 2, including the two policy objectives to be achieved:

- i) Revenue: To identify further funding or savings for 2021-22 and 2023-24 to produce a balanced budget in all years 2020-24 in accordance with the timetable set out in the Revenue Budget report (Table 1 of Appendix 1).
- ii) Capital: To provide a framework for identifying and prioritising capital requirements and proposals to ensure that all capital investment is targeted at meeting the Council's priorities.
- j) The mitigating actions proposed in the equality and rural impact assessments (Appendix 6).
- k) **Note** the planned reduction in non-schools earmarked and general reserves of 37.9% over five years, from £88.709m (March 2019) to £55.109m (March 2024) (Reserves Table 6 in Appendix 3);
- l) **Note** the policy on reserves and provisions in Section 3 of Appendix 3;
- m) **Agree**, based on current planning assumptions and risk forecasts set out in Appendix 3:
 - i) for 2020-21, a minimum level of general balances of £19.623m, and
 - ii) a forecast minimum level for planning purposes of
 - 2021-22, £25.982m;
 - 2022-23, £26.343m; and
 - 2023-24, £26.431m.

as part of the consideration of the budget plans for 2020-24, reflecting the transfer of risk from Central to Local Government, and supporting recommendations;
- n) **Agree** the use of non-school Earmarked Reserves, as set out in Reserves Table 5 of Appendix 3.

13.12 **Alternative Options**

Refer to the Cabinet Report.

13.13 **Reason for Decision**

Refer to paragraph 4 of the Cabinet Report.

14 **Capital Strategy & Programme 2020-21**

- 14.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services presenting the proposed capital strategy and programme and included information on the funding available to support the programme. The report summarised the development of the proposed capital programme, including proposed new schemes, and a summary of forecast capital receipts.
- 14.2 The Chairman highlighted the major programmes and schemes included in the report, together with the new schemes it was proposed to add to the capital programmes, the full details of which were set out in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 of the report.

- 14.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which presented the proposed capital strategy and programme including information on the funding available to support the programme.
- 14.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention endorsed the report and said that he fully supported the strategy.
- 14.5 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport agreed that highway improvements were essential to achieve better infrastructure in Norfolk. He referred Cabinet to the Transforming Cities Funding bid, where Norfolk was one of 12 cities included in a bid for a share of a £1.2bn fund to develop the Greater Norwich area to transform transport in Norwich. He added that the business case had been submitted and a decision was expected in March 2020.

The Cabinet Member agreed that the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing was essential for Norfolk and thanked the team for progressing the scheme and said he looked forward to seeing it built and become operational.

- 14.6 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services said that a lot of residents didn't realise how much money was spent on capital projects in Norfolk for education purposes, adding that Children's Services was spending money on Special Educational Needs (SEND).
- 14.7 The Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships highlighted the investment in the Castle Keep project which, on completion, would increase revenue income through an uplift in visitors.
- 14.8 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste welcomed the investment in recycling centres and highlighted that investment in recycling was currently the biggest ever in Norfolk.
- 14.9 The Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy welcomed the report and, together with transport and infrastructure projects such as the Norwich Western Link, the A47, A140 Long Stratton bypass and rail improvements, would make travelling easier for the people of Norfolk.
- 14.10 The Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted the capital investment in Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Environmental Services and Infrastructure which would all help drive the economy in Norfolk.
- 14.11 The Chairman stated that the programme of investment in Norfolk would support the new Government's infrastructure revolution in the whole country.

14.12 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Note** known grant settlements as summarised in Section 3 of the report and agree that future capital grants would be added to the programme when confirmed;

2. **Note** the estimated capital receipts to be generated, subject to market conditions, over the next three years to support schemes not funded from other sources, as set out in Table 5 of the report.
3. **Agree** the Capital Strategy at Appendix A as a framework for the prioritisation and continued development of the Council's capital programme.
4. **Agree** the proposed 2020-23+ capital programme of £536.577m.
5. **Refer the programme to County Council** for approval, including the new and extended capital schemes outlined in Appendix D of the report.
6. **Recommend to County Council** the Council's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2020-21 to 2021-22 as set out in Section 5 of the report.

14.13 **Alternative Options**

Refer to the Cabinet report.

14.14 **Reason for Decision**

The Annex attached to the report summarises the development of the proposed capital programme, including proposed new schemes, and a summary of forecast capital receipts.

15 **Highways Capital programme 2020/21/22/23 and Transport Asset Management Plan.**

- 15.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services summarising the government settlement and proposed allocations for 2020/21. The report also included the successful competitive bids that had already secured significant funding from the Local Growth Fund (LGF), via the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) as well as the Department for Transport's (DfT) "National Productivity Investment Fund" for improvements and the DfT "Challenge" and "Incentive" funds for maintenance.
- 15.2 The Executive Director of Communities and Environmental Services introduced the report which set out the emerging high assets and planned improvements to be delivered over the next 4 years.
- 15.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport, in moving the recommendations, highlighted the following details from the report:
 - The six main aims of the LTP –
 1. Managing and maintaining the transport network.
 2. Delivering sustainable growth.
 3. Enhancing strategic connections.
 4. Improving accessibility.
 5. Reducing transport emissions
 6. Improving road safety.
 - The maintenance fund.
 - The outcome of the submitted funding bids to the DfT.
 - The popular Parish Partnership Scheme.
 - The Local Member budget, which Councillors could use to spend on highway projects in their Divisions.

- The improvements to the junction at Hempton.

15.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance thanked the Cabinet Member for Highways Infrastructure & Transport and the Community & Environmental Services team for the funding being made available to improve safety at the Hempton junction which was a very busy junction in his Division.

15.5 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **approve**:

1. The Highways Capital Programme including the proposed draft allocations and programme for 2020/21 and indicative allocations for 2021/22/23 (as set out in Appendices A, B, C and D of the report).
2. The Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) for 2020/21 to 2024/25.

15.6 **Alternative Options**

Refer to the Cabinet Report.

15.7 **Reason for Decision**

Refer to paragraph 5 of the Cabinet Report.

16 **Residual Waste: Procurement and Suffolk Inter-Authority Agreement.**

16.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services proposing the continuation of an existing agreement with Suffolk County Council so that some of Norfolk's left-over rubbish could continue to be treated via Suffolk's waste PFI contract beyond 2021 to 2027.

The report also revisited the decision made by Cabinet in October 2019 to procure new residual waste services, reaffirming the need for the procurement but noting it would now need to cater for around 20,000 tonnes per year less than forecast.

16.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste, in moving the recommendations in the report, advised that the proposal was to continue an existing agreement with Suffolk County Council and use the Great Blakenham Energy from Waste facility to dispose of Norfolk's left-over rubbish.

16.3 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. **continue** the arrangement with Suffolk County Council for the delegation of certain limited residual waste disposal functions where:
 - a) The arrangement represents value for money.
 - b) The continuation is from 01 April 2021 and is for six years in principle and which could be extended for up to a further two years.

- c) The initial tonnage is around 20,000 tonnes a year with the potential to vary in line with available capacity.
- 2. **delegate** to the Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste the approval of any documents together with any other acts or instruments required to continue the arrangement.
- 3. **approve** use of the procurement strategy and the commencement of a procurement process to secure services to process, treat and dispose of Norfolk's residual municipal waste as agreed by Cabinet in its decision of 07 October 2019, having taken account of the reduction in the estimated annual tonnage requirement from 2021 to approximately 180,000 tonnes a year.

16.4 **Alternative Options**

The County Council could decide not to continue the agreement beyond 2021 and the decision to begin a procurement exercise made by Cabinet on 7 October 2019 would remain in place.

16.5 **Evidence and Reason for Decision**

Prices in the procurement for services from 2021 will not be known until companies bid for those contracts. However, based on current prices, feedback from market testing and the experiences of other local authorities, continuing the agreement represents good value for the County Council when the overall cost of continuing the agreement are considered, ie the cost of treatment and transport combined.

This is because it is highly likely that some of the prices offered by the market could be higher than the overall cost of a continued agreement. In addition, some current contract prices are higher than the overall cost of continuing the agreement and continuing the agreement would provide partial protection from inflation risk and secure an alternative to landfill disposal.

17 **Norfolk Museums Service 5-Year Strategic Framework.**

- 17.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services outlining how the Norfolk Museums Service 5-year Strategic Framework delivered on Norfolk County Council's three strategic outcomes of Growing the Economy, Thriving People and Strong Communities.
- 17.2 The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services introduced the report which sets out plans to develop and grow the Norfolk Museums Service over the next five years.
- 17.3 The Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships highlighted the detailed investment and money brought to the county, together with the Mission and Vision for the next five years.

- 17.4 The Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy endorsed the report which would help bring additional visitors to Norfolk.
- 17.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention endorsed the report and congratulated everyone involved in the Service, adding that the external income represented excellent value for money to council-tax payers. He commended the well-run Service and the achievement of securing Arts Council England investment. The Cabinet Member also welcomed the work on health and wellbeing, particularly delivering accessible dementia-friendly and autism-friendly programmes and also working with Public Health on the Norfolk County Council Prevention Strategy.
- 17.6 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance also fully endorsed the report and the work being done in partnership with other areas and with stakeholders including Arts Council England, together with the improving digital skills initiative through a collaborative approach with key public and private partners, including the UEA and Norwich University of the Arts.
- 17.7 The Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnership highlighted that £86k had been allocated to assist the digital skills project.
- 17.8 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **approve**:

1. the Norfolk Museums Service's 5-year Strategic Framework.
2. To commend Norfolk Museums Service's key goals and performance outcomes.

17.9 **Alternative Options**

Refer to the Cabinet Report.

17.10 **Reason for Decision**

Refer to paragraph 4 of the Cabinet Report.

18 Environmental Policy for Norfolk – Member Oversight Group.

- 18.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services setting out the proposed Terms of Reference for the Member Oversight Group to help develop the work and to deliver the commitments outlined in the Environmental Policy for Norfolk.
- 18.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste introduced the report and moved the recommendations.
- 18.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services supported the initiative and welcomed the all-member involvement.
- 18.4 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Approve** the Terms of Reference for the Environmental Policy for NCC Member Oversight Group, as set out in Appendix A of the report.
2. **Agree** to review the new Member Oversight Group arrangements after 12 months to ensure they are fit for purpose.

18.5 **Alternative Options**

Cabinet may wish to amend or enhance the Terms of Reference set out in the report.

18.6 **Reason for Decision**

Establishing the Member Oversight Group will enable cross-party input into the implementation of actions associated with the Environmental Policy for NCC.

19 **Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy 2020-21.**

19.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services presenting the Council's borrowing and investment strategies for 2020-21.

19.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report, which formed an important part of the overall management of the Council's financial affairs and detailed the criteria for choosing investment counterparties and managing the authority's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the provisions made for borrowing, together with details of debt maturity.

19.3 In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy, the Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing project did not have the additional 1% interest rate added when the rate increased on 9 October 2019. The Cabinet Member also confirmed that more money had been borrowed than was actually required to take advantage of borrowing money at a lower rate of interest.

19.4 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- **Endorse and recommend to County Council**, the Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy for 2020-21, including:
 - The capital prudential indicators included in the body of the report;
 - The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020-21;
 - The list of approved counterparties at Appendix 4, including working capital facilities for NCC Nurseries Limited (maximum £0.250m), NCC HH Limited (maximum £0.250m) and Independence Matters CIC (Maximum £1m) to be made available from the date of approval by County Council;
 - The treasury management prudential indicators detailed in Appendix 5.

19.5 **Alternative Options**

Refer to the Cabinet report.

19.6 **Reason for Decision**

Refer to paragraph 4 of the report.

20 Risk Management

20.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services setting out the latest corporate risks.

20.2 The Chairman introduced the report, which included those risks which came under the remit of Cabinet and asked each Cabinet Member to provide a brief update of the latest position for each risk.

20.2.1 **Risk RM001** – Realising infrastructure funding requirements to achieve the infrastructure ambition of the Business Plan.
The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport advised that the funding application had been submitted and the risk was being managed.

20.2.2 **Risk RM002** – The potential risk of failure to manage significant reductions in local and national income streams.
The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that the risk was being managed by working with budget owners and central Government.

20.2.3 **Risk RM003** – Potential for failure to comply with information compliance and information security requirements.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance advised that a six-month review to reduce demand and increase capacity would take place.

20.2.4 **Risk RM004** – The potential risk of failure to deliver effective and robust contract management for commissioned services.
The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that contract management risk was considered by the Corporate Select Committee regularly. The Transformation Strategy would improve contract management.

20.2.5 **Risk RM006** - The potential risk of failure to deliver our services within the resources available for the period 2018/19 to the end of 2020/21.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance highlighted that this risk formed part of the budget setting proposals going forward.

20.2.6 **Risk RM007** – Risk of inadequate data quality resulting from poor data governance, leading to poor decisions being made affecting outcomes for Norfolk citizens.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance referred to the progress update which highlighted value and integrity checks to ensure risks were mitigated before they became risks.

- 20.2.7 **Risk RM010** – The risk of the loss of key ICT systems including – internet connection; telephony; communications with cloud-provided services; the Windows and Solaris hosting platforms.
The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance highlighted that IT systems were vitally important and various tasks mitigated the risk including the LAN project which was due to be completed by the end of January. Exercises had taken place to ensure staff could work from other locations in the event of County Hall being unavailable; MS Teams allowed staff to keep in touch; a cyber-attack exercise had been completed and a business continuity exercise completed. The risk score had reduced to 3.
- 20.2.8 **Risk RM013** – The potential risk of failure of the governance protocols for entities controlled by the Council, either their internal governance or the Council's governance as owner. The failure of entities controlled by the Council to follow relevant guidance or share the Council's ambitions.
The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management advised that the risk score was green and was meeting all targets although ways of improving governance were continually being explored.
- 20.2.9 **Risk RM016** – Failure to adequately prepare for and respond to a major disruption to Norfolk County Council services.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance advised that this risk was linked to Risk RM010. The score was currently amber. The resilience team was auditing the plans and an annual audit was underway.
- 20.2.10 **Risk RM022** – Potential changes in laws, regulations, government policy or funding arising from the UK Leaving the European Union, which may impact on Council objectives, financial resilience and affected staff ('Brexit').
The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy advised that the risk mainly related to a "no deal" Brexit. Norfolk County Council was preparing for any eventuality and was in contact with MHCLG. He added that the report would now be updated following the election of the new Government.
- 20.2.11 **Risk RM023** – Failure to respond to changes to demography, funding and government policy, with particular regard to Adult Social Services.
The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention advised that the risk reflected the fact that was a demographic pressure. He added that there were six key points which outlined the NCC Strategy and he stressed how focused NCC was in tackling the issues faced in the day to day work of the department.
- 20.2.12 **Risk RM024** – Failure to construct and deliver the Great Yarmouth 3rd River Crossing within agreed budget and to agreed timescales (construction to be completed early 2023).
The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport advised that the budget of £121m had been agreed. The risk score was currently amber but the project was well placed to be completed in 2023.
- 20.2.13 **Risk RM026** – Legal challenge to procurement exercise.
The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that this risk sat with Risk RM004 and each procurement was considered on a case by case basis and was subject to formal review.

- 20.2.14 **Risk RM027** – Risk of failure of new Human Resources and Finance system implementation
The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance advised that the new HR System would replace the current antiquated system. He added that it was hoped that the target score would be green by September 2021 and that the Select Committee regularly considered the risk.
- 20.2.15 **Risk RM028** – Risk of any failure to monitor and manage health and safety standards of third-party providers of services.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance advised that it was expected the score would achieve its target score of 5 by March 2021, primarily around the work carried out by the departments.
- 20.2.16 **Risk RM029** – NCC may not have the employees with critical skills that will be required for the organisation to operate effectively in the next 2-5 years and longer term.
The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance advised the score was expected to move to green in March 2021 with the savings and demand linking to the transformation programme.
- 20.2.17 **Risk RM030** – Realisation of Children's Services Transformation change and expected benefits.
The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised that the transformation programme was progressing well and was being closely monitored.
- 20.2.18 **Risk RM031** – NCC Funded Children's Services overspend.
The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised that the department was recruiting to two new posts – (Head of Social Work for Looked After Children and Head of Locality Corporate Parenting) which would have an impact on the overspend.
- 20.3 The Chairman endorsed the style of reporting the risks which provided good information and gave reassurance to portfolio holders of the work being carried out.

20.4 **Decision**

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Agree** the key messages and key changes to corporate risks since the last risk management report in September 2019.
2. **Note** the corporate risks as at mid-December 2019.

20.5 **Alternative Options**

None.

20.6 **Reason for Decision**

Not applicable as no decision is being made.

21 **Corporately Significant Vital Signs Report – December 2019.**

21.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Strategy & Governance presenting the current performance information for corporately significant vital signs. The purpose of the report was to provide Cabinet with an update on the current performance and to highlight the key challenges and to provide supporting information to the summary slides.

21.2 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance introduced the report which provided an update on the current performance and highlighted where there were drops in performance which needed addressing.

The Cabinet Member advised that from 2020 a new set of Vital Signs would be introduced which would help identify and address any areas of concern.

21.3 The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance highlighted that retention of staff and reducing the vacancy rate was key and that the Council was performing well in retaining staff, although the stretch target was still to be met and needed further work.

21.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Public Health & Prevention advised that delayed transfers of care attributable to Adult Social Care was dependant on the NHS. He added that Norfolk County Council still experienced issues of “batching” at the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital which created pressure, as Norfolk County Council was required to find care packages for people discharged from hospital at very short notice which proved difficult. He added that Norfolk County Council was working closely with the NHS, but even after being regularly raised it remained a key contributor of the score on delayed transfers of care.

21.5 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance highlighted that future reports would align with Cabinet responsibilities and, whilst reporting what was going well would highlight problems to enable a focus to be maintained where performance was starting to drift in order to address them.

The Executive Director of Strategy & Governance reiterated that the focus would be on outcomes, showing impacts and informed Cabinet that the aspiration was to present future reports in a digital format which would allow current data to be included in an attempt to make reports more meaningful.

21.6 **Decision**

Cabinet reviewed the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. **Note** the performance data and planned actions.

21.7 **Alternative Options**

N/A.

21.8 **Reason for Decision**

N/A.

22 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Mid-year Report 2019-20.

22.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Strategy & Governance providing data and analysis on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing mid-year performance position for Norfolk County Council as an employer.

22.2 The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance introduced the detailed report and highlighted the excellent work by the Health & Safety Manager in achieving the current position, although it was recognised there was still more work to be done.

22.3 Decision

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- Note the necessary steps required to provide the leadership needed to secure the improvements as identified in the report, including ensuring:
 - Managers review and investigate incidents in a timely way (target of 90% completed within 90 days, current performance 68%).
 - Services to support mental wellbeing and musculoskeletal health are fully utilised to support the reduction of absence and turnover in NCC (absence is currently 3.8% against a target of 3.5% and the number of employees retained for more than 2 years is 68.63% against a target of 80%).
 - Services improve the approach to change to reduce the impact this may have on mental health wellbeing.
 - All employees have completed all of the health and safety training needed to ensure they are competent in their role (training compliance issues were identified at 17% of monitoring visits against a target of ≤10%).

22.4 Alternative Options

N/A.

22.5 Reason for Decision

N/A

23 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding

23.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Children's Services presenting the changes to the distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2020 in line with the Department of Education's National Funding Formula arrangements. This included the funding distribution formula that delegated the funding into maintained schools and academies who were responsible for using it to ensure the educational outcomes for their children.

23.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report highlighting that the final Dedicated Schools Grant calculations of individual school allocations were not yet known.

23.3 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **agree**:

1. The Dedicated Schools Grant funding and the changes to the schools funding formula;
2. To delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to revise the funding cap once the final Dedicated Schools Grant calculations of individual school allocations are known.

23.4 **Alternative Options**

Refer to Cabinet Report.

23.5 **Reason for Decision**

Schools Forum agreed to Option 2 of the consultation with schools, despite the majority of responses to the consultation being in support of Option 3 (and equal numbers in support of Option 1 and Option 2). As detailed earlier in this report, this was an extremely difficult decision for the members of the Schools Forum to make and came with the request to the Council that no further application was made for a Schools Block to High Needs Block transfer in excess of the 0.5% agreed for 2020-21 to protect that funding available to schools to invest at a local level.

A summary of the consultation responses from Schools is included in Appendix B and further details regarding Schools Forum's considerations can be found within their publicly available agenda and minutes.

Applying the MFG of 1.84% provides most support to those schools losing per-pupil funding whilst ensuring that the vast majority of schools receive the total gains calculated through the NFF. Protecting local schools from sharp funding changes and, based upon the modelling undertaken for the schools' consultation, will mean that all schools will receive an increase in funding (on a like-for-like basis).

24 **Education Landscape and School Place Sufficiency**

24.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Children's Services focusing on Local Education Policy; Admission Coordination and Policy for 2021/22 and the annual Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan.

24.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report highlighting the policy and included minor amendments to the policy which had been agreed by Children's Services Committee in 2017 to reflect the move to a Cabinet System of governance.

It was not proposed to amend the Admissions Policy.

Cabinet was being asked to note and endorse the Local Schools Growth and Investment Plan which outlined how Norfolk County Council planned for sufficient school places in response to demographic growth and decline.

24.3 The Chairman endorsed the issue relating to the challenges faced and how they could be funded and said he looked forward to seeing the details of the proposal for new funding schemes for schools local growth and investment.

24.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention supported the initiative for Federation schools and Leadership which would offer more support to small schools.

24.5 The Cabinet Member for Finance agreed that small schools should be supported for as long as possible.

24.6 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- 1 A **Agree** the amended policy approach including a district focus on planning for demographic growth and decline.
- B **Agree** amendments to processes for capital prioritisation and school organisation taking account of the new Cabinet system.
- 2 **Agree** the Admission Coordination and Policy for 2021/22.
- 3 **Note and endorse** the Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan.

24.7 **Alternative Options**

The key alternative option would be to retain the status quo. Change is advocated to support statutory compliance, accelerated improvement and efficient use of resources.

24.8 **Reason for Decision**

In addition to the discussion under 1.1.13 further evidence on the achievement in small schools is contained in Appendix D.

Decisions regarding amendments to local education policy are designed to accelerate school improvement and reduce costly repeat intervention.

The decision regarding admission policy is proposed to ensure Norfolk County Council, as Admission Authority, remains compliant with statutory expectations.

The proposed Local Schools and Investment Plan provides the necessary detail to ensure we provide sufficient school places and prioritise capital appropriately.

25 **Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property**

25.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services setting out proposals aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council (NCC) priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, proactively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational

needs can be met from elsewhere and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the county.

- 25.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management introduced the report, highlighting that Cabinet was being asked to formally declare the properties identified in the recommendations as surplus to requirements.

The Cabinet Member also drew attention to Recommendation 5 in the report, highlighting that the current letting policy for county farm tenancies offered detailed provision and requirements for applicants applying for farms for the first time. He continued that, as no definitive policy was in place, there was an expectation from existing tenants that the initial terms would continue to be extended until tenants reached retirement age. The proposed new policy would govern extensions and renewals of the main farm business tenancies.

- 25.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention endorsed the proposals and the fact that Norfolk County Council should be free to buy and sell property which could release land to people that wanted to make better use of it.

25.4 **Decision**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Formally declare the 20 Clarence Road, Great Yarmouth (6009/071) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
2. Formally declare the 13 property assets as listed in Table 1 surplus to Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose. In the event of a disposal receipt for an individual property exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
3. Formally declare the Thatched Cottage, Long Stratton (7067/018) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
4. Formally declare the Primary School, 3 Dell Loke, Trowse with Newton (7108/015) surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.

5. Endorse and adopt the proposed renewal of farm business tenancies policy.

25.5 **Alternative Options**

Declaring land holdings and buildings surplus is a result of the sites no longer being required for service delivery. The alternative would be to retain resulting in incurring holding costs for an asset that is not contributing to service delivery.

The alternative to adopting a policy for renewal of farm business tenancies is to retain the current situation.

25.6 **Reason for Decision**

Declaring land holdings and buildings surplus to County Council use means that the Corporate Property Team can consider options for the disposal and exploitation of these sites.

Adoption of a policy for renewal of farm business tenancies help ensures that only the best and most able tenants are let holdings.

26 **Delegated Decisions Reports**

Cabinet **noted** the following Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions:

26.1 **Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport:**

- Winterton, Beach Road Waiting Restriction.
- Norwich Transforming Cities Bid – Funding Submission
- Cromer, The Gangway, Clearway Order

26.2 **Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management:**

- Plot sale at Industrial Land off London Road, Attleborough.

The meeting ended at 12.25pm.

Chairman



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**Cabinet
13 January 2020
Public & Local Member Questions**

**Agenda Public Question Time
item 5**

Question 1 from Mr Jim Elliott

Will Norfolk ever stop transporting our residual waste outside of the County for treatment as I see you are proposing to continue sending 180,000 tonnes to Suffolk till 2027?

Response:

The arrangement with Suffolk County Council only relates to a part of Norfolk's waste and has proven effective for several years and it is sensible to consider what part that arrangement could play in the medium term.

Question 2 from Mr Jim Elliott

In view of our climate change emergency when will we process this waste in Norfolk?

Response:

When looking at our future options we will continue to evaluate the carbon effects of the options available to us. However, it is important to recognise that the more efficient treatment options being used deliver carbon benefits that outweigh the effects of taking waste out of Norfolk.

Question from Ms Sara Heath

The most vulnerable people in Norfolk, profoundly disabled 18-64yrs. and their carers are in despair owing directly to this council's version of MIG cuts and resultant charges from their fixed income, with no way of increasing income or even getting DWP rises. PM Johnson stated he wants NCC's MIG cuts reversed and has pledged funding for ASC for the next 5 years. All MPS at DNNGs lobby of parliament were against it. Family carers are responsible Norfolk residents saving this County £1.9billion. Their focus is the welfare of their cared for person, else they would not be caring.

Is this administration incapable of any opinion but their own?

Response:

Thank you for your question. My administration is happy to listen to any and all opinions from the public and we encourage as many people as possible to take part in our consultation processes. However, we must weigh our decisions against providing a balanced budget that allows us to continue to provide services to all residents of Norfolk.

Question from Mr Clive Shipp

In September 2018 the then Prime Minister, announced that austerity was coming to an end (repeated by then Chancellor last March). In spite of this, last April, disabled people in Norfolk were hit with huge increases in social care charges.

In his autumn statement the Chancellor stated categorically that austerity is over and announced a substantial injection of cash for social care. The claim was repeated many times by the Prime Minister and others during the election campaign. Yet Norfolk's disabled people face another huge increase in charges this spring.

Why are disabled people in Norfolk being excluded from benefiting from austerity being over?

Response:

The Spending Round 2019 and subsequent announcements have provided welcome and much-needed additional funding for Norfolk County Council in 2020-21. However, these additional resources have been substantially absorbed by ongoing demand and demographic pressures, and national and local policy decisions, and the unfortunate reality is that after nearly a decade of reductions, the new funding falls far short of removing the need to continue to deliver significant savings to set a balanced budget. It is also important to recognise that while the proposed budget includes raising the further 2% of council tax for the Adult Social Care precept in 2020-21 (which will provide valuable extra funding), it is not a sustainable solution in the long term to continue to pass the burden of funding adult social care onto council tax payers.

The council's share of the new £1bn provided for social care amounts to £17.6m. The £1bn provided nationally for 2020-21 is intended for both children's and adults' services – and is insufficient to fully meet the needs of either. The council continues to face very significant cost pressures across all areas of social care – for example, the Government's announcement of the national living wage for next year will increase this direct pressure above the amount within the budget to £7.8m (£6.9m is included within the budget) to become the single biggest cost driver for Adult Social Services. In total, spending pressures to deliver social care total £57.9m for the next financial year (£34.6m for adult social care and £23.3m for children's services). As such, the additional funding only helps to reduce the level of new savings to be found and is unfortunately insufficient to remove the need to identify new proposals and certainly does not provide the scope for existing deliverable savings to be removed.

Looking at the financial position of social care more widely, in spite of the additional funding, short and medium term pressures remain. There is continued uncertainty about the level of social care funding beyond 2020-21, and in particular whether this funding will increase in line with anticipated cost pressures, which severely limits the ability to plan effectively. There is no doubt that demographic pressures on adult social care will increase further in the longer term, and there is a widespread consensus that social care funding needs to be put on a more secure and sustainable long term footing. Until this happens, the council will continue to face very significant challenges in delivering social care within the resources available.

In short, the major cost pressures within the council's 2020-21 budget are such that in spite of the additional funding for next year, the council doesn't have any significant leeway to reverse past decisions or remove previously planned savings (such as the Minimum Income Guarantee changes), unless equivalent reductions are made to other, existing services. The council is legally required to set a balanced budget and part of this process includes taking account of the additional costs and demand for services and reviewing options for how services can best be delivered within our known available resources. The council is keen to work with the new Government on fair and sustainable

funding, and is actively communicating the cost pressures faced along with details of what would be necessary to resolve them.

Question from Mr Nicholas Taylor:

How are you monitoring the admitted damage caused by MIG cuts to the lives of working age disabled, and what ratio of suffering to funding, especially but not only in the light of recent funding commitments from government, would prompt a rethink of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 budgets?

Response:

We work closely with all service users to provide support regarding debt management and to ensure that people can discuss any concerns regarding their care and support plans. The current and proposed budget must balance our funding position against service delivery, this is important to ensure the continuity of critical services to people in Norfolk. These plans have necessarily included the phased implementation of a charging policy for contributions towards non-residential care that is in line with the Government's guidance and most other similar county councils. We continue to press the Government for a sustainable funding position for social care that can meet rising pressures from inflation and demand for services, together with a clear and equitable system for individual's contributions towards the costs of their care. We monitor cases individually through the relationship between service recipients and their social worker.

Appendix B

Agenda Local Member Issues/Questions item 6

Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp

Prevention of Domestic Abuse in Norfolk

Sadly, three people every week are killed by violent partners; the numbers of people attempting suicide, as a result of domestic abuse, are higher. Norfolk County Council has a team of Domestic Abuse Change Champion Trainers based in Children's Services, who are training 2,000 people as Domestic Abuse Change Champions, to spot hidden signs of domestic abuse and provide support. They train hospital staff, social workers and businesses. Their pioneering Domestic Abuse Champion training for hairdressers is nationally recognised. Unfortunately funding runs out this April, but the need will not. Will the Leader make sure that this important Prevention Service continues and expands?

Response:

The Domestic Abuse Co-ordinators have done an excellent job in training Children's Services staff and partners in understanding the issues relating to domestic abuse and ensured ongoing learning with well attended events and updates. Their posts were funded by the Home Office for a ring-fenced period and without this funding the Domestic Abuse agenda and related issues for victims, perpetrators and children would have been less well known across the services in Norfolk. They also trained and raised awareness of the domestic abuse assessment tools across Norfolk's services.

The development of the Domestic Abuse Champions has been a particular strength of their work. These champions have also had training in all aspects of domestic abuse and the DASH assessment tool so they can undertake assessments and give advice to their staff.

In the new operating model for Children's Services there will be specialist staff whose job it will be to provide direct work with victims, perpetrators and affected children. Another aspect to their role will be advice and support to the workforce and some specific training to staff through direct work with front line teams and by acting as mentors within the service.

The issue of maintaining and growing the Champions role is still being discussed but there is recognition that this is something that should be maintained. This may fall within the remit of the Intensive Support Team service or it may have a better multi-agency fit as a priority for the Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership, a decision which will be made in February. A sub-group of the Board would then take forward the maintenance of this network of workers with specialist domestic abuse workers across the agencies working within communities in Norfolk.

There is a current piece of work taking place with Norfolk Police, Children's Services Commissioning Team and myself to look at a strategy for Children's Services that compliments the Norfolk County Council strategy and ensures that we identify what is needed for our staff and for the families of Norfolk in order that these needs are met equally across the County by either in-house or a commissioned service.

There is a new Head of Service role for the Intensive Support Service and a Head of Practice. The Head of Service is now in post and as the current Domestic Abuse lead for Children's Services I will be discussing the learning from the Domestic Abuse Champions' role so he can consider this within his new service.

Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton

Could I please ask, when the assessment of crossings near schools has been handed over to the Fire Service, why Members were not notified and how long will it take for the crossing near George White Primary School to be assessed as we haven't had a traffic crossing attendant there for 18 months and with the traffic coming over the brow of the hill at more than 30mph and 3 near misses of pupils trying to cross the crossing just before Christmas, this is more urgent than ever for Sewell District.

Response:

Management of school crossing patrols was transferred across to Fire in April 2019. As a Service based in our communities, it was felt that this was a good operational fit.

I understand that you have been in contact with officers and they have committed to getting it completed as a priority. Now that schools have returned following the Christmas break, I am happy to confirm that the assessment is being carried out this week. I will ensure officers keep you updated on progress.