

Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Wednesday 14 December 2022**

Time: **10 am**

Venue: **Council Chamber, County Hall, Martineau Lane,
Norwich NR1 2DH**

Membership:

Cllr Steve Morpew (Chair)	
Cllr Lana Hemsall (V Chair)	
Cllr Carl Annison	Cllr Brian Long
Cllr Lesley Bambridge	Cllr Ed Maxfield
Cllr Phillip Duigan	Cllr Jamie Osborn
Cllr Barry Duffin	Cllr Richard Price
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris	Cllr Brian Watkins
Cllr Keith Kiddie	

Parent Governor Representatives

Mr Giles Hankinson
Vacancy

Church Representatives

Ms H Bates
Mr Paul Dunning

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person.

It will be live streamed on YouTube and members of the public may watch remotely by clicking on the following link: [Norfolk County Council YouTube](#)

However, if you wish to attend in person it would be helpful if you could indicate in advance that it is your intention to do so as public seating will be limited. This can be done by emailing committees@norfolk.gov.uk.

The Government has removed all COVID 19 restrictions and moved towards living with COVID-19, just as we live with other respiratory infections. However, to ensure that the meeting is safe we are asking everyone attending to practise good public health and safety behaviours (practising good hand and respiratory hygiene, including wearing face coverings in busy areas at times of high prevalence) and to stay at home when they need to (if they have tested positive for COVID 19; if they have symptoms of a respiratory infection; if they are a close contact of a positive COVID 19 case). This will help make the event safe for all those attending and limit the transmission of respiratory infections including COVID-19.

A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2. Minutes

(Page 5)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022

3. Members to Declare any Interests

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is on your Register of Interests you must not speak or vote on the matter.

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** in a matter to be considered at the meeting and that interest is not on your Register of Interests you must declare that interest at the meeting and not speak or vote on the matter

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

If you do not have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you may nevertheless have an **Other Interest** in a matter to be discussed if it affects, to a greater extent than others in your division

- Your wellbeing or financial position, or
- that of your family or close friends
- Any body -
 - Exercising functions of a public nature.
 - Directed to charitable purposes; or
 - One of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

Of which you are in a position of general control or management.

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

4 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm on Thursday 8 December 2022**. For guidance on submitting a public question, please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/councillors-meetings-decisions-and-elections/committees-agendas-and-recent-decisions/ask-a-question-to-a-committee>

5 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm on Thursday 8 December 2022**

6 To note that the deadline for calling-in matters, from the Cabinet meeting held on Monday 5 December 2022, for consideration by Scrutiny Committee on 21 December 2022, was 4pm on Monday 12 December 2022

7 Nutrient Neutrality (Page 13)

Report by Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

8 East Anglia Green – Proposed New Over-head Power Line between Norwich and Tilbury (Page 19)

Report by Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

9 Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (Page 43)

Report by Director of Governance

Tom McCabe
Head of Paid Service
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NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 6 December 2022



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Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 November 2022
at 10 am at County Hall Norwich

Present:

Cllr Steve Morpew (Chair)

Cllr Lana Hemsall (Vice Chair)

Cllr Carl Annison

Cllr Lesley Bambridge

Cllr Phillip Duigan

Cllr Barry Duffin

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris

Cllr Keith Kiddie

Cllr Brian Long

Cllr Ed Maxfield

Cllr Jamie Osborn

Cllr Robert Savage (Sub for Cllr Richard Price)

Cllr Brian Watkins

Also, present (who took a part in the meeting):

General The Lord Dannatt
Cllr Graham Plant

Cllr James Bensly
Cllr Andrew Jamieson
Cllr Daniel Elmer

Grahame Bygrave
Joel Hull
Mark Ogden
Jo Middleton
Carolyn Reid
Nick Tupper
Marcus Needham
Tom McCabe
Kat Hulatt
Peter Randall
Tim Shaw

Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance
Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy and Deputy Leader of the Council
Chair of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee
Cabinet Member for Finance
Deputy Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Chair of the Children's Services PRP
Director of Highways, Transport and Waste
Assistant Director of Waste and Water Management
Flood and Water Manager
Economic Strategy and Development Manager
Assistant Director, Growth and Development
Consultant, Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance
Head of Quality, Performance and Systems, Children's Services
Head of Paid Service
Head of Legal Services
Democratic Support and Scrutiny Manager
Committee Officer

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Richard Price, Ms Helen Bates (Church Representative), Giles Hankinson (Parent Governor) and Mr Paul Dunning (Church Representative).

1.2 An apology was also received from Cllr Eric Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste).

2 Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the previous meetings held on 19 October 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Cllr Brian Long declared an “other interest” because he was a member of the King’s Lynn Internal Drainage Board.

4. Public Question Time

4.1 There were no public questions.

5. Local Member Issues/Questions

5.1 There were no local member issues/questions.

6 Call In

6.1 The Committee noted that there were no call-in items.

7 Review of Norfolk Flood Prevention Activity

7.1 The annexed report (7) was received.

7.2 The Scrutiny Committee received a report that presented the progress made on flood mitigation and alleviation by the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance and by the County Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Norfolk and as a Highways Authority.

7.3 During discussion of the report with General The Lord Dannatt (Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance), Nick Tupper (Consultant to the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance), Joel Hull (Assistant Director of Waste and Water Management), Grahame Bygrave (Director of Highways, Transport and Waste) and Mark Ogden (Flood and Water Manager), the following key points were noted:

- In the league table of areas most at risk from flooding, Norfolk was tenth out of 149, and the County had been affected by several significant rainfall events in recent years. Some of the risks were of a coastal nature and some were internal to the county with drainage systems unable to cope with heavy rainfall.
- In Norfolk there were 36 different organisations that had some level of responsibility for flood prevention.

- The partners of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance had identified 28 priority projects and established a rigorous process, including a strategy and action plans, to ensure that projects moved from concept to delivery as quickly as possible when funding was secured.
- Out of the 28 priority projects, 9 were rated green (where funding and an outline solution was found, and projects were due to be completed shortly) 11 were rated as amber (where there was an outline solution and the funding had not yet been secured) and 8 rated red (where an outline solution had not been identified and funding had not been secured). The Alliance was updated on the latest position regarding internal flooding at meetings that were held every two months.
- Each of the sites mentioned in the report had a lead agency to develop the options for a solution.
- In the first tranche of projects identified in the report, the lead authority was either the County Council or Anglian Water. In the second tranche the lead authority was sometimes an Internal Drainage Board or one of the District Councils, key partners in developing a solution.
- Cllrs raised concerns about the ability of the Alliance to secure adequate external capital funding to deal with flooding mitigation issues.
- It was pointed out the Cabinet had made a flood reserve of £1.5m for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years, with the intention to provide a further £3m over the following two financial years to 2024/25 inclusive, totalling £6m, to help deliver change and ease the flooding challenges faced across the county. The report included information about the processes to secure additional funding, including recently notable successes.
- The delivery of many of the solutions was expected to require successful funding bids to be secured from a variety of external sources.
- While it was estimated that it would take a direct funding stream to the Alliance of £80m to fund solutions to the flooding problems across Norfolk (other than at Welney which would cost an additional £50m), the County Council and other Local Authorities were unable to provide this level of funding which would need to be found by the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and other organisations in the water industry.
- The biggest success of the Alliance was that Norfolk now had a single strategic body that enabled an integrated conversation around flooding and water resource management. It was important for all the organisations to continue working together in a strategically joined up way.
- If the NSFA had more access to direct sources of funding then it would be able to get more done to tackle the issues.
- There was a single contact number, 0344 800 8013, for the public to report on flooding issues.
- It was suggested that Norfolk MPs should be asked to take up with the Government the need to review the inadequacies in the Flood and Water

Management Act which had not taken on all the recommendations of the Pitt Review.

- One of the biggest issues was poorly maintained riparian watercourses which required urgent routine maintenance work.
- Town and Parish Councils placed great importance on the support they received from the Alliance for dealing with issues about poorly maintained riparian ditches in their areas. Landowners needed to take up their own shared responsibilities.
- It was suggested that steps should be taken to ensure that longstanding knowledge of residents about potential flooding issues was not lost.
- The Committee discussed how sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) could help reduce the risk of flooding by slowing the flow of rainfall into the drains by using units designed to gradually release the captured water back into the environment.
- It was suggested that the Government should allow Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act to be implemented to improve the regulatory sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) framework.
- The Committee highlighted the case made to Government for national change to the planning system to improve the protections from flood risk and streamlining watercourse regulation, whilst also recognising funding issues with retrofitting of sustainable drainage schemes.
- It was noted that schemes within the 'Reclaim the Rain' project aimed to store flood water and make it available for use by agriculture, industry, communities, and the environment. The use of slow-release water butts and large water containers within local communities was being explored as part of this project. An update on this project could be provided at a future meeting.
- It was pointed out that the County Council had sought funding to offer households across Norfolk that had been flooded internally by water from rainfall, watercourses or groundwater, the opportunity to apply for a grant towards property level protection. Details were available by following the following link: [Flood protection grants - Norfolk County Council](#) It was however noted that it might take a number of months to identify whether the property was eligible as it was subject to the County Council securing external funding, and would depend on the amount of funding received.
- The report set out the role of the bodies in relation to planning applications.
- Cllr Jamieson confirmed that the sums mentioned in local levy contributions towards surface water projects which were set out in paragraph 5.4 of the report were correct.
- Cllrs spoke about combining attempts to deal with flooding with those for dealing with conditions of water retention during drought conditions.
- Cllr James Bensly, Chair of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, explained how that Committee were looking at responsibilities for combined storm overflows and particularly where foul drains were being used to take away excess water which led to sewage ending up in coastal waters.

This was an issue which the Scrutiny Committee would also be able to take up with Anglian Water at a future meeting.

- It was pointed out that Schedule 3 of the Act referred to the removal of the right to connect properties to public sewers. This was something that the Alliance and Anglian Water were pursuing.

7.4 The Committee RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet

That Cabinet lobby directly with the Government, and through the work of the Norfolk MPs, for the implementation of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and for a direct and adequate funding stream for the work of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance.

It was also RESOLVED

- 1. That the Committee note the nature and speed of progress made with flood prevention activities in Norfolk.**
- 2. That representatives of Anglian Water and the Environment Agency be invited to discuss sewage and stormwater overflow issues with Members of the Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3. That officers be invited to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in one year's time to discuss progress with flood prevention activity.**
- 4. That the Committee place on record the Council's thanks to General The Lord Dannatt, Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance, who was due to give up the chairmanship of the flooding Alliance in January 2023.**
- 5. That the Cabinet Member be asked to implement the widest possible use of slow release water butts to store flood water and make it available for use by agriculture, industry, communities, and the environment.**

8 Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy – Impact on Market Towns

8.1 The annexed report (8) was received.

8.2 The Scrutiny Committee received a report that outlined the elements of the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24 that related to market towns. The report set out the activity to date, since Cabinet endorsed the Strategy in December 2021, and described the broader policy context in which the Strategy was being delivered, including the changing funding landscape and role of partnership working in delivery.

8.3 During discussion of the report with Cllr Graham Plant, Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy and Deputy Leader of the Council, and the officers that were present for this item, the Committee considered the following:

- It was pointed out that the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy 2021-24 ('NRES') was a partnership strategy, led by a steering group with public,

private and third sector representation, including the Chair of the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee.

- It was also pointed out that the Strategy Steering Group regularly invited project leads relevant to delivery in market towns and officers to assist in informing bids, bringing interested parties together and strengthening cooperation between the County Council and rural stakeholders.
- Projects identified on the Project Pipeline linked to the Market Town delivery theme included the development of a fund to finance business diversification and adaptation (replacing LEADER and DRIVE).
- An example of joint working with the District Councils that was referred to by Members was the way in which Cllr Plant and officers of the Strategy Steering Group worked with Breckland District Council to support the development of the “Future Breckland” prospectus.
- Similar initiatives to this were being put in place elsewhere in the county and a shared post was in place for joint working in the Greater Thetford area.
- In reply to questions about work to implement the market towns delivery theme in the Dereham area, Cllr Plant said that he recognised the changing demographics and changing use of market towns and the need to reskill the local workforce.
- Cllrs spoke about the importance of the availability of cash to those living in rural areas. The County Council was working with the Cash Action Group to review and improve the situation in Holt where a Bank Hub had been set up and to see what further opportunities were available for elsewhere in the county.
- It was pointed out that mapping the use of new buses in rural areas and the training of bus drivers on the use of those buses would be taken up with the Passenger Transport Unit. The Passenger Transport Unit would be asked what lessons could be learnt from a pilot scheme that had been introduced in the Swaffham area. This was however more of an issue for the Council’s transport strategy than it was for the rural economic strategy.
- The success of the rural economic strategy was shown in the overall amount of funding secured for the rural economy. Success was also shown by how far the rural agenda was embedded into all aspects of the County Council’s work.
- A new series of matrixes were being put in place to measure and monitor progress of the Norfolk Investment Framework over the longer term.
- Opportunities for supporting retrofitting was being taken up through the work of the District Councils and the industry.
- Members spoke about how the development of small-scale manufacturing within the rural economy was limited by the supply of electricity.
- It was important for Norfolk to be able to retain more of the electricity that came into the county from offshore electricity generation. This was currently the subject of discussions with appropriate parties within the industry and an

issue within the forward work plan for the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee.

- The County Council worked closely with its neighbours and in partnership through the work of the LEP, the Norfolk and Suffolk economic strategy and the Norfolk Investment Framework.
- Cllrs spoke about the need for a clear definition of what was meant by the term primary villages. In this context market towns and primary villages is taken to include larger villages and other service centres in rural areas which have a key role as service delivery locations for retail, health, education, or other services.
- It was pointed out that should Norfolk enter a County Deal that this would potentially allow for more flexible use of pots of money to support the rural economy..

8.4 RESOLVED

That the Committee note the market towns element of the Norfolk Rural Economic Strategy.

9 Quarterly update on Children's Services Performance Review Panel

9.1 The annexed report (9) was received.

9.2 The Committee received an update on recent work undertaken, key actions, updates on actions from scrutiny, and an overview of the forward programmes of work for the Children's Services Performance Review Panel.

9.3 The Committee discussed with Cllr Daniel Elmer (Chair of the Children's Services PRP) the work of the Panel, received answers to questions and considered the following:

- Cllr Daniel Elmer gave an update on the discussions that had taken place at the PRP about meeting the targets for Education Health and Care Plans since the last update to the Scrutiny Committee.
- The impact on consistency, quality assurance and management of risk policies had been examined by the PRP.
- Measures had been put in place to reduce front line pressures and waiting times.
- The Chair suggested that the PRP might like to consider producing an annual report for those Members who did not serve on the Scrutiny Committee who were unfamiliar with its work.
- The Cabinet Member said that when the outcome of the OFSED report was known then he would like to see a plan put in place to show how the PRP could help move matters forward to the next stage through a series of benchmarks and indicators.

9.4 RESOLVED

That the Committee note the progress and activity of the Children's Services Performance Review Panel.

10 Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

10.1 The annexed report (10) was received.

10.2 There were a number of additions and changes to the work programme that were shown in the appendix to the report.

10.3 RESOLVED

That the Committee:

Note the current forward work programme as set out in the appendix to the report

The meeting concluded at 2.30 pm

Chair

Scrutiny Committee

Item No: 7

Report Title: Nutrient Neutrality

Date of Meeting: 14 December 2022

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Vardy (Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste)

Responsible Director: Tom McCabe (Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services)

Executive Summary

This paper summarises the immediate implications and the possible actions required going forward, in the light of Natural England advice on the status of the Norfolk Broads and the River Wensum.

Action Required To consider the report on Nutrient Neutrality and its implication for Norfolk County Council.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 The rivers of Norfolk and England are in a very poor ecological state. Parliament's Environmental Audit Committee reported in March of this year that only 15% of the rivers in England and Wales are in favourable ecological status, and 0% were in favourable status in relation to chemical pollution.
- 1.2 The Norfolk Broads and the River Wensum are designated Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) under the Habitats Regulations, which means that they receive additional protection.
- 1.3 The Habitats Regulations requires that planning authorities can only grant planning permission where they are satisfied that the development, on its own, or in combination with surrounding activities, will not adversely affect the integrity of a designated habitat.
- 1.4 This is not a matter of exercising planning judgement; it is a legal test and there must be no reasonable scientific doubt of an adverse effect. This means that a precautionary approach is required to any assessment.

2. The Assessment Stages

2.1 The Habitats Risk Assessment process can have up to 3 stages

1. Screening - to check if the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on a site's conservation objectives. Usually screened out on distance from designated sites.
2. Appropriate Assessment - if the proposal cannot be screened out a more detailed assessment is required including identifying ways to avoid or minimise any affects. Then
3. Derogation – In cases where after an appropriate assessment a significant adverse effect cannot be ruled out – to consider any qualifying exemptions (National interests).

3. Natural England

- 3.1 If an appropriate assessment is required, Natural England are a statutory consultee in the process. In March of this year, Natural England issued advice that development that results in additional overnight stays within the River Wensum catchment and 5 catchments within the Broads (Bure, Ant, Trinity, Upper Thurne and the uppermost part of the Yare) that increased loading of nutrients needs to have appropriate mitigation in place - as part of the issuing of any new planning permission for residential / over-night accommodation. Some other types of development will also require mitigation where it results in additional nutrient levels over current land use.
- 3.2 At the same time Natural England advised that an approach referred to as "Nutrient Neutrality" could be used to deliver development in the affected catchments in a way that does not add to the existing pollution problems.
- 3.3 In July 2022 the Government issued further advice which requires water authorities in effected areas to upgrade most of their waste water treatment works to the highest technically achievable limit by 2030. Natural England were also required to set up a mitigation scheme in impacted areas and this is expected to come forward during 2023.
- 3.4 There are two stages to the Nutrient Neutrality Approach:
 - Assessment of the additional nutrient loading created by the development.
 - Agreement on the scheme by which this quantity of Nutrients can be offset (i.e., mitigation). Any scheme will need to be secured for the lifetime of the development, which is likely to be perpetuity (generally regarded as 80 -120 years). This could include the creation of new wetlands, fallowing of land, cover cropping or upgrading of wastewater treatment works.

- 3.5 Because the harm is catchment specific, the location of any offsetting schemes is highly dependent on the location of the proposed development.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 Any proposals that provide additional overnight accommodation within the relevant catchment will not pass an appropriate assessment without accompanying Nutrient Neutrality measures. Any measures must be known and agreed at the time of the planning decision.
- 4.2 Since the publication of the guidance no permissions for development that would give rise to additional nutrient (sewage) loading within the catchment have been granted.
- 4.3 DLUHC will be providing a total of £200,000 for the local authorities in Norfolk to support activities that will be aimed at delivering development within the affected catchments (£100,000 per catchment).
- 4.4 Royal Haskoning DHV has been commissioned by Local Planning Authorities to look at ways to recommence development within the two catchments.
- 4.5 To date, the main area of work has been to develop a calculator providing figures for both Phosphorous and Nitrogen nutrient arising from development and, therefore, what needs to be offset to demonstrate nutrient neutrality. This is based on the work initially carried out by Natural England. RHDHV have also updated the original catchment mapping provided by Natural England to identify the areas impacted by Nutrient Neutrality, and to incorporate wastewater treatment works into these catchments.
- 4.6 Schemes/projects within the catchments which remove nutrients from the catchment and can be used to offset loading created by new developments are still some way off and unlikely to be available until 2023 at the earliest.
- 4.7 This current impasse is delaying the determination of the Long Stratton growth proposals which include the proposed bypass to be delivered by NCC. The current position creates risk to the programme and associated.

5. Key Actions Going Forward

- 5.1 In order to be able to deliver development going forward in the relevant catchments Local Planning Authorities must:
- Agree with Natural England a robust method of calculating the nutrient impacts of development and offsetting schemes

- Identify new land management practices or other mitigation methods that can be delivered within the catchments and the legal mechanisms for securing them and monitoring them over the lifetime of the development that they are offsetting.
- 5.2 To achieve this, Local Authorities are looking to set up a Joint Venture with Water Resources East and Anglian Water to deliver a Norfolk Environmental Credits Board, this will complement the Natural England mitigation scheme in delivery mitigation for developments.

6. Implications for Norfolk County Council

- 6.1 As a county Planning Authority, NCC is responsible for undertaking the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and for applications submitted to the County Council for determination. For the Council's own development, and for mineral proposals, the County has sole responsibility for the assessment. For waste development this is shared with the Environment Agency. Assessments are carried out by professional Ecologists working in the Environment Team. In addition to supporting our own work, our Ecologists also provide this support for a number of district councils as a paid for service.
- 6.2 As highlighted above, the delivery of offsetting land management practices and schemes will be essential in securing future development within the affected areas. As a major landowner with assets within the impacted catchments, NCC has, in theory, the potential to deliver offsetting schemes. As the offsetting would be required to endure for the lifetime of the relevant development any changes will needed to carefully be considered. Given the existing levels of ecological expertise within the Authority we could also support planning authorities in the scrutiny and monitoring of offsetting schemes over their lifetime. This could be either direct through agreed service levels with the LPA's, or through the joint venture scheme currently under consideration. Any support provided would need to appropriately funded

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None as result of this report.

8. Resource Implications

- 8.1 **Staff:** None as result of this report.
- 7.2 **Property:** None as result of this report.

7.3 IT: None as result of this report.

9. Other Implications

8.1 Legal Implications: None as result of this report.

8.2 Human Rights Implications: None as result of this report.

8.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included): None as result of this report.

8.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA): None as result of this report.

8.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate): N/A

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): None as result of this report. However, the underpinning issue that the concept of Nutrient Neutrality is seeking to address, is to ensure that future development does not add to the existing pollution issues.

8.7 Any Other Implications: n/a

10. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 None as result of this report. Solutions for the existing and longstanding river pollution caused by historic land uses has yet to be found. There is the risk that any solutions that are found are used to offset the impacts of future growth rather than improve the quality of rivers.

11. Select Committee Comments

10.1 n/a

12. Recommendations

To: Consider the implication of Natural England's advice on Nutrient Neutrality.

13. Background Papers

12.1 [House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee- Water Quality in Rivers](#)

12.2 [Natural England – Nutrient Neutrality – A summary guide](#)

Officer Contact

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

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Scrutiny Committee

Item No: 8

Report Title: East Anglia Green – Proposed New Over-head Power Line between Norwich and Tilbury

Date of Meeting: 14 December 2022

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Wilby (Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport)

Responsible Director: Vince Muspratt Director of Growth and Development

Executive Summary

National Grid have been invited to this meeting to provide an update on the East Anglia Green project and to answer any questions members of this Committee may have in respect of the project. The project will be taken forward as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the 2008 Planning Act. The final decision will be made by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS); following two rounds of formal / statutory consultations; and a Public Examination.

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview and update of the project (i.e. the proposal for a new over-head power line between Norwich and Tilbury (Essex)). This report sets out the County Council's position to date following a non-statutory consultation undertaken by National Grid between April – June this year.

Officers continue to be fully engaged with National Grid on a number of technical and planning matters relating to the project; and at the time of writing this report officers are preparing a response to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion.

Questions and issues this Committee may wish to raise could include: (a) the need for significant accompanying investment in all the electricity transmission networks to address power shortages especially along the A 11 Corridor; and wider consideration of the opportunities and benefits for Norfolk in order to ensure that there is sufficient power to meet the needs of existing and planned housing and employment growth; (b) the reasons why the project is needed; (c) an explanation of the preferred route corridor for the over-head power line; and any other supporting infrastructure required (e.g. Substations etc); (d) consideration of alternative options including: an offshore transmission circuit / network; and/or opportunities for undergrounding the onshore proposal.

Recommendations / Action Required [delete as appropriate]

The Committee is asked to:

1. Note the current status of the East Anglia Green project; and the future opportunities for stakeholder engagement on this project through the NSIP consultation process; and
2. Raise any issues and questions direct to National Grid, who are invited to this meeting, on this project as it impacts on Norfolk.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 National Grid undertook a non-statutory consultation on their East Anglia Green project earlier in the year (April - June 2022) setting out their proposals to reinforce the electricity transmission network between Norwich Main substation and Tilbury substation in Essex.
- 1.2 Given the scale of the proposal (see below – section 2) it will be taken forward as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the 2008 Planning Act and will be determined by the Secretary of State (Business, Energy and Industrial strategy – BEIS).
- 1.3 While the precise timetable for taking forward the Project is not known at this time, it is understood that National Grid intend to:
 - Prepare a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and undertake a statutory consultation on the PEIR (Section 42 of the 2008 Planning Act) in Spring 2023;
 - Submit their Development Consent Order (DCO) application in Q4 2024; which will be followed up with a further statutory consultation under Section 56 of the Act;
- 1.4 The above consultations will be followed up with a Public Examination led by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) as the Examining Authority, who will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS). The final decision on this project will be made by the SoS.
- 1.5 It is likely that the above decision-making will take between 2 – 3 years, with construction taking place between 2027-2030.
- 1.6 The County Council made its comments on the non-statutory consultation in June 2022, and these are summarised below and set out in full in the Appendices 1 – 3 attached;

- 1.7 Officers have had sight of National Grid's Strategic Options Technical Report which has provided further details on the cost and potential environmental implications of any alternative offshore transmission solution.
- 1.8 In addition PINS have recently consulted the County Council as statutory consultee on seeking technical comments on National Grid's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion; and at the time of preparing this report officers are in the process of collating a technical response.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The East Anglia Green (EAG) project is set out on the Applicant's web-site: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/east-anglia-green>.

- 2.2 The proposed route corridor is shown in Appendix 4.

- 2.3 In summary National Grid are proposing:

- building a new high voltage (400 kv) network between Norwich and Tilbury (Essex);
- work at existing substations at Norwich Main; Bramford and Tilbury; and
- a new substation in Tendering.

The proposed over-head power lines are likely to comprise conventional pylons with a height of 45-50m at intervals of 350-400m. It is understood that alternative solutions including undergrounding; and placing the line offshore have been discounted on technical and cost grounds. Members may wish to question National Grid on these alternative solutions/options.

- 2.4 The proposed reinforcement is needed according to National Grid to increase capacity to cater for additional electricity which will be going into the network principally from the offshore windfarm sector. Norfolk is already the landing point and grid connection point for a number of offshore windfarms (e.g. Sheringham Shoal (2012) and Dudgeon (2017)); and this will increase substantially with the additional planned offshore windfarms, including the following consented projects: Norfolk Vanguard (1.8 GW); Norfolk Boreas (1.8 GW); Hornsea Project 3 (2.4 GW); and proposals to extend / double the generating capacity of the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore windfarms.

- 2.5 The East Anglia Green project is designed to accommodate the above offshore windfarms and in doing so:

- Assist in decarbonising the energy system;
- Meeting the Government's target of 40 GW of electricity from offshore windfarms by 2030 and

- Meeting the Government's objectives of net zero emissions by 2050
- 2.6 At this stage in the planning process the detail of a precise route corridor and works required at the respective substations is not known. National Grid have set out in their consultation documents a preferred route corridor stretching from Norwich Main in the North down to Bressingham in the South of the County - a distance of between 18 -20 miles (see Map Appendix 4).

3. Impact of the Proposal on Norfolk

- 3.1 The County Council's response to the non-statutory consultation was sent to National Grid in June 2022 (see Appendices 1 and 2); and the key strategic issues raised are set out below:
- While recognising the need for increasing capacity to the network; National Grid need to demonstrate that alternative solutions such improvements to the existing infrastructure; and any offshore opportunities have been thoroughly considered/tested;
 - Bringing Power into Norfolk - While acknowledging the wider strategic need for improving capacity to the existing electricity network; the proposals set out by National Grid do not bring any direct or immediate benefit to Norfolk in terms of providing clean energy to existing or planned homes and businesses. There needs to be significant accompanying investment in all the electricity transmission networks to address power shortages especially along the A11 Corridor.
 - The wider economic benefits need to be realised and National Grid will be asked to prepare a Skills and Employment Strategy;
 - There needs to be appropriate compensation for those residents and businesses affected by the proposals; and a community benefit fund established/set up for those communities affected;
 - Ideally the whole of the route corridor set out by National Grid should be placed underground to minimise landscape and visual impact. At the very least National Grid need to consider undergrounding the most sensitive sections of the proposed route corridor such as where the route crosses the Waveney Valley. Other forms of mitigation also need to be considered including: the use of lower pylon towers or alternative tower design; and appropriate landscape measures designed to minimise the impacts of new pylons;
 - As part of the DCO process National Grid will need to provide detailed transport/highway technical evidence to demonstrate appropriate mitigation measures will be in place both during construction and operation of the project.
 - Emergency vehicle response times should not be compromised during the construction phase;

- The health implications will need to be thoroughly considered by National Grid; and the route will need to avoid close proximity to residential areas; and public buildings particularly schools (e.g. at Hapton and Winfarthing).
- 3.2 Further comments were submitted to National Grid by the Labour Group (Appendix 3) in June 2022 raising concerns in relation to the lack of adequate evidence on: (a) carbon neutrality; and (b) the impacts on the natural and historic environment. Concern was also raised about the project being premature ahead of the BEIS led Offshore Transmission Network Review.
- 3.3 Since the above comments were made in June 2022, further officer-level discussions have taken place with National Grid; and officers have provided a technical response to the EIA Scoping Opinion. In addition, National Grid have provided further briefings to officers and members on the cost and potential environmental implications of placing the proposed transmission route offshore.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 At this stage no decision is being sought from Scrutiny Committee in connection with the above project. The County Council will be consulted as a statutory consultee on this project at the appropriate planning stages; and this will be reported to the County Council's Planning and Highways Delegations Committee where a decision on the County Council's response will be made in line with the procedures set out in the Constitution.
- 4.2 The key stages for the above Committee and member involvement will be at: (a) the preliminary environmental information report (PEIR) stage (Pre-application); and (b) submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Stage - indicative timetable shown above.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 The County Council is a key stakeholder in the NSIP process given its statutory responsibilities as: Highway Authority; Lead Local Flood Authority; Public Health; Minerals and Waste Planning Authority; and Local Education Authority.
- 5.2 Continued County Council involvement and engagement in the NSIP process is considered essential and will assist in ensuring the wider community implications are properly taken into account. The alternative would be not to engage in the NSIP process.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The County Council's involvement in the NSIP process is particularly resource hungry in terms of officer time spent responding to technical consultations (e.g. statement of community consultation; scoping of the Environmental Impact Assessment; assessment of technical data etc); attending expert technical groups and so on. The County Council is engaged with National Grid, as with other NSIP promoters, to secure cost recovery mechanisms through a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). This would ensure that the County Council's involvement is cost neutral.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1 **Staff:** The County Council is a statutory consultee on the above project and officers will need to consider the implications of any development on the County Council's key statutory responsibilities, such as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority. As indicated above the County Council will be looking to recover any costs associated with officer time spent on assessing this project.

- 7.2 **Property:** No immediate implications

- 7.3 **IT:** None

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Legal Implications:** No implications at this stage as this is not a formal planning consultation. The legal team will, however, be involved in the drafting of the PPA. The County Council has the appropriate procedures in place for responding to any formal/statutory consultation stages.

- 8.2 **Human Rights Implications:** N/A

- 8.3 **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** The Council's Planning functions are subject to equality impact assessments. A detailed equality impact assessment has not been carried out as this report is simply noting a project being taken forward by National Grid and will be the subject of formal/statutory consultations in the future. However, consideration has been given to equality issues and the Council's Planning functions are subject to equality impact assessments. Any future County Council Report and comments on this project will aim to ensure that any development will have minimal impact on communities; while supporting our own clean growth ambitions in line with the Government's vision for economic recovery.

- 8.4 **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):** N/A

- 8.5 **Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):** None at this stage

8.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate): There are no immediate sustainability implications associated with this report, although the County Council will need to consider the wider implications of the above EAG project in respect of the authority's own clean growth ambitions.

8.7 Any Other Implications: None

9. Risk Implications / Assessment

9.1 The County Council is a statutory consultee on any Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project determined by the Secretary of State. The County Council will also be invited to submit a Local Impact Report (LIR) as part of the Public Examination process, the content of which is a matter for the Local Authority and will provide an opportunity for the County Council to make more detailed comments.

10. Select Committee Comments

10.1 Given the timetable to respond to formal / statutory consultations there is not the opportunity to take NSIPs through the Select Committee process.

11. Recommendations

To:

- 1. Note the current status of the East Anglia Green Project; and the future opportunities for stakeholder engagement on this project through the NSIP consultation process;**
- 2. Raise any questions direct to National Grid, who are invited to the meeting, on this project as it impacts on Norfolk.**

12. Background Papers

- 12.1 East Anglia Green Project - <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/east-anglia-green>
- 12.2 Scoping Opinion - [East Anglia Green Energy Enablement \(GREEN\) Project | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](#)
- 12.3 Appendix 1 – Letter from the Leader to National Grid – June 2022;
- 12.4 Appendix 2 – Norfolk County Council officer response to the non-statutory consultation June 2022;
- 12.5 Appendix 3 - Labour Group Response – June 2022
- 12.6 Appendix 4 – Map proposed Route Corridor

Officer Contact

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

Officer name: Stephen Faulkner

Telephone no.:01603 222752

Email: stephen.faulkner@norfolk.gov.uk



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

Appendix – Norfolk County Council Comments made to the Non-statutory Consultation (June 2022)

Please find attached Norfolk County Council's response to the above High Voltage Cable Route proposal, comprising:

- (a) Letter from the Leader of Norfolk County Council - Cllr Andrew Proctor;
- (b) Detailed officer-level comments and Local Member concerns raised; and
- (c) Additional Comments from the Labour Group at Norfolk County Council.

AP/MBC

Tel: 01603 223201

13 June 2022

Mr Simon Pepper
National GridSent by email only: simon.pepper@nationalgrid.com

Dear Mr Pepper

Re: East Anglia Green - Preferred Route Corridor Consultation

Thank you for engaging with the County Council on the above consultation exercise.

The County Council fully recognise the need for clean sustainable energy supplies in order to meet the Government's plans to deliver net zero emissions by 2050; and that a key component in achieving this is to increase the offshore wind energy sector. It is understood that the current plans for increased capacity in the electricity network is being driven by the need to accommodate the offshore wind sector.

While supporting the offshore wind energy sector, the County Council do not consider current plans for an all new high-voltage (400 kv) over-head power line between Norwich Main to Tilbury in Essex is the appropriate solution.

The proposed cable route corridor as currently planned would have demonstrable impacts on local communities; businesses; and the precious Norfolk landscape. I have attached the comments of those local County Councillors whose constituents would be affected by the above route corridor proposal.

Therefore, the County Council would strongly urge National Grid and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to consider:

- (a) An offshore option – involving some form of offshore transmission network capable of delivering power direct from source to where it is most needed in London and the South-East;
- (b) Under-grounding option – in the event that the offshore solution is not feasible in the current timescales; every effort must be made to bury the proposed cables underground to avoid the damaging impacts on local communities in Norfolk; and
- (c) Upgrading the existing over-head power lines to increase capacity.

These alternatives options must be thoroughly explored and tested as part of the Government's national response to delivering safe, secure and sustainable energy supplies for the future.

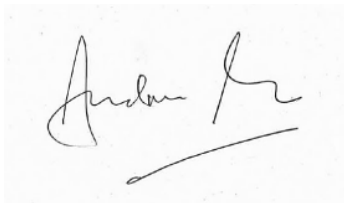
In addition, the wider potential opportunities and benefits for Norfolk must be taken into account by National Grid in order to ensure that there is accompanying investment in the transmission networks to provide power to meet the needs of existing and planned growth in this area, particularly along the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor.

Notwithstanding the above comments I have attached detailed officer-level comments in relation to the above route corridor proposal, which are made without prejudice to any further comments the County Council will want to make at the formal planning stages.

I have asked my officers to continue to work with yourselves (National Grid); and those other Local Authorities affected by this proposal to ensure the best outcome for the residents and businesses in Norfolk.

Should you have any queries on the above comments or those set out in the attached detailed officer-level comments, I would suggest you contact Stephen Faulkner (Principal Planner) or the named officers in the attached schedule.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Proctor', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Cllr Andrew Proctor
Leader of the Council

c.c. Greg Hands MP Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth
Minister.Hands@beis.gov.uk
Cllr Bills and Duffin - Local Members
David.bills.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk
Barry.duffin.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

Norfolk County Council Response to National Grid's Non-Statutory Consultation on: East Anglia Green Project

June 2022

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The technical officer-level comments below are made on a without prejudice basis and the County Council reserves the right to make further comments at subsequent stages in the planning process. The County Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposals for a new 400 kv transmission line between Norwich Main and Tilbury in Essex; and recognises that at this stage the preferred route corridor is quite broad and does not show a precise route for any new transmission lines.
- 1.2 While this is largely a technical officer-level response, it should be noted that local County Council members along the route have been consulted by officers; and local member comments are set out below (section 9).
- 1.3 The County Council understands that the above project will be progressed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the 2008 Planning Act; and that the final decision on any Development Consent Order (DCO) will be made by the Secretary of State (BEIS).

2. General – Overview

- 2.1 **Alternative Options** - While recognising the need to increase capacity to the electricity network, the County Council would strongly urge National Grid and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), along with the Ofgem to consider:
 - An offshore option – involving some form of offshore transmission network capable of delivering power direct from source to where it is most needed in Essex; London, and the South-East;
 - Under-grounding option – in the event that the offshore solution is not feasible in the current timescales; every effort must be made to bury the proposed cables underground to avoid the damaging impacts on local communities in Norfolk.
- 2.2 In addition to the above National Grid will have to clearly demonstrate through their supporting evidence accompanying any DCO application that full consideration has been undertaken in relation to any network reinforcement options, which could comprise improvements or extensions to existing infrastructure rather than an entirely new line – in-line with National Policy

Statement (NPS) for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011).

2.3 De-carbonisation of the grid - The County Council recognises the need for increasing capacity to the existing electricity transmission networks across the Eastern Region in order to cope with the additional electricity being generated from offshore windfarms. This is consistent with meeting the Government's: (a) plans to increase energy from offshore wind to 40 GW by 2030, which would be enough to power every home in the UK with clean energy; and (b) achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050. As such the County Council acknowledges the need for additional infrastructure to meet these sustainable objectives

2.4 Bringing Power into Norfolk - While acknowledging the wider strategic need for improving capacity to the existing electricity; the proposals set out by National Grid do not bring any direct or immediate benefit to Norfolk in terms of providing clean energy to existing or planned homes and businesses. There needs to significant accompanying investment in all the electricity transmission networks to address power shortages especially along the A 11 Corridor. Any proposals should support existing and planned growth at businesses in the area such as Lotus; and future growth along the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor (CNTC).

The County has significant planned housing and employment growth and as such consideration should be made by National Grid at this early stage in the NSIP process as to how Norfolk could potentially benefit from any new electricity infrastructure in terms of clean energy supplies;

National Grid need to actively engage with Norfolk County Council and other key stakeholders to explore how the above benefits for the County can be realised.

2.5 Compensation – National Grid will need to consider appropriate compensation packages for those homes and businesses directly affected by both the construction works, and any long terms impacts. The route of any power-lines will need to avoid any direct impacts on business. National Grid will be aware that their preferred route corridor passes close to Tibenham Airfield; and Priory Farm Airstrip and will need to ensure that the siting of any power lines does not impact on the commercial operation of these airfields. The County Council recognises aviation safety is a matter for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to comment on as necessary.

2.6 Community Benefits – National Grid will need to set out clearly from the outset:
(a) how local communities impacted by the onshore construction (e.g. Cable Route and Substation) can have such impacts mitigated; and

(b) the need for a “local community fund” to assist the wider community affected by the proposal.

- 2.7 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Stephen Faulkner (Principal Planner – NSIP lead) email stephen.faulkner@norfolk.gov.uk

3. Natural Environment and Archaeology

(1) Over-arching Environmental Comments

- 3.1 The above proposal will need to follow the advice and guidance set out in National Policy Statement (NPS) for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) published by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011); and emerging advice in the Draft NPS EN-5. In particular National Grid will need to satisfy:
- (a) the Guidelines for routeing of new overhead lines introduced by Lord Holford (i.e. the Holford Rules - <https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13795-The%20Holford%20Rules.pdf>); and
 - (b) The Horlock Rules <https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13795-The%20Holford%20Rules.pdf> - guidelines for the design and siting of Sub-stations.

(2) Arboriculture

- 3.2 The comments below are in addition to the response from Ecology and Landscape and relate to the potential impact on trees (not just designated woodland masses) suitable for retention and the need for this to be assessed and conflict designed out at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 3.3 Use of tree and hedge data - In addition to considering woodlands with designations National Grid should consider publicly available information, such as the Norfolk Tree and Hedge Map ([ArcGIS Web Application](#)) which are used to help inform design before the detailed design stage.
- 3.4 BS 5837 - At the more detailed design stage trees that may be impacted by the scheme delivery (including access routes and siting of work and storage compounds) must be considered in line with BS 5837 (2012) – Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction. It is expected that BS537 will form part of an iterative design process and influence design, layout and construction.

- 3.5 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Tom Russell-Grant (Arboriculture and Woodland Officer)
tom.russellgrant@norfolk.gov.uk

(3) Ecology

Route Corridor Selection Process

- 3.6 Having reviewed the Corridor & Preliminary Routeing & Siting Study Report (April 2022) and Appendix A (Norwich to Bramford Topic Baseline Overviews), it is noted that the preferred route (Option NB1) has been selected out of an initial seven corridors assessed.
- 3.7 All route corridor options appear to have potential direct and/ or indirect effects on International, National and Local Designated Sites, as well as Ancient Woodlands and Priority Habitats. It should be noted that in section 4.5.5 of the Study Report, the preferred Option NB1 was considered to perform less well due to the proximity to Norfolk Valley Fens SAC/ Flordon Common SSSI. As stated in section 4.5.3, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is likely to be required should option NB1 be selected as the preferred route corridor.
- 3.8 While the assessment process appears broadly acceptable in terms of taking account of environmental factors, it is of concern that Local Wildlife Sites which appear to be directly affected by Option NB1 are not identified within the Ecology/ biodiversity Topic Baseline Overview (Appendix A). For example, Hapton Common CWS, Norton's Wood CWS, Brock's Watering CWS, Brick Kiln Lane, Bunwell Hill CWS and Carlton Rode Fen CWS all appear to be within the corridor of NB1, yet are not referred to in the Main Risks, Constraints & Opportunities section (page A2).
- 3.9 Ecological Survey Requirements - The preferred route should be carefully refined, taking account of all relevant ecological impacts, including locally designated wildlife sites. It is also important that any desk study should include the collation of all relevant habitat and species data from the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS), including all Local Wildlife Site information. All surveys carried out will require to be up to date, therefore given the potential timescales involved with such a scheme, it may be necessary to carry out regular surveys throughout the course of the design stage to ensure all surveys are no more than 18 months old.
- 3.10 Ecological Reporting - The scheme will need to consider all ecological effects, both during construction and in-operation (e.g. bird collision risk etc). The scheme should adhere to the ecological mitigation hierarchy and avoid impacts in the first instance. Where impacts cannot be avoided, mitigation measures will need to be identified, and compensation provided. Impacts to

Irreplaceable Habitats (e.g. Ancient Woodland) should be fully avoided. In addition, the development will be expected to deliver a measurable Net Gain in Biodiversity and contribute towards the local Nature Recovery Network.

- 3.11 Should have any queries with the above ecological comments please contact James Fisher (Principal Ecologist) – Email james.fisher@norfolk.gov.uk

(4) Landscape

- 3.12 A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be undertaken, including where necessary a Townscape Assessment. This should consider all potential impacts, both during construction and in-operation, and the cumulative impacts. **Ideally the whole of the route corridor should, from a landscape and visual impact point of view, be placed underground;**
- 3.13 Impacts on the Landscape Character and Visual Amenity should where possible be avoided this could be through consideration of fine tuning the route or looking at sensitive areas where undergrounding may be more suitable. Irreplaceable landscape features such as ancient woodland should be fully avoided.
- 3.14 Consideration should also be given to ways to minimise impacts; this could be through the use of **lower pylons** or pylons of an alternative design. Sometimes it may be suitable to embrace the visual appearance in the landscape and make the pylons a feature in themselves.
- 3.15 Cumulative impact should be avoided and National Grid should consider whether there are opportunities to reconfigure; rationalise or underground any existing electricity network infrastructure (in line with para 2.11.5 of the Draft NPS EN-5);
- 3.16 Where impacts cannot be avoided than **mitigation measures** will need to be identified. Whilst advanced planting and screening will not minimise all impacts, carefully planned incremental planting can be effective at minimising and softening the appearance of infrastructure in the landscape. Often layered planting starting some distance away can help to break up extensive views.
- 3.17 **Undergrounding** – should be considered by National Grid where the route crosses the **Waveney Valley** and runs close to Bressingham Village and the nearby Steam Museum and Gardens. In landscape terms this is an unspoiled tranquil landscape which is more sensitive to infrastructure. In addition consideration should be undertaken of other places where route refinement and potentially undergrounding is needed in order to avoid impacts in the surrounding landscape. These include, for example:
- (a) designations such as SSSIs/SACs (such as Flordon Common/Norfolk Valley SAC), Registered Parks and Gardens (e.g. Rainthorpe Hall),
 - (b) Sites of important historical context (e.g. Tibenham Airfield, Diss Conservation Area, Listed Buildings) Ancient Woodland (e.g. Bunwell Wood), County Wildlife Sites (e.g. Royden Fen).

- 3.18 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Emily Smith (Principal Landscape Architect) emily.smith2@norfolk.gov.uk

(5) Archaeology

- 3.19 From the relatively limited contact the archaeological team have had with National Grid it is clear that they are well aware that undergrounding any sections of the scheme would increase potential impacts on below-ground archaeological remains by several orders of magnitude, with attendant impacts on timetables and costs.
- 3.20 It is understood that an archaeological consultant working on behalf of National Grid has already obtained an Historic Environment Record search to aid in the siting of any new pylon towers in order to avoid impacts on undesignated heritage assets in the form of below-ground archaeology.
- 3.21 Consideration should also be given to the placement of construction compounds, access tracks and the like as these can have more impact than pylon bases. Consideration should also be given to 'no-dig' construction methods for compounds, access tracks etc.
- 3.22 Should you have any further queries please contact John Percival, Historic Environment Senior Officer (Strategy and Advice) Email john.percival@norfolk.gov.uk

4. Transport / Highways

- 4.1 The proposals are still at a very early stage and accordingly the applicants do not appear to be at a point where they can supply sufficient detail to undertake a full highway assessment. At this stage I would simply ask that the applicants take the following into account:
- 4.2 Roads that will be crossed and impacted upon by the cable route need to be assessed. The scope of the assessment needs to be agreed with the appropriate highway authority. In highway and transport terms, the following factors need to be considered:
- The method for crossing the highway must be agreed in advance with the highway authority
 - Access points to any potential section of overhead line (OHL)
 - Location for temporary accesses and Temporary Construction Compounds, storage and laydown areas;
 - location of any Potential permanent accesses.
- 4.3 Assessment for the above needs to take into account the following:

(a) Vehicles – define the nature of the traffic likely to be generated. In addition for the largest vehicles proposed to use each access route(s) this must include: -

- minimum width (including unhindered horizontal space)
- vertical clearance
- axle weight restriction

(b) Access & Access Route – description of the route (including plans at an appropriate scale incorporating swept-path surveys). Assessment to include site inspection and details of contact with the appropriate Highway Authority (including the Highways Agency for Trunk Roads where applicable). In addition: -

- details of any staff/traffic movements/access routes;
- detailed plans of site access/es incorporating sightline provision
- confirmation of any weight restrictions applicable on the route together with details of contact with the relevant Bridge Engineer
- overhead/ underground equipment – details of liaison with statutory undertakers - listing statutory undertakers consulted together with a copy of their responses
- details of any road signs or other street furniture along each route that may need to be temporarily removed/relocated.

(c) Impacts during construction – are any special requirements needed and if so provide details e.g.:-

- timing of construction works
- removal of parked vehicles along the route(s) – full details will need to be provided – including whether or not alternative parking arrangements are being offered or bus services provided in lieu of potential loss of ability to use private cars
- removal and reinstatement of hedgerows – since these are usually in private ownership has contact been made with the owners. Has formal legal agreement been reached or are negotiations pending/ in progress
- identification of the highway boundary along the construction traffic route together with verification from the Highway Authority (scope to be agreed in advance)
- any modifications required to the alignment of the carriageway or verges/over-runs
- identification of sensitive features/receptors along the route
- confirmation of whether any of the verges along the route(s) are classified as SSSI or roadside Nature Reserve status. If so, detail any impact
- confirmation of any extraordinary maintenance agreement/s required by the Highway Authority

(d) Cabling route/grid connection – description of the route/s including plans at an appropriate scale, incorporating, for example:

- assessment to include site inspection and details of contact with the appropriate Highway Authority (including the Highways Agency for Trunk Roads where applicable)

- traffic details of grid connection enabling works

(e) Impacts during operation

- details of type and frequency of vehicle to be used to service the facility/structure(s) when in operation
- details of any long-term highway impact e.g. will trees and hedgerows need additional trimming to allow access for service vehicles
- assessment of any impact on adjacent/affected public rights of way e.g. horses and pedestrians

4.4 For further Information on highway related matters please contact John Shaw (Developer Services Manager) Email: John.R.Shaw@norfolk.gov.uk

5. Minerals and Waste

5.1 At this stage ahead of any detailed Environmental Statement the County Council as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority does not have any substantive comments to make on the preferred corridor regarding minerals and waste planning policy. This is largely because the proposed infrastructure in Norfolk would consist of overhead powerlines and pylon towers and the preferred corridor route only contains sparse isolated areas of safeguarded sand and gravel resources.

5.2 Should you have any queries on the above comments please contact Caroline Jeffery (Principal Planner – Minerals and Waste) – email caroline.jeffery@norfolk.gov.uk

6. Norfolk County Council – Public Health Impact

6.1 The County Council would expect as part of any formal submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO), a Health Impact Assessment to form part of the supporting Environmental Statement (ES).

6.2 The UK Health Security Agency guidance (formerly PHE) published guidance on Electric and magnetic fields: health effects of exposure in July 2013. This states, *inter alia*, that a number of studies:

“...show a possible link between exposure to magnetic fields in the home (and/or living close to high voltage power lines) and a small excess in childhood leukaemia. It is estimated that 2 to 5 cases from the total of around 500 cases of childhood leukaemia per year in the UK could be attributable to magnetic fields. This number is based on the assumption that exposure has to be above a certain threshold before there could be a health effect. The overall evidence, however, is not strong enough to draw a firm conclusion that magnetic fields cause childhood leukaemia. Magnetic fields don’t have sufficient energy to damage cells and thereby cause cancer. At present there

is no clear biological explanation for the possible increase in childhood leukaemia from exposure to magnetic fields. The evidence that exposure to magnetic fields causes any other type of illness in children or adults is far weaker.”

6.3 As the National Grid proposal is considered a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project the UK Health Security Agency will be a statutory consultee and are the national experts on the health impacts of such proposals.

6.4 The precautionary principle would support ensuring the preferred route of the proposed new 400 KV overhead power lines avoid schools (see Children's Services comments below).

6.5 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Jane Locke (Prevention Policy Manager – Places) email jane.locke@norfolk.gov.uk

7. Service Provider Comments and wider Opportunities

(a) Children' Services

7.1 As a general principle the County Council as Education Authority considers that any proposed route should not pass directly over a school building or associated playing fields, or be located in close proximity of any schools. It is understood that the preferred route corridor does pass close to two primary schools at: Hapton; and Winfarthing.

7.2 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Paul Harker (Place Planning Manager) email paul.harker@norfolk.gov.uk

(b) Norfolk Fire and Rescue

7.3 Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) response to emergency incidents should, wherever possible, not be compromised by ongoing construction works, site or road closures relating to the East Anglia Green project works. Specific responses will be made as more detail is received but NFRS would urge that due consideration is given at all times to ensuring that emergency vehicles retain the ability to reach Incidents in the fastest and safest manner to protect anyone in danger.

7.4 Should you have any queries with the above comments please contact Tim Allison (Water Resources and Planning Manager) email tim.allison@norfolk.gov.uk

(c) Economic Development and Skills

7.5 The County Council would urge National Grid to produce a Skills and Employment Strategy to accompany their proposals given the scale of the

project and wider links to meeting National targets on renewable energy use and Net Zero. Such a Strategy would need to secure demonstrable benefits to both the local economy and workforce.

- 7.6 The proposals by National Grid need to be seen alongside those offshore windfarms which will make landfall and grid connection in Norfolk; and as such National will need to demonstrate throughout their Planning stages that they are working closely with these offshore wind promoters to ensure appropriate synergy particularly around Norwich Main where Hornsea Project Three; and the Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Windfarm extension Projects will make grid connection.

8. Lead Local Flood Authority

- 8.1 The LLFA notes the current documentation provided shows very limited consideration in relation to flood risk. While the development may have a minimal physical footprint, it should not lead to the exclusion of flood risk from the constraints to be considered.
- 8.2 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) clearly indicates that Flood risk is a 'generic impact' that requires consideration on all energy projects. While Section 5.7 of EN1 states that *"Although flooding cannot be wholly prevented, its adverse impacts can be avoided or reduced through good planning and management."* However, no high-level consideration is currently demonstrated in relation to this project at this time.
- 8.3 Some further consideration of all sources of flood risk would need to be provided in the route selection process for both the temporary and permanent works proposed to be included within the scheme.
- 8.4 Should National Grid require any further guidance on the LLFA's expectations for information from applicants can be found at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/flood-and-water-management/information-for-developers>; or email llfa@norfolk.gov.uk

9. Local Member Comments

- 9.1 Cllr David Bills (Humbleyard Division) - *I, along with many other County Councillors, have received an email from Barford and Wrampingham Parish Council. This state their opposition to the proposed route and method of distributing the power via power lines to the London area. They make a very good case for Offshore Transmission network which I fully support. We must do all we can to protect the Norfolk countryside as once it is lost it cannot be*

replaced. Many areas have historic ties to them and again must be protected. I believe NCC should strongly object to the current proposal.

- 9.2 Cllr Barry Duffin (West Depwade) - *I would like to see Norfolk County Council take the hardest line possible, the proposed line of the pylons completely dissects West Depwade. . I have residents who are reduced to tears at the thought of their homes being ruined forever. Many of the properties will be permanently blighted by having power lines at the front and back, and whilst accepting you don't have a view unless you own it, it cannot be right to ruin such a huge swathe of South Norfolk for the benefit of getting power to Essex. The power is created in the North Sea and it seems to me to be only right and proper to continue the journey of the power via the North Sea to its destination. Failing that, if cables can be buried in Essex then there cannot be a good reason, and please don't suggest cost, as dozens and dozens of residents will pay a huge cost, as a reason to be above ground. This simply cannot and must not happen in the proposed manner, it will be ruin for a huge area of undoubted beauty of South Norfolk in general and West Depwade in particular. Bressingham gardens which is a nationally known attraction will have huge power cables strewn over it and what dangers does that constitute to the thousands of visitors that regularly come to South Norfolk.*

East Anglia Green – National Grid Consultation

Formal Response from the Labour Group at Norfolk County Council

Thursday 9th June 2022

Norfolk Labour County Councillors are deeply concerned by the National Grid East Anglia Green project and its impact on our county. We have considered the information provided by National Grid through its consultation portal and substantial feedback from residents, town and parish councils who have presented coherent arguments against the proposal.

We recognise and support the benefits that offshore energy production offers Norfolk. Projects that help our county move towards renewable energy sources are clearly welcome and our coastline has high prospects of creating clean energy for large swathes of our country. The green energy sector also brings benefits to the economy, although it remains to be seen if Norfolk's economic strategy will be robust enough to ensure Norfolk receives the highest dividend from offshore green investment.

We also recognise and support carbon neutrality and environmental targets for our county and country. The consultation fails to adequately evidence that the overall impact of this project will be carbon neutral, that our natural and historic environment will be unaffected and that quality of life for local residents will remain unchanged.

Bringing forward proposals of this nature, while the Offshore Transmission Network Review, set up by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, is yet to be concluded, is premature and appears to undermine the review. On conclusion of the review, which is due later this year, new legislation could be introduced which would override the basis of this project and cause it to be reworked from scratch. While we are not concerned in principle with the impact this would have on National Grid shareholders, we do believe this would bring uncertainty to the sector from an investment point of view and create risk for our economy.

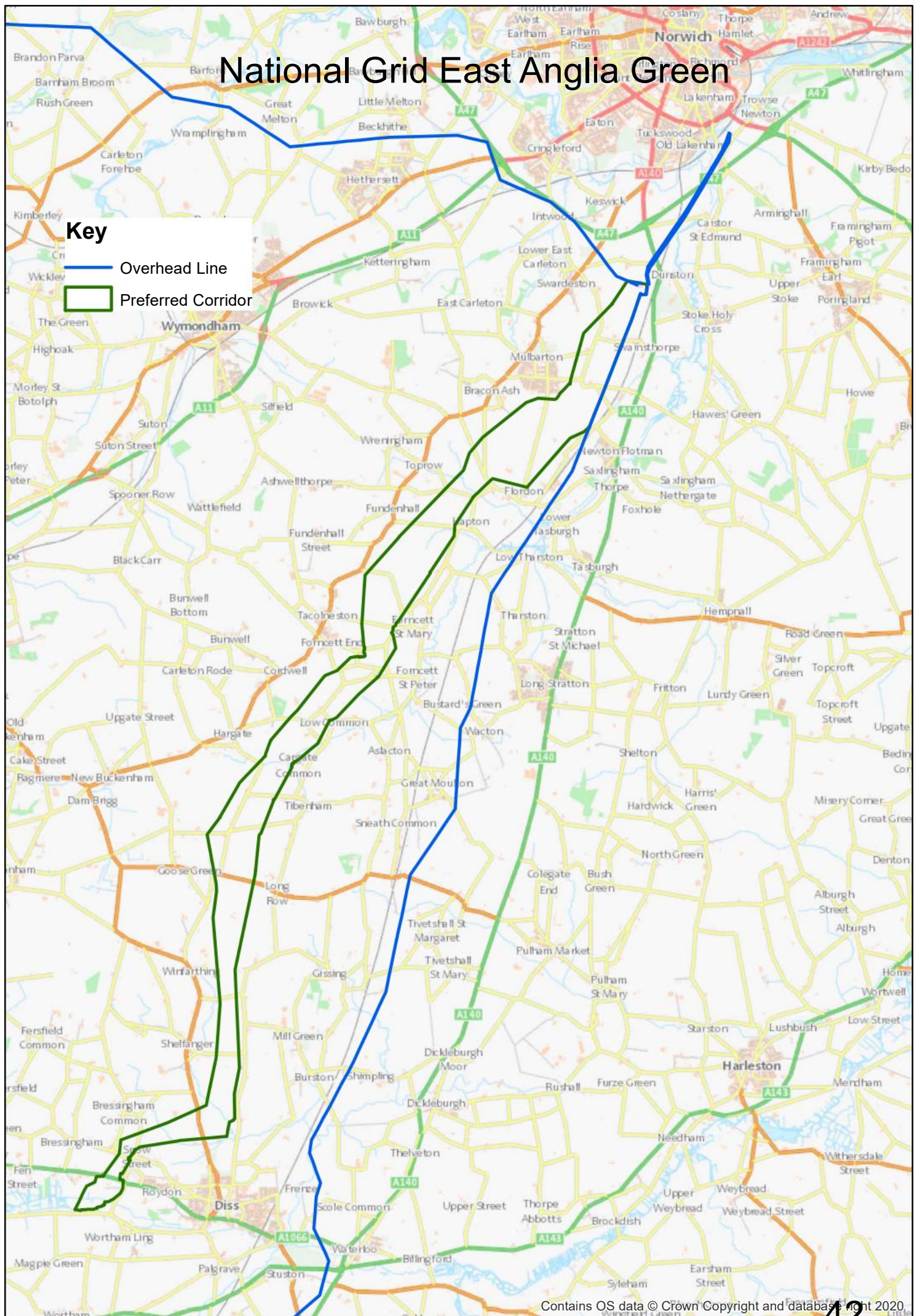
In a motion submitted for debate to the Council meetings held on 29th November 2021, 28th March 2022 and 11th April 2022, Councillor Plant, Deputy Leader of Norfolk County Council, outlined further work that needed to be carried out by National Grid, on the implications of the various grid connection options and we support his calls.

In conclusion, Labour County Councillors do not support this proposal and will oppose the project.

National Grid East Anglia Green

Key

- Overhead Line
- Preferred Corridor



Scrutiny Committee

Item No: 9

Report Title: Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Date of Meeting: 14 December 2022

Responsible Cabinet Member: None

Responsible Director: Director of Governance

Executive Summary

This paper sets out the current forward work programme for the Scrutiny Committee, outlining committee dates and agreed items.

Recommendations

Members of the committee are asked to:

1. Note the current Scrutiny Committee forward work programme and discuss potential further items for future consideration.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee took part in a work programming session held on the 16 May 2022, discussing proposed items for the Committee to consider through until March 2023.
- 1.2 The work programme attached is amended frequently to better reflect officer pressures and changes to the Cabinet forward plan of decisions.
- 1.3 All topics are subject to change, with the committee remaining flexible to ensure the ability to adapt to emerging and urgent topics for consideration.
- 1.4 Members are further advised to keep the morning of the 16th March free for a potential additional meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the attached forward programme of work (**Appendix A**) and discuss potential further items for consideration.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1 Maintaining the proposed work programme will ensure that the Scrutiny Committee has a full schedule of work, and officers are well prepared to present to the committee.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 None

5. Resource Implications

5.1 Staff:

None

5.2 Property:

None

5.3 IT:

None

6. Other Implications

6.1 Legal Implications:

None

6.2 Human Rights Implications:

None

6.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):

None

6.4 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA):

None

6.5 Health and Safety implications (where appropriate):

None

6.6 Sustainability implications (where appropriate):

None

6.7 Any Other Implications:

None

7. Risk Implications / Assessment

7.1 None

8. Select Committee Comments

8.1 None

9. Recommendations

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

1. Note the Scrutiny Committee forward work programme and discuss potential further items for future consideration.

10. Background Papers

10.1 **Appendix A** – Scrutiny Committee Forward Programme of Work

Officer Contact

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

Officer name: Peter Randall

Telephone no.: 01603 307570

Email: peter.randall@norfolk.gov.uk



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

Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Date	Report	Further notes/Comments	Better Together for Norfolk - Strategic Goal(s)*	Cabinet Member	Exec Director
14/12/22	National Grid – Impact on Norfolk Communities of New Route of Pylons Running from Norwich to Tilbury	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the work programming meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Greener, More Resilient Future - Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities 	Cllr Martin Wilby, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport	Tom McCabe, Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
	Nutrient Neutrality	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the work programming meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Greener, More Resilient Future 	Cllr Eric Vardy, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste	Tom McCabe, Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
26/01/23	Performance Review Panels – Quarterly Update	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 21 July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better Opportunities for Children and Young People - Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives 	Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention &	James Bullion, Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Sarah Tough, Executive Director of Children's Services

				Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
	Education Health and Care Plans	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the work programming meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022	- Better Opportunities for Children and Young People	Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	Sarah Tough, Executive Director of Children's Services
	Update from the Chair of the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership	Standing item	- Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities	None	Tom McCabe, Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
15/02/23	Scrutiny Committee 2023-24 Budget scrutiny	Standard budget setting process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy - Better Opportunities for Children and Young People - Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives - Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities - A Greener, More Resilient Future 	Cllr Andrew Jamieson, Cabinet Member for Finance	Simon George, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services

22/03/23	Quality of Care – Overview of the Care Market in Norfolk	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the work programming meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022	- Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives	Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention	James Bullion, Executive Director of Adult Social Care
20/04/23	Performance Review Panels – Quarterly Update	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 21 July 2021	- Better Opportunities for Children and Young People - Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives	Cllr Bill Borrett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention & Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	James Bullion, Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Sarah Tough, Executive Director of Children's Services
	Provision of Extracurricular Activity for Norfolk Children	Agreed by the Scrutiny Committee at the work programming meeting held on Monday 16 May 2022	- Better Opportunities for Children and Young People	Cllr John Fisher, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	Sarah Tough, Executive Director of Children's Services

*The '**Better Together for Norfolk – County Council Strategy 2021-25**' outlines five strategic priorities. These are:

- A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy
- Better Opportunities for Children and Young People
- Healthy, Fulfilling and Independent Lives

- *Strong, Engaged and Inclusive Communities*
- *A Greener, More Resilient Future*

When scheduling items for the work programme the committee should consider, where applicable, the item contributes to the above strategic goals and overall delivery of the County Council's strategy for 2021-25.

Issues to be considered for addition to work programme:

- Implementation of New Technology in Adult Social Care
- People with Disabilities – Engagement and Charging Policy
- Children's Services – Utilisation of Built Assets
- Fuel Poverty
- Norfolk County Council – Development of a County Deal
- Transport East Strategy
- Social Prescribing in Adult Social Care
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Rewilding activity and Carbon Offsetting