

Cabinet
Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 31 January 2022
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, at 10am

Present:

Cllr Andrew Proctor	Chairman. Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance.
Cllr Graham Plant	Vice-Chairman and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy.
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and 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 and Waste
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance.
Cllr Greg Peck	Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management.
Cllr Martin Wilby	Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Transport.

Executive Directors Present:

James Bullion	Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Paul Cracknell	Executive Director of Transformation and Strategy
Helen Edwards	Monitoring Officer and Director of Governance
Simon George	Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services
Tom McCabe	Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services and Head of Paid Service.
Sara Tough	Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services

Cabinet Members and Executive Directors formally introduced themselves.

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 There were no apologies.

2 Minutes from the meeting held on Monday.

2.1 Cabinet agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 January 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting.

3 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared

4 Matters referred to Cabinet by the Scrutiny Committee, Select Committees or by full Council.

4.1 No matters were referred to Cabinet.

5 Items of Urgent Business

5.1 No items of urgent business were discussed.

6 Public Question Time

6.1 The list of public questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.

7 Local Member Questions/Issues

7.1 The list of Local Member questions and the responses is attached to these minutes at Appendix B. Four written supplementary questions were received and were responded to in writing; these questions and the responses are attached at appendix C of these minutes.

7.2.1 Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Brociek-Coulton stated that Norfolk County Council was responsible for Angel Road Infant School for many decades and had left the roof unsafe.
- She said that the Council found many millions of pounds to repair County Hall, with the building having been referred to as a “Rolls Royce building”, and asked why children and families shouldn’t expect a similar investment in a “Rolls Royce school”?

7.2.2 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services replied that the state of the school building before it was handed over to the academy was inspected. Both parties agreed to the building’s condition before the academy took over responsibility for the building and they had the opportunity to make representations about the condition of the building at that time.

7.3.1 Cllr Alexandra Kemp asked a supplementary question:

- Cllr Kemp felt that the Cabinet Member didn’t understand the community guidelines for health visiting and the healthy child programme, which was the only programme which could engage with families in their own home to prevent problems worsening.
- She noted that the Cabinet Member intended to pay business consultants £6m to invest in social care and asked if he could commit to all five health visitor visits being made in person.

7.3.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention agreed with Cllr Kemp that health visiting was a vital service, and as such, over £8m a year was spent by the Council commissioning the NHS to provide this service. The Council would continue to invest in this service and once Covid-19 pressures across the NHS and social care sector had been mitigated it would be possible to get this service back to where it should be.

8. Fee levels for adult social care providers 2022/23

- 8.1.1 Cabinet received the report bringing forward the annual review of the fee levels relating to Adult Social Services purchased care services, and the recommended change to these for the upcoming financial year 22/23.
- 8.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention introduced the report to Cabinet
- Information set out in this report was a vital part of the Council's responsibilities
 - There had been a policy of investing and supporting the care market for the past years and similar reports had been brought to Cabinet before
 - It was proposed to invest £18m, which was above inflation
 - The Council didn't directly employ staff in care homes but commissioned services to provide care
 - More than £330m was spent per year purchasing care from the market, and the Council had supported the Government's position around the national living wage by continuing to fund its increase in full to allow workers in the care system to benefit fully from the uplift.
 - The Government white paper published in December 2021, "People at the Heart of Care" included an assurance that local authorities paid a fair cost to the people who provided care on their behalf, underpinning what Norfolk already did. Extra funding had been received from Government to provide this; top tier authorities would share an additional £162m in 2022-23 and additional £600m in 23-24 and 2024-25 from an increase in national insurance levy.
 - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention felt there was a case to be made for more funding to be given to the Council to reflect the good work of the care sector.
 - Actual wages in Norfolk's care market were above the national living wage and the increase proposed today would maintain and increase this
 - This paper demonstrated that Norfolk County Council was aware of the stresses in the system and was doing all it could to support care workers and businesses dealing with care
 - The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 8.2 The Chairman agreed that the balance of funding going to the NHS and social care needed rebalancing so that social care received a fair amount; table 6 on page 36 of the report showed how wide a market was being supported by the Council.
- 8.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance agreed that local authorities should receive a greater amount of the money raised through the additional 1.25% national insurance levy. Local authorities had received no firm indication of the funding which would be received beyond 2022-23 from Government and noted that one-year allocations of funding made the budget process difficult.
- 8.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that long term demand for care was increasing, with people living longer and with higher levels of need.
- 8.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- a) Consider and agree the implementation of the outputs of the Cost of Care exercise described in section 3.2 of the paper
- b) Consider and agree the implementation of the outputs of the fee uplift exercise described in sections 3.3 - 3.11 of the paper

8.6 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

See section 5 of the report

8.7 Alternative Options

The option recommended within this report is affordable within the Council's budget planning approach and alternative options are not presented. However, members could choose to make different budget decisions as part of the County Council budget process.

9. Integrated Care System Places

9.1.1 Cabinet received the report updating Cabinet on development of ICS Places and outlining the Council's proposed approach to support and allocate staff resource to ICS Places.

9.1.2 The Executive Director for Adult Social Services stated that the report linked to the Council's ambition agreed in 2020 for greater integration between health and social care; there was an ambition to unite around a common purpose, with a similar report being taken to district and borough councils.

9.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention commented:

- This was the latest in a suite of reports taken to Cabinet and Full Council since October 2020
- The key aim of the report was to create partnerships in place based on district council boundaries to work on the wider determinants of health. District councils would lead work on wider determinants on health noting the importance on prevention which helped keep people healthy for longer, and put less stress on health and social care system
- Bringing in local councils to support people on a range of areas such as leisure, healthy lifestyles and housing was important in this area of work
- Working with primary care on the overall population health was a new area of work as a system but would make a difference.
- The system would be led bottom up, with local areas setting their own priorities and allocating funds and resources to identify what would make the biggest impact for people in their areas
- This paper was asking Cabinet to allocate money to support these systems and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted that this demonstrated the Council's commitment to support change. He hoped that the NHS would follow the Council's lead and support these partnerships, including financially
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention moved the recommendations as set out in the report

- 9.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted the opportunity for Norfolk County Council to take a leadership in the new system. Children's services had been working more closely with district councils such as in housing for children leaving care, and a more joined up system would be beneficial for this work and other areas of partnership working between Children's Services with other services. This was an opportunity to help children earlier.
- 9.3 The Chairman pointed out that this would have an impact across the whole system and authority and that all bodies seemed to be on board, with changes in joint working being seen.
- 9.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste reported that conversations with officers at Great Yarmouth District Council showed there were more engaging conversations and better partnership working between authorities to put in place better outcomes for citizens.
- 9.5 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the following key strategic approaches:
- a) Agree NCC's support for, and commitment to engaging with, ICS Places
 - b) Agree NCC support and staff resources be allocated to ICS Places, including to lead the development of Health and Wellbeing Partnerships
 - c) Formally ask district councils to ratify support for, and commitment to, leadership of Health and Wellbeing Partnerships within their respective areas

9.6 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

The risks must be weighed against the potential benefits, and the alternative of ICS Places without NCC aims embedded in their purpose and approach. If navigated with care, these risks can all be mitigated to a degree that could result in a significant net benefit to the local authority, our partners and our citizens. The recommendations in this paper attempt to find a manner in which to navigate through these opportunities and challenges.

9.7 **Alternative Options**

N/A

10. **2022 Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan**

- 10.1.1 Cabinet received the report covering the Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and providing an annual snapshot of how these would be secured.
- 10.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report to Cabinet:
- This annual report identified the Council's duty to provide school places and showed how this would be achieved as set out in Annex A of the report.
 - Children's Services worked with district councils and planning authorities to identify how new schools would be built and expanded
 - New schools were developer funded, as well as funding being received from CIL and Government
 - The plan sought to address the Council's core duty of promoting high

standards of education through commissioning new schools, promoting DfE free school proposals, expanding age range and size of schools and agreeing changes to the admission numbers. It was also important to consider areas where child numbers were in decline

- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services moved the recommendations as set out in the report

10.2 The Chairman noted that it was important to consider how to respond to growth areas in terms of planning when large scale growth allocations were replaced by smaller developments.

10.3

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste welcomed the report, especially the mention of the new school in Bradwell. There was outcry at new homes proposed in Bradwell due to concern about services not being provided and overcrowded schools; this school would allay residents' concerns.

10.4

The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted that the information on Fakenham was well set out and based on housing growth with well-planned expectations that a school might be needed, based on growth and demographics and where funding would be obtained from.

10.5

The Vice-Chairman commented on the primary school being build in Bradwell in 2025; he noted that the pressure on Ling Grove academy which was at capacity and queried if there were future plans for improving the secondary provision in this area. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services replied that there was a formula in place for determining this, informed by parent choice; if there were pressures on senior schools there would be expansions and modifications

10.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to adopt the Schools Local Growth and Investment Plan 2022.

10.7 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

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

10.8 **Alternative Options**

The statutory duty is to provide sufficient places.

It is possible to plan for fewer additional places, where surplus places are available further afield, but within maximum recommended travel distances.

Norfolk County Council would then have a duty to provide Home to School Transport. This would add a considerable inconvenience to children and families and is outside of the Council's policies (e.g. building local communities). It would also add to the existing transport costs, where budget pressures already exist.

11. **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Funding**

11.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the changes to the distribution for the Dedicated Schools Grant from April 2022 in line with the Department of Education's National Funding Formula arrangements.

- 11.1.2 The Executive Director for Children's Services stated that this was an annual paper setting out how the DSG would be distributed. She highlighted an update on page 91 of the report, 3rd bullet point where it stated that "an additional one-off movement of 1% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, due to the scale of demand for high needs specialist places for pupils, if agreed by the Secretary of State". Since writing the report, the Secretary of State had agreed to this movement. This did not change the recommendations in the report and would not increase the DSG deficit.
- 11.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report to Cabinet
- This paper dealt with funding of local maintained schools and academies distributed in line with local funding formula
 - Main pressures for school financing were the high needs block
 - It was hoped that in spring 2022 when the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) review was published, Government funding would be identified to support the high needs block deficit
 - Early years settings would receive an increase in funding
 - The DSG deficit was forecast go up by approximately £10m
 - The Cabinet Member for Children's Services moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance noted that the DSG deficit was forecast to be £54m in 2021-22 rising to £154m by 2025-26. A £1.3bn deficit across all councils was expected by the Society of Council Treasurers indicating that this was a situation that would require Government support to address.
- 11.3 The Chairman agreed that this could not be solved by individual councils therefore funding was required from Government.
- 11.4 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste agreed that more funding needed to be allocated from Government to Children's Services noting the increase in children diagnosed with SEND
- 11.5 The Chairman asked the Executive Director for Children's Services what the outcome of lobbying on this situation was. The Executive Director for Children's Services responded that the Local Government Association, County Treasurers and Association of Directors of Children's Services were all making representation for this to be dealt with at a national level; there was a review taking place and the outcome of this was being awaited in Spring 2022.
- 11.6 The Vice-Chairman noted that page 94 of the report discussed how increasing demand was being seen for SEND school places in Norfolk which outstripped availability of places, and low parental confidence was seen in mainstream provision. The Vice-Chairman noted that lots of money was being spent out of county on higher cost provision as the provision was not available in Norfolk. Funding had been committed to increase provision in Norfolk however this was not enough to meet demand.
- 11.7 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree:
1. the Dedicated Schools Grant funding including
 - a. the changes to the schools funding formula;
 - b. the changes to the early years funding entitlements formula;

- c. agreeing the high needs block budget, including the changes to the alternative top-up funding model for state-funded special schools, noting that it has been assessed to meet our statutory duties and it adds to the DSG cumulative deficit;
2. to delegate decision making powers to the Executive Director of Children's Services, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to agree the final funding cap, or allocation of additional funds, once the final DSG calculations of individual school allocations are known and in line with the principles of Cabinet's decision.

11.8 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

11.9 **Alternative Options**

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

12. ***Better Together, for Norfolk 2021-2025 – delivering our strategy***

12.1.1 Cabinet received the report seeking approval for the proposed approach to business planning and the Corporate Delivery Plan, and to provide an update on the Corporate Delivery Plan, refreshed Communication Strategy and refreshed Workforces Strategy.

- 12.1.2 The Chairman introduced the report to Cabinet
- The Strategy was agreed by council on 29 November 2021 and this report discussed how the strategy was being turned into action
 - Council recognised that the pandemic changed the context and set back delivery of previous ambitions
 - Norfolk County Council wanted Norfolk to be a place where everyone could start life well, live well and age well and where no one was left behind, with a vibrant entrepreneurial, sustainable economy supported by the right jobs, right skills, training and infrastructure. A place where communities felt safe, healthy, empowered and connected with their individual distinctiveness respected and preserved.
 - The strategy was structured around 5 key priorities as set out on page 157 of the report
 - This report updated Cabinet on activities and outlined provisional content for the delivery plan which continued to be refined ahead of final approval. It also provided an update on the workforce and communication strategies.
 - The planning framework consisted of strategic documents ensuring alignment across the organisation as set out in section 3 of the report.
 - The business planning cycle was the process for confirming content and coordination of the different levels and this was well underway
 - The purpose of the plan was to describe significant and priority actions and support a focus on delivery through enabling accountability and performance management. It was structured around the five key priorities and contained a section on the Council's significant activity which would transform property, technology, engagement and workforce and contribute to a sustainable financial position
 - The draft corporate development plan provided Cabinet with a proposed

structured approach to be developed by March 2022. This would allow the council to go into 2022-23 with clear priorities and significant activities and to plan more effectively for 2023-24 and beyond

- Over the next months, workshops with senior leadership teams would continue to confirm activities contributing to delivery of the strategy and financial sustainability, key dependencies and cross cutting priorities, identify gaps and what could be done to address them. It was important to align actions with financial planning, so business and budget planning were more integrated
- It would be important to review and redesign the performance management framework and vital signs with potential development via associated reporting and monitoring tools. One aspect would be to review use of internal and external sources of data to ensure performance measurement was best benchmarked, compared and assessed in achievable, smart and realistic ways.
- Section 7 of the report showed how the council was increasing chances of successful delivery through reviewing the performance framework by monitoring operational performance and transformation, and progress towards the strategic ambitions.
- The workforce strategy was set out in section 8 of the report. A draft strategy was anticipated at the end of the financial year 2021-22 and would deliver ambitions to create a workforce fit for the future.
- Section 9 of the report gave an update on progress in developing the communication strategy. This would create meaningful conversations with residents, staff, partners and stakeholders and involve staff and elected members to ensure they were advocates for Better Together for Norfolk in the community
- The Chairman moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 12.3 The Vice-Chairman noted that departments would work with strategic partners to roll out plans for economic growth and recovery. It was important to tap into levelling up funding when available. The Vice-Chairman discussed some of the schemes and projects funded by the Council which supported Norfolk's economy such as the Chances Programme and offshore wind projects. It was key to have a county with better wages, skills and a vibrant economy.
- 12.4 The Cabinet Member for Finance supported the report, and the alignment of business development, performance management and financial planning to drive change
- 12.5 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services reported that staff in new roads hubs had fed back that they had more support, noting the strategy's aim to support children and young people.
- 12.6 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of ensuring that everyone could access digital technology and services. Project Gigabit for example and provision of more online services would ensure the County was well regarded for its digital provision and access.
- 12.7 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management noted that measuring performance was important to ensure the Council was delivering on the strategy and endorsed the report.

12.8 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships noted the importance of other services such as museums or libraries in supporting the vibrant economy; for example, libraries supporting older people to live an independent life.

12.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the proposed approach to business planning and developing a Corporate Delivery Plan.
2. Acknowledge, comment on and agree the work being done to develop the Communication and Workforce strategies, and the proposed timescale for delivery.

12.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

12.11 **Alternative Options**

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

13. **Capital Strategy and Programme 2022-23**

13.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the proposed capital strategy and programme and including information on the funding available to support that programme

13.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The report set out the Capital programme and was the backbone supporting the council's commitment to rebuild and regenerate the economy, with a focus on health and wellbeing of residents and taking the lead in building Norfolk's sense of community and place
- Last year the council launched Better Together for Norfolk 2021-25 to come together with other public bodies to build a single vision for the county to build back better. The council's job was to deliver on its manifesto pledge as part of this to deliver key infrastructure schemes and investment plans to attract grant funding
- The autumn statement stated that £106.8m public funding would be made available however not much of this was aimed at local government; therefore, it was vital that Norfolk took advantage of initiatives such as the UK shared prosperity fund, allocations of funding for active travel and active transport funding.
- The Council would continue with its ambitious SEND schools programme and development of extra care provision
- Development and upkeep of the road network and better broadband for Norfolk continued, augmented by schemes approved in the current year, 2021-22, for future delivery such as roll out of the full fibre network and Norwich Western Link
- Summary of current and proposed schemes were shown in Tables 1-3 on page 201 of the report.
- The commitment to rebuilding the economy was underpinned by existing programmes listed in appendix C of the report.
- A range of additional projects were in place to boost the economy, help

manage change in the environment, promote wellbeing and health and strengthen core community hubs

- £ 90.7m was being added to the capital programme in new schemes aimed at supporting the economy, promoting health and wellbeing and giving people a strong sense of community and place as shown in appendix D of the report
- The investment plan had two strands: the need to act on pressing challenges while building on the statement of intent to tackle the challenges of an ageing population, climate change and increasing automation.
- New proposals would help to grow the economy such as a £5m investment in Repton Property Developments Ltd and ongoing investment in county farms. The Council had provided for expansion at Scottow Enterprise Park and support the maintenance facility at Great Yarmouth. Physical infrastructure to support the economy was supported by the third river crossing and Long Stratton Bypass.
- Support for Health and wellbeing came from continued investment in the greenways project, expansion and renewal of Norfolk trails and footpaths and backing of jubilee trail with £6m to develop castle keep, next stage of Wensum lodge and a manifesto commitment to invest £3m in the library service
- Closer attention to capital requirements of spending departments was needed to ensure Norfolk achieved value for money, so in addition to the quarterly treasury management panel a capital programme review board had been set up to provide additional oversight. From this, £14.6m had been reprofiled as set out in table 2 of the report
- Due to borrowing decisions by outlying councils the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities council was looking at changing what was allowable under Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This may minimise the effect on MRP and on revenue budget as shown in section 5 of the report however the proposed changes would cause an additional provision of £3.4m in 2023-24.
- A prioritisation system had been produced in accordance with the county's priorities and good practice as shown in appendix B of the report.
- While the revenue budget provided resources to tackle the next stages of the Covid-19 pandemic and set the Council on the road to recovery the capital strategy underpinned a strong and stable county

13.2 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport was pleased to see support for major infrastructure projects such as the Norwich Western Link, Third River Crossing, A47 improvements, Greenways, Transport for Norwich and improvements to walking and cycling in Norwich. He noted the importance of supporting infrastructure at a local level as well, such as through the local Member budget and Parish Partnership scheme.

13.3 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention noted the £90m extra investment in adult social services proposed in the report, which included Living Well homes for Norfolk, and £30m investment over 10 years approved by Cabinet and Council to accelerate care housing in Norfolk to reduce unnecessary care admissions. This would allow people to live more independently in their own homes; The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention thanked Cabinet and the administration for their support in this.

- 13.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance noted the importance of the Norwich Western Link for air quality in Norwich and for the quality of life of people living in the West of Norfolk.
- 13.5 The Vice-Chairman noted there was a plan to ensure the Norfolk economy would grow and all communities received improvements.
- 13.6 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services discussed the new SEND schools which were being built, some of which would be open in the next academic year 2022-23, and which would impact on the home-school transport budget.
- 13.7 The Chairman noted that the Council performed well on leveraging external grants as shown in table 5 of the report. The Levelling Up white paper was due in the next few days, and he hoped that this would have a positive impact for Norfolk County Council. The full details of the Shared Prosperity Fund were also being awaited.
- 13.8 The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.
- 13.9 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:
1. To agree the Capital Strategy at Appendix A of the report as a framework for the prioritisation and continued development of the Council’s capital programme;
 2. To agree the proposed 2022-27+ capital programme of £717.756m, subject to additional amounts for schemes yet to be re-profiled from 2021-22;
 3. To refer the programme to the County Council for approval, including the new and extended capital schemes outlined in Appendix D of the report;
 4. To recommend to County Council the Council's Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2022-23 as set out in Section 5 of the report;
 5. To note known grant settlements as summarised in Section 3 of the report and agree that future capital grants will be added to the programme when confirmed;
 6. To note the forecast of estimated capital receipts to be generated to achieve the target of £30.0m, subject to market conditions, over the next four years to support schemes not funded from other sources, as set out in Table 5 of the report.

13.10 **Evidence and Reasons for Decision**

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

13.11 **Alternative Options**

The papers appended to the report represent the culmination of the process to develop capital schemes to be recommended to Full Council which will improve services, promote efficiencies and address deficiencies. However, at

this stage it remains the case that new capital proposals have not been agreed and could be removed from the proposed capital programme.

14. Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022-23

14.1.1 Cabinet received the report presenting the Council's borrowing and investment strategies for 2022-23 in accordance with regulatory requirements.

14.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- The council was required to operate a balanced budget. The treasury function helped achieve this as cash flow was carefully monitored, ensuring money was available when required
- Surplus assets were invested in highly liquid, low risk assets and the treasury was responsible for funding planned capital investments and ensuring the council could meet repayment obligations over the long term.
- Interest rates were increasing, with the increasing cost of borrowing impacting on the revenue account and how capital programmes were viewed moving forward
- External debt for the following five years was set out on page 202 of the report. By the end of March 2022 debt was estimated to be £914.5m and forecast to rise to over £1bn by 2025.
- The treasury's main function operated a number of key indicators to ensure the Council worked within prudential boundaries as set out in the report; operational and authorised. The council was within these boundaries and smoothing the capital programme was likely to increase headroom along with a programme to increase capital receipts
- Borrowing projections were shown on page 202 of the report.
- Interest rates in 2021 hit an all-time low, with borrowing of £110m in 2021-22 to support the capital programme, with long-term borrowing as low as 1.65%. This secured £718,000 savings on the cost of carrying debt. No further borrowing was needed for the remainder of 2021-22
- External treasury advised a long-term forecast for base rates to rise slowly; 50yr money was assumed to cost 2.4% in 2025, up from 1.9%
- Investments in commercial activities were classified as non-treasury investments and not included in the report as they were included as capital expenditure however the cost of this would impact the overall borrowing requirement and was listed in appendix 10. This was reviewed monthly.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

14.2 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to endorse and recommend to County Council the Annual Investment and Treasury Strategy for 2022-23 as set out in Annex 1 of the report, including:

- The Capital Prudential Indicators included in the body of the report
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022-23 in Appendix 1 of the report
- The list of approved counterparties at Appendix 4 of the report
- The Treasury Management Prudential Indicators detailed in Appendix 5 of the report

14.3 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

The primary objectives of the Council's Investment and Treasury Strategy are to safeguard the timely repayment of principal and interest, whilst ensuring adequate liquidity for cashflow and the generation of investment yield. A flexible approach to borrowing for capital purposes will be maintained both in terms of timing, and in terms of possible sources of borrowing including the Public Work Loans Board (PWLB) and the UK Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA). This strategy is prudent while investment returns are low and the investment environment remains challenging.

The Investment and Treasury Strategy summarises:

- The Council's capital plans (including prudential indicators);
- A Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time);
- The Treasury Management Strategy (how the investments and borrowings are organised) including treasury indicators; and
- An Investment Strategy (including parameters on how investments are to be managed).

14.4 Alternative Options

In order to achieve sound treasury management in accordance with the statutory and other guidance, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendation in the report.

15. Finance Monitoring Report 2021-22 P8: November 2021

15.1.1 Cabinet received the report giving a summary of the forecast financial position for the 2021-22 Revenue and Capital Budgets, General Balances, and the Council's Reserves at 31 March 2022, together with related financial information.

15.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:

- A balanced budget was being forecast
- All departments were at or near budget due to the way emergency grant funding had been used; there was no indication this funding would continue into 2022-23 or beyond.
- The impact across the council of the Covid-19 pandemic would remain including rising demand.
- Children's Services: despite full use of departmental reserves utilised to deal with ongoing added pressures and pandemic related costs, the department would overspend by £5m this year. External social care costs impacted the department and the Covid-19 pandemic reduced availability of foster carers and increased the price and availability of residential home places. These issues were being addressed by the new deal with carers and new in-house provision. Work was underway on home to school transport which was overspent by £2.6m and forecast to be overspend £4.325m in 2022-23 and £3m in 2023-24. The increase in Education Health and Care Plans with an increase in specifying school places a large distance from children's homes impacted on this budget but would be helped by the increase in SEND schools.
- Adult Social Services: the department were forecasting a balanced in-year position after using £8.9m departmental reserves, however,

additional costs from the current financial year, 2021-22, would impact costs in 2022-23, such as cost of care. The council had supported the care sector this year and it was important that purchase of care continued.

- Community and Environmental Services: strain had been seen from volatile waste recycling and garden waste volumes. Cost pressures on museums, street parking and libraries meant reserves would need to be used this year.
- Table 3 on 296 of the report showed departmental provision and the reserves forecast to be set at £136.5m at the start of the next financial year 2022-23, including a provision for a general Covid reserve of £18.8m to meet pandemic pressures for which there was no significant ongoing Government funding. This would mean this money would not be available for the 2023-24 budget.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

- 15.2 The Chairman noted the pressures on Children's Services and Adults Social Services and that the ability for them to make savings had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 15.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services noted that Children's Services was a demand led service. It would be important to work with parents and schools to reduce the home to school transport budget. High placement costs were difficult to predict in advance however the Council had a responsibility to pay for placements when needed.
- 15.4 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention highlighted the large amount of pressure being realised in demand led services caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and thanked all officers who had helped maintain services and delivery of a balanced budget. The Chairman endorsed these comments.
- 15.5 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste noted that recycling centre investment had historically been a success in the county. The overspend on recent recycling centre costs had been impacted by building inflation caused by the pandemic particularly related to aggregates and metals.
- 15.6 Cabinet **RESOLVED**:
1. To recommend to County Council the addition of **£5.904m** to the capital programme to address capital funding requirements as set out in detail in capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.1 as follows:
 - £5.288m for the 2021-22 Schools Capital Maintenance funded by the Department for Education and carried forward into 2022-23
 - £0.601m for the 2022-23 Section 106 developer contributions for schools provision at Bradwell and Holt
 - £0.015m for Libraries services provision at Swaffham funded by Section 106 developer contributions
 2. To recommend to County Council the uplift to the capital programme by a net **£2.125m** in December 21 to address forecasted overspend in the Household Waste Recycling Centre Projects as set out in detail in Capital Appendix 3, paragraph 4.3.

3. Subject to County Council approval of recommendation 1 and 2 to delegate:
 - 2.1) To the Director of Procurement authority to undertake the necessary procurement processes including the determination of the minimum standards and selection criteria (if any) and the award criteria; to shortlist bidders; to make provisional award decisions (in consultation with the Chief Officer responsible for each scheme); to award contracts; to negotiate where the procurement procedure so permits; and to terminate award procedures if necessary;
 - 2.2) To the Director of Property authority (notwithstanding the limits set out at 5.13.6 and 5.13.7 of Financial Regulations) to negotiate or tender for or otherwise acquire the required land to deliver the schemes (including temporary land required for delivery of the works) and to dispose of land so acquired that is no longer required upon completion of the scheme;
 - 2.3) To each responsible chief officer authority to:
 - (in the case of two-stage design and build contracts) agree the price for the works upon completion of the design stage and direct that the works proceed; or alternatively direct that the works be recompeted
 - approve purchase orders, employer's instructions, compensation events or other contractual instructions necessary to effect changes in contracts that are necessitated by discoveries, unexpected ground conditions, planning conditions, requirements arising from detailed design or minor changes in scope
 - subject always to the forecast cost including works, land, fees and disbursements remaining within the agreed scheme or programme budget.
 - That the officers exercising the delegated authorities set out above shall do so in accordance with the council's Policy Framework, with the approach to Social Value in Procurement endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting of 6 July 2020, and with the approach set out in the paper entitled "Sourcing strategy for council services" approved by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting of 16 July 2018.
4. To recognise the period 8 general fund forecast revenue **of a balanced budget**, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to reduce or eliminate potential over-spends where these occur within services;
5. To note the COVID-19 funding available of **£99.795m**, including £22.745m brought forward from 2020-21;
6. To recognise the period 8 forecast of 90% savings delivery in 2021-22, noting also that Executive Directors will continue to take measures to mitigate potential savings shortfalls through alternative savings or underspends;
7. To note the forecast General Balances at 31 March 2022 of **£23.763m**.
8. To note the expenditure and funding of the revised current and future 2021-25 capital programmes.

15.7 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Three 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
- Covid-19 grant income

- Changes to the approved budget
- Reserves
- Savings

Appendix 2 summarises the key working capital position, including:

- Treasury management
- Payment performance and debt recovery.

Appendix 3 summarises the capital outturn position, and includes:

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

Additional capital funds will enable services to invest in assets and infrastructure as described in Appendix 3 section 4 of the report.

15.8 **Alternative Options**

To deliver a balanced budget, no viable alternative options have been identified to the recommendations in this report. In terms of financing the proposed capital expenditure, no further grant or revenue funding has been identified to fund the expenditure, apart from the funding noted in Appendix 3 of the report.

16 **2022-23 Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-26**

- 16.1.1 Cabinet received the report providing an overview of the Council's strategic and financial planning for 2022-23 to 2025-26 and set out the detailed information to support Cabinet's Revenue Budget and council tax recommendations to County Council including the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services' (Section 151 officer's) statutory assessment of the robustness of the overall budget.
- 16.1.2 The Executive Director for Finance and Commercial Services stated that his advice was clearly laid out in both the body of the report and the recommendations.
- 16.1.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report to Cabinet:
- The report included proposals for a balanced budget addressing two pressures Norfolk was facing: demand triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic and the increase in cost of living faced by residents.
 - The Covid-19 crisis affected all aspects of council service delivery, and its impact would be felt for many years by individuals, families, services and community groups with the most vulnerable being affected the most
 - The Council had stood by its partners to deliver services to vulnerable residents, schools, district councils, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary sector. The cost to the Council in savings not made and additional costs had been high and unfunded additional burdens in the medium to long term needed to be paid for.
 - The overall net budget proposed would increase to £464.325m in 2022-23 meaning council tax would be increased by 2.99%, so tax paid by a band D property would rise to £1516.95.
 - Spending would be increased in 2022-23 on key services by £68m

compared to 2021-22

- With savings by departments, it was proposed to set a robust budget for 2022-23. A budget gap would be faced in 2023-24, but there was confidence that this could be bridged, so Cabinet was not proposing to raise council tax by the maximum amount available, recognising the cost-of-living pressures on residents and not wanting to put the maximum burden on them.
- In view of the budget gap forecast for 2023-24 a higher council tax increase of 3.99% had been recommended by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services however Cabinet intended to save money from how the council was run. The council had a range of transformation programmes to deliver services more efficiently, effectively and reduce costs of delivery
- Lobbying of Government for a fair share of funding would continue through recognition of the challenges of Norfolk's ageing and rural population and for a fair share of funding for social care
- The local authority social care settlement for 2022-23 was for one year only. Limited core funding was made available however 50% of this rise assumes council tax would rise by 2.99%.
- This year, investment in Adult Social Services would be increased by £25m to £277.5m before funding changes to meet cost pressures and to develop the central theme of supporting people to be independent, resilient and well. Early intervention and targeted prevention helped the council support adults to be independent for longer
- The partnership with Newton Europe would be part of development of the next stage of the prevention programme, a better front door and a new targeted operating model. A one-off cost was involved dependent on savings targets savings being reached and would use departmental reserves set aside for this.
- The transformation programme in Children's Services was well established; the new social care model was mostly implemented, and savings were shown on page 420 of the report. £11m was being invested in Children's Services on top of covering the in-year overspend for 2021-22 of 5.05m
- Community and Environmental Services covered a wide range of services, and the list of additional costs and savings were therefore diverse. These services impacted on and were used by most residents, visitors and businesses every day. Through work of this department the council focussed on Norfolk as a place through heritage, environment and infrastructure and were supporting delivery and growth through the Norfolk and Suffolk Delivery Plan and Norfolk Investment Framework.
- Providing digital and physical infrastructure that people and businesses needed to thrive such as best possible broadband infrastructure and reducing impact on the environment were also important. This included delivering the council's environmental policy including a new electric vehicle charging strategy.
- a sustained and transformative programme set out in Better Together for Norfolk set out a roadmap to a vibrant and sustainable economy, better opportunities for children and young people, healthy and fulfilling lives a greener and more resilient future. Through improving educational outcomes, growing skills, developing good quality jobs and developing affordable housing and infrastructure, life chances and the economy would be strengthened.

- The 5 year programme Norfolk Futures was delivering on what to do to support the strategy to deal with complex demographic challenges faced in Norfolk.
- It was important to de-silo services to bring together projects holistically
- Significant new pressures listed by the main demand driven departments needed to be met and there was no indication from Government that they would provide more grant funding.
- Through careful management in 2021-22 the Council could set aside a centrally held Covid reserve of £18m which would cover the contingency to deal with pressures and protect services in the next financial year
- As the country came out of the pandemic department heads believed many transformation programmes delayed last year would be rolled out in 2022-23
- Results of the public consultation stated that 47.5% of respondents agreed with the decision to increase council tax by 1.99% with 41% disagreeing. Most respondents agreed with the 1% increase in social care precept.
- The primary objective of the medium-term financial strategy was to show a balanced position; additional savings and revenue funding needed identifying. Gaps remained in the years after 2022-23 of £94.255m were similar to gaps in previous years which were able to be resolved. Transformational change would help deliver savings needed.
- One year funding was applied to some funding such as one off services grant with Government increasingly providing funding in this way.
- Implications of the social care levy were covered in paragraph 18.3-5 of the report
- Significant medium term cost implications arose from increased and more complex need being seen in social care.
- Cabinet would continue to advocate for Norfolk, pressing Government for a fair share of funding and bringing overdue reforms to fix local authority funding; this proposed budget supported communities through investment in services and would help to make the council fit for future.

16.2 The Chairman noted that spend was increasing and discussed the impact of dealing with pressures in Children's Services and Adult Social Services with a lack of Government funding, noting that inflation played a big part in the cost of community services. The Council had consulted on the council tax increase of 2.99% which had been accepted showing this was the correct approach and would not make the medium-term financial strategy unsustainable. Core Spending power was predicated on a 3% council tax uplift which was not sustainable and could not be relied on year on year. The Chairman pointed out that the Council had responded to many consultations pointing out the issue of fair funding; reliance on one-year funding was an issue and multi-year funding was a requirement moving forward. Support funding to help with Covid-19 pressures was not available however pressures remained on services from the pandemic. The forecast gap of £94m over the medium-term financial strategy showed that work needed to be done to ensure the council was in a position to deliver what they wanted for the future. The Chairman noted the positive impact that the new corporate strategy, Government white paper and major capital programmes could bring.

16.3 The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport discussed the Community and Environmental Services financial strategy on page 422 of the

report. This discussed reducing reliance on revenue funding achieved by sourcing funding through other sources, competitive bidding and achieving income. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport noted that there was a good track record in this department which would continue into the future.

- 16.4 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance pointed out that the report showed Norfolk County Council was innovative and transforming, learning from peers as well as teaching peers about innovative new ways of working
- 16.5 The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention supported the proposals set out in the report; there had been challenges around funding and the Covid-19 pandemic, but he felt there was an opportunity to do more with the same amount of money if more was known about future funding streams. In Adult Social Services, efficiencies were set out in the budget however more was being spend as demand was increasing and people were living longer.
- 16.6 The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services noted the importance of identifying new ways of working to make savings and the increase in cost of living for residents. He felt the Council should do all they could to support.
- 16.7 The Cabinet Member for Finance moved recommendation 1, option b and recommendation 6 d option ii. The Cabinet Member for Finance moved the rest of the recommendations as set out in the report
- 16.8 Cabinet **RESOLVED**
- 1) To consider the statements regarding the uncertain planning environment, robustness of budget estimates, assumptions and risks relating to the 2022-23 budget, and 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. In recognition of the significant budget gap forecast for 2023-24, and to enable a final balanced Budget position to be recommended to County Council, Cabinet AGREED:
 - that any income shortfall will be addressed from the Corporate Business Risk Reserve (to the extent possible).
 - 2) To review the findings of public consultation as set out in Section 14 of Appendix 1 of the report and in full in Appendix 5 of the report, and consider these when recommending the budget changes required to deliver a balanced budget as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
 - 3) To consider and comment on the findings of equality impact assessments, as set out in Appendix 6 to this report, and in doing so, 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 note that the Council has responded to the consultation undertaken on the Provisional Local Government Settlement for 2022-23 as detailed in Section 3 of Appendix 1 of the report.
 - 5) To note that the Council has agreed to establish a Business Rates Pool for 2022-23 on the terms previously reported to Cabinet in November 2021 and as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 1 of the report.
 - 6) 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 of the report), which underpin the revenue and capital budget decisions and planning for 2022-26.
 - b) The general principle of seeking to increase general fund balances as part of closing the 2021-22 accounts and that in 2022-23 any further 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 of the report), which should be considered when agreeing the 2022-23 Budget (Appendix 1 of the report).
 - d) To note the advice of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services (Section 151 Officer), in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report, on the financial impact of an increase in council tax and the sustainability of the Council's medium term position, and that the Council's 2022-23 Budget will include a general council tax increase of 1.99% and a 1.00% increase in the Adult Social Care precept (being the deferred element of the 2021-22 Adult Social Care precept), an overall increase of 2.99% (shown in Section 5 of Appendix 1 of the report), resulting in an overall County Council Net Revenue Budget of £464.325m for 2022-23, including budget increases of £89.154m and budget decreases of -£63.924m as set out in Table 13 of Appendix 1 of the report, and the actions required to deliver the proposed savings, subject to any changes required in line with recommendation 1 above to enable a balanced budget to be proposed. This would result in a budget gap of £59.920m to be addressed for 2023-24, and £94.255m over the life of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
 - e) The budget proposals set out for 2023-24 to 2025-26, including authorising Executive Directors to take the action required to deliver budget savings for 2023-24 to 2025-26 as appropriate.
 - f) With regard to the future years, to undertake a full review of how the Council operates to deliver its future services and strategy in view of the significant budget gap to be addressed for 2023-24 as set out in Section 4 of Appendix 1 of the report, and that further plans to meet the remaining budget shortfalls in the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 are developed and brought back to Cabinet during 2022-23.
 - g) Noting Government's historic assumptions that local authorities will raise the maximum council tax available to them, and that the final level of council tax for future years is subject to Member decisions annually (informed by any referendum principles defined by the Government), to confirm, or otherwise, the assumptions set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS Table 4 in Appendix 2 of the report) that the Council's budget planning for 2023-24 onwards will include for planning purposes:

- i) general council tax increases of 1.99%;
 - ii) Adult Social Care precept increases of 1.00%; and
 - iii) that if the referendum threshold were increased in the period 2023-24 to 2025-26 to above 1.99%, or any further discretion were offered to increase the Adult Social Care precept (or similar), the Section 151 Officer would recommend the Council take full advantage of any flexibility in view of the overall financial position.
- 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 2022-23 Budget, to make payments, to raise and repay loans, and to invest funds.
- i) To agree the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-26 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, including the two policy objectives to be achieved:
 - i) Revenue: To identify further funding or savings for 2023-24 to 2025-26 to produce a balanced budget in all years 2022-26 in accordance with the timetable set out in the Revenue Budget report (Section 4 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 impact assessments (Section 6 of Appendix 6 of the report).
- k) Note the planned reduction in non-schools earmarked and general reserves of 55.67% over five years, from £136.590m (March 2021) to £60.547m (March 2026) (Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report);
- l) Note the policy on reserves and provisions in Section 3 of Appendix 3 of the report;
- m) Agree, based on current planning assumptions and risk forecasts set out in Section 5 of Appendix 3 of the report:
 - i) for 2022-23, a minimum level of general balances of £23.268m, and
 - ii) a forecast minimum level for planning purposes of
 - 2023-24, £24.018m;
 - 2024-25, £25.018m; and
 - 2025-26, £26.018m.

as part of the consideration of the budget plans for 2022-26 and supporting these budget recommendations;

- n) Agree the use of non-school Earmarked Reserves, as set out in Section 6 of Appendix 3 of the report.

16.9 Evidence and Reasons for Decision

Refer to section 4 of the Cabinet report.

16.10 Alternative Options

Refer to section 5 of the Cabinet report.

17 Disposal, acquisition and exploitation of property

- 17.1.1 Cabinet received the report containing proposals aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively 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.
- 17.1.2 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management introduced the report to Cabinet
- Both disposals outlined an opportunity for savings in holding costs and capital receipts.
 - A new site had been identified for a waste and recycling centre at Holt Road, Beeston Regis, to allow better vehicle access and provide significant operational benefits. The existing site was at operational capacity.
 - The new site for a waste and recycling facility identified at Spooner Row in Wymondham was currently waste ground but would provide better vehicle access. The existing site was at operational capacity and providing a new centre would allow for operational growth.
 - The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management moved the recommendations as set out in the report
- 17.2 The Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste endorsed the development of two new waste and recycling centres. He noted that the existing centre at Wymondham held six cars and the centre at Sheringham held 8 cars. At busy times, more than 20 cars could be queuing to enter the sites so this change would be beneficial as well as provide an opportunity to increase recycling rates at both sites.
- 17.3 Cabinet **RESOLVED**
1. To agree to the County Council entering an agreement for a lease and lease for 0.4 hectares of land, Holt Road, Beeston Regis as identified on the site plan for 25 years at an initial rent of £20,000 per annum and other agreed terms.
 2. To formally declare the Sheringham Recycling Centre site, Holt Road, East Beckham NR26 8TS (1025/011) and the adjacent former highway land surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of both properties subject to the replacement recycling centre being operational. In the event of the disposal receipts exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer.
 3. To agree to the County Council entering an agreement for a lease and lease for 0.6 hectares of land, Spooner Row, Wymondham as identified on the site plan for 25 years at an initial rent of £30,000 per annum and other agreed terms.
 4. To formally declare the - Wymondham Recycling Centre site, Strayground Lane, Wymondham NR18 9NA (7117/013) surplus to County Council

requirements and instruct the Director of Property to dispose of the property subject to the replacement recycling centre being operational. In the event of the disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Director of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer

Evidence and Reasons for Decision

17.4

Declaring the sites and land holdings surplus to County Council use means that the Corporate Property Team can consider options for the disposal and exploitation of these sites. The property acquisitions will support the development of new Recycling Centres.

Alternative Options

17.5

Declaring sites and land holdings 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.

In respect of site acquisitions, the Council's agent, NPS, confirm they undertook an extensive site search and considered the proposed sites will satisfactorily address planning and highways considerations.

18. Reports of the Cabinet Member and Officer Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting

18.1 Cabinet **RESOLVED** to **note** the Delegated Decisions made since the last Cabinet meeting.

The meeting ended at 12:24

The Chairman

Cabinet
31 January 2022
Public & Local Member Questions

Agenda item 6	Public Question Time
6.1	<p>Question from Joe Mooney This cabinet report is in my opinion a key milestone in terms of securing a new recycling centre for Wymondham. The existing site is no longer fit for purpose and it does need replacing. I welcome the news to secure the site outlined in the cabinet paper and I very much hope that it can be brought to fruition as soon as possible. My question is outlined below.</p> <p>Could you give me a timetable for the project and will the agreement to sign the lease and the removal of the soil heap be conditional on securing all of the necessary permissions such as planning and permits</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment of Waste Thank you for your support and ongoing interest in the replacement of the Wymondham Recycling Centre. Providing a new recycling centre for the Wymondham area is part of the County Council's programme of improvements to Norfolk's recycling centre network, which is to make sites easier to use, to improve recycling performance and to allow for increased usage and a greater focus on reuse.</p> <p>For the Wymondham project, applications for permission to build and operate a new recycling centre are expected in summer 2022. If approvals are secured, then construction would be expected to start in spring 2023 with the new recycling centre then opening in late 2023 or early 2024.</p> <p>And the answer to the second part of your question is yes; as the County Council will only trigger the lease for the site and payment for site clearance when it has secured the relevant permissions, and when the County Council is ready to start its work to construct the new recycling centre.</p>
6.2	<p>Question from Iain Duncan COUNTY HALL, NORWICH: I know that a small amount of lighting may be needed 'out-of-hours', but why is County Hall (inside and out) and its grounds apparently fully or nearly fully illuminated 24/7 and 365 days a year?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services and Asset Management Over the past few years, Norfolk County Council have consolidated a number of buildings into County Hall – which has changed the activities and hours of operation of the building. A number of teams – notably colleagues from Adult Social services, Children's Services and partners such as Norfolk police operate out of the building on a 24/7 basis.</p> <p>Cleaning, maintenance and security teams will also be working in the evening (normally starting their shift after 18.00). There is significant activity across the floors by these teams across the evening, which require the floors to be lit.</p> <p>All of the lights are on 'proximity sensors' that switch on the low voltage LED lights on when there is movement on sections of the floor. They will switch off after a set period of time. The floors in County Hall are open plan, so whilst one section may be lit – this will be visible from the windows.</p>

We have looked at the 'timing' of sensors and also on reducing security inspections of the building, however have to balance this with the comfort and usability of the building – particularly by staff working in the evening.

The use of electricity has significant fallen in County Hall over the past ten years, as well as the significant property savings from moving teams from across Norwich from (less visible) offices into County Hall.

Exterior lighting provides wider security and works with our CCTV system to ensure users of the building and the wider public using the footpaths can do so safely.

Supplementary question from Iain Duncan

PARK AND RIDE CAR PARKS: Why are these apparently fully illuminated at all times, and not just when the buses using them are running?

I am concerned about the apparent huge waste of energy - with large financial cost, atmospheric damage (in the face of a climate catastrophe), and light pollution.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Highways and Transport

The streetlights at the park and ride sites are left on at 50% capacity at night for security reasons – we have unfortunately had several incidents of vandalism and anti-social behaviour on the sites and so to leave them in total darkness would increase this risk and lead to more cost in repairs. However, we are exploring more efficient lighting and the use of solar power as part of our Net Zero programme.

**Cabinet
31 January 2022
Local Member Questions**

Agenda item 7	Local Member Issues/Questions
7.1	<p>Question from Cllr Paul Neale If Conservative governments hadn't cut renewable energy support, people would now be paying £140 less in fuel bills. Yet it's also been revealed that only 7% of homes that should have been were insulated through the Green Homes Grant, partly due to a lack of skilled workers. There is a need for local coordination and training to ensure homes are insulated and bring down the cost of living and carbon emissions. Will the county council establish a local retrofit taskforce to ensure appropriate training and funding to achieve this?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste Under the Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme (part of the wider suite of government funding, including the Green Homes Grant) a consortium led by Broadland District Council (including Norwich City, Breckland District Council, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, North Norfolk District Council and South Norfolk District Council) successfully secured funding. Full details of successful Local Authority bids can be found here. The current phase of the LAD scheme is managed by the Greater South East Energy Hub, which also covers Norfolk. More details about the current scheme can be found here.</p> <p>The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has established a clean growth task force with one of the five focus areas being the Workforce for the Future and a key action being to shape the Decarbonisation Academy proposal and the wider clean growth skills agenda. The Decarbonisation Academy aim is to create the skilled workforce that is required to support a zero-carbon economy and the pilot project will look to develop the institutional and physical infrastructure needed to support the rapid deployment of high-quality training programmes needed to deliver cutting-edge property decarbonisation schemes. The County Council sits on the task and finish groups set up for the project covering a range of themes including planning, economic development, and skills.</p> <p>We have also recently funded a Local Energy Asset Representation, which has provided data on housing stock and are leading the proposal for a Local Area Energy Plan, which will set out the infrastructure and investment required to achieve the transition to net zero.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Paul Neale Norfolk's Enhanced Partnership Plan for improving bus services proposes bus priority studies on only 6 corridors (two in each major urban area). Considering the scale of the shift to public transport needed to meet climate targets, a limited target of 6 bus priority studies is insufficient. Will the Cabinet Member for Highways reconsider this and expand the areas considered for priority studies?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and</p>

	<p>Transport</p> <p>The target of 6 bus priority studies listed in the Enhanced Partnership Scheme is only a starting point – you will see that the target date is June 2022. In this initial Scheme we could only list commitments that we knew we could realistically carry out without knowing what funding we will get from the Department for Transport. Assuming we get a good level of funding for our £106m Bus Service Improvement Plan bid, which we hope to know by the end of February, our intention is to review and scale up those commitments in line with the amount of funding allocated to Norfolk.</p>
7.2	<p>Question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare</p> <p>Food banks in Norfolk are reporting overwhelming demand, rising running costs and an end to financial support. Most recently, Mandalay Wellbeing's food bank in my division reported that it ran out of food, had to turn people away and its future is now uncertain.</p> <p>The Council continues to build emphasis on the community and voluntary sector supporting the delivery of public services, including health and wellbeing. As health inequalities widen in Norfolk, how does the Council propose to either help support Norfolk's food banks in their vital work, or eradicate the need for them entirely?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy</p> <p>Norfolk County Council, alongside Great Yarmouth Borough Council have provided £2,000 in direct funding to Mandalay Food Bank to support their ongoing food provision to vulnerable households in the town, as well as 30 pre-packed food parcels. In addition the Mandalay food bank also received £10,000 via the Norfolk Community Foundation to provide £50 grants to 200 families in Great Yarmouth. Both elements have been funded from the Household Support Fund allocated to Norfolk County Council from the Department of Work and Pensions.</p> <p>We are aware that foodbanks offer a temporary solution to concerns linked to sustainable employment, the rising cost of living and other economic factors affecting household finances exacerbated by the pandemic. Norfolk County Council has supported around 29,000 children and young people with free school meals vouchers during school holidays, increased funding to Norfolk Assistance scheme by £1.2million this winter as well as supporting over 6,000 households with direct food provision to help them shield or self isolate during the pandemic.</p>
7.3	<p>Question from Cllr Maxine Webb</p> <p>The council estimates it will spend at least £575,000 on legal fees for SEND Tribunals this year. 95% of decisions in the last year have gone in favour of the family and against Norfolk County Council. At the Council meeting in November 2021, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services described this as "not a good figure for the Council to have to defend" and that he was to have a meeting to discuss this. Please can he give an update on the outcome of this meeting and next steps?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>The figure of 95% seems to have been taken from a national figure that has been reported by various media sources and has been used in discussions regarding the situation in Norfolk.</p>

	<p>To clarify the position for Norfolk, in academic year 2020-2021, 8% of appeals lodged were decided by a Judge. Of those 8%, 60% were upheld in favour of the parent.</p> <p>94% of the total number of all appeals lodged by parents that year were for special school places, which is reflective of the supply and demand pressures of our special school system due to the significant increase in parental requests for special school places experienced since the 2014 reforms and the expectation the tribunal places on our existing special schools to accommodate greater and greater numbers of children within ever decreasing space and facilities.</p> <p>As our new special schools open we anticipate we will see a reduction in appeals for special school placements.</p> <p>I do agree with Cllr Webb that we need to ensure council funding for SEND should be used effectively and I can reassure her that our investment for SEND over the past 3 years has led directly to our improved performance for EHCP assessments and also the opening of the first two of our new special schools.</p>
7.4	<p>Question from Cllr Julie Brociek-Coulton Angel Road Junior school has been allowed to become unsafe through lack of maintenance. It is proposed children will use modular classrooms funded by the trust instead of a new purpose built school paid for by the county council as it should be and my community deserves. Can the cabinet member explain how this council neglect led to children losing out with the only winners being the county council who will be handed back a valuable site?'</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services Angel Road Junior School became an Academy in March 2018 along with the Infant School, originally as part of Diversa Academy Trust and then both schools were later rebrokered to join Evolution Academy Trust (a process managed solely by the DFE with no involvement with a Local Authority).</p> <p>Around the time of academisation a condition survey is completed and shared with parties. In a small number of cases Norfolk County Council funds urgent capital works to address condition issues, and this was the case at Angel Road Junior School – resulting from the age and condition of the building. The buildings are passed to an academy as safe, warm and dry at the point of academisation and after this, the responsibility for condition of buildings (including health and safety) passes to the academy trust and they are funded directly from the Department for Education either via a School Condition Allocation for larger Academy Trusts or via a bidding process for those under a specified size.</p> <p>The funding for schools' capital nationally is fragmented between central government, Academy Trusts and local authorities. It would only be appropriate for NCC to invest in a new building for an academy where there is a need for additional pupil places and this is not the case here. So when issues arise at a school such as Angel Road Junior it is not appropriate for NCC to step in to resolve but we will continue to work with all schools and academies for the benefit of children and young people in schools.</p> <p>The site is yet to formally return to NCC but we have been informed that it will</p>

	<p>happen in the coming months. The reuse of the site will be considered in the normal manner.</p>
7.5	<p>Question from Cllr Terry Jermy There have been worrying reports of an increase in drugs paraphernalia dumped around Thetford including discarded used needles spotted in the river. Many people locally have linked these issues with a decrease in levels of NCC commissioned drugs and alcohol support services provided by 'Change Grow Lives' in the town. Will the Cabinet review the service provided locally to ensure that it is adequate?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. As you are already aware the responsibility to collect any litter is one for the local, District Council. We therefore do not hold any data on whether there has been an increase in litter in Thetford.</p> <p>I can say that there has been no reduction in the level of services we commission to treat drug and alcohol addiction. A needle exchange scheme is offered by local NHS pharmacies and at Breckland House in Thetford. All suppliers are contracted to collect used needle and syringes at their premises. They are also asked to encourage service users to return their used paraphernalia.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Terry Jermy Repairs to broken and faulty NCC street-lights and illuminated road signs appear to be taking a considerable amount of time at present. What is the agreed time period with the contractor for repairs to be undertaken and is this being achieved?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport Streetlighting faults including illuminated road signs should generally be rectified within five business days upon receiving notification of the fault.</p> <p>Where faults involve the repair of UK Power Network equipment, these should generally be rectified within 20 business days. This however is often outside of the control of our contractor and can take longer being dependent on attendance by UK Power Networks. We are aware of certain issues regarding UKPN faults and our contractor is actively engaging with UK Power Networks to rectify the issues being experienced. During 2020-22, more than 98% of faults were rectified on time and within the five business days.</p>
7.6	<p>Question from Cllr Emma Corlett When RM033 was included in the Corporate Risk Register last year it was rated an Amber possible major risk. In the light of delays in the consultation, increasing controversy, continuing cost increases and adverse comments from Department of Transport officials on the environmental impact, what is the current risk rating of RM033?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The risk register refers to delays to funding and statutory approvals. At this time, whilst the consultation has been delayed, we are looking at the overall timings for</p>

	<p>the project. There is no indication that funding is at risk. Once the project timescales have been reviewed the risk register will be updated as part of the regular review process. The rating is currently still Amber.</p>
7.7	<p>Question from Cllr Steve Morpew We have all joined in congratulating and thanking those in Norfolk who worked so hard to guide us through the pandemic. We have all expressed heartfelt sympathy with those who lost and sacrificed so much. In the light of the Sue Gray report and police investigation into behaviour at the heart of the government will the Leader now take this opportunity to reflect the feelings of so many in Norfolk that the Prime Minister must resign?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy As the Sue Gray report has not yet been published, I have no comment to make</p>
7.8	<p>Question from Cllr Sharon Blundell Is the council meeting its current pothole repair target times and how does this performance compare to those being achieved by the authorities in the rest of the East and England?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport In this current financial year, 95.1% of urgent/dangerous potholes we identify or are reported to the Council are repaired or made safe within our target timescales. All other potholes are assessed individually taking into account factors such as location and severity to form a risk based approach and response times will vary according to each individual assessment. In addition, we closely monitor contractor performance and we know that so far this financial year only 3.5 % of pothole jobs have gone past their target date. This comprises pothole jobs assessed across all priorities.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Sharon Blundell Section 73(14) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 says the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance is excluded by law from being taken into account for charges. The mobility component of Personal Independence Payments should also be disregarded.</p> <p>Therefore what people do with that component (leasing a motability car or otherwise) should not be factored in.</p> <p>The council's Adult Social Services Department Transport Policy reviewed in June 2021 says "Adult Social Services would not normally provide Council funded transport for a person who is in receipt of a Motability vehicle or mobility payment."</p> <p>Can you please explain how it is lawful for the council to do this?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question.</p> <p>This is very straightforward; the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance</p>

	<p>(or Personal Independence Payment) is excluded in means-tested charging to allow people to keep this benefit (or a Motability vehicle) to help them get around if they have an illness or disability. This is to avoid mobility payments (or a Motability vehicle) reducing the value of this payment or preventing its use to help the person get around. Norfolk complies with this requirement within our charging arrangements. As people are expected to use the mobility payment (or a Motability vehicle) to get around, the Council's position in its policy of whether to include transport funding in care plans is that people will be using this benefit to transport themselves to whatever service they are using. The assessment process allows a full discussion of transport issues to take into account any problems or issues in applying the policy.</p>
7.9	<p>Question from Cllr Brian Watkins</p> <p>According to a report from the Centre for Cities, Norwich has lost 33 weeks of potential sales during the pandemic. With the rise of online shopping, the future of our high streets across the county is extremely uncertain. Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) are particularly vulnerable and need the support of local people. The Federation of Small Businesses says that for every £1 spent with an SME, 63p goes back into the local economy. What further measures can the Council take to help SMEs survive and increase footfall, to help Norfolk avoid the closure of more local shops?</p> <p>Response from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy</p> <p>Unfortunately our high streets were already finding it challenging to compete with the rise of online retailers before the pandemic - a national problem reported by the Federation of Small Businesses - which has led to a steady increase in vacancy rates in our towns and city over time.</p> <p>However, the County and district councils have been working closely together, to put in place measures of support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building on the grants administered in the first wave of the pandemic, district councils are distributing additional grants for hospitality businesses affected by Omicron.• The 'Click it Local' scheme, currently covering businesses in Norwich and South Norfolk, enabling customers to order gifts, food and essentials from small businesses.• Town Deal high street improvements in King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth, to make these town centres more attractive to shoppers (in line with the Government's Build Back Better High Streets Strategy).• Delivery of our Go Digital programme, to help SMEs improve their productivity and competitiveness with digital tools. Over 450 businesses registered on the scheme, with plans to support over 1000 by March 2023. District councils are also co-funding the programme.• Our Employer Training Incentive Programme is helping businesses to become more competitive through up-skilling their staff for the new trading circumstances. Over 325 SME supported to date, with over 1,200 interventions. Source of funding being explored for the waiting list of 200+ businesses, now that the initial grant funding has come to an end. <p>The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June are also an opportunity for SMEs to attract people to their high streets for celebratory experiences and associated purchases.</p>

7.10	<p>Question from Cllr Tim Adams What work is being done to address potential reduced levels of activities and increased isolation for older residents in Care homes?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. As you are already aware Care Homes in Norfolk are independent businesses.</p> <p>The Council has detailed in the specification for all the Residential and Nursing Care homes it commissions places within, a clear requirement to ensure that support is available to people, so they can enjoy a variety of activities and social opportunities based on their preferences and strengths, as part of everyday life. This includes activities within the home but also to support people's access within the wider community.</p> <p>As part of our approach to ensuring Quality of care in Norfolk, the PAMMS (Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution) audit that all residential and nursing care homes will receive, includes areas such as Personalised Care and Support, which includes this expectation. The findings of these audits are discussed with the providers to ensure any areas for improvement are identified.</p> <p>We understand that during the various restrictions placed on Care Homes to protect their residents from Covid, regarding visitors and movement of people, activities available will have been impacted. With the recent easing of social care restrictions, this will support the return of activities as well visitors, which will reduce people's isolation and improve their well-being.</p>
7.11	<p>Question from Cllr Dan Roper Is the council looking to introduce a lane rental scheme to prevent utility companies outstaying their welcome with unnecessary traffic lights and what would the terms of the scheme be?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport The council already issues fines on utility companies where they have taken too long to complete their street works. These fines are based on the number of extra days those works took to complete. Since 2001 highway authorities have used Section 74 of the New Roads & Street Works Act to achieve this.</p> <p>A lane rental scheme allows a highway authority to charge all works promoters (including those undertaken by the highway authority) for the use of the highway on a small part of their road network. These daily fees are based on the number of days taken to complete the work with the income collected used to operate the lane rental scheme.</p> <p>Only London and Kent County Council currently operate lane rental schemes. Norfolk, along with other regional highway authorities are keeping the position under review to help us consider if a lane rental scheme would be beneficial to Norfolk.</p>

7.12	<p>Question from Cllr Lucy Shires In 2020/21, there were almost 200 cases of serious harm or death involving babies in England, which is a 31pc rise compared to 2019/20. Yet in Norfolk we see press reports that Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust, which is paid millions of pounds a year by Norfolk County Council to provide the service, has failed to visit the vast majority of Norfolk families in 2020. What are you doing to urgently address this?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention The Health Visitor, Healthy Child Programme is a Public Health commissioned, NHS delivered service. It is a universal service to support parents, and all children's healthy social, emotional, and physical development. Norfolk County Council has fully funded the service and has also used Government Covid money to increase investment during the pandemic.</p> <p>Like all NHS services our NHS provider is experiencing severe pressures due to Covid - I also understand that there is a longer-term national shortage of health visitors, who are trained by NHS Health Education England. The National Guidance supports the provision of a mix of face to face, on-line and phone appointments. In line with this the Norfolk Health Child programme offers a 'blended' service. Face-to-face appointments are undertaken for vulnerable and higher risk families. For lower need families the youngest babies are prioritised, for example 94% of new-borns are seen in face-to-face appointments. All families are contacted either in person or virtually for every mandatory check. Throughout this time the NHS has prioritised those who are the most vulnerable and families with highest need. The NHS meets regularly with the commissioners and is producing an immediate recovery trajectory with increased face-to-face appointments as short-term sickness in staff reduces with reducing numbers of Covid cases. And an in-year catch-up programme for families most affected by the pandemic is being agreed as the peak in Covid is passed.</p> <p>In addition, our NHS provider is implementing a longer-term workforce plan to address the challenges of national NHS shortages in Health Visitors.</p>
7.13	<p>Question from Cllr Rob Colwell When considering any imminent Wisbech incinerator planning application the Planning Inspectorate will give Councils 14 days to report on the validity of the public consultation. Is this Council ready to meet this deadline and to declare the public consultation in West Norfolk to have been inadequate in its coverage of the actual population living downwind of the incinerator?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste No planning application has been received and if and when it does come forward Norfolk County Council will follow its obligations under planning law as a statutory consultee</p> <p>The validity of the public consultation undertaken by MVV will be assessed against the published Statement of Community Involvement dated June 2021. The contents of which would have been considered by all local planning authorities before adoption by MVV</p>

7.14	<p>Question from Cllr Alexandra Kemp The NSPCC says delivery of the Health Visitor Service over the phone or on Zoom, instead of in person, makes it harder to spot developmental delay or domestic abuse. The Health Visitor needs to see how parents and children interact. This is best done face-to -face. Norfolk County Council commissions Norfolk’s Health Visitor Service. In Norfolk Health Visits after the first visit, are conducted virtually. Can the Cabinet Member ensure that Norfolk has enough Health Visitors to make every Home Visit in person?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. Please see the answer to question 7.12 for the full response.</p>
7.15	<p>Question from Cllr Jamie Osborn In 2020, Norwich City Council unanimously adopted a Green Party motion to trial safer consumption spaces in the city to reduce drug-related deaths and prevent situations where drug-users take drugs in the stairwells of residents, with faeces, blood and drug paraphernalia being left outside residents’ front doors.</p> <p>Recently, Bristol welcomed the Overdose Prevention Centre, a mobile unit where drug-users can find safety and supervision to reduce deaths. This is done with the express support of the police, even though the Home Office has not granted permission.</p> <p>Will Norfolk follow the example of Bristol and many European nations by working with partners to establish a safer consumption space in Norwich?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention Thank you for your question. As you would expect Norfolk County Council is committed to reducing the number of drug related deaths. Our public health commissioners follow National Policy, therefore we would not support “Consumption Rooms” because they are not supported by the Home Office.</p> <p>Second question from Cllr Jamie Osborn Government proposals to make voter photo ID mandatory to vote could block 2.1 million people from voting despite voter fraud being negligible. This would disproportionately disenfranchise people from minority ethnic backgrounds (eg: 47% of Black people in England don’t have a driving license, compared to 24% of white people) and social-renters. Will the Council Leader urge his Conservative colleagues to oppose this Bill that threatens to disenfranchise already-marginalised groups in Norfolk?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Governance and Strategy Thank you for the question. This is a difficult issue that will no doubt be subject to a</p>

	<p>lot of debate in the lead up to any decision being made. My position is very similar to that of the Electoral Commission- It is important that the UK's electoral system is both secure and accessible.</p> <p>There are already checks in place to confirm a voter's identity if they are voting by post. But there are no similar checks in place at polling stations in Great Britain to prevent someone claiming to be someone else and voting in their name. This makes polling station voting in Great Britain vulnerable to fraud.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, there has been a requirement to show ID when voting since 1985, updated to photo ID in 2003.</p> <p>The UK has very low levels of proven electoral fraud, and voters should feel confident about their vote. But we know from public opinion research that it is an issue that concerns some voters. Two-thirds of people say they would feel more confident in the security of the voting system if there was a requirement to show ID.</p> <p>If introduced it must be done with consideration for everyone who is eligible to vote and importantly must come with funding to allow Local Councils to implement it.</p>
7.16	<p>Question from Cllr Ben Price</p> <p>Thorpe Hamlet Children's Centre supported a top 20% most disadvantaged area offering the first Sure Start Programme in Norwich. In 2010, the centre was saved after Greens worked with parents against plans to close it. In 2019, a decision was made to shut 38 of Norfolk's 53 children's centres, including the Thorpe Hamlet centre. Removing access to this essential service had a detrimental impact on children and families I represent. Does the cabinet member accept the redesign of the service has been a failure, opportunities have been reduced for children and their families, and it's time to reinstate this essential service provision and reopen the Thorpe Hamlet centre?</p> <p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services</p> <p>The transformation of our early childhood services with the creation of the Early Childhood and Family Service in 2019 was not about reducing access to support for families but about making better use of resources through focusing on funding front line delivery and support for families who need it, rather than operating buildings. Whilst the last two years have been a very challenging period with significant disruption both for families and services, the Early Childhood and Family Service has continued to support families during the pandemic through a mix of face to face delivery and online and digital support. The service is working closely with other local services and agencies, including in the Thorpe Hamlet area, to help ensure that families who need help can access the support they need in a coordinated way.</p> <p>The Thorpe Hamlet centre has continued to be used by local families as a result of Lionwood Junior School taking it over. Families are also accessing the nursery provision onsite which has been enhanced under this arrangement. The Early Childhood and Family Service is able to use the centre to meet with families, alongside other community venues and within families' homes. Through the council's community funding for early childhood groups, within the Norwich North area that Thorpe Hamlet is within, four new community groups have been supported to set up and a further two have been supported to continue to operate</p>

following the pandemic.

Second question from Cllr Ben Price

Norwich City Council's climate commission provides expert advice on reducing carbon emissions area-wide (not just for the council's own operations) and follows best practice for place-based climate leadership by integrating energy, governmental, educational, arts and civil society sectors in producing a credible and legitimate climate action plan. Does the county council agree that involving these sectors in decision-making is important and will it establish a climate commission for Norfolk?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

Norfolk County Council has committed to achieving net zero across its own estates by 2030, and also to working closely in partnership with key organisations, including District partners and the private sector, in terms of the county's wider journey towards net zero.

Norfolk County Council is an active member of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and many other networks, including the ICS, committed to tackling climate change.

The Council's Member Oversight Group for the Environment also continues to consider and make recommendations around other partnerships and the membership of wider networks and bodies, regionally and nationally, which will help Norfolk County Council deliver its net zero goals.

**Written Supplementary Questions requiring written responses from the Cabinet Meeting held on
Monday 31 January 2022**

	<p>Agenda item 7 Local Member questions</p>
	<p>Supplementary question from Cllr Steve Morpew What are The Leader’s expectations for Norfolk from the long awaited Levelling Up White Paper expected on Wednesday, especially in the light of reports it will mostly recycle already made announcements that sold Norfolk short?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance The White Paper and the potential of a deal for Norfolk is a real opportunity. We are currently going through the detail of the White Paper and will be beginning discussions with local partners and Government over the coming weeks. It is too early to say what the ‘Deal’ would look like for Norfolk as negotiations haven’t yet begun but I am sure Cllr Morpew and other opposition members will be supporting us in getting Norfolk the best deal possible</p>
	<p>Supplementary question from Cllr Mike Smith-Clare Will the Leader commit to work with me to explore how the Council can safeguard the future of Mandalay CIC at its current site, or identify alternative accommodation to ensure this vital community food bank continues to operate after March 2022?</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance The direct relationship with Mandalay Wellbeing CIC is managed via Great Yarmouth Borough Council, who we work in close partnership with. Mandalay Wellbeing CIC will still have direct support offers via the Norfolk Assistance Scheme that people can access if they need to.</p>
	<p>Supplementary question from Cllr Robert Colwell Planning Inspectorate guidelines for local councils states the pre-application stage should be used to express their views of local residents, groups and businesses. In West Norfolk it is obvious that public sentiment is very much against an incinerator due to previous public enquiry. Why were Norfolk County Council the only neighbouring local authority to the proposed Wisbech mega incinerator, not to engage fully in the public consultation, given that local authorities are “strongly encouraged” to.</p> <p>Response from the Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Governance We as an authority will respond if and when a planning application is lodged. We appreciate and note the responses of other LA’s and will make an appropriate response at the right time in the planning process.</p>

Appendix C

Supplementary question from Cllr Maxine Webb

The statistics quoted do not reveal what percentage of the 92% of appeals not heard by a judge are agreed in favour of the parent, before the date of the hearing, resulting in the appeal being withdrawn. However, my question was about the meeting the Cabinet Member was due to have. Please can he give an update on the outcome of this meeting and next steps?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Thank you for your follow up question. The meeting and discussion I had with officers to discuss this was effectively covered by the narrative in the answer. My apologies if the response did not make this clear