

Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Wednesday 23 September 2020**

Time: **10am**

Venue: **Virtual Meeting**

Pursuant to The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, the 19 August 2020 meeting of Norfolk County Council will be held using video conferencing.

The Scrutiny meeting will be broadcast live via this link:

<https://youtu.be/vMFQmSkdsj0>

Scrutiny Members and other attendees: DO NOT follow this link, you will be sent a separate link to join the meeting.

Membership:

Cllr Steve Morphew (Chair)
Cllr Alison Thomas (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Roy Brame	Cllr Joe Mooney
Cllr Emma Corlett	Cllr Judy Oliver
Cllr Phillip Duigan	Cllr Richard Price
Cllr Ron Hanton	Cllr Dan Roper
Cllr Chris Jones	Cllr Stefan Aquarone
	Cllr Hayden Thirtle

Parent Governor Representatives

Mr Giles Hankinson
Vacancy

Church Representatives

Ms Helen Bates
Mr Paul Dunning

A g e n d a

1 To receive apologies and details of any substitute members attending

2. Minutes

(Page 5)

To confirm the minutes from the Meetings held on 19 August 2020

3. Members to Declare any Interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency

5 Public Question Time

Fifteen minutes for questions from members of the public of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm on Friday 18 September 2020**. For guidance on submitting a public question, please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how->

6 Local Member Issues/Questions

Fifteen minutes for local member to raise issues of concern of which due notice has been given. Please note that all questions must be received by the Committee Team (committees@norfolk.gov.uk) by **5pm on Friday 18 September 2020**

7 The deadline for calling-in matters for consideration at this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee from the Cabinet meeting held on Monday 7 September 2020 was 4pm on Monday 14 September 2020

7A Call in: County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation (Page 14) response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631

8 Banham Poultry Covid 19 Outbreak (Page 31)

Report by the Director Public Health and the Head of Paid Service

9 Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22 (Page 38)

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services

10 Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee (Page 69)

Report by Executive Director of Strategy and Governance

11 Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme (Page 76)

Report by Executive Director of Strategy and Governance

Tom McCabe
Head of Paid Service
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DH

Date Agenda Published: 15 September 2020



Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 19 August 2020
at 10:00 on Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)**

Present:

Cllr Steve Morphew (Chair)
Cllr Alison Thomas (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Stefan Aquarone
Cllr Roy Brame
Chris Jones
Cllr Phillip Duigan
Cllr Ron Hanton

Cllr Judy Oliver
Cllr Richard Price
Cllr Dan Roper
Cllr Hayden Thirtle

Substitute Members present:

Cllr Brenda Jones for Cllr Emma Corlett
Cllr Penny Carpenter for Cllr Joe Mooney

Parent Governor Representative

Giles Hankinson

Also present:

Suzanne Baldwin
Debbie Bartlett
Harvey Bullen
James Bullion
Craig Chalmers
Caroline Clarke
Geoff Connell
James Dunne

Helen Edwards
Karen Haywood
Gary Heathcote
Andrew Jamieson
Sarah Jones

Tom McCabe
Fiona McDiarmid
Daniel Newbolt
Sara Tough
Tim Weller
James Wilson

Finance Business Partner (Adult Social Services)
Director of Strategy and Transformation, Adult Social Services
Director of Financial Management
Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Director of Community Social Work
Head of Governance and Regulatory Services
Director of IMT & Chief Digital Officer
Head of Communications - Assistant Director of Strategy & Governance
Director of Governance
Democratic Support and Scrutiny Manager
Director of Commissioning, Adult Social Services
Cabinet Member for Finance
Director of Commissioning, Partnerships and Resources, Children's Services
Head of Paid Service
Executive Director Strategy and Governance
Assistant Director, Children's Social Care
Executive Director of Children's Services
Head of Integrated Quality Assurance, Adult Social Services
Director of Quality and Transformation, Children's Services

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Emma Corlett (Cllr Brenda Jones substituting) and Cllr Joe Mooney (Cllr Penny Carpenter substituting)

2. Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 No Interests were declared.

4 Urgent Business

- 4.1 No urgent business was discussed.

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1.1 One public question was received from Mrs Marilyn Heath; the answer was circulated and published online before the meeting: [see appendix A](#).

- 5.1.2 Mrs Heath asked a supplementary question:

- Mrs Heath quoted Government advice on Coronavirus stating that Local Authorities were expected to adopt and enable the most flexible use of direct payments to manage issues arising from Covid-19. She noted that this could allow direct payment users to access equipment during lockdown, but that thousands of pounds of unspent funding was being clawed back by Norfolk County Council while reasonable requests for equipment by people in shielding, as low as £20, had been refused as they were not outlined in a care plan.
- Mrs Heath asked how care plans from before the Covid-19 outbreak were relevant in the current situation and how decisions taken in August 2020 could help people who applied in April and May 2020, taking into account the care plan easement guide.

- 5.1.3 The Executive Director of Adult Social Services responded that Norfolk had incorporated the additional Covid-19 guidance into its Care Act procedures once the guidance was published. The question raised by Mrs Heath was a matter of individual assessment, taking a case by case view of whether equipment requested was suitable to meet an individual's needs. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services expected staff to take a flexible approach towards previous care plans during the pandemic and was happy to follow up about individual cases with the Disability Network Norfolk Group (DNNG).

6. Local Member Issues/Questions

- 6.1 No local Member questions were received.

7. Call In

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

8. Covid-19 -Support for Shielded and Vulnerable People in Communities

8.1 The Committee received the report focussing outstanding issues relating to the response from Children's Services and Adult Social Care to support for children and vulnerable people in Norfolk communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

8.2.1 The Committee received a presentation by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care; [see Appendix B](#):

- The Social care national position, such as testing in care homes, was arrived at in April 2020, a month after the NHS position was developed.
- Work was undertaken with care providers to ensure arrangements for paying providers and additional capacity available across the Norfolk system.
- The number of safeguarding reports had decreased, and it was now expected that they would increase again.
- Integration of software would be looked at moving forward

8.2.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Chair queried what effect the later response of the Social Care system than the NHS had on Norfolk. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services replied that although the impact of Covid-19 in Norfolk Care Homes was lower than nationally, the Norfolk care system was still impacted by the later response. As people discharged from hospital were not tested for Covid-19 until a month after the NHS started testing, this had an impact on care homes. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services felt the Council and the NHS worked together well to help the response during this time.
- The Chair asked for information on integrated working. The Director of Commissioning, Adult Social Services, replied that a tracker was in place to look at data across the local system, and through integrated working it had been possible to prevent care providers from running out of PPE or collapsing for financial reasons. Norfolk care providers and the Norfolk Care Home Association felt support given during the pandemic, such as weekly letters sent to providers, vlogs, and meetings held to hear the voice of providers, was good.
- Reflecting on lessons learned since the start of the pandemic, the Director of Commissioning, Adult Social Services, noted that a good infrastructure was in place across the system and the relationship with the care market had improved; Officers aimed to maintain this relationship after the pandemic by continuing the care provider meetings to hear the voice of providers.
- Officers were asked how quality of care was monitored during the pandemic; monitoring visits were not possible during the pandemic, however the care quality team now provided virtual support, virtual visits and virtual walks around care homes. Information continued to come in from visitors making window visits to care homes and was increasing as lockdown measures were relaxed. Ways to safely re-start monitoring and Care Quality Commission visits would be looked at.
- The main cause of Covid-19 outbreaks in Norfolk Care Homes was queried. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services reported that each outbreak in a care home was looked at individually but outbreaks early in the pandemic were mostly caused by hospital discharges without testing. Another cause was asymptomatic transmission by staff and family members, or outbreaks in communities where

staff worked. There had been an issue of staff moving between care homes; Norfolk County Council gave Care Grant funding to care homes to pay staff the wages they would receive working between different sites, to reduce movement of staff. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services agreed to provide Cllr Roper with detailed data on the causes of outbreaks in Norfolk Care homes.

- Further clarification given around the phrase “protective ring around staff”; officers clarified that guidance written on what to do in a pandemic, the care badge developed with input from staff, the national “clap for carers” and resources allocated to Adult Social Services by Government had all contributed to a protective “ring” of support around the care sector.
- Adult Social Care were preparing for a second wave of Covid-19 as well as the usual winter pressures; resources had been allocated to providers to pay “on-block”, in advance and to not charge service users; to continue this for a longer period resources would be needed from national Government.
- Officers had taken part in Clinical Commissioning Group research which included dedicated work around focus groups with experience in social care. Feedback from the care home staff, managers and residents focus group would be available by October 2020. The Your Norfolk panel were seeking feedback on impact, messaging, and how recovery and resilience was being handled and the Making It Real Group were giving feedback on the impact of the pandemic on people with learning disabilities.
- Officers were asked how staff self-isolating due to “track and tracing” would impact on workforce availability moving forward; Officers were planning for the “new normal”, incorporating steps to limit the transmission of Covid-19. Day care services were considering operating at 50% capacity and zoning and cohorting guidance was due to be released to support safe working in care settings which would likely reduce occupancy to 75%. Officers would work with the NHS to see what staff capacity would be needed to cope with the winter pressures and would look across the care sector to see where additional capacity would be needed if there was a second wave. Additional capacity could be provided by setting up Nightingale care home and ensuring enough reablement and home support was available.
- The Annual Winter Plan would be taken to People and Communities Select Committee before and then Cabinet in Autumn 2020; there was an 8% vacancy and 35% staff turnover rate, which was doubled for the impact of Covid-19. Early data for regular testing of care home staff and residents was not yet available
- The Executive Director of Adult Social Services reported that officers had worked with care sector employers and unions to ensure there were routes to raise concerns through a whistleblowing approach. The importance of the public knowing how to report concerns was also raised and the Chair **asked** for a briefing note on this to be circulated to Members of the Committee
- It was acknowledged that there were some scenarios where face to face working could not be avoided; routes were in place for staff to raise any concerns they had, and advice and guidance on PPE use was available and updated regularly. It was advised that social distancing must be carried out where possible, with face to face contacts being made only where necessary
- People were being assessed in the community, and assessments in care homes to help people move on to their next step of care could be carried out using technology; there was potential for some assessments to be delayed.
- Support for people being cared for by family members was queried and tribute was paid to unpaid carers. As services were reinstated, respite was one of the services being prioritised. Emergency respite had continued during the

pandemic and people for who care breakdown was a risk had been prioritised. A better advice and information service for carers was now available by phone than before the pandemic.

- The Head of Paid Service reported on analysis from the Royal Academy looking at the possibility of a second wave of Covid-19. It was thought this would most likely begin through September and October 2020 with a peak predicted in January-March 2021 but was still being debated. The second wave would predicted to be longer than the first but with a lower peak. Alongside this a mild winter flu could cause excess deaths in the single thousands and a bad winter flu season could cause more than 30,000 excess deaths.
- An update on lessons learned was due to be taken to Cabinet in November 2020

8.3.1 The Committee received a report from the Executive Director of Children's Services; [see Appendix C:](#)

- At the height of lockdown, the number of referrals to Children's Service was half of expected. It was not believed that abuse and neglect decreased during lockdown, therefore that this was due to missed demand
- Children's Services were expecting a spike in demand when schools reopened for a wider cohort of pupils in September 2020, as were all Local Authorities. It was possible that there could be around 500 more referrals per month than usual. It was noted however that only around half of referrals led to ongoing casework, and the spike would be temporary, likely to reduce by spring 2021.
- If the spike in demand was significant, workers could be redeployed to increase capacity; modelling has been carried out to identify that in this case around 45 additional social care qualified workers would be needed. Support via community-based support and early help was also an important part of the response to a possible surge in demand
- A training programme would be developed for schools to help staff raise awareness and identify trauma; information advice and guidance would be improved so that families and professionals could access all information needed.

8.3.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The challenges of completing quality assessments in timescale during the pandemic was queried; the Executive Director of Children's Services replied that work had to be carried out differently during lockdown, but in some cases, this had resulted in a greater level of family engagement. She noted that assessing some elements of risk was difficult without visiting a family home
- There had been less children coming into care during the pandemic; if the surge resulted in an increase in children needing to come into care then the demand and risks would be evaluated to identify how best to respond. The Director of Quality and Transformation, Children's Services, noted that one-year prior 125 more children were in care whose needs could be met; in-house care provision was strong and in-house fostering provision was being strengthened to improve the Council's resilience in this area
- Projections of the spike in demand were modelled on a worst-case scenario. Work had been carried out to understand the staff cohort so that if redeployment was needed, a small number of staff could be redeployed from each service.
- The Vice-Chair asked about staff members' response about possible redeployment in the case of a surge in demand; the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, replied that in the case of a surge in demand staff would be chosen who were willing to be redeployed and who would provide a good service to children and families

- Officers were asked about the impact of the possible surge in demand on case-loads and management oversight; the Assistant Director, Children's Social Care, reported that a 4.88% increase had been calculated as the maximum increase in case load before redeployment of staff would be needed, impacted by the duration of the increase. Approximately 19 full-time staff may need to be redeployed across all teams and localities, which would have a low impact on managers supervisory requirements. In the event of a surge in demand, support staff could also provide more practical support to frontline staff in the short term.
- Officers were asked what had been learned from the first spike that would impact practice in the event of a second spike of Covid-19. The Executive Director of Children's Services replied that in order to create a protective system for children it was important for schools to remain open and only close as a last resort.
- The Chair asked how vulnerability of children could be assessed during a pandemic spike; the Executive Director of Children's Services reported that research which informed practice around determinants which increased levels of risk to children and families in normal times, and whether these would be increased by the pandemic had been looked at and used. Having no 'line of sight' to children and families could also increase the impact on the family.
- Children and young people had been asked how the pandemic had affected them through the Family Voice Group, SENSational Families, Young Carer Groups and others; packages of support had been put together for when children returned to school. Children's Services were working on a project with Research in Practice from September 2020; as many families as possible would be surveyed about the pandemic to see how to see how resilience had felt for them.
- A work stream was in place for young carers, with young carers feeding into it; young carers had fed back their fears around social distancing/peers not social distancing on the return to school and the potential impact of this
- It was noted that the pandemic's effect on the economy and employment could cause an increase in referrals to family support and social care
- The Executive Director of Children's Services reported that the county lines model had adapted during the pandemic and was now more online; nationally and internationally, gangs were going underground, and online exploitation was going up therefore the Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Constabulary responses to this were being looked at. The true impact would not be seen until children went back to school.

8.4 **RESOLVED**

- To **THANK** officers for their presentations and thank all staff for their work since the start of the pandemic
- To **NOTE** the report and presentations given during the meeting

9. **Covid-19 – Norfolk County Council - Internal processes**

- 9.1 The Committee received a report setting out internal processes that have supported Members and the democratic functions of the County Council during the Covid-19 crisis, including governance arrangements, ICT support and communications, both internal and external to the Council.
- 9.2.1 The Committee viewed a presentation by the Head of Governance and Regulatory Services; [see Appendix D](#):
- There was a requirement to deliver legal and accessible meetings; due to the dangers of returning to meetings in County Hall and inability to provide socially

distanced meetings there, it was decided to provide virtual meetings

- the publication of the Government Legislation, “Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020” enabled virtual Committee meetings to be carried out.
- The IMT (Information Management Technology) Team provided technological expertise to set up the virtual meetings and helped Members with connectivity.
- Democratic Services set up group and 1:1 training for Members, Member support and how-to guides to support individual Members with use of technology to participate in virtual Meetings
- Virtual Committee meetings were now streamed live via YouTube
- Information provided to Members was regular and consistent through weekly updates and a single point of contact was put in place for Members for queries on the pandemic; weekly updates would continue to be provided to Members

9.2.2 The Chair noted that the weekly group leaders’ meetings and weekly information provided by Norfolk County Council to Members during the pandemic had been beneficial

9.3.1 The Head of Communications, Assistant Director of Strategy & Governance, gave a presentation on the approach from communications; [see Appendix E](#):

- The Communications Strategy and Activity Plans were aligned with the Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) principles and County Council
- Communication cells and roles were set up working with the NRF
- 5 key principles were set out around trust, speed, accuracy, availability and responsiveness
- Each department was given a dedicated communications support staff member who attended their daily meetings
- An internal communications working group was established with HR
- Daily briefings were held during the pandemic
- The Norfolk County Council website was used as a one stop shop for all information as it had a dedicated information hub
- The Communications team worked with InTrans to translate information and guidance throughout the pandemic and shared this with colleagues across the system
- MyNet was launched for consistent messaging for County Council staff
- Use of animation would be looked at moving forward
- Clear and open media channels were set up at the start of the pandemic to ensure an open and transparent dialogue was maintained
- Information was shared digitally so it could be shared with all partners and to ensure consistency of information across all partners
- New tools such as sentiment analysis allowed the team to look at trends on social media and work with this information

9.3.2 The following point were discussed and noted:

- The use of British Sign Language in briefings was suggested and the Head of Communications - Assistant Director of Strategy & Governance **agreed** to take this back; translated messages included those in British Sign Language were being looked at for information and messages moving forward.
- Officers were asked what was being done to support the public to engage with virtual meetings; The Head of Governance and Regulatory Services **agreed** to

find out how many members of the public watched virtual meetings on YouTube. Meetings and the YouTube links to watch them were publicised, and there was good coverage in the Eastern Daily Press. There had been no increase in the number of members of the public asking questions to committees

9.4 RESOLVED

- To **THANK** officers for the presentations and information
- To **NOTE** the report and presentations

10. Briefing on Covid-19 and Strategic and financial planning

10.1.1 The Committee received the report from the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services setting out a briefing on the Council's current and future financial position to help the Committee better understand the Council's strategic financial planning process and undertake a more effective role in its scrutiny

10.1.2 Cllr Jamison, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report:

- There had been a reduction in the level of overspend to £7.784m due to the receipt of 3 rounds of grant funding from Government, but Covid-19 costs were around £62.288m as at end period 3
- Each spending department was being looked at including the impact of Covid-19 on their spending to date
- Effects may be facilitated by further Government intervention and this continued to be sought from the Government
- No impact was anticipated of a second spike but the Treasury recognised that this may not be the case

10.2 The following points were discussed and noted

- There would likely be an increase in people seeking discounted council tax but the full impact of this was not yet known
- There had been an assumption of an increase in tax base based on new properties being built; due to the effects of the pandemic this would be lower
- There would be a roll-on effect on delivery of a balanced budget in the next financial year because of the impact of Covid-19
- Since early forecasts, the loss of savings was not as bad as expected; Adult Social Services had seen a reduction of £2m in their predicted overspend. It was likely however that the impact would be seen over a longer term
- The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that the overspend of £7.784m for the year 2020-21 was predicted outturn

10.3 RESOLVED

- To **NOTE** the report

11. Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel

11.1 The Committee received a report asking them to appoint 3 County Council members (2 Conservative and 1 Labour) to represent the County Council on the Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel.

11.2.1 The Chair proposed that the existing Labour representative on the Sub-Panel would continue

11.2.2 The Vice-Chair, seconded by Cllr Penny Carpenter, proposed Cllr Haydn Thirtle and Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris as the Conservative representatives.

11.3 **RESOLVED**

•To **APPOINT**

- Cllr Emma Corlett as the Labour Group representative on the Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel.
- Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris and Cllr Haydn Thirtle as the Conservative Group representatives on the Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel.

12. **Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme**

12.1 The Committee received a draft of the forward work programme.

12.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- Cllr Chris Jones asked if Members could see the forward work plan that was in place at the start of 2020 to ensure that any reports could be brought forward that had been previously planned
- Members discussed the possibility of pre-scrutiny. The Chair clarified that Cabinet were not open to pre-scrutiny at that time
- A discussion was held about the Children's Services scrutiny sub-panel; the Vice-Chair felt that more challenge should be provided to Children's Services. The Chair agreed that more work was needed on the sub-panel; the Committee needed to agree the size of the sub-panel as well as its remit and he hoped that progress on this could be reported to Committee members by the end of that week

10.2 **RESOLVED**

- That the Committee **AGREE** its forward work programme as set out in a report by the Executive Director of Strategy and Governance.

The meeting concluded at 13:39

Chair

Scrutiny Committee

Decision making report title:	Call in: County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631
Date of meeting:	23 September 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Graham Plant (Cabinet member for Growing the Economy)
Responsible Director:	Tom McCabe, Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
Introduction This report relates to the call-in of item 14 of the Cabinet papers of 7 September 2020 entitled, 'County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631'	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. At the meeting on 7 September 2020 Cabinet considered a report entitled 'County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631' which recommended that they:

Determine the County Council's statutory consultee response to this planning application, as highway authority i.e. to support or object to the proposal, and to set out the reasons for this determination.

A copy of the report is attached at Appendix B.

- 1.2. The draft minute extract from the Cabinet meeting on 7 September is as follows:

- 1.3. **14 County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631**
- 14.1 Cabinet received the report by the Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services asking Cabinet to determine the County Council's statutory consultee response to the planning application number 2018/2631. The application was made on behalf of Ben Burgess (a national farm machinery company) for the relocation of their headquarters. The new site would be in Swainsthorpe to be served from a roundabout on the A140 which was part of the national Major Route Network (MRN).
- 14.2 The Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services drew attention to paragraph 2.3.7 of the report which stated that the Local Member, Cllr Colin Foulger, did not support the proposal set out in the planning application. The

Executive Director advised that Cllr Foulger had contacted him and clarified that he had never stated verbally, or in writing, that he supported nor opposed the proposed development and asked Cabinet to delete that paragraph from the report.

The Executive Director highlighted that the decision on the planning application remained with South Norfolk District Council and that the report was to determine the County Council's consultation response. Cabinet was asked to weigh up the relatively narrow highways view on the junction, versus the broader impact of the development on the Norfolk economy.

- 14.3 The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy asked Cabinet to confirm it agreed to remove paragraph 2.3.7 of the report, as highlighted by the Executive Director in paragraph 14.2 above). Cabinet **agreed** to remove the paragraph.

The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy introduced the report, during which the following points were noted:

- Cabinet was being asked to determine Norfolk County Council's statutory consultee response to the planning application as the Highway Authority, ie to support or object the proposal and set out its reasons for the determination.
- A planning application had been submitted by Ben Burgess, a farm machinery company, to relocate their headquarters from Norwich to Swainsthorpe, with direct access onto the A140.
- As statutory highway authority, Norfolk County Council had responded to the original application recommending refusal in 2019. Since the refusal, an amended application had been submitted and Cabinet was being given the opportunity to consider the economic benefit of the proposal, alongside the highway considerations.
- the Highway Authority had been engaged in discussion with Ben Burgess before the application was submitted, during the application process and after the formal response had been made.
- The application was submitted for a new junction on the A140 part of the MRN serving the development only.
- The Highways Authority had recommended refusal.
- An amended application had been submitted and officers had considered the revised information and felt the application did not overcome the original recommendation of refusal and that an additional junction on the A140 would not be welcome. Officers had acknowledged that a roundabout was the only form of acceptable junction for the site.
- Cabinet had been asked to consider the proposal from an economic benefit to Norfolk viewpoint, which was not a consideration for highways officers, but was a consideration for Cabinet.
- Ben Burgess was a key participant in the agrifood sector and supported the agriculture sector and the wider economy of Norfolk and there would be a number of economic benefits of the company moving from its current location, including:
 - Expanding and attracting new customers, whilst maintaining its current workforce.
 - Increasing jobs and apprenticeships.

- The business would be able to fully embrace new technology as the location was on the A140, connected to the A47 and A11, part of the Norwich-Cambridge tech corridor.
- The economic benefit of an application was not a direct consideration for the highways authority, although it was a consideration for Cabinet. Economic Development officers in Community & Environmental Services had considered the implications and for the purpose of the report, considered the economic benefits viable.

In summing up, the Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy said that Ben Burgess provided significant services to the farming sector, both regionally and nationally and if they were not able to successfully relocate in Norfolk, there was a risk they would seek another location outside Norfolk, leading to job losses. He considered Cabinet should not allow this to happen.

- 14.4 The Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy proposed the following recommendation, which was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Manager:
- Cabinet considers that the economic impact of the proposals alongside the safety and appropriateness of a roundabout on the A140 overcomes objections as a highways authority and we therefore raise no highways objections to the planning proposal.
- 14.5 The Cabinet Member for Commercial Services & Asset Management supported the proposed recommendation, adding that Ben Burgess was a Norfolk company which had expanded its business to cover a large slice of East Anglia. He added that there was a danger that if they weren't allowed to develop the site, they would move their headquarters outside Norfolk, which would damage the Norfolk economy.
- 14.6 The Cabinet Member for Communities & Partnerships supported the proposal as it would support the local economy and safeguard the employment of staff in Norfolk. With the current situation, proposals that enabled people to keep their jobs should be supported. She added that she considered the roundabout was a suitable option.
- 14.7 The Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation & Performance also supported the recommendation as he felt it was important to keep the company headquarters in Norfolk.
- 14.8 The Chairman summed up that a recommendation had been made and seconded and asked Cabinet to agree the recommendation.
- 14.9 **RESOLVED:**
- Cabinet considers that the economic impact of the proposals alongside the safety and appropriateness of a roundabout on the A140 overcome objections as a highway authority and we therefore raise no objections to the planning proposal.
- 14.10 **Evidence & Reasons for Decision.**

See section 2 of the report.

14.11 **Alternative Options**

Cabinet could determine to support or object to the proposal and should set out the reasons for this determination.

If Cabinet feel that further information is needed in order to make a determination, we could request an extension of the deadline for making a response to South Norfolk District Council to enable this. Note that the original deadline for response was 4 September and that has been extended to enable Cabinet to debate this issue.

2. Call in

- 2.1. Notification was received on 14 September 2020 that Cllr Dan Roper, supported by Cllrs Brian Watkins, Tim East and Steffan Aquarone wished to call in the decision of the Cabinet relating to item 14 – **County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631**. The reasons for call in are attached at Appendix A. The Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer has confirmed that it is valid under the requirements of the Constitution.
- 2.2. The final list of witnesses to be invited to attend will be agreed by the Chair and those calling in this decision.

3. Background Papers

- 3.1. [Cabinet agenda from meeting held on 7 September 2020](#)
[Cabinet minutes from meeting held on 7 September 2020](#)

Officer Contact

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

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

Call in Request Form

This form is to be completed and signed by any Member of the Council, with the support of at least 3 other Members and must be returned to Democratic Services at committees@norfolk.gov.uk within 5 working days of the Cabinet decisions being published or, if the decision has been taken by an individual member or Chief Officer, within five working days of the decision being published under the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Appendix 13 of the Constitution. Where education matters are involved, the Parent Governor and Church representatives together count as one Member.

Please telephone the Head of Democratic Services on 01603 222620 or Democratic Support and Scrutiny Manager on 01603 228913 to make them aware that the call-in form is on its way. You will receive a confirmation email once it has been received.

A Call-In request will only be valid if it has been received in person by the above people within the 5 working day deadline which will be specified in the decision letter. The form may be emailed or hand delivered.

Please note that the call-in procedure does not apply to urgent decisions.

Decision Title and minute number
County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631

Decision taken by (i.e. Cabinet, Cabinet Member, Chief Officer)
Cabinet

Date of Decision
07 September 2020

	Reasons for call in	Highlight which of the following apply and explain why you consider the process/principle has not been followed by the decision maker (as appropriate)

1.	The decision is not in accordance with the budget and policy framework	
2.	The decision is a key decision and it has not been taken in accordance with the Constitution.	
3.	There is evidence that the principles of decision-making (as set out in Article 12 of the Constitution) have not been complied with. These principles are:	
	a) Actions agreed will be in proportion with what the Council wants to achieve.	No evaluation or assessment of what the Council wants to achieve was provided to substantiate the actions agreed, so it is impossible to say that the actions are in proportion with Council objectives in either Highways or Economic Development. Furthermore there is nothing in the report that sets out any evidence to underpin the conclusions reached.
	b) Appropriate consultation will have been carried out and decisions will take account of its results and any professional advice given by Officers.	At Page 166 the report presented to Cabinet stated, "a new junction on the A140 would be contrary to the highway authority's guidance which clearly states that a new junction on a strategic route and in particular on the Major Route Network would attract a recommendation of refusal." The amended plans had not been changed sufficiently to overcome this position. Instead the report contained only a "narrow highway view" on the suitability of roundabouts as road junctions. The full professional advice given by officers does not seem to have been taken into account.
	c) Decisions will reflect the spirit and requirements of Equalities and Human Rights legislation.	
	d) The presumption that information on all decisions made by the Council, the Executive	

	and Committees should be public with only those issues that need to be exempt by virtue of the Access to Information Rules will be taken in private.	
	e) Decisions will be clear about what they aim to achieve and the results that can be expected.	

Detailed reasons for call in or any additional information in support of the call in that you wish to submit

The report said that the Cabinet determines the County Council's response, as Highway Authority, to the consultation on this planning application. Yet the decision wasn't made as a Highway authority, it was made on other grounds.

The LGA guide *Probity in Planning for Councillors and Officers* suggests that councillors should be ready to explain why they have not accepted the officer's recommendation and that officers should be given an opportunity to explain such a decision's implications, including those for any appeal and award of costs.

It says, "Councillors should be prepared to explain in full their planning reasons for not agreeing with the officer's recommendation. Pressure should never be put on officers to 'go away and sort out the planning reasons'. The officer should also be given an opportunity to explain the implications of the contrary decision, including an assessment of a likely appeal outcome, and chances of a successful award of costs against the council, should one be made."

The Cabinet did not follow this procedure.

Please use the space below to add any further comments. You may wish to consider:

- **The outcome you would like to see as a result of this decision being called in**
- **Any further information that the Scrutiny Committee might wish to consider when assessing this call in.***
- **Any Cabinet Members/Officers you would like to attend the meeting.***
- Please note this will be at the Chair of Scrutiny Committee's discretion

There was also Cabinet deleting a sentence in a report because a local member says he never said something! Did he or not? A Cabinet member not the individual Councillor read this out.

We would like the Scrutiny Committee to

1. Seek additional information on what the council's highway view currently is on the scheme (bearing in mind press quotes after the meeting)
2. Ascertain where in the council's economic strategy it says that this development must be at this place with this exact roundabout
3. Ask what requests were made to highway officers by Cabinet members on this matter
4. And, notwithstanding the above, refer this decision back to cabinet for reconsideration based on a report that addresses:
The evidence cabinet use to come to their decision that should be included in the report and published in full or with reasons for not publishing it;
The weighting given in determining the balance of evidence; and
The justification for determining one option over another, taking into account the advice of officers.

We would all like cabinet members that spoke on this issue and the officers with responsibility for determining the Council's highways view to give evidence.

Although it is not a constitutional requirement you are advised to speak to the Chair of Scrutiny Committee before submitting your call in. If you wish to record any comments from the Chair please insert them below

The Chair of Scrutiny has been consulted and believes this to be a matter of legitimate concern.

Name (please print)	Signature	Date
Dan Roper	Dan Roper	14/09/2020

In accordance with the Constitution you must sign this form and obtain the signatures of at least three other Members of the Council:

Name (please print)	Signature	Date
Brian Watkins	Brian Watkins	14/09/2020
Tim East	Tim East	14/09/2020
Steffan Aquarone	Steffan Aquarone	14/09/2020

I have considered the above call in and confirm that it is valid under the requirements of the Constitution.

I have considered the above call in and confirm that it is not valid under the requirements of the Constitution for the following reasons.

In coming to this conclusion, I have consulted the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.

Signed by the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer Helen Edwards

Date 14 September 2020

Please return to Democratic Services at committees@norfolk.gov.uk

Cabinet

Decision making report title:	County Council Highway Authority - Planning Consultation response to South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631
Date of meeting:	7 September 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Graham Plant (Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy)
Responsible Director:	Tom McCabe (Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services)
Is this a key decision?	No
If this is a key decision, date added to the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.	
<p>Introduction from Cabinet Member</p> <p>The proposals from Ben Burgess to relocate their headquarters provide clear economic benefits to Norfolk and represent an investment in the Norfolk economy and infrastructure at what is proving to be one of the most challenging times in economic terms.</p> <p>In particular, the proposal will support both the agriculture sector in Norfolk, as well as supporting the challenging rural economy.</p> <p>I welcome Cabinet's consideration of the proposals set out in the planning application.</p> <p>Executive Summary</p> <p>This report asks Cabinet to determine the County Council's statutory consultee response to planning application number 2018/2631. The application was made on behalf of Ben Burgess (a national farm machinery company) for the relocation of their headquarters currently in Norwich. The new site would be in Swainsthorpe to be served from roundabout on the A140 which is part of the national Major Route Network (MRN).</p> <p>The views of relevant officers and the guidance used to assess the application are detailed in the report.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>1. To determine the County Council's statutory consultee response to this planning application, as highway authority i.e. to support or object to the proposal, and to set out the reasons for this determination.</p>	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. A planning application has been submitted to South Norfolk District Council, as the relevant Planning Authority. The County Council has been consulted on this application and has a statutory duty, as local highway authority, to respond to consultations on planning applications from Local Planning Authorities.
- 1.2. In this case, Cabinet wanted to ensure that they had the opportunity to consider the economic benefits of the proposal alongside the highway considerations. Therefore, Cabinet will consider the proposals and determine the response.

2. Proposal

- 2.1. It is proposed that Cabinet determine the County Council's response as Highway Authority to the consultation on this planning application. Relevant information for Cabinet to consider is set out below.

2.2. The planning application

- 2.2.1. The planning application has been made on behalf of Ben Burgess (a national farm machinery company) for the location of their new headquarters. This includes provision of an agricultural, horticultural and construction vehicle and machinery repair, retail and education hub with office accommodation and areas for internal and external storage and external areas for best practice demonstration purposes. The application proposes that access will be via a new roundabout on the A140 which is part of the national Major Route Network (MRN).
- 2.2.2. A copy of the consultation documents from South Norfolk District Council, to which Cabinet are asked to determine the highway authority's response, are available to view at <https://info.south-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

2.3. Officer highway authority consideration

- 2.3.1. The Major and Estates Development Team in CES deals with hundreds of major planning application consultations of various types (residential, employment and infrastructure related) across the county each year. Each application is not only assessed by the case officer but also referred to Development Team to ensure consistent consideration of highway safety, network impacts, maintenance impacts and any potential issues around design of highways & transport infrastructure.
- 2.3.2. NCC was initially consulted by South Norfolk District Council (SNDC) on 8 January 2019 regarding planning application number 2018/2631. This application included the proposal for access to be via a new roundabout on the A140.

Officers engaged with the applicant before the application was submitted. Officers, in these pre-application discussions, informed the applicant that a new junction on the A140 would be contrary to the highway authority's guidance

which clearly states that a new junction on a strategic route and in particular on the Major Route Network would attract a recommendation of refusal. During these discussions various options were considered including a new roundabout which incorporated an existing junction, and which would overcome any potential recommendations of refusal.

However, when the application was submitted, the access proposal was for a new junction (in the form of a roundabout) which would only serve the development. Therefore, after much consideration, officers recommended refusal to South Norfolk District Council on the following grounds:-

“The proposed development would lead to the creation of a new access on a stretch of classified highway of nationally strategic importance which carries significant traffic movements, usually at speed. Furthermore, the vehicular movements associated with the use of the access would lead to conflict and interference with the passage of through vehicles and introduce a further point of possible traffic conflict particularly with the introduction of slow-moving traffic. Contrary to South Norfolk District Council’s Development Plan Policy DM 3.11.”

- 2.3.3. Officers then further engaged with the applicant to explore other potential solutions. Discussions centred on the potential for a roundabout junction which would replace an existing junction and serve the development, and which would be in accordance with guidance. We understand from the applicant that these options are not possible, primarily due to third party land ownership.
- 2.3.4. On 13 August 2020, an amended application was submitted on behalf of Ben Burgess. The access proposals via a new roundabout remain unchanged from the January application.
- 2.3.5. Officers have given the proposed access arrangements further consideration and do not consider that they address the points in the original consultation response set out in para 2.4.
- 2.3.6. Officers considered the relevant guidance (see Appendix A) in formulating the view that the introduction of a new junction on the A140 as set out in the planning application would have a detrimental impact on the free flow of traffic on the A140 between the new Hempnall roundabout and the A140/A47 junction at Harford. Considering the investment in the A140 which seeks to improve journey times and reduce accidents along this section of MRN, officers consider that a new junction would undermine efforts to improve the A140 relative to a proposal that offers little highway benefit by reason of not being located at an existing junction.
- 2.3.7. The Local Member, Cllr Colin Foulger, does not support the proposal set out in the planning application.
- 2.4. **Safety and view of the Head of Profession**
 - 2.4.1. To enable Cabinet to have access to all relevant information to assess this application, the views of the Director of Highways of Waste have been sought on

the proposal. The Director of Highways and Waste is the Council's Head of Profession for highways and civil engineering and holds the relevant qualifications and experience.

- 2.4.2. In particular, irrespective of the specific guidance considered above, the Director of Highways and Waste has reviewed the planning application and considered whether the proposed access arrangements via the roundabout configuration proposed can be considered as safe. The view of the Director of Highways and Waste is that the correct form of junction on this type of road with the current and forecast traffic flow volumes is a roundabout junction. Providing this roundabout can be designed to comply with the latest national requirements specified in the national Standards for Highways, and in particular the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, then it can be considered safe. As highlighted earlier in this report, the preference remains to have a single roundabout junction serving the proposed development and the Stoke Lane junction, both in terms of network management, road safety and to comply with the Council's current Safe and Sustainable Guidance for developers. However, if this cannot be achieved, on balance a stand-alone roundabout constructed to the current design standards will be a safe form of junction

2.5. **Economic benefits**

- 2.5.1. The applicant maintains that the economic benefit of the application is such that it outweighs any concerns that the highway authority has.

- 2.5.2. Economic benefit is not a direct consideration for the highway authority but is a consideration for Cabinet). Economic Development officers in CES have considered the information supplied in the planning application and, for the purposes of this report, have considered other potential economic benefits as follows:

- Agri-food is a key sector in a number of key local strategies and plans:
 - The [New Anglia Economic Strategy](#) and [Local Industrial Strategy](#), its [Covid19 Restart Plan](#) and the [Norfolk Rural Strategy](#)
 - Ben Burgess are a key player in the agri-food sector and wider rural economy, and so are represented on the Board of the New Anglia Agri-Food Industry Council, which oversees delivery of actions to grow and develop the sector.
 - Ben Burgess supports the agricultural sector, and wider Norfolk rural economy, both of which are even more important in light of Brexit and the post-Covid19 recovery of the county.
- There would be a number of economic benefits of Ben Burgess moving from their current location, both to the company and the wider economy:
 - A move would allow the business to expand and attract new customers and retain the current skilled workforce.
 - The proposal may also provide an increase in the number of jobs from 95 to approximately 122, with an opportunity to expand apprenticeships.

- Expansion would strengthen the supply chain that supports farmers and producers in close proximity to their operations, which is vital to the future competitiveness of the agricultural sector in Greater Norwich.
- The business will be able to fully embrace new technology and train and demonstrate to existing and potential customers the capabilities of the new machinery and technologies – a key objective of the Norfolk Rural Strategy.
- Linked to this, a new innovation and education hub is proposed, to enable Ben Burgess to assist rural businesses in south Norfolk to fulfil their competitiveness and achieve the most out of new technologies.
- The proposed location also has good access to the A11, and fits with the aims of the Norwich-Cambridge Tech Corridor strategy, to drive clean, efficient, technology-based economic activity
- In summary, Ben Burgess provide significant services to the sector, both regionally and nationally. If they are not able to successfully relocate within Norfolk there is a risk that they have to seek a location outside Norfolk, meaning that the jobs and economic benefits of the operation will be lost.

3. Impact of the Proposal

- 3.1. As set out in Section 2 above.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

- 4.1. As set out in Section 2 above.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1. Cabinet could determine to support or object to the proposal and should set out the reasons for this determination.
- 5.2. If Cabinet feel that further information is needed in order to make a determination, we could request an extension of the deadline for making a response to South Norfolk District Council to enable this. Note that the original deadline for response was 4 September and that has been extended to enable Cabinet to debate this issue.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications for the County Council.

7. Resource Implications

- 7.1. **Staff:** There are no staff implications.
- 7.2. **Property:** There are no property implications.

7.3. **IT:** There are no IT implications.

8. Other Implications

8.1. **Legal Implications** There are no legal implications.

8.2. **Human Rights implications:** There are no implications

8.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** The highway authority is a technical consultee in the planning process. The decision maker is the Local Planning Authority and so the requirement for an Equality Assessment lies in this instance with South Norfolk Council. However, if approved, any detailed design of the roundabout, would require an Equality Assessment to be undertaken as part of an associated Highway Safety Audit.

8.4. **Health and Safety implications:** The view of the Head of Profession and the Highways Development officers is very clear that a roundabout is the only acceptable solution at this location.

8.5. **Sustainability implications:** The proposed development is remote and would be significantly reliant on access by vehicular mode. Whilst a footway is proposed to the adjacent village and bus stops, there is unlikely to be any significant demand for use.

9. Risk Implications/Assessment

9.1. As set out in section 2 above.

10. Select Committee comments

10.1. N/A

11. Recommendations

11.1. **1. To determine the County Council's statutory consultee response to this planning application, as highway authority i.e. to support or object to the proposal, and to set out the reasons for this determination.**

12. Background Papers

12.1. South Norfolk Planning Application 2018/2631 documents - <https://info.south-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

12.2. [Safe, Sustainable Development: Aims and Guidance notes for Local Highway Authority requirements in Development Management](#)

Officer Contact

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

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Extract from “Safe, Sustainable Development: Aims and Guidance notes for Local Highway Authority requirements in Development Management”

Aim 7 To ensure the Major Road Network and Principal Road Network can safely cater for sustainable development, which, if not suitably addressed, would otherwise cause fundamental road safety and accessibility concerns.

7.1 Need

Outside of urban areas with high connectivity, the Major Road Network (MRN) and Principal Road Network (PRN) have a strategic role to play in carrying traffic, usually at speed. Development in the vicinity of these roads or their junctions can compromise the ability for people to travel more sustainably whilst also prejudicing the ability of strategic routes to carry traffic freely and safely. For these reasons the MRN and PRN are additionally designated 'Corridors of Movement' (CoM) where development is normally resisted. The emergence of the MRN gives an additional weight to these issues as a formalised tier of nationally recognised inter urban/regional routes.



On CoM outside of urban areas, drivers do not generally expect to encounter slowing; stopping; turning; manoeuvring or parked vehicles; nor do they expect to encounter pedestrians. This lack of expectancy increases the hazards caused by an access that exists in isolation. Furthermore, the generally more rural location dictates that the opportunity to provide high quality access to public transport and safe walking/cycling routes is severely curtailed.

7.2 Requirements

- Development needs to be located in accessible locations recognising the needs and travel patterns of patrons, avoiding the need to create new accesses, or to increase or change the use of an existing access onto a CoM. Development contrary to this aim is likely to attract a recommendation of refusal from the LHA unless well founded reasons exist to permit development. This is strictly applied.

Exceptions may be made where the development is of overriding public/national need or the access is required to serve essential development where it has been proved incapable of being sited elsewhere. In such instances the development must be served by a safe means of access.

Where improvements to transport infrastructure are necessary developers may be required to enter into agreements to secure their provision.

The full document can be viewed at

<https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUK Ewj4zO OyrbrAhWuQ0EAHfvxDIIQFjAAegQIBBAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.norfolk.gov.uk%2F-%2Fmedia%2Fnorfolk%2Fdownloads%2Frubbish-recycling-planning%2Fplanning%2Fsafe-sustainable-development.pdf%3FId%3Den&usq=AOvVaw2p7E8eaG6Dv5DdVMILYF3e>

Scrutiny Committee

Item No: 8

Decision making report title:	Banham Poultry Covid 19 Outbreak
Date of meeting:	23 Sept 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Governance
Responsible Director:	Louise Smith, Director Public Health Tom McCabe, Head of Paid Service
Is this a key decision?	No

Introduction from Cabinet Member

Over the last month weeks Public Health Norfolk and our partners in district councils, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, the voluntary sector along with regional and national government agencies have been working to contain a Coronavirus outbreak at Banham Poultry in Attleborough. This paper seeks to update Members about the measures we have taken to:

- contain the outbreak and to protect the public
- ensure the welfare of those Banham Poultry workers affected by the outbreak
- help the company manage its voluntary partial closure
- work with other similar food production companies to take further steps to ensure a Covid secure work environment

This has been very much a partnership response, and tribute should be paid to the quick mobilisation of resources across the public sector to deal with this outbreak effectively. Everyone is playing their part in managing this outbreak and reducing the risk of spread into the community and other businesses. Work carried out earlier this year in establishing a Local Outbreak Control Plan – one of the pilot areas to do so - has stood the County in good stead and procedures set out then have worked effectively throughout this outbreak.

Overall the rates of Covid-19 infection in Norfolk remains low, and there is no evidence to suggest that this outbreak has spread beyond Banham Poultry staff and their households, although the situation continues to be monitored. However, the outbreak is a timely reminder that Covid-19 is still very much with us, and we must all play our part in keeping Norfolk safe.

Recommendations

- 1. Scrutiny Committee to review and consider NCC response to significant COVID-19 outbreak.**
- 2. To acknowledge the work that has been carried out by NCC and partners in containing this Coronavirus outbreak by implementing Norfolk's Outbreak Control Plan.**
- 3. Members continue to support and promote Protect Yourself, Protect Others Protect Norfolk public health messages to keep residents safe.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. To provide Cabinet with a summary of the recent COVID-19 outbreak at Banham Poultry and the measures that Norfolk Council and partners have taken to contain the spread.
- 1.2. The report details work that Norfolk County Council and partners have undertaken to support affected Banham Poultry staff; efforts to support the company; and support given to the wider food production sector. The contents of the report are based on data and circumstances that are changing frequently and therefore some areas may become superseded by new information on an ongoing basis.

2. Context

- 2.1. On Friday 21st August, Norfolk County Council's Public Health Team became aware of an issue that day when a member of Banham Poultry's staff was admitted to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and subsequently tested positive for Covid-19. Banham Poultry asked staff who had helped the staff member who had fallen ill, and had therefore been in close contact with him, to get tested and to self-isolate. This resulted in the first 7 positive tests on Monday 24 August and triggered further testing of 376 workers in the cutting room at the plant. At this time Norfolk County Council notified the Government's Covid-19 Joint Biosecurity Centre and staff from both the Department of Health and Public Health England have been attending local meetings to advise on containment of the virus.
- 2.2. By Wednesday 26th August a total of 75 positive cases had been identified in staff from the cutting room out of 347 tested. Banham Poultry voluntarily agreed to close the cutting room temporarily for a deep clean and to ask all staff who had been working there to self-isolate. The numbers of those found to be infected rose to 80 out of 376 workers by 28th August, an infection rate of 22% in this part of the factory.
- 2.3. Following completion of testing of people in the cutting room, further precautionary tests were then extended to other staff who work at the factory, including anyone who worked there from the beginning of August. Testing began on 28th of August. By 1st September the number of positive tests had risen to 104 out of 769 results returned with the majority of staff asked to self-isolate.
- 2.4. Norfolk's Public Health team is working with national NHS Test and Trace to contact trace all contacts of all staff who are self-isolating. To increase contact tracing capacity, we have brought in Essex and Southend Contact Tracing Service. The proposal is to have trained Norfolk contact tracers in place as we take on the responsibility for local contact tracing to better support and protect Norfolk's residents.

The ongoing risk of transmission on site is assessed as low. The risk assessment concluded that staff at the front-end of the slaughterhouse can maintain a social distance and operate within Covid guidelines. This has advantages to Animal Welfare. The situation continues to be monitored daily at the multi-agency Incident Management Team (IMT) meeting.

- 2.5. Throughout the outbreak a partnership approach has been taken. Norfolk County Council has worked closely with Breckland District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Norwich City

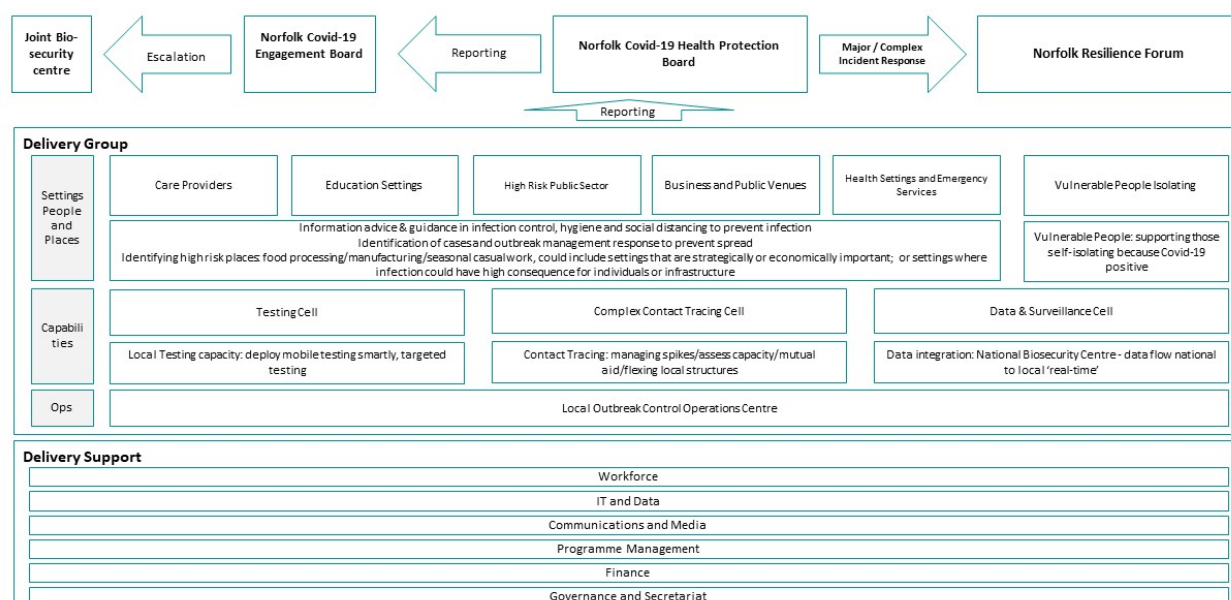
Council, the Health and Safety Executive, Public Health England, the Department for Health and Banham Poultry management to ensure the best handling of the outbreak.

- 2.6. Prior to the outbreak Covid-19 infection rates in Norfolk were low compared both with the East of England and nationally and remain so.
- 2.7. Mobile testing units have been specifically deployed in Great Yarmouth, Norwich, Thetford and Attleborough to encourage wider community testing.
- 2.8. The risk to the wider population of Norfolk has been assessed as low and there is no evidence that the outbreak has spread further than Banham Poultry. The risk of the virus being passed on via food or food packaging is assessed as small. Members of the public are advised to continue to play their part by washing their hands thoroughly and regularly and to observe social distancing guidance.

3. Governance arrangements

- 3.1. As part of our management response, Norfolk County Council and partners has stood up its Local Outbreak Control Plan structure – a command and co-ordination structure to ensure clear roles and responsibilities and lines of organisation for efficient and effective outbreak control.
- 3.2. These arrangements bring together all relevant local partners in one place to enable Norfolk's approach and response to be jointly planned, co-ordinated and any risks managed. A co-ordinated approach is key to making the best use of resources and delivering the best possible response for Norfolk.
- 3.3. The Norfolk Local Outbreak Control Plan is set out in the diagram below. Since this structure has been implemented some groups are meeting daily and some weekly, as required.

LOCP Structure



- 3.4. The delivery groups are mainly led and staffed by Norfolk's local authorities, drawing heavily on Public Health resources. However, the reporting structures take a multi-agency approach and the following organisations are represented in both the Health Protection Board and the Covid-19 Engagement Board:

- Norfolk County Council
- Seven District Councils
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Norfolk and Waveney CCG
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
- Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- Norfolk Resilience Forum
- Public Health England

The Health Protection Board, chaired by Dr Louise Smith Director of Public Health, has Met a number of time to review the situation. In addition, the Engagement Board, chaired by Councillor Andrew Proctor, Leader of NCC, most recently met on 9 September 2020.

- 3.5. An Incident Management Team, including input from Banham Poultry has been established. The outbreak is drawing resources from a Communities Cell, Animal Welfare Cell and Business Cell as well as delivery support from both Norfolk County Council's communications team and communications teams within district councils.
- 3.6. Norfolk Resilience Forum remains on standby to provide further assistance to the Health Protection Board if required, but currently there has been no requirement to escalate.
- 3.7. Throughout the response the Director of Public Health has been in daily communication with Department Health and Social Care and the Joint Biosecurity Centre and been briefing the Leader as chair of the Engagement Board.

4. Partnership Response

- 4.1. Approximately 800 staff and their households have been asked to isolate as a result of this outbreak. The majority of these live in Great Yarmouth, Norwich, Attleborough and Thetford. The Communities Cell, co-chaired by Ceri Sumner Director CES and Jamie Sutterby Director SNDC and BDC, has led the response of the Vulnerability Hub, set up at the start of the Pandemic to ensure the welfare of high-risk groups and those shielding and isolating, This is reaching out via voluntary organisations and district councils to ensure people are supported and enabled to isolate. This support potentially includes provision of food parcels, childcare and accommodation to enable isolation and safe transport.
- 4.2. New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership has supported Public Health Norfolk colleagues in the development of a business tool kit which provides businesses and their owners with information and resources on ensuring their workplaces are Covid secure and the steps to take in the event of an outbreak. This was launched earlier in the summer and has been well received by businesses.
- 4.3. Following the outbreak at Banham Poultry the LEP and public health colleagues organised a meeting with the eight largest poultry processing businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk to update those businesses on the Banham Poultry outbreak. The companies were also provided with information and advice on their own workplaces and steps staff should be taking in the workplace but also outside the workplace environment. The situation will continue to be reviewed along with any subsequent advice on the need for increased testing for screening of employees in this sector.
- 4.4. The LEP has also been working with Banham Poultry and other partners including the government on options for financial support for the company following the partial closure of the site.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. There are no further financial implications save those already identified in the Council's wider response to the pandemic which are documented elsewhere.

6. Resource Implications

- 6.1. **Staff:** There are no direct staff implications arising from this report.
- 6.2. **Property:** There are no direct property implications arising from this report.
- 6.3. **IT:** There are no direct IT implications arising from this report

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. **Legal Implications:** None identified
- 7.2. **Human Rights implications:** None identified
- 7.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** COVID-19 has impacted on every individual and family across Norfolk, particularly on people with protected characteristics. New evidence is emerging daily about the nature and extent of this impact. In view of this, the Cabinet is maintaining a dynamic equality impact assessment, which is available at:

https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/169/Default.aspx

This impact assessment is being used by Cabinet to inform decision-making during the COVID-19 crisis. It is being continually updated to inform business continuity planning. Mitigating actions are being developed wherever necessary and these are summarised in the assessment. Cabinet is asking all elected members to review the dynamic impact assessment and keep Norfolk County Council informed of any new impacts that emerge for people with protected characteristics in their division, so that the assessment can be updated accordingly.

- 7.4. **Health and Safety implications** (where appropriate): None save those identified in the report
- 7.5. **Sustainability implications** (where appropriate): None identified
- 7.6. **Any other implications:** None identified
8. **Risk Implications/Assessment:** All risks associated with Covid-19 are documented in the Norfolk County Council Corporate Risk Register.

Officer Contact

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

Appendix 1 – District data positive COVID-19 cases:

The report below provides a daily update on the COVID-19 epidemiological picture in the East of England PHE Centre. The rating of COVID-19 in local authorities used in this report has been developed for use in the East of England. It is not the same rating and does not correspond directly with the Red Amber Green ratings used in national COVID-19 reports. Instead, in this report, a series of metrics are reviewed for each unitary authority/lower tier local authority in the East of England to highlight where further investigation may be required. Metrics include the number of cases in the last 7 days, the incidence rate, the positivity rate, the exceedance rating and the number of new outbreaks. Local authorities are categorised into:

- Areas of lower COVID-19 activity (colour coded green)
- Areas of intermediate COVID-19 activity (amber)
- Areas of higher COVID-19 activity (red)

- **Overview of cases by district areas across Norfolk (updated 01.09.2020) – based on cases in the last 7 days** Breckland, Great Yarmouth and Norwich are red as they have high case numbers. South Norfolk is amber as they have intermediate number of cases. **In contrast Broadland, King's Lynn and West Norfolk and North Norfolk are currently green** as they have low case numbers

	Cases		Field Service Rating	Rationale	Field Service Actions		
	7 days prior	last 7 days			Completed	Date completed	Outstanding
Breckland	21	29	Higher COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days			Ongoing support
Broadland	3	4	Lower COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance and low case numbers	Case based review	10/08/2020	
Great Yarmouth	15	22	Higher COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days	Case based review	06/08/2020	Ongoing support
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	5	4	Lower COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance but small case numbers			Ongoing support
North Norfolk	0	1	Lower COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance and low case numbers			
Norwich	8	18	Higher COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days			Ongoing support
South Norfolk	6	12	Intermediate COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, intermediate cases in past 7 days			Ongoing support

(see detailed breakdown below).

Source: East of England Daily Field Epidemiology Service Report. This data is provided by Public Health England for monitoring and supporting the management of Covid-19 infections and is confidential.

Decision making report title:	Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22
Date of meeting:	23 September 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Responsible Director:	Simon George, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services
<p>Introduction</p> <p>Saving proposals which will support the preparation of a balanced and robust Budget for 2021-22 are currently being developed and will be presented to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting 5 October 2020.</p> <p>The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, along with continued unprecedented levels of uncertainty about future year pressures and funding, represent a very significant challenge for Norfolk County Council in developing its budget plans for 2021-22. The scale of the budget gap to be closed remains subject to considerable uncertainty and there are a number of issues which could have a material impact on the level of resources available to the Council to deliver services in the future. As part of responding to these challenges, services will need to bring forward balanced, sustainable budget proposals which enable the Council to continue to deliver essential services to Norfolk's people, businesses and visitors. The appended report to 7 September Cabinet forms an important part of the process of preparing the 2021-22 Budget, and in particular sets out details of the strategy for saving proposal development which is being adopted by each Department.</p> <p>Executive Summary</p> <p>This report supports the Committee's scrutiny of the Council's process for developing the 2021-22 Budget, and in particular represents an opportunity for the Committee to consider the approach to developing budget proposals.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and comment on the key issues for 2021-22 budget setting and the broad areas proposed for savings development as set out in the appended Cabinet report. 	

1. Background and Purpose

1.1. At its meeting 19 August 2020, Scrutiny Committee examined the County Council's current and future strategic and financial planning, and considered the next steps for future scrutiny. This report now provides an opportunity to review:

- Some of the significant uncertainties facing local government finances as a result of COVID-19 and other issues.
- The latest changes to the MTFS position for 2021-22 onwards, which will be updated further as part of reporting to Cabinet in October.
- Some of the key issues facing services in relation to their financial strategy, and the approach being taken in each Department in order to develop saving proposals to seek to meet the targets agreed by Cabinet in July.

2. Proposals

2.1. The appended report to the September Cabinet meeting provides the latest overview of:

- the overarching timetable for 2021-22 budget setting;
- the key issues being identified in relation to 2021-22 budget setting;
- the target level of savings to be found by each service department;
- the impact of the Covid-19 response on services; and
- the broad approaches and themes for the development of saving proposals by Service.

2.2. In considering the progress of budget setting for 2021-22, the Committee may wish to consider (1) key issues for 2021-22 budget setting and (2) the broad areas proposed for savings development, in order to comment on budget and saving proposal development for 2021-22, and the identification of key pressures and priorities for the 2021-22 Budget.

2.3. Committee members may in particular wish to refer to the following sections of the appended September Cabinet report:

- Paragraph 2.4 – The Council's approach to engaging with Government in responding to the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review and advocating for further funding for Norfolk.
- Section 3 – The latest MTFS assumptions, and in particular Table 1, the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy, noting that this will be further updated for October Cabinet.
- Services' financial strategies and approaches to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals:
 - Section 4 – Adult Social Services
 - Section 5 – Children's Services
 - Section 6 – Community and Environmental Services
 - Section 7 – Strategy and Governance
 - Section 8 – Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General

3. Impact of the Proposal

3.1. Highlighted in appended report.

4. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

4.1. Highlighted in appended report.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. Highlighted in appended report.

6. Resource Implications

6.1. Staff:

There are no direct implications arising from this report although there is a potential that staffing implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed. These will be identified as they arise later in the budget planning process.

6.2. Property:

There are no direct property implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to property budgets and assumptions around capital receipts to be achieved. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver property related savings.

6.3. IT:

There are no direct IT implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to IMT budgets. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver savings through activity related to digital and IT initiatives.

7. Other Implications

7.1. Legal Implications

Highlighted in appended report.

7.2. Human Rights implications

No specific human rights implications have been identified.

7.3. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)

Highlighted in appended report. EQIAs will be undertaken later in the budget process.

7.4. Health and Safety implications (where appropriate)

None identified.

7.5. Sustainability implications (where appropriate)

None identified.

7.6. **Any other implications**

None identified, beyond those highlighted in appended report.

8. **Risk Implications/Assessment**

8.1. Highlighted in appended report.

9. **Select Committee comments**

9.1. Select Committees will be receiving reports on these matters during the September meeting round to support their consideration of the key issues for 2021-22 budget setting and the broad areas proposed for savings development in relation to the services within each Select Committee's remit, in order for them to provide input to the October Cabinet meeting and inform the saving proposals put forward.

A verbal update will be provided at the meeting in the event that there are comments pertinent to the Scrutiny Committee's discussions.

10. **Recommendations**

10.1. 1. **To consider and comment on the key issues for 2021-22 budget setting and the broad areas proposed for savings development as set out in the appended Cabinet report.**

11. **Background Papers**

11.1. Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2020-21 to 2023-24, County Council 17/02/2020, agenda item 5 ([here](#))
Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22, Cabinet 08/06/2020, agenda item 12 ([here](#))
Briefing on COVID-19 and Strategic and Financial Planning, Scrutiny Committee 19/08/2020, agenda item 10 ([here](#))
Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22, Cabinet 07/09/2020, agenda item 11 ([here](#))
Norfolk County Council Budget Planning 2020-21:

- Corporate Select Committee, agenda item 12 ([here](#))
- Infrastructure and Development Select Committee, agenda item 10 ([here](#))
- People and Communities Select Committee, agenda item 10 ([here](#))

Officer Contact

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Cabinet

Decision making report title:	Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22
Date of meeting:	7 September 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Cllr Andrew Jamieson (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Responsible Director:	Simon George, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services Fiona McDiarmid, Executive Director of Strategy and Governance
Is this a key decision?	No

Introduction from Cabinet Member

As set out in the Financial Monitoring report elsewhere on the agenda, the Council continues to work to deliver a balanced position for 2020-21. Simultaneously, work is underway to develop proposals to enable a balanced and robust Budget to be proposed for 2021-22. The impact of COVID-19, along with continued unprecedented uncertainty about future year pressures and funding, represent a very significant challenge for the Council in developing its Medium Term Financial Strategy. As set out in this report, the scale of the budget gap to be closed in future years remains subject to substantial uncertainty and there are a number of issues which could have a material impact on the level of resources available to Norfolk County Council to deliver services in the future.

In the face of these challenges, it will be critically important to bring forward balanced, sustainable budget proposals which will enable the Council to continue to deliver the essential services which are relied on by all Norfolk's people, businesses and visitors. This report represents an important milestone in the development of the 2021-22 Budget and provides an opportunity for Members to influence the shape of these emerging proposals.

Executive Summary

The latest estimates of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are set out in the Financial Monitoring report. This reflects additional costs, lost income and undeliverable savings in the current year, many of which will have an extended impact on the 2021-22 Budget. This report, and the Financial Monitoring paper, together provide an overview of the anticipated financial implications of COVID-19, for both the current year and for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy as originally agreed in February 2020.

The Council continues to engage with MPs, the County Council Network (CCN), the Local Government Association (LGA), the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and other Government Ministers and departments on the need for

sustainable and long term funding for councils. The latest opportunity to communicate our key concerns is provided by the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The 2021-22 Budget is being prepared in truly exceptional circumstances. These are inevitably having a profound impact on the organisation's ability to achieve planned budget savings and income for 2020-21, as well as on the capacity to develop and deliver new budget proposals for 2021-22, and on the wider budget position, which, as a result, is the subject of extremely high levels of uncertainty. As such, the report forms part of the budget planning process for 2021-22, which has been designed to recognise that there remains a need for ongoing flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. In this context, the report also provides a summary of key areas of wider risk and uncertainty for Cabinet to consider.

The MTFS position will continue to be updated in light of future government announcements and as the scale of the impact on the Council becomes clear. This will be reported to Cabinet and to Scrutiny Committee as the budget setting process progresses.

Recommendations

- 1. To comment on and agree key points to be included in the representation to the Comprehensive Spending Review in relation to:**
 - the uncertainty about wider funding allocations and reforms;
 - the urgent need for details to enable 2021-22 budget setting;
 - the need for adequate funding to meet pressures from Covid-19; and
 - the fundamental need to address underlying pressures including adults and children's social care.

Delegate to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to approve the final response for submission on behalf of the Council reflecting the points set out in Paragraph 2.4.
- 2. To comment on and agree the key points set out in Paragraph 2.6 to be included in the response to the consultation on Business Rates system and delegate to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to approve the final response for submission on behalf of the Council.**
- 3. To consider the updated overall budget gap of £129.779m in the Medium Term Financial Strategy including a latest gap of £45.434m forecast for 2021-22, noting the key areas of risk which remain to be quantified. (Section 3)**
- 4. To agree that detail of saving proposals to aid in closing the budget gap should be presented to Cabinet in October, after being developed based on the approaches set out in Sections 4-8, and following input from Select Committees about the overall strategy in each Department during September.**

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the developing 2021-22 Budget and associated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). To inform discussion of the budget position it also:
 - Summarises the latest position in relation to some of the significant uncertainties facing local government finances as a result of COVID-19 and other issues.
 - Sets out the latest view of the MTFS position for 2021-22 onwards, updating the assumptions agreed in February 2020. This position will be updated further as part of reporting to Cabinet in October.
 - Provides an overview of some of the key issues facing services in relation to their financial strategy, and proposes the approach being taken in each Department in order to develop saving proposals to seek to meet the targets agreed by Cabinet in July.
 - Details the key points to be made in the Council's representation to the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review process, and the call for evidence on Business Rates reform, for endorsement.
- 1.2. Ultimately this report is intended to support the Council in preparing the 2021-22 Budget and developing the approach to identifying savings proposals which will assist in delivering a balanced budget for the year.
- 1.3. The content of the report is based on circumstances that are changing frequently and therefore some areas may become superseded by new information on an ongoing basis.

2. Government announcements with potential implications for local government funding

- 2.1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, announced the **2020 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)** on 21 July 2020¹. The CSR, which will be published in the autumn, is expected to set out the government's spending plans for the parliament, covering a three-year period for resource budgets (2021-22 to 2023-24) and a four-year period for capital budgets (2021-22 to 2024-25). Among the areas that the Chancellor stated the CSR will prioritise, the following are likely to have the most relevance for local government:
 - Strengthening the UK's economic recovery from COVID-19 by prioritising jobs and skills;
 - Levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people – spreading opportunity, maximising productivity and improving the value add of each hour worked;
 - Improving outcomes in public services, including supporting the NHS and taking steps to cut crime and ensure every young person receives a superb education;

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-launches-comprehensive-spending-review>
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- Making the UK a scientific superpower, including leading in the development of technologies that will support the government's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050; and
 - Strengthening the UK's place in the world.
- 2.2. Taking into account the wider uncertainty, the Chancellor did not set a "spending envelope" for the CSR but confirmed that departmental spending "will grow in real terms across the CSR period". However, the Chancellor also stated that "there will need be tough choices in other areas of spending at the review. As part of their preparations for the CSR departments have been asked to identify opportunities to reprioritise and deliver savings."
- 2.3. The deadline to submit representations to the CSR is 24 September 2020. This timescale would suggest a Budget or Autumn Statement announcement of some sort in late October or early November. Realistically, this implies that as in previous years, **the Council will not receive detailed information about funding allocations for 2021-22 and beyond until December 2020 at the earliest.**
- 2.4. It is proposed that the Council's representation to the CSR cover the following key areas:
- How the Council contributes to the priorities set out for the CSR;
 - The impact of COVID-19 and the continued uncertainty and further delay of significant planned reforms to local government finance (including the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Reform) on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
 - The opportunity for Government to deliver a permanent step change, recognising the importance of children's and adults social care, and adequately funding local authorities to make a key contribution to national recovery.
 - The need for a larger quantum to meet immediate pressures of COVID-19, and to provide a sustainable funding level for the future.
 - The urgent need for clarity and certainty about the support that Government will provide for 2021-22 and beyond to enable budget setting to take place effectively.
 - The need to address underlying key issues including:
 - Investing in infrastructure and delivering "levelling up";
 - Reforming council tax and addressing associated inequalities;
 - Adequately funding children's and adults Social Care pressures;
 - Addressing other unfunded pressures;
 - Providing adequate funding for schools, including addressing the High Needs Block deficit; and
 - Delivering on environmental commitments and supporting effective waste management.

Members' views are sought on this approach, and Cabinet is asked to delegate to the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree a final representation for submission.

- 2.5. The Government committed to undertake a fundamental **Business Rates Review** at the Spring Budget, and launched a call for evidence on 21 July 2020². This seeks views on how the business rates system currently works, issues to be addressed, ideas for change and a number of alternative taxes. The Review is due to conclude in Spring 2021. While this timeframe means it will not impact on the 2021-22 budget setting process, the increasing significance of Business Rates income to local authorities means that this Review may be an important issue in relation to the Council's medium to long-term funding position.
- 2.6. The call for evidence asks a number of technical questions about the Business Rates system and its administration. It is proposed that the Council's response to the Business Rates Review address these where they are relevant to an upper tier authority and also covers the following key areas:
- The significant concern that growth in rates will not keep pace with the future pressures faced across the full range of local government services including, for example, the National Living Wage, and the need for any reforms to take account of this.
 - The pressing need to address fundamental issues in the business rates system including the under-taxation of online retailers while traditional "bricks and mortar" businesses bear a disproportionate share of the burden.
 - That the tax base is arguably overly dependent on a relatively small number of businesses and places which means much greater risk, volatility and fragility within the system as a whole.
 - The fact that there is a clear tension between some (entirely understandable) national government policies (for example to support the high street and reduce the rates burden) and an increased local authority share of retained rates and expectation of reliance on these as a source of income to meet demand driven cost pressures. In this context it will be critical that the impact of government policies continues to be fully compensated following any reforms.
 - That government should consider how the tension between continuing central control of business rates and the aspiration of further localisation to councils can best be resolved.

Members' views are sought on this approach, and Cabinet is asked to delegate to the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance to agree a final representation for submission.

3. Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy context

- 3.1. In July, Cabinet agreed the following **principles for 2021-22 budget planning**:

- MTFS Budget planning to cover the period **2021-22 to 2024-25**.
- **Budget Challenge** meetings for each directorate.
- Allocate the **February 2020 MTFS gap of £38.992m for 2021-22** based on "controllable spend" approach (with no additional corporate / transformation target given the £4.388m already assumed).

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hm-treasury-fundamental-review-of-business-rates-call-for-evidence>

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- In order to inform revision of 2021-22 MTFS and budget gap in September 2020, Cabinet to undertake a **fundamental review of MTFS assumptions** relating to:
 - council tax and business rates planning assumptions (informed by latest District forecasts).
 - forecast delivery of planned 2020-21 savings programmes and viability of previously planned 2021-22 savings.
 - cost and income pressures, including new pressures resulting from COVID-19.
 - any further Government funding announcements for 2020-21 and future years.
- Seek to identify **proposals to begin to address future years with target £10m per annum**, reflecting need for longer term planning in line with the Financial Management Code.
- Select Committees to have a role as part of the budget-setting process, considering areas for savings in September.
- Final **decisions about the 2021-22 Budget to be taken in February 2021** in line with the budget setting timetable (Appendix 1).

3.2. Taking account of these Government announcements and looking beyond the immediate impacts of coronavirus, the overall level of uncertainty means that the **financial outlook for local government remains extremely challenging** for the foreseeable future. As previously reported to Cabinet, local authorities continue to face a growing gap between funding and service pressures, driven in part by demographic changes, unfunded burdens such as the National Living Wage, and the needs of vulnerable social care users becoming increasingly complex. Children's services, in both social care and education (particularly the High Needs Block), are also under very significant stress. There is a risk that these pressures increase in the medium-term as a result of additional needs driven by effects of COVID-19 and the associated lockdown.

3.3. The Council approved its 2020-21 Budget and MTFS to 2023-24 on 17 February 2020. This was based on one-year funding allocations for 2020-21 announced at the Spending Round 2019 and ultimately confirmed in the Local Government Settlement in January 2020. As set out in this report, funding for 2021-22 onwards remains a subject of considerable uncertainty. Although there are profound short-term impacts being experienced from the response to COVID-19, it remains to be seen precisely what the medium- and longer-term impact will be, and as such the full implications for the council's Budget in 2020-21 and beyond remain to be confirmed. However, the pandemic will unquestionably also change the long term shape of some services, in relation to joint working, public expectations, levels of demand, and the underlying cost base. Risks remain that adult social services will incur changed volume and market prices into 2021-22, which are not included within the current budget plans. The key risks are from the cessation of the hospital discharge service arrangements, which are in operation until 31st March 2021. This could mean that above usual volumes and prices of care, following transition of the NHS funding arrangements, are incurred by the council going forward. In addition, some providers have needed to change their business models to operate services in line with social distancing rules, which will reduce the capacity of some providers and increase unit costs. These additional costs

could remain into the next financial year if the pandemic and associated government guidelines continue.

- 3.4. The budget setting principles agreed in July included a proposal that a fundamental review of budget assumptions be completed in September. At this point, a limited number of revisions to the MTFS have been identified, but it remains too early to forecast many elements with confidence. It is highly likely for example that key income sources including council tax (through both the Collection Fund and tax base growth) and business rates will be under significant pressure in 2021-22, requiring revision to planning assumptions. Detailed work is underway with District Council partners to understand the likely Norfolk impacts on both business rates and council tax. At this stage it is appropriate to begin to revise some of the assumptions associated with these elements of the Budget, but it is not yet possible to produce a comprehensive and robust forecast for 2021-22.
- 3.5. Likely impacts on Business Rates continue to include:
- Total business rates collectable will potentially reduce where increased numbers of businesses close (particularly as temporary financial support measures are withdrawn).
 - An increase in the number of properties claiming empty property relief where businesses either cease trading or seek to take advantage of changed working patterns to reduce property costs.
 - Appeals against rateable values may increase where rental values have been impacted.

Likely impacts on council tax continue to include:

- Tax base may not increase as forecast due to suppressed growth in new properties (reduced to 0.5% in latest assumptions, risk of further reduction remains).
 - Council tax support is likely to increase linked to increased levels of unemployment and Universal Credit claims. This will also potentially suppress council tax growth, or may result in a reduction in the tax base.
 - Changes in the council tax collection rate where households have experienced a reduction in income.
- 3.6. In addition to COVID-19 cost pressures, the final employer pay offer for 2020-21 has now been confirmed as 2.75%, compared to the budgetary provision of 2%. This will represent a one-off pressure of approximately £1.9m to be addressed in the current year, as well as an ongoing cost pressure that needs to be incorporated within budget planning. The final pay award level for 2020-21 has now been confirmed following union responses, and it is therefore prudent to make provision for this level of pay award in the MTFS.
- 3.7. The latest MTFS position is shown in Table 1 of this report, which updates the forecast considered in July 2020 for the latest known issues. **The MTFS now identifies a gap of £129.779m, incorporating a gap of £45.434m for 2021-22.** This will be further updated in the report to October Cabinet and kept under continuous review through the Budget process. Details of the approach to Services developing savings to assist

in closing the Budget gap are set out in sections 4-8, and as reported in the July Cabinet paper, ultimately options to close the gap will include:

- Government providing additional funding;
- Corporate / centrally identified savings opportunities including the use of capital receipts to support transformation; and
- Service departments identifying further savings or removing budget pressures.

3.8. The current MTFS position is based on a number of further significant assumptions as set out below:

- 2020-21 funding levels will be broadly maintained (i.e. a further rollover settlement).
- Pay inflation will run at 3% from 2021-22 onwards.
- Non-pay inflation provided for on some budgets being reduced from 2% to 1%.
- Council tax will be increased by 1.99% per year, but with no increase in the ASC precept (this remains subject to both Member decision-making and Government announcements about referendum thresholds annually), helping to address pressures across all front line services including social care.
- Continuation of previous increases in the National Living Wage (NLW). The Government could indicate a more significant increase, without additional funding. Announcements about the April 2020 level were made in January this year. Each 1p rise in the NLW increases the costs of care by £0.200m. Many organisations have lobbied central government to make further increases in the NLW and in particular seek higher increases for care workers. Either would increase costs significantly above the current budget assumptions.
- The tax base will increase by 0.5% in 2021-22 and thereafter by 1% each year to 2023-24 (1.39% growth was forecast for 2020-21).
- Collection Fund surplus is assumed as £3m in 2021-22, £2m 2022-23, and £1.5m 2023-24. This remains an area of significant uncertainty and will be reviewed further in the Autumn.

Table 1: Updated Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-22 to 2024-25

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<u>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-25</u>					
Gap as reported to Cabinet 8 June 2020 (Surplus)/Deficit	38.992	24.500	30.203	24.158	117.852
Reduce Tax Base growth to 0.5%	5.624	2.415	2.566	0.319	10.925
Additional pay inflation 2020-21 of 0.75%	1.984	0.060	0.061	0.063	2.168
Children's transport pressure (+3 days 2021-22)	0.617	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.617
Adults grant assumption changes (2020-21 allocations for Local Reform and Community Voices, Social Care in Prisons, and War Pensions Disregard Grant)	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005
Review of non-pay inflation assumptions	-1.788	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.788
Latest forecast gap position as at 7 September 2020 Cabinet	45.434	26.974	32.830	24.540	129.779

- 3.9. A summary of the cost pressures and savings provided for in the February MTFS analysed by Service was reported to Cabinet in July. As set out in that report, the MTFS includes significant unavoidable ongoing pressures from 2021-22 to reinstate Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) budgets following the saving delivered over recent years. It should also be noted that the level of pressures included in the Children's Services budget for future years is substantially lower than has been provided for in 2020-21 and this may therefore be a particular area of risk for future cost pressures emerging through the remainder of the 2021-22 budget process. As set out above, the Adult Social Care budget for next year is subject to significant uncertainty particularly in relation to ongoing costs of care that are currently funded by health under the Hospital Discharge Service requirements and market prices affected by Covid-19 measures and national living wage. Further savings will be required to close the identified budget gap in addition to the £23.542m identified in the agreed MTFS. It should be noted that the MTFS already assumes £4.388m of savings from business transformation in 2021-22. This is a challenging target and it remains the case that the scope for any further savings in this area may therefore be limited. A report on the delivery of these business transformation savings is due to be considered by the September meeting of the Corporate Select Committee and will be reflected in a future update to the MTFS.

3.10. Cabinet in July noted that the budget setting principles agreed for 2020-21 could result in the saving targets currently allocated to Services being revised (and potentially materially increased) in September. **It is not currently the view of the Section 151 Officer that savings targets should be revised**, however it will be essential that **Service Departments develop sufficient sustainable savings proposals, to achieve the target level of savings set in July**, and ultimately enable a balanced budget for 2021-22 to be proposed. This judgement is naturally subject to any further Government announcements about financial support for both the current year, and for the medium term as part of the Local Government Settlement for 2021-22, and the way in which the Covid-19 pandemic and associated cost, income and saving pressures continue to develop.

3.11. The savings targets by Department as agreed by Cabinet in July are set out in the table below.

Table 2: Allocation of saving targets 2021-22 to 2024-25

Department	2021-22 £m	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2021-25 £m	%
Adult Social Services	-17.723	-4.597	-4.628	-4.628	-31.576	46%
Children's Services	-8.782	-2.223	-2.213	-2.213	-15.431	22%
Community and Environmental Services	-8.771	-2.232	-2.207	-2.207	-15.417	22%
Strategy and Governance Department	-0.844	-0.215	-0.213	-0.213	-1.484	2%
Finance and Commercial Services	-1.753	-0.439	-0.430	-0.430	-3.052	4%
Finance General	-1.120	-0.294	-0.309	-0.309	-2.032	3%
Total	-38.992	-10.000	-10.000	-10.000	-68.992	100%

4. Service financial strategy and approach to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals – Adult Social Services

4.1. Financial Strategy

Adult Social Services continues to pursue the Promoting Independence strategy, focussed on delivering six priorities:

- Safeguarding people.
- Strong partners for integrated working.
- Strengthen social work so that it prevents, reduces and delays need.
- Supporting the Social Care market.
- Accelerate the use of technology.
- A positive working culture which promotes people's independence and uses public resources fairly.

4.2. Covid-19 Impact and Context

Covid-19 has caused a seismic and immediate refocus of services, process and planning. The financial consequences of this continue to emerge, but it is having a material impact on the ability to deliver the full level of planned savings in both 2020-21 and 2021-22. Currently, advice still remains to avoid all but emergency visits to care homes and public health advice to avoid transferring people, both mean that much of the previously successful demand management work as part of the Promoting Independence strategy has temporarily stopped. Adult Social Services is working to assess original plans, evolve them where appropriate, and restart areas of change governance where feasibly possible. As a result, alongside the longer term delivery of Promoting Independence, the immediate priority and context for Adult Social Services' financial planning in 2021-22 is the post-pandemic recovery – with services facing unprecedented challenges this year (2020-21) and continued uncertainty – particularly relating to demand, funding and the wider market.

The Covid-19 pandemic has inevitably had a major impact on the provision of support and services to vulnerable adults in Norfolk. The Council continues to support the care market, while recognising that the demand and supply of care services will change in the short, medium and longer term. Options for support for September and beyond are currently being assessed. For some services where future demand is less clear, such as day services, the long term sustainability of the market will be a key issue, and there may also be cost implications for the Council from this. Transport capacity is also creating a pressure and potential emerging cost pressures. For some vulnerable adults, the pandemic has created an escalation in social care needs. Supporting these people, and their families, will continue to be a priority for the Council, and has increased some costs, at least in the short term.

The Covid-19 response has given rise to some opportunities as well through some closer links with health and joint responses around discharge from hospital, but the longer term national plans for intermediate care post discharge is not certain and nationally the story for adult social care is still being written. Sir Simon Stevens has written in the last month to health organisations setting out the phase three plans for the overall health service. As part of this he has signalled the continuation of the hospital discharge services requirements for the remainder of this year, but for only up to the first six weeks of care to be funded by NHSEI from 1 September. In addition there is an expectation from 1 September that previous placements will be assessed and revert back to normal funding arrangements. The council is currently awaiting revised government guidance, but if a transition period is not built in to the changes, this will present a significant cost pressure for the Council. It is also clear that in some areas, where the nature of the supply is changing (for example Day Care), there is a need to understand the financial implications of the changes, how the Council should continue to meet need, and how demand may evolve as a result of new support arrangements. Finally, we need to look at the likely longer term costs for some providers, such as residential care providers and ensure that fees are appropriate but not inflated above genuine Covid-19 related expenditure, such as PPE. Current infection control funding for providers ceases at the end of September and future government support to meet these additional costs will be key.

4.3. Savings development 2021-22

The impact of the Covid-19 response on 2020-21 is therefore affecting decisions for next year and there is a need to be pragmatic about the starting position. In this context, the Service is developing saving proposals under four **new** saving themes as set out below. There will be a need for investment to deliver some of the associated savings in 2021-22.

Savings fall under five main themes.

- **Independence and enabling housing (new)**
Adult Social Services is already working to develop more alternative types of accommodation to give people other choices and more independence. Proposals will look to extend this focusing on making better use of existing accommodation, collaboration with health partners, and putting in place strategic funding arrangements for developing alternative accommodation.
- **Revising the short term out of hospital offer (new)**
Adult social services has historically played a significant role in funding and delivering out of hospital care. New Discharge to Assess guidance, post-COVID, highlights the importance of this for the health and social care system as whole. We want to review what our offer is – as part of a health and social care intermediate care offer. This will allow us to focus more resources on home first services, including greater therapy input, and moving away from reliance on short-term beds.
- **Our commissioned models of care (new)**
We will seek savings from some commissioned services, particularly maximising block contracts and re-shaping those which are no longer value for money. Part of this will include looking at the cost of care, given the significant changes in the market as a result of COVID.
- **Self-direction, prevention and early help (new)**
Our prevention and early help approach has enabled us to achieve significant savings in demand, by preventing, reducing and delaying the need for formal care. We will look to consolidate initiatives, strengthening those which are effective and ceasing some activities if there is duplication.
- **Digital efficiency, value for money (extension)**
We are already delivering significant savings through exploiting digital technology. Proposals will look to extend this, taking up new opportunities to improve productivity and drive out costs.

5. Service financial strategy and approach to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals – Children's Services

5.1. Financial Strategy

The core strategy and transformation approach remains unchanged and Children's Services continues to project benefits from existing schemes and new schemes in the same strategic areas:

1. Inclusion
2. Prevention and Early Intervention
3. Quality of Practice
4. Edge of Care and Alternatives to Care
5. Re-shaping the care and specialist support market

These areas are now supported by a major focus on modernisation, efficiency and opportunities to work differently which will be enabled by technology and the cultural shift that is being accelerated by Covid-19. These include:

- Efficient Processes
- Reduced Travel
- Using Buildings Differently
- Exploiting Technology

5.2. Covid-19 Impact and Context

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Children's Services. Initially, demand for core statutory services fell by around 40-50%, although this is now returning to normal levels. Numbers of children in care remained fairly stable, albeit with unit costs rising, and some additional costs have been incurred in managing the disrupted care market.

It is very likely that there will be a fairly significant spike in demand in the autumn once schools return – which may translate into higher demand for statutory services and children in care, although this remains highly uncertain.

In a best case scenario, the number of children in care will continue to fall in line with the recent trend – more likely is at least a temporary rise aligned to the surge in demand. Some authorities are projecting a significant rise over an extended period and so this will need to be closely monitored and an additional financial pressure could emerge which is not currently accounted for.

The Service has identified a range of other, less obvious, impacts on demand – including hidden need, trauma, and economic factors. It is hard to know what the experiences of children will have been during lockdown and how that will play out in the medium to longer term. In addition, there has been major disruption to the traded services model, and a review is now underway. Some key external markets are also under major strain, for example transport, early years, the voluntary sector as well as care.

There are likely to be some opportunities emerging from the Covid-19 response, including:

- The relationship with the school system in particular has been strengthened, creating an opportunity to wrap support around in a preventative way;
- Greater family resilience is being evidenced and family networking is thriving in the current context, and this is an area to build on;
- Increasing responsiveness to meet families' needs at times better for them and professional assessment purposes rather than being constrained by office opening hours;
- The potential to unlock the capacity and budgets normally tied up at the higher tiers;
- Significant opportunity to strengthen recruitment and retention through greater flexible working and opportunity to increase workforce stability;
- In the mental health arena, the crisis has accelerated the move away from the previous clinic-based model;
- Volunteers have come forward in much greater numbers than previously;
- Virtual working is unlocking creative practice and improved relationship and engagement with families and young people that could be included in the overall offer as a "new normal" is established;
- Potential to move 'upstream' together and have more and better 'early help' across cohorts; and
- Partnership working has deepened and accelerated.

5.3. Savings development 2021-22

The impact of Covid-19 is projected to cause delays to the delivery of existing saving plans which will impact on 2021-22 as well as the current year, meaning the Service will need to make up for any potential shortfall on previously planned savings as well as delivering against new targets.

Saving proposals are being developed in line with the themes identified to date and will include expansion of the existing transformation programme in relation to:

- Transforming the care market and creating the capacity that we need
- Alternatives to care
- Prevention, early intervention and effective social care

This represents some continuation of existing programmes and some major new elements such as the "No Wrong Door" model, which is intended to achieve good outcomes at lower long-term cost for the children with the most complex need. The department is continuing to work up new initiatives through the autumn, including potentially a more substantial transformation in relation to children with disabilities – offering a solution for children who require specialist education, intensive care and who have significant medical needs in an integrated model. That business case is being developed as rapidly as possible.

Proposals also seek to identify areas for efficiency but will require significant support to deliver, for example to drive out the benefits of technology, to enable teams to operate with reduced reliance on buildings, to progress the staff skills agenda. The department is looking to set fairly substantial savings targets in these areas, over and above those to be delivered through the major transformation programme.

The department is also commencing a close internal review of staffing – especially in support and ‘back office’ teams – in an effort to identify non-transformational staff reductions, such as any areas of duplication or where there might be potential for efficiency. This work will take further time to complete and whilst the focus will be upon achieving efficiency without compromising quality and effectiveness of service, there is a risk that the quality and quantity of service that can be provided will reduce to enable the required savings to be delivered in the context of the Council’s very challenging financial circumstances.

6. Service financial strategy and approach to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals – Community and Environmental Services

6.1. Financial Strategy

Community and Environmental Services (CES) has responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services; there is no hierarchy as each area has a vital role to play in achieving better outcomes for the whole of Norfolk. CES proactively provide information and advice to help people to make better choices that enable them to live fulfilling, independent lives. Teams continue to provide vital services to ensure that residents are safe, both in their own homes and when out and about in the county.

There are large elements of the CES budget where there would be little scope to change or influence (such as capital charges, recycling credits, and concessionary fares), and these are treated as uncontrollable costs for the purposes of seeking savings.

In terms of an overall strategy for developing budget proposals, the broad range of services and outcomes means that a single approach would not be beneficial. Instead, CES is focussing on two general approaches:

- Cost reduction – including through use of new technology and contract renegotiations
- Ways of working – including efficiencies in back office processes and organisational re-design

In previous years, the department has also had a focus on income generation. However, given the current pressures and risks associated with existing income generation targets (as set out in paragraph 6.2) it is not considered prudent for new income generation to be a key strand of the financial strategy for next year.

6.2. Covid-19 Impact and Context

A significant number of staff within CES were redeployed in roles to support the emergency response efforts throughout the county. The service also plays a crucial role in supporting communities and businesses to respond to and recover from the impacts of Covid-19. Key activities have focussed around:

- Supporting Norfolk's businesses and workforce
- Keeping the county moving
- Delivering essential support and supplies to those most in need
- Keeping communities safe, healthy and well

In addition, colleagues in Public Health have continued to carry out significant work to:

- Develop and deliver the Local Outbreak Control Plan
- Deliver local management of outbreaks and contact tracing
- Provide advice on infection control and management
- Media messaging on reducing the risk of infection, reassuring the public and seeking to mitigate the impact of social control measures
- Information and analysis – modelling the likely impact of an epidemic on the population of Norfolk (which started around 10 March, at a very early stage meaning we are now ahead of the curve in terms of epidemiological data and analysis available to plan service capacity)
- Providing mutual aid to Public Health England for infection control

Longer term impacts and potential future budget pressures for CES arising from Covid-19 include:

- Significant work will be needed to support delivery of the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Recovery Restart Plan, working with New Anglia LEP. A number of projects and measures have been developed to support the Norfolk economy including through advice for businesses, support for the visitor economy, investment in infrastructure and support for individuals to reskill and upskill.
- The department is heavily reliant on generating external income, such as museums admissions income. Given the extended period that services were not able to operate, and new restrictions in the foreseeable future, this will have a significant impact on the income generating activities already built into the budget.
- Higher volumes of residual waste are anticipated due to residents being at home rather than places of work, therefore generating more waste through the kerbside collections.
- Whilst Government have provided support to transport operators, both directly and through the County Council, CES continues to work with operators to ensure there is resilience of the public transport network including home to school transport. Work is also underway with operators to ensure they have the

ability to provide viable services under social distancing measures and through a period where there may be low public confidence in using public transport.

- Increased costs are also expected for the delivery of capital schemes to accommodate safe working practices.
- Some services in the department continue to carry out significant work specifically on Covid-19 response and recovery, in particular the Public Health, Growth and Development and Resilience teams. It is anticipated that there will continue to be a need for significant support from these areas for some time.

6.3. Savings development 2021-22

CES has a very strong track record of securing external income off-setting the cost of service delivery. CES activities are at the heart of communities and further budget reductions will have a significant impact on the ability to continue to generate income and support communities. Some key considerations in relation to saving development are:

- The Fire Service 2020-23 IRMP, agreed by Full Council in March 2020, sets out the budget required for service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks. It sets out the management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Any deviation from this would require public consultation and approval by Full Council.
- The library service provides front line service in communities across the county with critical computer access to a number of users and forms a fundamental part of the Children's Services Early Years offer as well as providing crucial facilities to support individuals seeking employment and to support the social care demand management agenda.
- Whilst the Museum Service is highly successful in securing external funding, it is based on a level of local authority commitment to the Service and further reductions could undermine the relationships with key external funders such as Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- Public Health is funded via a ringfenced grant and opportunities are already being taken to use it to fund activities across the wider Council that meet the criteria of the grant.
- Performance and Governance budgets largely provide centralised support to the rest of CES and wider parts of the organisation, these are constantly reviewed for opportunities for efficiencies and in many instances are delivering services at a lower cost than a decentralised model.

CES have historically delivered savings primarily through service efficiencies, cost reduction, management of vacancies and collaboration activities, and will continue to explore all opportunities, although over time this becomes more difficult. The service will continue to look for opportunities for efficiencies especially through new ways of working as a result of Covid-19.

7. Service financial strategy and approach to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals – Strategy and Governance

7.1. Financial Strategy

The Strategy and Governance department brings together a number of professional services which fulfil different functions, and need to be differentiated in the way they operate and the focus of their advice and support.

The functions provide a **continuum of services** including strategic direction, and resource stewardship as well as support to services, managers and staff.

- A strategic focus - to advise and support the political and managerial leadership of the Council in their strategic approach. At a time when resources are stretched, the organisation is in recovery and there are so many “unknowns” in the financial and government policy space, it is essential to:
 - have the capability to look to the future and anticipate change
 - identify and frame strategic issues for the executive team
 - provide analytical and problem-solving expertise to the executive team and the business units
 - offer **professional leadership** to the organisation in key areas such as strategic communications, intelligence and analytics to drive insights and actions
- A support service focus – to support and enable **transformation change** and seek to drive innovation, as well as operations at departmental and service level. It is important to have capacity to:
 - define transformational solutions to strategic problems
 - implement transformation initiatives
 - provide more responsive internal services to managers and staff, while achieving lower costs through greater use of technology, and simpler and more streamlined processes
- A governance focus – to ensure the organisation is **safe, compliant and governed effectively** and with strategic focus and purpose, with strong stewardship / control systems and processes, joining up across the local government system.
- An **income generating** focus – to create value for NCC through maximising the opportunities provided through public service provision, for genuine fee earning activities which don't deviate from, but enhance, our statutory purpose and core offer.

7.2. Covid-19 Impact and Context

As set out above, services within Strategy and Governance fulfil a key role in supporting the Council to continue to operate in a safe, well-governed and compliant way during the response to the COVID-19 emergency, and have played a key role in supporting the wider organisational response, including:

- Maintaining democratic functions and Member support;
- Ensuring effective communications both internally and with key stakeholders and supporting delivery of key Public Health messaging;
- Providing advice on statutory and regulatory changes arising from the response to the pandemic;
- Maintaining effective HR functions and supporting the wider workforce through a period of radical change;
- Supporting wider organisational capacity and the management of the response to the pandemic.

7.3. Savings development 2021-22

Strategy and Governance provides an integrated set of services that support strategy development, underpinned by insight and analytics, performance management, business planning, HR, communication and engagement with residents and staff delivering critical central services, which drive good governance, change and transformation.

As a consequence, any budget proposals can have significant impact in the bigger service departments.

Strategy and Governance as a whole relies heavily on income particularly Nplaw and Registrars, so proposals to reduce headcount need to balance the loss of fee earners.

Reserves for Strategy and Governance are all committed to supporting Business Transformation.

In this context, saving proposals are being developed which:

- Align to departmental strategy.
- Ensure that we keep the organisation **safe and legal** as **efficiently** and **effectively** as possible.
- **Balance opportunities to maximise income for genuine fee earning services**, against cost savings, without deviating from our core service offering.
- Work to **drive our professional leads model**, in providing support across the organisation to maximise efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Maximise any saving opportunities arising from changed expectations and **working practices** as a result of COVID-19.

8. Service financial strategy and approach to developing 2021-22 Budget proposals – Finance and Commercial Services / Finance General

8.1. Financial Strategy

Finance and Commercial Services provides the capacity to enable the organisation to act swiftly, innovatively and effectively in the context of rapid change. Core departmental priorities include:

- Enhancing financial performance
- Supporting and training service managers
- Effective management of property assets to make best use and maximise the return on investments
- Efficient and effective contract management
- Providing information which supports good decision making
- Reducing the costs of our services whilst improving their effectiveness, utilising new technology and implementing smarter ways of working
- Rolling out technological infrastructure, improving customer service and saving money

8.2. Covid-19 Impact and Context

Services within Financial and Commercial Services deliver essential support functions which have enabled the Council to continue operating during the response to the COVID-19 emergency, and have played a key role in supporting the wider organisational response, including:

- Ensuring safe, effective and appropriate use of property and assets;
- Effective procurement of vital equipment including PPE;
- Provision, development, delivery, and maintenance of effective ICT solutions to enable remote working and organisational resilience;
- Maintaining effective, prompt and secure payment systems, and ensuring appropriate financial control and oversight of decision-making;
- Supporting wider organisational capacity and the management of the response to the pandemic.

8.3. Savings development 2021-22

Savings proposals for 2021-22 are being developed with a focus on:

- Ensuring critical functions and capability are maintained;
- Maximising any opportunities arising from changed expectations and working practices as a result of COVID-19; and
- Protecting the quality of service and level of support provided to front line services and colleagues across the Council.

9. Impact of the Proposal

9.1. This paper sets out further details of the Council's budget planning process for 2021-22, while recognising that significant risks and uncertainties remain. The proposals in this report will:

- set the context for service financial planning for the year to come;
- provide an opportunity for Cabinet to comment on and provide guidance about the development of departmental budget proposals;
- support the Council in continuing its engagement with Government in relation to the Comprehensive Spending Review and Business Rates reform; and
- contribute to the Council setting a balanced budget for 2021-22.

10. Evidence and Reasons for Decision

10.1. The County Council faces an unprecedented financial and public health crisis which has the potential to have significant implications for future budget setting. It will be essential to continue to engage with Government, MPs and other stakeholders to continue to push for adequate and sustainable funding for Norfolk to continue to deliver vital services to residents, businesses and visitors. It is also important that Government issues guidance on financial planning assumptions, particularly indicative funding allocations for 2021-22, as soon as possible. Otherwise there is a significant risk that the Council will be obliged to reduce service levels. The Council's MTFS planning builds on the position agreed in February 2020 and it is important to note that this will need to continue to be updated as more reliable information about cost pressures and funding impacts emerges through the process. Nevertheless, it remains prudent to move forward with planning for savings at the level required to close the underlying gap identified in February 2020.

10.2. The proposals in the report reflect a prudent response to the challenges and uncertainties present in the 2021-22 planning process and will ultimately support the Council to develop a robust budget for the year.

11. Alternative Options

11.1. This report sets out a framework for developing detailed saving proposals for 2020-21 and at this stage no proposals have been agreed, meaning that a range of alternative options remain open.

11.2. In addition, there are a number of areas where Cabinet could choose to consider different parameters for the budget setting process, such as:

- Considering alternative approaches to the development of savings from those proposed.
- Adopting an alternative allocation of targets between services, or retaining a higher or lower target corporately.
- Considering an alternative timetable within the time constraints required to develop proposals, undertake public consultation, and meet statutory deadlines for the setting of council tax.

- Changing assumptions within the MTFS (including the level of council tax) and therefore varying the level of savings sought.

11.3. Final decisions about the overall shape of the 2021-22 Budget, savings, and council tax will not be made until February 2021.

12. Financial Implications

12.1. Financial implications are discussed throughout the report. This paper sets out the proposed approach to developing savings proposals to address the targets agreed in July and which will need to be found by each department to contribute to closing the 2021-22 and future year budget gap, subject to formal approval by Full Council in February 2021. The proposals in the paper will require departments to identify further significant savings to be delivered against current budget levels. The scope to achieve savings at the level required may be limited by delivery of the response to COVID-19.

12.2. The Council is legally required to set a balanced Budget annually and should plan to achieve this using a prudent set of assumptions. However, Members could choose to vary the allocation of indicative targets between Directorates, or to establish an alternative approach to identifying savings. Work to deliver additional Government funding could also have an impact on the overall budget gap to be addressed. As a result, the budget setting process and savings targets will be kept under review as budget planning progresses. In the event that additional budget pressures for 2021-22 emerge through budget planning, there may be a requirement to revisit the indicative saving targets.

12.3. However, the scale of the budget gap and savings required are such that if the Council is required to deliver savings at this level there is a risk that this could result in the Council failing to fulfil its statutory responsibilities. As such the Government's response and decisions about Council funding in 2021-22 will be hugely significant. Government has an opportunity as part of the COVID-19 response to deliver a permanent step change in the recognition of the importance of social care, and to fund local authorities to provide a key contribution as part of the national recovery. Any changes in Government funding could have a material impact on both the level of savings to be identified, and the Council's wider budget process. Fundamentally there is a need for a larger quantum of funding to be provided to local government both to meet the immediate pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to provide local authorities with a sustainable level of funding for future years.

13. Resource Implications

13.1. Staff:

There are no direct implications arising from this report although there is a potential that staffing implications may arise linked to specific saving proposals developed. These will be identified as they arise later in the budget planning process.

13.2. Property:

There are no direct property implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to property budgets and assumptions around

capital receipts to be achieved. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver property related savings.

13.3. IT:

There are no direct IT implications arising from this report although existing saving plans include activities linked to IMT budgets. In addition, activities planned within Business Transformation will include further work to deliver savings through activity related to digital and IT initiatives.

14. Other Implications

14.1. Legal Implications

This report forms part of the process that will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2021-22 in line with statutory requirements, including those relating to setting council tax, and undertaking public consultation.

14.2. Human Rights implications

No specific human rights implications have been identified.

14.3. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Any saving proposals with an impact on service delivery will require public consultation and an Equality and Rural Impact Assessment of all proposals will need to be completed as part of budget-setting in due course. The results of public consultation and the findings of all EqIAs will be presented to Cabinet in February 2021 in order to inform budget recommendations to County Council.

No specific EqIA has been undertaken in respect of this report, although the dynamic EqIA in respect of the Council's response to COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

15. Risk Implications/Assessment

15.1. The ultimate impact and financial cost of the response to the COVID-19 outbreak will be highly dependent on a wide range of factors including the length of time that the pandemic continues, the severity of the impact (both nationally and in Norfolk), the impact of any second wave of infection, and the wider actions taken in response.

15.2. Further (non COVID-19) cost pressures may emerge through the 2021-22 budget setting process, these would increase the gap to be closed. Similarly, central Government funding decisions could have a material impact on the level of the budget gap.

15.3. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may continue to impact on the county council's budget setting process in a number of ways, most significantly:

- The council's available resources and capacity to plan robust future year savings while responding to a rapidly changing operating environment;
- The ability to adhere to the proposed process and timetable;
- The need to provide for any immediate or ongoing cost pressures emerging for the council; and
- The medium to long term financial implications including the impact on the wider economy and council tax and business rates base and income.

- 15.4. It will be necessary to operate with some flexibility in response to these and any other issues which may arise during the budget setting process.
- 15.5. As set out elsewhere in the report, the overall gap position will be kept under review throughout the budget setting process to inform changes to the MTFS gap. In the event that any other additional budget pressures for 2021-22 emerge through budget planning (for example as funding reductions, non delivery of savings, or additional pressures in services), it should be noted that there may be a further requirement to revisit the indicative saving targets for 2021-22.
- 15.6. Other significant risks around budget setting are detailed in the 2020-21 budget papers to County Council³, and these will continue to apply in 2021-22. Any saving proposals with an impact on service delivery will require public consultation and an Equality and Rural Impact Assessment of all proposals will need to be completed as part of budget-setting.
- 15.7. There remains considerable uncertainty about reforms to local government finance and any funding changes that will be faced in 2021-22 as reflected in the report. The Norfolk County Council Corporate Risk Register details key financial risks in this area, and all risks associated with COVID-19 are also documented in the Risk Register.

16. Select Committee comments

- 16.1. None.

17. Recommendations

- 17.1. Cabinet considers the recommendations as set out in the Executive Summary.

18. Background Papers

- 18.1. Norfolk County Council Revenue and Capital Budget 2020-21 to 2023-24, County Council 17/02/2020, agenda item 5 ([here](#))
 COVID-19 financial implications for Norfolk County Council, Cabinet 11/05/2020, agenda item 9 ([here](#))
 NCC response to COVID-19, Cabinet 11/05/2020, agenda item 8 ([here](#))
 Strategic and Financial Planning 2021-22, Cabinet 08/06/2020, agenda item 12 ([here](#))

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³ [Agenda Item 5](#), County Council, 17 February 2020

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Appendix 1: Budget setting timetable 2021-22

Activity	Date
June Cabinet (to consider 2021-22 budget process and timetable, agree allocation of savings required and framework for service planning).	08/06/2020
Scrutiny Committee	23/06/2020
FFR exemplifications to be published by Government	Originally Spring / Summer, now delayed
Treasury Fundamental Business Rates Review	July 2020 to Spring 2021
Comprehensive Spending Review	July 2020 to 24/09/2020
NCC Financial Regulations update	Autumn 2020
Budget Challenge (Corporate Board and portfolio leads to consider proposals at extended Corporate Board / Budget Challenge session)	July 2020 (Round 1) September 2020 (Round 2)
September Cabinet (to review MTFS assumptions, proposed areas for savings, and agree any revisions to 2021-22 budget gap targets)	07/09/2020
Select Committees to consider proposed areas for savings	September 2020
Scrutiny Committee	23/09/2020
October Cabinet (to consider final 2021-22 savings proposals for consultation, and overall budget position. Key decision – agree 2021-22 budget proposals for consultation)	05/10/2020
Scrutiny Committee	21/10/2020
Public consultation on 2021-22 Budget proposals	22/10/2020 to December 2020
Autumn Budget 2020 and Provisional Settlement (5 December Government's target date for provisional Local Government Finance Settlement)	November-December*
Final Settlement	January 2021*
February Cabinet (to recommend 2021-22 Budget and council tax to County Council).	01/02/2021
Scrutiny Committee (scrutiny of 2021-22 budget proposals, consultation and EQIA)	17/02/2021
County Council Budget Setting (to agree final 2021-22 Budget and level of council tax)	22/02/2021

Notes:

- *Dates or activities to be confirmed.
- Additional reports to Cabinet to be presented through the year as required (e.g. in the event of FFR or CSR announcements, or the ongoing COVID-19 response impacting on the planning assumptions).

Scrutiny Committee

Item 10

Decision making report title:	Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee
Date of meeting:	23 September 2020
Responsible Director:	Executive Director of Strategy and Governance
<p>Introduction</p> <p>In January 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a review of the County Council's newly developing governance arrangements. The LGA's Governance review formed Phase 1 of ongoing work to strengthen the Council's system of governance, refresh arrangements for member development and training, and adapt the democratic support & scrutiny function which supports the new system. The work builds on the findings of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge at the end of 2019.</p> <p>The LGA's Report included four key recommendations, each with a series of related actions, covering the following areas - work programming across the key components of the governance system, reviewing the Council's Constitution, scrutiny and wider ownership of children's services matters, and member training and development.</p> <p>On 27 February 2020, County Council Group Leaders met to consider the LGA report. Consideration was given to the need highlighted in the report to, 'Ensure both the scrutiny and wider corporate ownership of children's services matters meets the highest possible standards, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for Norfolk's young people and their families'. To support this recommendation, it was agreed to establish a body to focus specifically on children and young people as a sub group of this Committee.</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee agreed on 23 June 2020 to the establishment of a Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee and agreed to ask the Chair and Vice Chair to agree terms of reference for the sub group and wider membership. The Chair and Vice Chair were also asked to develop a draft work programme for the Sub Committee based on outcomes from the earlier Children's Services scrutiny and reports considered elsewhere on this agenda. At the last meeting of Scrutiny Committee on 23 August 2020 the Committee asked for an update on progress at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice Chair have now met to discuss scrutiny of children's services issues and ask the Scrutiny Committee to agree the most appropriate way forward for their consideration.</p>	

Recommendations

1. To consider the following options for scrutiny of Children's Services and agree that scrutiny be undertaken by either:
 - A Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee with the membership being:

5 Members (3 Conservatives, 1 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)
or
8 Members (5 Conservatives, 2 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)

Or
 - The main Scrutiny Committee with additional meetings focusing on children's services issues
2. To agree the proposed programme of work and meeting dates outlined in the report.

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. In January 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a review of the Council's newly developing governance arrangements. The LGA's Governance review formed Phase 1 of the ongoing work to strengthen the Council's system of governance, refresh arrangements for member development and training, and adapt the democratic support & scrutiny function which supports the new system. This work builds on the findings of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge at the end of 2019.
- 1.2. The LGA's Report included four key recommendations, each with a series of related actions, covering the following areas - work programming across the key components of the governance system, reviewing the Council's Constitution, scrutiny and wider ownership of children's services matters, and member training and development.

2. Proposals

- 2.1. On 27 February 2020, County Council Group Leaders met to consider the LGA report. Consideration was given to the need highlighted in the report to, 'Ensure both the scrutiny and wider corporate ownership of children's services matters meets the highest possible standards, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for Norfolk's young people and their families'. To support this recommendation, it was agreed to establish a body to focus specifically on children and young people as a sub group of this Committee.

2.2. Scrutiny Committee agreed on 23 June 2020 to the establishment of a Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee and agreed to ask the Chair and Vice Chair to agree terms of reference for the sub group and wider membership. The Chair and Vice Chair were also asked to develop a draft work programme for the Sub Committee based on outcomes from the earlier Children's Services scrutiny and reports considered elsewhere on this agenda.

2.3. The Chair and Vice Chair have now met to discuss scrutiny of children's services issues. A programme of scrutiny work and topic areas for discussion has been agreed as follows:

Wednesday 7th October 2020

Re-shaping the Care Market and creating the capacity we need

Wednesday 2nd December 2020

Edge of Care and Alternatives to Care

Wednesday 3rd February 2021

Effective Practice

Wednesday 3rd March 2021

Prevention and early intervention

Inclusion

2.4. The Chair and Vice Chair are mindful of the need to start this scrutiny work as soon as possible and therefore propose that the Committee agree a way forward for scrutiny of children's services based on the following options:

- Children's Services Sub Committee
(5 Members - 3 Cons, 1 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)
- Children's Services Sub Committee
(8 Members – 5 Conservative, 2 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)
- Scrutiny Committee holding additional meetings dedicated to considering Children's Services issues on the dates outlined above.

3. Reasons for Decision and Impact of the Proposal

3.1. Establishing a sub group of Scrutiny Committee, with a specific focus on Children's Services matters, will work towards developing effective governance arrangements to ensure that the County Council is achieving the best possible outcomes for young people and their families in Norfolk. The creation of a sub-committee for Children's Services matters would allow for Members of this group to focus on the 5 strategic themes in the Children's Services Transformation programme and the main Scrutiny Committee to concentrate on other areas of focus within the County

Council, including the wider response to the COVID 19 emergency.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no financial implications.

5. Resource Implications

5.1. **Staff:**

Further Officer support to support the Sub Committee, or additional meetings of the Scrutiny Committee, and it's work programme will be needed from Democratic Services.

5.2. **Property:**

N/A

5.3. **IT:**

Meetings of the Sub Committee will be held virtually as will other County Council meetings for the foreseeable future.

6. Other Implications

6.1. **Legal Implications**

N/A

6.2. **Human Rights implications**

N/A

6.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)**

N/A

6.4. **Health and Safety implications** (where appropriate)

N/A

6.5. **Sustainability implications** (where appropriate)

6.6. **Any other implications**

7. Risk Implications/Assessment

- 7.1. N/A

8. Select Committee comments

- 8.1. This report has not been considered by Select Committees however the Sub Committee will need to ensure that it avoids duplication of any future work programme with others, particularly the People and Communities Select Committee.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1. 1.To consider the following options for scrutiny of Children's Services and agree that scrutiny be undertaken by either:
- A Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee with the membership being:

5 Members (3 Conservatives, 1 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)
or
8 Members (5 Conservatives, 2 Labour, 1 Lib Dem)

Or
 - The main Scrutiny Committee with additional meetings focusing on children's services issues
2. To agree the proposed programme of work and meeting dates outlined in the report.

Officer Contact

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

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Norfolk County Council
<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee</p>
<p>Members</p> <p>XX Members <i>(To be agreed by Scrutiny Committee)</i></p> <p>Sub Committee Members will be drawn from the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>The Sub Committee will have a list of named substitute Members that may substitute for any Member of their group.</p> <p>Named substitute members do not need to be members of the main Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>It is advisable that any Member and substitute Members appointed will need to have attended appropriate training on Children's Services issues.</p> <p>Plus:</p> <p>2 Parent Governor and 1 representative of each of the Church of England and Roman Catholic Diocesan Boards. They are entitled to speak on all matters but only to vote on education matters.</p> <p>Quorum</p> <p>The quorum for the Sub Committee will be XX Members. <i>(To be finalised once Membership is agreed by the Scrutiny Committee)</i></p> <p>Chair of the Sub Committee –</p> <p>Chair of the Sub-Committee to be agreed from Sub-Committee members.</p>
<p>Background</p> <p>In January 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) undertook a review of the County Council's newly developing governance arrangements. The LGA's report included four key recommendations, one of which related to scrutiny and wider ownership of children's services matters. It highlighted the need to 'Ensure both the scrutiny and wider corporate ownership of children's services matters meets the highest possible standards, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for Norfolk's young people and their families'.</p>

At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 29 June 2020 members agreed to establish this Sub Committee.

Purpose and Objectives

The Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee will be responsible for scrutiny of matters relating to Children's Services on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee.

Meetings and reporting arrangements

The Sub Committee:

- Will meet at least four times a year
- Will agree their programme of scrutiny work and report on progress to the Scrutiny Committee annually
- Will not have any decision-making powers but will make recommendations to the main Scrutiny Committee. Any minority views will be reported.
- May consider the views of non-Sub Committee Members at the request of the Chair and/or Committee.

Report to Scrutiny Committee

Report title:	Forward Work Plan
Date of meeting:	23 September 2020
Responsible Cabinet Member:	N/A
Responsible Director:	Executive Director of Strategy and Governance
Is this a key decision?	N/A
Actions required The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and agree the forward work plan and any future items for scrutiny	

1. Background and Purpose

- 1.1. Since May 2020 Scrutiny Committee have been considering a forward programme of scrutiny regarding the County Council's response to COVID 19. Members have been focusing areas for consideration on lessons learnt that could be fed into any current emergency planning and issues for longer term recovery planning.
- 1.2. At the last meeting on 19 August 2020 the Committee asked for any items on the work programme prior to the COVID outbreak to be brought back to Committee to consideration.
- 1.3. Attached at Appendix A is the proposed programme of work for the remainder of the year, including pre-March 2020 issues, for approval by the Committee.

2. Proposals

- 2.1. The Scrutiny Committee has been mindful that the County Council is still in the middle of the COVID 19 crisis and any programme of scrutiny work needs to be able to adapt to constantly changing situations. Proposed longer term areas of work for later in the year may therefore need to be adapted and changed as the crisis evolves.
- 2.2. In considering any work programme the Committee should consider the following:
 - Is this something that the County Council has the power to change or influence
 - How this work could engage with the activity of the Cabinet and other decision makers, including partners such as the Norfolk Resilience Forum
 - What the benefits are that scrutiny could bring to this issue?
 - How the committee can best carry out work on this subject?

- What the best outcomes of this work would be?

- 2.3. The Committee may wish to hold additional meetings in the coming months considering any issues highlighted for the work programme.

3. Resource Implications

3.1. Staff:

The County Council is still in the middle of this crisis and the main focus for Officers will be in dealing with the crisis. Some Officers may be redeployed from their current roles elsewhere to support ongoing work during the pandemic and the Committee may need to be mindful of focusing requests on essential information at this time.

3.2. Property:

None

3.3. IT:

None

4. Other Implications

4.1. Legal Implications:

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ("the Regulations") sets out the framework for Councils to hold Council meetings remotely.

4.2. Human Rights implications

None

4.3. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included)

None

4.4. Health and Safety implications (where appropriate)

None

4.5. Sustainability implications (where appropriate)

None

4.6. Any other implications

None

5. Risk Implications/Assessment

- 5.1. None

6. Select Committee comments

- 6.1. Select Committees have received updates on COVID 19, addressing the response from their own service areas. The Scrutiny Committee should take into consideration any future comments raised by the Select Committees regarding their own forward work plans to avoid duplication. Forward work plans are attached as follows:

[Corporate Select Committee](#)

[Infrastructure and Development Select Committee](#)

[People and Communities Select Committee](#)

7. Recommendation

- 7.1. The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and agree the forward work plan and any future items for scrutiny

8. Background Papers

8.1. [Scrutiny Committee meeting : 27 May 2020](#)

Officer Contact

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

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Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Date	Report	Issues for consideration	Cabinet Member	Exec Director
23 Sept	COVID 19	Normalisation and Recovery Planning Focus on public health, communities, health protection.	Bill Borrett	Dr Louise Smith
	Budget 2020/21		Andrew Jamieson	Simon George
	Children's Services Scrutiny	To agree the proposed body to scrutinise Children's Services issues	John Fisher	Sara Tough
21 October	COVID 19	Normalisation and Recovery Planning - Childrens and Young People - Support for vulnerable people in our communities - How does the 'new normal' feel for service users	John Fisher Bill Borrett	Sara Tough James Bullion
	Budget 2020/21			
18 Nov	COVID 19	Normalisation and Recovery Planning Norfolk Economy and support for businesses Digital	Graham Plant Tom FitzPatrick	Tom McCabe
23 Dec	Call ins only			

Items to be scheduled from pre-March 2020:

Regional Schools Commissioner:

Report postponed from 17 March 2020 meeting

Peer Review:

Consideration of action plan agreed at Cabinet on 2 March 2020.– Report postponed from 17 March meeting

Changes to the Child and Family Support Service:

Six-month review of changes

New Anglia LEP*:

Update on LEP activities and issues raised on 17 December meeting in particular:

- LEP Board action plan in climate change
- LEP tourism strategy

*The LEP have been invited to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 18 November 2020 and these issues can be picked up at this meeting.