

Norfolk County Council

Extraordinary Meeting

Date: **Monday 11 April 2022**

Time: **10 am**

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

To: All members of the Council. You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council for the purpose of transacting the business set out in this agenda.

Advice for members of the public:

This meeting will be held in public and in person. It will be live streamed on YouTube and members of the public can watch remotely by clicking on the following link:

[Norfolk County Council - Democratic Services YouTube](#)

However, if you wish to attend the meeting in person it would be most helpful if, you could indicate in advance that it is your intention to do so. This can be done by emailing committees@norfolk.gov.uk where we will ask you to provide your name, address and details of how we can contact you (in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak). Please note that public seating will be limited.

Councillors and Officers attending the meeting will be required to wear face masks when they are moving around the room but may remove them once seated. We would like to request that anyone attending the meeting does the same to help make the event safe for all those attending.

To ensure that the meeting is held safely we ask that if you have any of the symptoms of Covid then for the safety of others please do not attend. For further information on Covid please visit the County Council's website [here](#)

Prayers

AGENDA

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **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. It is recommended that you declare that interest but it is not a legal requirement. 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.

- 3. To receive any items of business which the Chair decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

4 Notice of Motions

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Head of Paid Service
County Hall
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NR1 2DH

Agenda Published: 1 April 2022

Notice of Motions

Notice of the following motions (remaining from the meeting held on 28th March 2022) has been given in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules:

1. Business rates for offshore installations

Proposer: Cllr Steve Morphew

Seconder: Cllr Terry Jermy

Sizewell B power station in Suffolk pays around £25m a year in business rates. However, none of the wind farms or offshore platforms that provide energy through and are serviced in Norfolk pay business rates because the structures are situated beyond the shoreline.

Onshore wind and other renewable generators are subject to business rates that help support local services and fund the council's work on protecting the environment and combatting climate change.

Council believes Norfolk and other counties that contribute to the energy needs of the country offshore deserve to be recognised in the same way as those who host onshore generation and supply.

Council

- 1. calls upon the government to extend the boundary for business rate liability to include offshore installations.**
- 2. requests the Leader of the council to**
 - a) write to and lobby ministers**
 - b) raise the issue with the Local Government Association and other representative bodies in local government**
 - c) seek support from Norfolk MPs**

2. Reviewing the Pandemic Response

Proposer: Cllr Emma Corlett

Seconder: Cllr Maxine Webb

Council resolves to establish a cross party group to include external partners with an independent chair to review Norfolk's response to the pandemic and make recommendations that will help Norfolk become more resilient when faced with future emergencies.

Council requests the Leader in consultation with other group leaders to appoint the chair and members of the review panel drawn from an appropriate cross section of expertise and interests.

Council requests Cabinet to provide resources to support this review to enable the results to be reported to council with an action plan from Cabinet in July 2022.

3 Future Letting of County Hall
Proposer: Cllr Brenda Jones
Seconded: Cllr Alison Birmingham

Council notes the briefing to Broadland and South Norfolk District Council staff to tell them they were moving to County Hall before any Norfolk County Councillors outside the inner circle of the administration were consulted. Council further notes that the proposal to bring staff and council accommodation from Broadland and South Norfolk to County Hall has been abandoned. Given the importance and sensitivity of the work of Norfolk County Councillors, Council resolves to ask the Corporate Select Committee to suggest ways that the interests of County Councillors and staff can be protected in the event of any proposals to let County Hall accommodation to third parties.

4 Corporate Board
Proposer: Cllr Steve Morphew
Seconded: Cllr Matt Reilly

Council believes the business of the Corporate Board should not be shrouded in secrecy and should be treated in the same way as every other part of the council. Corporate Board papers should be published except where they meet the same confidentiality tests of all other council business and available to council members in the usual way. Council resolves to request the Director of Governance to publish all Corporate Board papers from the date of its establishment and hereafter.

5 Offshore Wind Benefits to Norfolk
Proposer: Cllr Plant
Seconded: Cllr Grant

The Council recognises the multiple benefits that offshore wind power, off the Norfolk coast, presents:

- A sustainable and renewable energy source which will assist in meeting the Government's target of delivering 40 gigawatts of offshore wind power by 2030.
- A major contribution to the Council's Environment Policy, which seeks to work with partners towards carbon neutrality by 2030 and "embed the ethos and practice of supporting 'clean growth' within the economy, including investigating opportunities which help to develop the green/renewable energy sector".
- Significant employment and skills opportunities, especially in areas like Great Yarmouth, where higher value jobs are in short supply. Norfolk has the potential to benefit more than any other area in England from growth in offshore wind, that will require a diverse mix of skills, with an additional 6,150 full-time well-paid jobs forecast to be created by 2032 (New Anglia Energy Recovery and Resilience Plan).

The Council also:

- Recognises the need for some of these projects to make landfall and grid connection in various parts of the county, involving cable routes and new sub-stations.
- Acknowledges the disruption that this may cause to local communities in the short term and therefore supports the need for a coordinated and integrated approach to connecting the electricity generated from offshore wind farms to the grid.
- Recognises the need for further detailed work to be carried out by National Grid on the implications of the various grid connection options, including the:
- Wider onshore environmental implications of any new transmission network

- Economic opportunities for those coastal areas and communities affected
- Opportunities for local communities to be appropriately compensated for any impacts caused by the need for either onshore or offshore infrastructure.
- Would support any offshore transmission infrastructure which reduces the environmental and community impacts that the current approach (radial, point to point) has on the county, subject to there being no anticipated long term impact on the marine environment off the Norfolk Coast;
- Support the wider opportunities for harnessing electricity generated offshore to supply clean energy to local homes and business; as well as helping to deliver housing and employment growth in Norfolk.

The Council resolves to continue to work closely with:

- The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), National Grid; the Office for Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM), New Anglia LEP, local councils and energy companies to progress the work needed to secure the long term environmental and economic benefits of offshore wind, whilst minimising its impact on local communities as far as possible.
- BEIS on the Government Offshore Transmission Network Review.
- Major companies: their supply chains and local colleges to develop employment and skills strategies to ensure that the high quality jobs set to be created in the sector over the next 50 years, are accessible to, and promoted to, Norfolk residents.

6 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

Proposer: Cllr Paul Neale

Seconder: Cllr Jamie Osborn

This Council notes:

- The recent announcement of Kent County Council that they are no longer able to support any more unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)
- Confirmation that Government will not be pursuing a mandatory rota for the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) but will offer a small funding uplift
- The Dublin III reunification programme has ended following Brexit
- That other councils have made commitments to take a minimum number of UASCs a year through the NTS

This council further:

- Notes that Norfolk County Council is not at the 0.07% of child population level that is the UASC quota under the NTS and does not currently anticipate doing so.
- Notes that gaps in funding from Government to support UASCs means a cost to the general fund
- Gives thanks to the council's UASC social workers, foster carers with placements of UASCs and all others who provide support to children and young people who arrive in the city

This council therefore requests:

- The chief executive write to the Home Secretary to express the council's:
 - dismay at the Government's refusal to introduce a mandatory rota for the NTS
 - concern that there is no replacement for Dublin III
 - disappointment that the Government funding uplift will not provide sufficient support to ensure that more councils take UASCs through the NTS
 - concern that in the meantime, UASCs are waiting at the border for placements that councils aren't providing.

7 Environmental Policy
Proposer: Cllr Steffan Aquarone
Seconded: Cllr Saul Penfold

Greta Thunberg has called the recent COP26 a failure describing it as a PR event, “where leaders are giving beautiful speeches and announcing fancy commitments and targets, while behind the curtains governments of the Global North countries are still refusing to take any drastic climate action.”

Council agreed its Environmental Policy in November 2019. Since then it's become clear that Norfolk needs leadership in order to respond to climate change at the necessary speed. Will the Cabinet member for Environment and Waste commit to expanding the ambition of carbon neutrality by 2030 to cover the whole of Norfolk, and urgently take the lead on creating a local climate action plan in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders for presentation to the next full council meeting.

8 Reduction of Sewage Discharges
Proposer: Cllr Tim Adams
Seconded: Cllr Rob Colwell

On 23 September 2019 the Council agreed to call on the Government to fast track legislation to better protect and restore our waterways and invest in effective monitoring and enforcement to ensure that all our rivers are once again clean and healthy.

In 2019 the Environment Agency stated that 8% of rivers in the Anglian river basin met a good ecological status. Now we find out that in 2020 Anglian water had 180,326 hours of storm overflows that had discharged sewage into local rivers.

The recent government fiasco on this issue was shameful but for the government to turn to mean anything urgent enforcement is needed to ensure that the public can once again have confidence to be able to use East Anglian's rivers safely.

The Council resolves to:

1. request the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs asking that the legal duty on water companies to progressively reduce the adverse impacts of storm overflow discharges is robustly enforced to ensure that this practise is stopped as soon as possible
2. request the Leader of the Council to write to the Chief Executive of Anglian Water to ask that the information on how often they use storm overflow discharge is made publicly available on a regular basis so that the public can have confidence that there is a reduction in the discharges

9 Climate Emergency
Proposer: Steffan Aquarone
Seconded: Saul Penfold

In light of this year's extreme weather events across the globe, the latest IPCC report on the impact of climate change on humanity, and the possibility of a rise in sea levels that would leave significant parts of Norfolk underwater within decades, this Council resolves to declare a Climate Emergency.

10 Retrofit taskforce to deal with the cost of living crisis

Proposer: Cllr Jamie Osborn

Seconded: Cllr Ben Price

Energy prices are set to rise by 50% in April 2022, on top of a £139 - £153 rise in October 2021. This will plunge many people into fuel poverty and exacerbate the cost of living crisis.

The poor energy efficiency of housing is contributing to this crisis. Due to decades of under-funding and lack of coordination for the domestic retrofit sector, the energy efficiency and renewable energy provision in UK housing lags behind much of Europe.

Norfolk will be hit hard by the cost of living rises due to an older than average housing stock, older population, and areas of high deprivation and fuel poverty. Within Norfolk there is a strong tradition of working to improve the energy efficiency of homes through the retrofitting of council and social housing, and some training programmes exist to skill up a workforce. The Norfolk Warm Homes initiative is a strong example to build on. However, there is much more work to be done.

The Climate Change Committee recommends that virtually every house will need to be upgraded to meet carbon reduction targets, as well as the need to insulate households against fuel poverty. This equates to upgrading two houses every minute for the next thirty years nationwide, including in Norfolk.

Retrofit industry experts have called for local leadership in the retrofit sector. The successive failures of the Government's Green Deal, Green Homes Grant, and Heat and Buildings Strategy have left a vacuum in coordination for the retrofit policy that local authorities must fill.

Despite the scale of the challenge, there has hitherto been little coordination between the various agencies that are required to work together to deliver retrofitting. Some local councils such as Lewes District Council together with Brighton and Hove unitary council are piloting a "Retrofit Taskforce" approach, establishing a local authority-led partnership of six local councils, between the construction and renewable energy industries, further, higher and vocational education institutions, architects, social housing providers, and other stakeholders. The retrofit taskforce will be dedicated to developing a local supply chain to retrofit 44,000 homes in the wider Sussex area, and boosting the provision of retrofitting for all tenures.

While housing is strictly speaking a district council responsibility, county-level authorities have a role to play as the authorities responsible for economic development, skills and training, and public health.

Council resolves to:

1) Immediately institute a response to the energy price crisis by working with district councils and the voluntary sector to ensure support for households facing poverty, including through provision of grants to the voluntary sector.

2) Call on Government to implement a windfall tax on the multi-billion pounds' profits of oil and gas companies who have benefitted from the energy price rises, and use the revenue to help those in fuel poverty.

- 3) Work with partners to establish a retrofit taskforce for Norfolk, dedicated to developing and promoting a local retrofit supply chain, including through skills training, and the targeting of resources to help those in most need of protection from fuel price rises.
- 4) Through the retrofit taskforce, lead the development of a retrofit strategy for Norfolk across all tenures, with a paper to be presented to Cabinet within 12 months.
- 5) Through the retrofit taskforce, seek to mobilise alternative sources of finance beyond insufficient and sporadic government grants, including working with the Local Enterprise Partnership and local and international businesses.
- 6) Share the aims and expertise of the retrofit taskforce with other local authorities, thereby establishing Norfolk as a leading authority.
- 7) Through UK100 and other channels, submit to Government a business case for increased funding to scale up local authority-led retrofit taskforces

11 Foster Carers

Proposer – Cllr Mike Smith-Clare
Seconder – Cllr Maxine Webb

Council regrets the upset caused to Foster Carers by the Cabinet decision on the future financial support for their invaluable work. Council notes the short timescale for the consultation, that the proposals were not considered in advance by the People and Communities Select Committee and that Councillors as corporate parents were not consulted.

Council requests Cabinet to delay implementation of their decision by at least six months in order that

1. Foster Carers can be involved in co-producing a scheme that they feel they have had a proper part in developing and that takes account of the needs of the those they care for
2. Councillors as corporate parents have been consulted
3. People and Communities Select Committee have the opportunity to consider and comment on proposals before they are determined by Cabinet.

12 Devolution

Proposer – Cllr Steve Morphew
Seconder – Cllr Colleen Walker

Council believes that if the governments levelling up proposals are to benefit Norfolk they will need to come with sufficient resources and enjoy the support of all parts of Norfolk society. Currently there is nothing tangible other than the prospect of additional and controversial layers of governance that might reduce the direct say for residents in their local, increase costs and undermine accountability.

Council believes a clear indication of what resources will come to Norfolk is a prerequisite before spending a lot of member and officer time that is needed elsewhere. Council

further believes the devolution and levelling up agenda is fundamental to the future of the county and a keystone to the policies and operation of the county Council. Council therefore resolves to

1. urge the Leader to see an indicative commitment from the government on the size and scope of additional investment that would come to Norfolk as a result of any devolution deal.
2. ask the Leader to report to full Council at every meeting on progress in talks with government and partners on a devolution deal and make additional time available at Council for questions.
3. include any agreements or deals relating to devolution as part of the policy framework, thus ensuring the decisions are taken by full Council after proper debate involving all members of the Council

13 Norwich Western Link Plan B

Proposer – Cllr Emma Corlett

Seconder – Cllr Terry Jermy

Council recognises there is common agreement that communities around Ringland, Costessey and Weston Longville amongst others that are blighted by rat running need action to relieve the problem.

Council further recognises that whatever the merits of the NWL argued by its supporters, there is a real risk of the scheme not going ahead as a result of one or a combination of factors such as becoming unaffordable, being rejected by government, failing to get planning consent or legal action. In the event of that happening those communities blighted by rat running deserve to know what alternatives will be available to mitigate or resolve the problem.

Council therefore resolves to request officers to

1. draw up a Plan B starting from the options in the Options Assessment report (NWL Options Appraisal Report Appendix B.pdf) that do not include building the NWL that were not taken forward as individually they were not considered as effective but were never considered cumulatively.
2. prepare a consultation process that would enable those affected communities and others to include further suggestions and comments on other options should the NWL not proceed.
3. Review the corporate risk register to take account of the range of potential risks to the NWL and include plan B as a mitigation measure in the event of the scheme not proceeding