

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



COUNCIL MEETING

Agenda

Thursday, 21st March, 2024
at 5.00 pm

In the Assembly Room
Town Hall
Saturday Market Place
King's Lynn

Available for the public to view on [WestNorfolkBC on You Tube](#)



King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX
Telephone: 01553 616200
Fax: 01553 691663

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk** which will commence at **5.00 pm** on **Thursday, 21st March, 2024** in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn to transact the business shown below.

Yours sincerely

Lorraine Gore
Chief Executive

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. PRAYERS

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 22 February 2024 (previously circulated).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Page 8)

Please indicate if there are any interests which should be declared. A declaration of an interest should indicate the nature of the interest (if not already declared on the Register of Interests) and the agenda item to which it relates. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared, the member should withdraw from the room whilst the matter is discussed.

5. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive Mayor's communications and announcements.

6. URGENT BUSINESS

To receive any items of business which in the opinion of the Mayor are urgent.

7. ITEMS REMAINING FROM 31 JANUARY AND 22 FEBRUARY MEETINGS
(Pages 9 - 104)

i) Cabinet recommendation remaining from 15 January 2024 meeting:

CAB93: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen (NB it is now proposed that 27 June 2024 is the date of the special Council)

ii) Petitions and Public Questions from 22 February meeting

To receive petitions and public questions in accordance with Standing Order 9.

iii) Cabinet Members reports from 31 January 2024

In accordance with Standing Order 11, to receive reports from Cabinet Members moved en bloc, under Standing Order 11.2 Members of the Council may ask questions of Cabinet Members on their reports and Portfolio areas. The order of putting questions shall commence with a Member from the largest opposition group, proceeding in descending order to the smallest opposition group, followed by a Member from the ruling group. This order shall repeat until the time for questions has elapsed or there are no more questions to be put.

The period of time for putting questions and receiving responses shall not exceed 50 minutes for all Cabinet Members, excluding the Leader.

The period of time for putting questions and receiving responses to the Leader shall not exceed 15 minutes.

(Councillors are reminded that this is a question and answer session not a debate.)

Business – Councillor A Beales
Climate Change and Biodiversity – Councillor M de Whalley
Environment and Coastal - Councillor S Squire
Finance – Councillor C Morley
Property & Corporate Services – Councillor B Anota
People and Communities – Councillor J Rust
Tourism Events and Marketing – Cllr S Ring
Deputy Leader Development and Regeneration – Councillor J Moriarty

Leader - Councillor T Parish

iv) Cabinet Members reports from 22 February 2024

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Leader - Councillor T Parish

v) Questions of Chairs from 31 January and 22 February 2024 meeting

In accordance with Standing Order 11.2 (b), Members of the Council may ask any questions of the Chair of any Council Body (except the Cabinet).

8. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive petitions and public questions in accordance with Standing Order 9.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES

(Members are reminded this is a debate, not a question and answer session)

To consider the following recommendations to Council:

1) **Cabinet: 5 March 2024** (Pages 105 - 106)

CAB130 : Anti Money Laundering Policy

10. NOTICE OF MOTION

To consider the following Notice of Motion (2/24), submitted by Councillor Kemp:

Wisbech Incinerator

This Council expresses its continued strong opposition to MVV Energie's proposed 625,000-tonne capacity Incinerator close to the West Norfolk border in Wisbech and notes with alarm that the Government granted a Consent Order on 20 February, which, however, may soon be subject to Judicial Review.

Council recognises that the operation would be carbon intensive and increase net carbon emissions, against the Norfolk Climate Change Strategy and achievement of Net Zero; that new facilities of this nature are against the advice of the All Parliamentary Group on Air Pollution and the National Infrastructure Commission; that the East of England already has an over-capacity of incinerators; and this Council wishes to prevent the bringing of London's waste onto the Fens road network, and the shipping of toxic waste into Lynn's port for transportation onto West Norfolk's congested road network to Wisbech.

As a Statutory Consultee, Neighbouring Authority and Interested Party at the recent Planning Enquiry, this Council supported the other neighbouring authorities, Fenland District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Norfolk Council in their opposition to the incinerator.

This Council will play a full part in any upcoming Judicial Review and will make strong representations against the facility to the Court, and will write to Government.

11. CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS 21 MARCH 2024 (Pages 107 - 151)

In accordance with Standing Order 11, to receive reports from Cabinet Members moved en bloc, under Standing Order 11.2 Members of the Council may ask questions of Cabinet Members on their reports and Portfolio areas. The order of putting questions shall commence with a Member from the largest opposition group, proceeding in descending order to the smallest opposition group, followed by a Member from the ruling group. This order shall repeat until the time for questions has elapsed or there are no more questions to be put.

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Leader - Councillor T Parish

12. MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

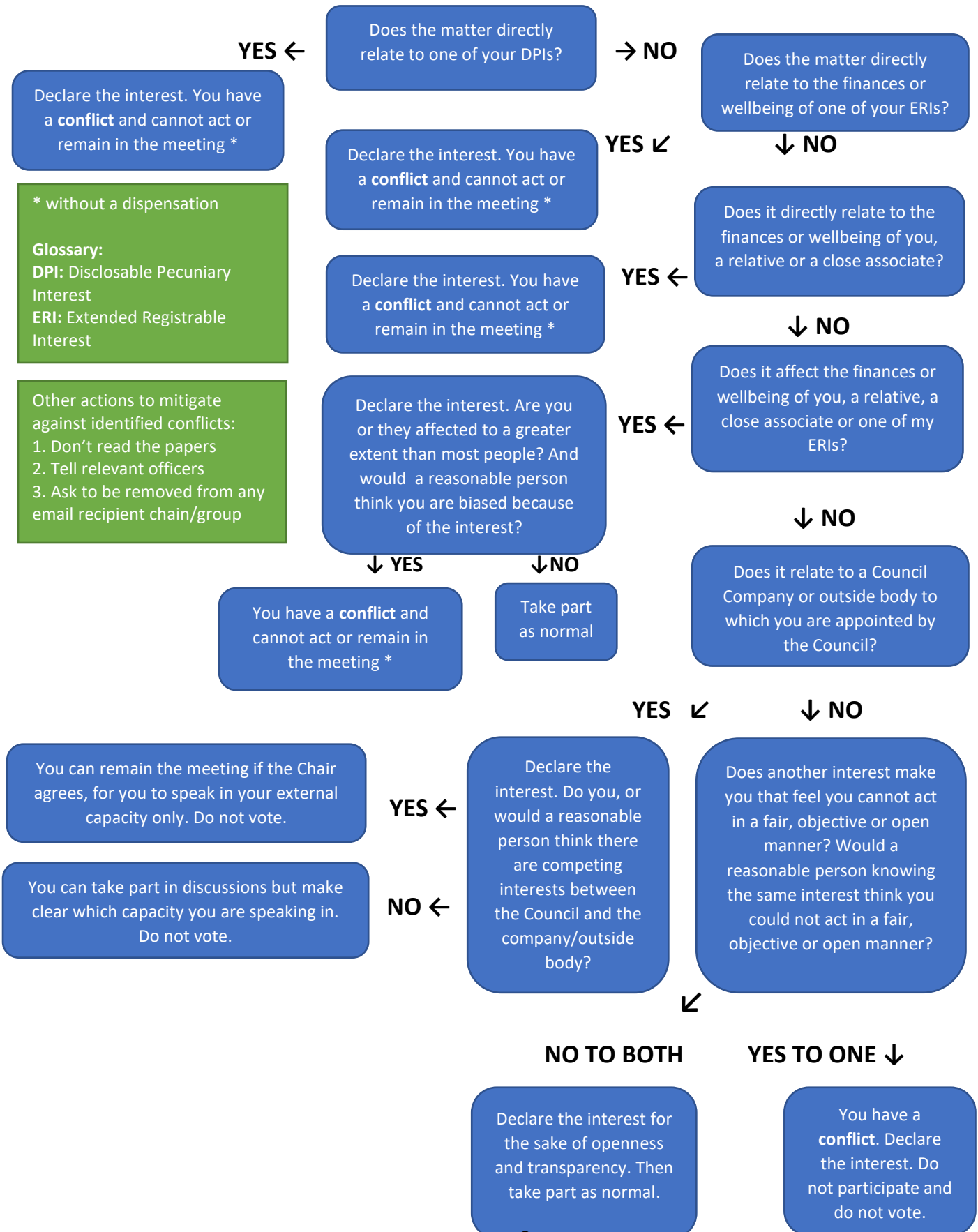
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Lorraine Gore
Chief Executive

DECLARING AN INTEREST AND MANAGING ANY CONFLICTS FLOWCHART



START



**RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL ON 21 MARCH 2024
FROM CABINET ON 15 JANUARY 2024**

CAB93 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube](#)

Cabinet was informed that following the 2023 Borough Council Elections, the opportunity had been taken to review the appointments of new Honorary Aldermen. Consideration has been given to nominations by Group Leaders and it had been agreed to bring forward five individuals at this stage to enable time to review the criteria for nominations.

Councillor Parish reported that following further discussions it had been agreed to bring forward those nominations in tranches up to the next elections, he also proposed to include the fact that the review of criteria for nominations to Honorary Aldermen be undertaken for new nominations.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Dark commented that the backlog of proposed Aldermen was due to Covid and no fault of the individuals, and the reviewed criteria for new nominations should be in place prior to the elections in 2027.

RECOMMENDED: 1) That the Council places on record its deep appreciation of the eminent services to the Council rendered by former Councillors:

Kathleen Collins (previously Mellish)
David Collis
Michael Peake
Geoffrey Hipperson
Andrew Tyler

2) That a Special Meeting of the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on those former Councillors be held ~~after Mayormaking~~ on Thursday, ~~16 May~~ 27 June 2024 and the engrossment of recommendation above and an Aldermanic badge be presented to the Honorary Aldermen at that Council meeting.

3) That a further report be brought forward reviewing the criteria of nominating Honorary Aldermen before any further new nominations are considered by the Council.

CAB96 COUNCIL COMPANIES FUNDING

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube](#)

Assistant Director David Ousby presented a report which brought together the advice the council had received from legal, financial and tax advisors on the funding of the council housing companies. It set out:

1. The total amount of borrowing available that the council could provide to support the housing companies, and the details of the funding agreements between the council and the companies.

2. the financing arrangements for West Norfolk Housing Company Limited (WNHC), which expired in March 2023, to allow that company to continue to purchase properties, both from the councils Major Housing Programme (MHP) and elsewhere.
3. the options available to the council to allow West Norfolk Property Limited (WNPL) to manage the private rented (PRS) properties in its portfolio, and the future pipeline of properties being delivered through the councils Major Housing Programme (MHP), through a hybrid debt plus equity financing and lease extension provision

The report and its recommendations had been reviewed by external consultants Grant Thornton. Their findings had been incorporated in the report to Cabinet.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Kemp asked if the council was safeguarding its loans against Council's companies as there were only a small number registered against West Norfolk Housing and none against West Norfolk Property. The Monitoring Officer confirmed they were aware of the issue with the charges where there were some errors in the documents meaning the amendments had to go through the courts for amendments.

Councillor Beales acknowledged there was a lot of work to be done with the Companies which was all part of the proposals.

Councillor Parish acknowledged there were now sufficient staff in the Legal Department to help with the work.

Under standing order 34 Councillor Dark drew attention to the suggestion made at the Corporate Performance Panel that the Shareholder Committee be involved in agreeing the final terms of the Drawdown facility with the companies.

Cabinet agreed to the amendment. Cabinet discussed the issue of whether it needed to progress to an exempt session to further consider the exempt appendices, it was agreed that members were very familiar with the appendices so would not need to exclude the press and public, and the detail of them would be further considered in detail by the Shareholder Committee.

RECOMMENDED: 4) That delegated authority be granted to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business to amend the Capital Strategy for 2023-2024 to reflect the approved Drawdown facility to the Companies.

Reason for Decision

1. To deliver on Council Corporate Objectives:
 - Promote growth and prosperity to benefit West Norfolk;
 - Protect our environment;
 - Efficient and effective delivery of our services; and,
 - Support our communities.

To deliver affordable and private rented housing for acquisition by the council's wholly owned housing companies to support the delivery of council corporate objectives

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31st January 2024

COUNCILLOR BEALES - CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS

For the period 24th November 2023 to 31st January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Nar Ouse Regeneration Area.

Councillors may be aware that it was necessary for an emergency item to be taken to Cabinet in November last year regarding this project. Although there are known areas of contamination on this brownfield development site and an agreed Contaminated Land Method Statement, discussions with the relevant regulatory body, the Environment Agency, concluded that there was now a requirement to remove the contaminated material from site and for this spoil to be deposited at an appropriate waste site. This remediation exercise has now been concluded and was budgeted for within the Capital Programme.

Major Housing Project

Florence Fields (Gaywood, near King's Lynn Academy)

The ongoing difficult weather, either persistent rain and/or high winds continues to cause logistical problems. The 3 – 4 inches of rainfall from Storm Babet that fell within 24 hours or so and ongoing rainfall since, deposited large amounts of water on the site that Lovell, our contractor, have managed by constructing temporary reservoirs. This has attracted comment about the amount of water on the site, but it is actually a positive move as it allows work to continue and manages the amount of water flowing into the drains and ditches. A Council owned culvert running under the cycle path (to the southwest of the site) has been repaired. The Network Rail repair to their culvert under the adjacent railway line is still awaited but work is anticipated to start this month. This delay has not impacted the project with works being rephased to accommodate. The original contract included an allowance for surface water management, which has covered the additional costs incurred to date.

There have been two minor complaints since I last updated Council. These are both from the same neighbour and investigation and follow up leads the team to believe that these complaints stem from a wider frustration with the scheme rather than specific issues.

Complaints are taken very seriously and in order to keep neighbours informed of works on site, newsletters were issued to over a thousand homes, and the parents of pupils at the three adjacent schools at the start of the school term.

Two existing gas mains, known to have crossed the site historically but precise location uncertain, were found in recent excavations. They had previously been declared defunct by Cadent (the regional gas distribution company) but in line with the precautionary approach taken by the Borough and Lovell our contractor and build partner, they were re-inspected by Cadent at our request. There was some concern when Cadent declared the pipes to be live after all, but further significant investigations have confirmed beyond doubt that the pipes are dead. They will be removed and Cadent will discharge their easements over the site. Again, operations have needed to be re-phased, but this doesn't look to have delayed the overall project.

Members will be aware that the Borough has invested in flood mitigation measures on all the homes in this development. One of those measures, relating to insulation, has recently become more difficult to implement due to changes in our warranty providers requirements. The Borough Council and Lovell have worked together to find a new solution that both increases the properties resilience whilst being easier to construct. There will also be a cost saving to build cost. A good example of how the need to protect our climate and environment can lead to innovative and cost effective solutions.

Piling the first phase of properties was completed without issues and bricklaying will soon start, somewhat ahead of schedule. Overall, we remain on programme, but should poor weather continue, and/or Network Rail works are delayed, the programme may yet slip.

Salters Road (King's Lynn close to Lynnsport)

This site continues to progress well. The handover of the first properties has been pushed back from early January to the end of the month to allow fitting of carpets and other flooring. This is a late addition to the contract, but Freebridge are to be applauded for the decision which will be financed by them and bring a greatly improved quality of life to future residents. The extra couple of weeks has also allowed the Lovell team to attend to the usual snagging issues and will ensure that the properties handed over meet the high expectations of both the Borough and Lovells.

The next phase of handovers is due for early March. Properties in the final phases are progressing well and are currently ahead of schedule for handover.

A creating communities event is planned for the 3rd of February to help integrate those moving into the area over the next year with the existing community. I am looking into this being the subject of a short pre Council

briefing.

Members visited the site on 19th of January in cold but sunny weather and seemed pleased with both progress on site and quality of the homes. Thanks to our officers, and the Lovells and Freebridge teams for making this possible.

Southend Road (Hunstanton)

Weather delays at Southend Road continue. The wind is hampering efforts to install the final roof trusses and the cold weather is limiting when bricks can be laid. To help combat delay, windows and screeding have been brought forward to create semi watertight units despite the roof not being completed. This has allowed internal trades to commence with partition walls going up and electrical and plumbing work underway. On areas where all the roof trusses are all installed, tiling and zinc work has started.

Completion is forecast for June of this year and the first 7 properties went on sale on Boxing Day. There have been twelve serious sales enquiries and William H Brown are working through them to ensure that locality requirements are met. The corporate projects team receives a weekly update from the William H Brown team and meet with them monthly.

Protocol for press enquiries

Media enquiries are by their nature, often at very short notice and a protocol is being developed to help guide the media, officers, members and Lovell on how to deal with short notice interviews. This will balance the Council's need to communicate with the media with the importance of site security and safety. Among other things, it will be important that the protocol identifies who needs to be aware of any interview, what topics can be discussed (some will be commercially sensitive) and agreeing specific "safe locations" on and off site where interviews can safely be undertaken.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Funding of council housing companies – should Council approve the recommendation from Cabinet of 15th January 2024. Should that approval be forthcoming, the Shareholder Committee will consider the technical aspects and possible timing of any funding offer in detail. Those Members that are interested are urged to attend.

Cabinet report on Lynnsport 1 development (to be considered by Cabinet on 6th February 2024).

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

24th November – Town Deal Board
27th November – Teams meeting re The Place
28th November – visit to The Epicentre (Haverhill)
28th November – MMPB planning meeting.
28th November – R&D Panel
29th November – Teams meeting re MMPB
29th November – Planning Committee training
1st December – meeting with James Wild MP
1st December – Town Deal Board comms meeting
4th December – Mayors Business Awards shortlist meeting
4th December – Teams meeting of Riverfront/Rail To River Project Board
5th December – planning induction training
5th December – meeting with Exec Director for Place re Grant Thornton report
5th December – Cabinet
6th December – Cabinet briefing
7th December – Budget briefing to Cabinet
13th December – MMPB (Members Major Project Board)
13th December – update re Active Travel Hubs
13th December – portfolio meeting
14th December – meeting with Cllr. Ware re Housing Companies
18th December – portfolio meeting (finance)
19th December – Teams meeting re Riverfront (TDB)
20th December – meeting with Leader of the Council
20th December – Cabinet briefing
3rd January – E&C Panel (apologies given)
4th January – CPP
5th January – Cabinet informal
8th January - Teams meeting of Riverfront/Rail To River Project Board
8th January – Teams meeting re projects on MMPB list
8th January – Cabinet briefing
10th January – Cabinet briefing
10th January – R&D Panel
14th January – Teams meeting re Riverfront (TDB)
14th January – Cabinet sifting
14th January – Cabinet
16th January – Teams training on Shareholding Committee & Council companies
17th January – Mayors Business Awards judging visits
17th January – Cabinet sifting (finance and budget)
18th January – update from TDB Chair on Teams
19th January – Member tour of Salters Road
22nd January – Cabinet sifting (finance and budget)
22nd January – meeting with CEO/Cllr Ware re Housing Companies
22nd January – West Norfolk Economic Strategy
22nd January Council companies training
24th January – Cabinet briefing

25th January – Teams portfolio meeting
26th January – TDB at COWA
26th January – tour of School of Nursing at COWA
29th January – visit to Hethel and Scottow innovation centres
30th January – R&D Panel
31st January – full Council



Council
Wednesday, 31st January, 2024 at 5.00 pm
in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market
Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

Reports marked to follow on the Agenda and/or Supplementary Documents

Councillor de Whalley's report

1. CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS (Pages 3 - 5)

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(ATTACHED)**

Environment and Coastal - Councillor S Squire

Finance – Councillor C Morley

Property & Corporate Services – Councillor B Anota

People and Communities – Councillor J Rust

Tourism Events and Marketing – Cllr S Ring

Deputy Leader Development and Regeneration – Councillor J Moriarty

Leader - Councillor T Parish

Contact

Democratic Services

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

King's Court

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PE30 1EX
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Email: democratic.services@west-norfolk.gov.uk

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 January 2024

COUNCILLOR SANDRA SQUIRE - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL

For the period 23 November 2023 to January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Waste & Recycling:

I am delighted to say that we have successfully completed another year of Christmas catch up collections. Whilst many of us enjoy additional time at home over the Christmas and New Year period the teams who collect our waste and recycling do not and also work Saturdays to catch up. I sent my regards to the team at the Serco west Norfolk depot just before Christmas and I would like to put on record my thanks to them.

Also I would like to thank our residents for using the information we give on radio, print and social media to manage their waste well. Over the Christmas period our Facebook posts were seen over 1/3 million times and by 20,000 readers of the local paper.

In three weeks ¼ million bins were emptied. The work of the teams in waste and communications should be acknowledged by the council. By working together, we keep the Christmas waste collections running smoothly.

In the follow up to Christmas the Waste and Recycling Manager spoke to BBC Radio Norfolk on behalf of both his and the Public Open Space teams to talk about Christmas tree disposal, promoting both the councils own shredding service, brown bins but also responsible waste disposal.

The Waste and Recycling Manager is now leading the Norfolk Waste Partnership on the issues around fly tipping and I expect to be able to report on progress around this subject in the coming months.

Flooding:

The flood and water management team have been engaging in a lot of multi-agency work with regard to inland flooding following Storm Henk. This has been in-particular regard to the Grimston / Roydon area and also with work around the North & South Creake and Burnham Market.

It is worth noting that while we are actively engaging in the works for both those locations we are not the lead agency in the works ongoing (instead this is Lead Local Flood Authority and Anglian Water), nor do we have any ownership of assets in those areas (e.g. we are not responsible for any of the ditches / drains). My thanks go to the team for all their work trying to help our residents.

Accompanying this report is Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance Booklet regarding watercourses and some flood prevention tips, and the EA Flood Information postcard. Please share with your residents as they contain useful information and contact numbers in case they are needed.

Further information on Living next to a watercourse is available here: [Living next to a watercourse in Norfolk - riparian owners - Norfolk County Council](#)

Information on how to report a flood can be found here: [Report a flood - Norfolk County Council](#)

The flooding hotline number to report a flood anywhere in Norfolk is **0344 800 8013**. If there is an immediate danger to life, call 999.

Further information on flooding and how to sign up for flood alerts is available on the Borough council website: [Flood protection and flood warning | Flood protection and flood warning | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

Water Quality & Shellfish Testing:

The Heacham & Hunstanton Cockles (Stubborn Sand) cockle bed which has had a Temporary Downgrade of its classification since poor results in the summer, has now had two consecutive results at levels which allow the temporary downgrade of a category C to be removed, with the bed to go back to the Time Limited classification which is currently a B.

This classification will allow the harvesting of cockles for purification and heat treatment until August when the Time Limited prohibition will commence.

I visited the Eastern IFCA offices before Christmas to learn more about our cockle beds and the issues they're facing including water quality and will be going out on one of their testing trips next month to learn more.

The new bathing water classifications were published in December. The classifications are based on data from 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023. While there has been a drop in standards nationally, our classifications remained the same. I continue to work with the LGA Coastal SIG and other councils to look at results and how improvements can be made.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Communications and providing encouragement for the public to do the right thing with their waste is a theme that will be taken forward over the next few months. The corporate plan demonstrates our commitment to protect the environment including increasing use of food caddies and the quality and quantity of items collected for recycling in the green bin.

We will be running a programme of events to encourage the use of food caddies to recycle food waste as it will reduce the amount of residual waste and is far better for the environment for food waste to go to the anaerobic digester. If any councillor needs a replacement food caddy, please let us know and we'll make sure you have a new one so we can all lead by example.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Joint Waste Contract Review Board
Joint Marine/Coast Partnerships Core Management Group
Cabinet (Dec)
LGA Coastal SIG
Eastern IFCA visit
Various Cabinet Briefings
Various Portfolio Briefings
Visit to the Depot
Visit to Hunstanton RNLI Station
LGA Coastal SIG water quality meetings
Environment & Community Panel
Meeting with Friends of Horsey Seals & James Wild MP
Cabinet Sifting
Cabinet (Jan)
Visit to RSPCA East Winch
North West Norfolk CaBa
Wash & North Coast Forum

Important Numbers and Contacts

Floodline – to sign up for flood warnings, find latest information or report flooding

Telephone: 0345 988 1188 / Textphone: 0345 602 6340

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Incident Hotline – to report blockages or areas of concern and flooding

0800 80 70 60 - Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Check any current warnings and latest river, sea groundwater and rainfall levels: <https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk>

Consider Flood Products to reduce the impact of flooding:

www.bluepages.org.uk

FLOOD

PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.

Floodline 0345 988 1188

Incident Hotline 0800 80 70 60



Environment
Agency

Watercourses

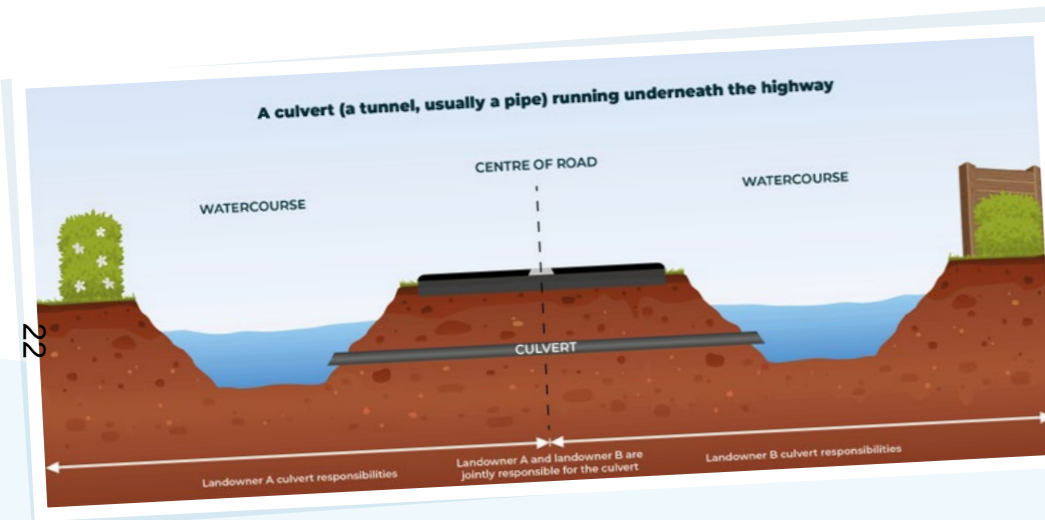
Who is responsible?

Culvert watercourses

Many culverts and pipes that run under roads, paths and highways are privately owned. The landowners on either side are jointly responsible for maintenance.

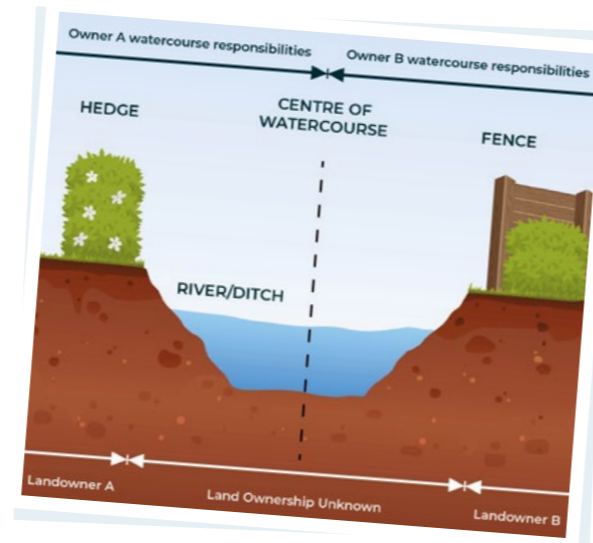
Even if there is a fence, hedge or wall between your land and the culvert you are still responsible for keeping the watercourse clear.

Norfolk County Council has a register of culverts and who owns them. Sometimes responsibility can lie with more than two landowners when a culvert runs behind several houses for example.



Watercourses on unregistered land

Landowners next to unregistered land are responsible for maintenance up to the centre line of the watercourse.



Watercourse between properties

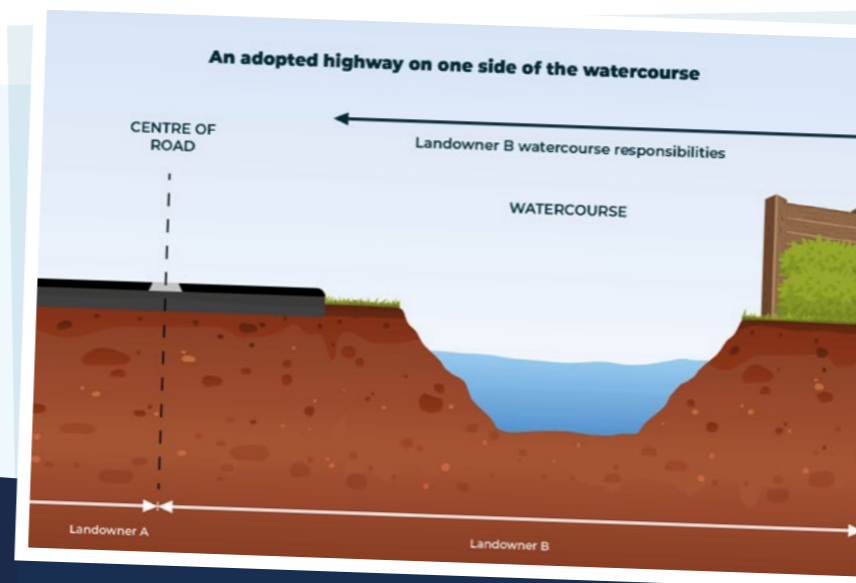
If there is a different landowner or tenant on each side of a watercourse, each person is responsible for their side up to the centre of the watercourse.

Even if there is a fence, hedge or wall between your garden and the watercourse, you are still responsible for keeping the watercourse clear, unless any title deeds state otherwise.

Adopted highway on one side of the watercourse

An adopted highway is a road maintained by Highways England or the council. The landowner on the watercourse side has maintenance responsibilities for the whole watercourse.

Even if there is a fence, hedge or wall between your land and the watercourse you are still responsible for keeping the watercourse clear, even if the title deeds do not show the watercourse.



Watercourse owners have rights as well as responsibilities.

These include receiving unpolluted water, protecting your property from flooding, fishing (with a licence), and the removal of a small amount of water from a watercourse for domestic use (also requires a licence). You can find out more online at www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse

WATERCOURSE CHECKLIST



- ✓ Carry out regular inspections and keep the watercourse clear of any debris, for example, litter, grass cuttings, branches, vegetation and animal carcasses.
- ✓ Maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse, including cutting back trees and shrubs.
- ✓ Allow water to flow without obstruction, pollution or diversion. Ask yourself: could a fish swim through the watercourse?
- ✓ Remove invasive plant species
- ✓ Keep any structures, such as grills, clear at all times
- ✓ Ensure you apply for consent or a permit for any construction or alterations that could affect the flow of water
- ✓ Carry out repairs or remedial works as directed
- ✓ Follow any byelaws (a law made by the local council)

CHECK YOUR WATERCOURSE REGULARLY

It's important to carry out regular inspections of your watercourse, particularly if you are responsible for a culvert, if you know your watercourse is prone to littering or fly-tipping, or if other obstructions such as garden waste are regularly dumped in it. Report fly-tipping online www.gov.uk/report-flytipping

BE PREPARED

www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding

To report a flood

CALL

0344 800 8013

If you are in immediate danger call **999**

23

REMEMBER



- ✓ Always put safety first when clearing watercourses.
- ✓ Clear your watercourse when the weather is fine and dry
- ✓ Avoid clearing in nesting season (February to the middle of August)
- ✓ Never enter floodwater to try to clear a blocked watercourse.
- ✓ Sign up to receive flood alerts
www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings

Fight flooding & keep water flowing in Norfolk

NSFA
Norfolk Strategic
Flooding Alliance

The best protection against flooding is to prevent flooding where possible.

- Keep your guttering, downpipes and drains clear of leaves and mud.
- Report blocked or broken highway drains near your property online.
- Check for blocked watercourses near your property. Look for watercourses behind hedges, fences and walls at the edge of your garden.



NSFA
Norfolk Strategic
Flooding Alliance

 Norfolk County Council

The Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance is a taskforce that works together to ensure local communities and infrastructure are safer and more resilient to the risks of inland and coastal flooding. The Alliance includes representatives from the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, the Association of Drainage Authorities, the Water Management Alliance, Water Resources East, the Norfolk Resilience Forum, the Broads Authority and Norfolk's county, borough, city, district and parish councils.

 **Norfolk**
County Council

Call 0344 800 8013 to report flooding

Call **999** if you are in immediate danger

www.norfolk.gov.uk/flooding

What is a watercourse?

Watercourses move water from one place to another. They can be natural or artificial, and might be completely dry for long periods of time, sometimes years.

Different types of watercourses include:



Streams



Rivers



Pipes or culverts*



Dikes and ditches

Have you got a watercourse near your house or business?

Do you know who is responsible for keeping it clear?

- ✓ If you live on, lease, or own land next to a watercourse, you are responsible for maintaining the watercourse, regardless of the boundary indications on any property deeds.
- ✓ If you are a tenant or landlord, check your tenancy agreement to confirm who is responsible for the maintenance of a watercourse.
- ✓ The different rights, responsibilities and common laws involved with watercourses are called Riparian Rights, read more online: www.norfolk.gov.uk/watercourses

Call 0344 800 8013
to report flooding

Call 999 if you are
in immediate danger

*a tunnel, usually a pipe, that carries water under a road, bridge, path, or between ditches for example.

Read our handy guide to
watercourse responsibilities inside!

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 January 2024

COUNCILLOR CHRIS MORLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

For the period 23 November to 18th January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

The main drivers of the Finance team over the last period have been:

Completing the audit work on the much delayed Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 financial year;

Continuing a more granular review of Earmarked Reserves;

Cost management discussions with Assistant Directors against, for this administrative transition year, a 5% cost reduction target; and continuing the budget and forward financial planning process which will culminate in the Financial Plan 2023 -2028 report, due to be presented to Council next month.

The Government has publicly stated that they are offering a Settlement of +6.5% for next year but local Districts are only receiving an average of +4.9% and our total revenue support is slightly less than expected by the tune of £0.5m.

Unfortunately, our Revenue Account, and this is the Account by which our ability to be a “going concern” is assessed, has now been reduced to the point (and contrary to opinions made in the public domain) where we need a significant funding boost. Without this we cannot meaningfully cut our services and financial outgoings to recover to a reasonably sound financial platform.

As we stand today, we are having to use £4.48m of our Reserves to balance our finances for the forthcoming year 2024/25 and £3.8m for 2025/26, However, this is not sufficient to cover the gap in 2025/6 with a £2.3m gap still remaining over and above our minimum reserve level balance which we wish to maintain. Therefore, without something changing our financial “black hole” will engulf us earlier than expected. These figures may change as final adjustments are made in the lead up to the full Council on 22nd February.

We will be recommending to Council that we increase Council Tax by the most allowable figure and as I write, our returns from Business Rates appear to be holding up. We will also have to increase our fees and charges this year, having mostly been held constant for the last period. The average increase will be around 10% for discretionary services but there are significant variations proposed such as +5.6% for trade waste, but car parking by an average of 11.9%. Notwithstanding these increases our headline budget figures are still, for 2024/5:

Total Net Cost	£27.07m	
Income	£12.25m	Business Rates
	£7.97m	Council Tax
	£2.37m	Government Support (various)
Total Income	£22.59m	
To balance	£4.48m	Withdraw from Reserves.

So, what has been going “wrong”?

- At least 15% real terms squeeze on support from Government since 2015;
- Recent tax increases from an unnecessarily low base;
- Significant deprivation and homelessness costs;
- Monies needing to be saved for flood and coastal erosion;
- We continue with our Climate Change Strategy;
- AND 43% of our Council Tax goes towards funding Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs). This is a levy placed on us and comes out of our Council Tax receipts – it is not a separate charge that we merely pass on to our tax payers and collect the sums, as apparently, some IDB Board Members think.

IDBs

The residents of West Norfolk are not alone in seeing their hard earned money going, disproportionately, to fund the work of these Boards. 23 District Councils (and these are all, like West Norfolk, relatively small Boroughs in terms of Finance, but carry serious responsibilities) have joined to form a Special Interest Group (SIG) to lobby for IDB costs to be funded centrally.

IDBs do important and critical work, a significant proportion (around ½) of this country is affected by water levels in river basins, and as we see, now on a regular basis, significant flooding around the country. Residents in places such as West Norfolk, cannot be expected to bear the brunt of local IDB costs and the Government should step in.

The lobby for this is growing, the SIG has made its case to the PM and senior MPs of all Parties. The Leader of this Council has written at length to both of our MPs and Liz Truss is taking a lead for us by co-hosting a meeting in the Houses of Parliament early next month. The subject is gathering much traction (election year?), so much so that, despite being one of the founder members, there is only 1 place for us at the meeting. Our S151 Officer will be representing us and most ably.

SPECIAL EXPENSES

Quite rightly, these costs are under more scrutiny than hitherto and are expenses incurred by this Council in performing, on its land around the Borough, activities (such as grass cutting) which would normally be undertaken by a Town or Parish Council. These costs are ascribed to each Parish or Town and paid for through the Council Tax demand.

We intend to put in place more information on the make up of these costs and in the unparished areas of Kings Lynn, provide more local powers to direct the work as seen fit locally.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SYSTEM (CTSS)

This Administration recognises the increasing issues with the cost of living, even as it affects families who have 1 or in some cases 2, working members. We are therefore recommending the continuation of CTSS benefits but not only widening the eligibility but increasing the benefit, for those eligible, to 100%.

LEVELLING UP & REGENERATION ACT 2013

This Act was put into Law last October and it permits the following changes to Council Tax which we are recommending be put into place by this Council.

Changes to the existing premium for long term empty properties.

There is already a premium for those properties that have been

empty, with no valid reason, for 2 years and more, this currently starts at an extra 100% and rises to 300% after 10 years.

Nobody likes to see empty houses blighting the area and we can now start charging double tax from 1 year of being empty. We can start charging such properties from April this year and we are recommending to Council that we do just that.

A 100% (DOUBLE) Premium for 2nd Homes.

The Act permits Councils to charge double Council Tax for 2nd homes from April 2025. We are recommending Council agree to this.

This is not just a money making exercise on the back of second home owners who we know contribute to local prosperity and very often, their communities. However, we do want to see vibrant communities all year round and hope this action will encourage this, but if people wish to sell their properties, the extra housing stock that becomes available will help to add to more full time occupation. Also, more opportunities for local people to stay in the area.

There will be exceptions, eg where there is a seasonal occupancy restriction and a full list of those categories of domestic properties who are excluded under the Act, if we go ahead, will form part of a communication programme later this year.

The financial impact of these changes will be addressed in the Recommendations to Council but the impact on our revenues will have to be negotiated with both the County and the Police Authority.

EXTERNAL AUDIT OF OUR ACCOUNTS

At last we are coming to a conclusion on the financial year 2019/20.

We now have an unqualified opinion on our Statement of Accounts from the External Auditors, EY, and by the time this report is taken by Council we will have the results of the January Audit Committee meeting.

Having said this, we are still uncertain of the final cost that EY will claim. Furthermore, the fast track audit operation for 20/21 and 21/22, which the National Audit Office wanted to be completed by 31/3/24, now seems out of reach and we wait for further advice on

how the audits of these years are to be conducted (country wide); together, of course, with the associated costs.

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

There is headroom for capital expenditure even though we have a tremendous and exciting programme, totalling some £150m over the next 4 years.

However, climate change, inflation, the geo-political issues that currently exist (and appear to be getting worse) and consequent interest rates are not helping deliver the plans we have for improvements to Town and communities, as we would wish.

The plans we have for delivering more rental and social houses through our subsidiary companies are not on hold but are under significant scrutiny. Interest rates are a significant factor in the finance and ownership analysis. We cannot afford to make a false move, notwithstanding our aspirations to improve, significantly, the opportunities for the businesses, people of and visitors to, West Norfolk.

I am sure more detail on this will be included in other Portfolio reports.

However, the underlying position I report further above, on our revenue account, and which is the yardstick for Government to measure our ability to be a going concern, is still the backcloth against which we are allowed to perform our investment strategies.

SLAs and GRANTS

Excluding the significant Household Support Fund (£325K) and money we may allocate for the Night Shelter, we still have aspirations to support communities through grants totalling some £400K.

We are scrutinising the merits of each against our Corporate Plan and the relative likely outcomes, also bringing our SLAs up to date, where many have remained dormant for some time.

PROCUREMENT

We are still weighing up the detail of the new Act and a Presentation is scheduled for Council later this year. Fuller report in future.

The Procurement Act is due to come into force in October 2024, with a six-month implementation period during which officers will be able to attend training. Secondary legislation is currently due to be published in the early part of this year.

The Government has provided some short videos which set out some of the basic intentions of the Act, and the key changes. These can be viewed at: [The Official Transforming Public Procurement Knowledge Drops - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-official-transforming-public-procurement-knowledge-drops).

WINS LOTTERY

Our promotion was a limited success. The volume of Sales has crept up to around 800 from 700 per month and the scheme is useful for those local causes, which may not have a national presence but may be struggling either for start up or for continuity funds.

I recommend Members keep this scheme as part of the Council's "armoury" and promote its existence. We cannot afford to offer grants to all those who need funds and this scheme can offer some amelioration.

In terms of focussed support across the Borough I found it pleasing that the 2 significant winners of our little competition were from Downham Market with the third the young Linnets of Kings Lynn.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

A communication package to explain to our Town/Parish Councils and communities details of our corporate plan and financial pressures.
Analysis of the review of Statutory and Discretionary services.
Project Plan for Staff Survey
Financial Plan
Plans and Costs for 21/22 and 21/22 audits of accounts
Review of SLAs and Grants
Continuous budget monitoring
Evolution of subsidiary companies and Shareholder Committees
Procurement review of future plans and process

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Regular weekly Portfolio meetings

27/11 Audit Committee

4/12. Grants and SLAs

“ . Joint Group Meeting

5/12. Grant Thornton Review of Housing Companies

“ . Cabinet

6/12. Further Cabinet briefing

7/12. Group Meeting budget development

11/12. Cabinet Sifting

13/12. MMPB

20/12. Cabinet Briefing

4/1/24. CPP

5/1. Informal Cabinet meeting

8/1. Cabinet briefing

9/1. Council Company training

10/1. IDB SIG

“ . CEO and Officers Statutory ad Discretionary service work analysis

“ Cabinet briefing

11/1 KLACC

Scheduled

18/1 Budget Consultation Ratepayers

“ . Freebridge presentation

“ . Cabinet informal.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 January 2024

COUNCILLOR BAL ANOTA - CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

For the period 23 November to 31 January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Management and maintenance of council owned property assets: including industrial estates, Kings Court, Town Hall and the Depot, Public conveniences, Crematorium and Cemeteries.

The staircase improvement works to King's Court have been largely successfully completed. There are a few finishing touches to be completed and some redecoration to be undertaken. The team has also started to look at King's Court office layouts, we still have some teams located off-site and some space at King's Court may be being freed up by one of our sub-tenants. This gives us the opportunity to explore more options with the office accommodation in terms of layout, function, and potential co-location opportunities with other public organisations.

On the wider council property portfolio, the team is starting to look at the longer-term strategic approach to the overall property estate and they will be working on a corporate wide asset management strategy. This will take time to develop and put into place. A largescale overall assessment of the condition of the property portfolio was last undertaken in 2008 and we are keen to do this exercise again in order that we can strategically manage our overall expenditure on repairs and maintenance particularly, however, this will only be one element.

Car Parks and Open Space

I have been holding ongoing conversations with Officers and Portfolio holders regarding revenue generation and cost saving opportunities to enable a well thought through budget proposal to be presented and we will continue with these discussions.

It was quite humbling to attend the quarterly meeting of the Norfolk Parking Partnership to hear such praise for our Parking Operations team who, at the beginning of November 2023, took over the back-office functions for the parking services delivered on behalf of Norfolk County Council for Norwich City Council and for Norwich City Council themselves. Having seen the effort, determination, and pressures this put that team under to ensure it was

delivered on time I must make the unusual step of naming some individuals as without their commitment this scheme would not have been delivered. Whilst times are hard in all public services, work such as this brings valuable contributions towards our corporate overheads, alongside protecting the livelihoods of those officers involved in delivering services. Those senior officers are David Morton, Charlotte Martin and Louise Gayton, and their respective teams.

I always take a keen interest in the parking stays within our car park areas and whilst there are always a number of factors that influence peaks and troughs the figures for November and December are always particularly interesting specifically within our town centre areas and the way in which parking is supporting our town centre vibrancy. I am pleased to report that the King's Lynn Town Centre long and short term stays not only held their numbers over last year but showed a marginal 0.26% increase over 2022 which was, in my opinion, a demonstration of how important our communities see the Town Centre offering: especially during times of cost-of-living pressures and a greater move towards online shopping. Hunstanton saw an even greater, 9% increase in stays but clearly a much milder Christmas than is the norm influenced this and it was great to see large numbers of people visiting the coast to enjoy it over the Christmas period.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Portfolio Meetings – TBC
- Wave 4b
- Hethel Innovation Centre

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

November 2023
 9th - Portfolio Meeting – MH TB
 10th - Leziate Parish Council
 14th - Portfolio Meeting – MH
 16th - Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)
 28th – Epicentre (Haverhill)
 29th – KL Parking Strategy (Teams)
 29th – Hunstanton Parking Strategy (Teams)
 29th – Planning Committee Training (Teams)
 30th – Portfolio Meeting MC
 30th - Portfolio Meeting MH
 December 2023
 4th – Planning Committee
 5th – Village Green Meeting
 5th – Cabinet
 6th – Portfolio Meeting MC

6th – Cabinet Briefing
6th – MintyIn Carol Service
7th – Budget Development
8th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
11th – Cabinet Sifting
12th – Directorate Plan Setting
13th – Portfolio Meeting MC DM
14th – Norfolk Parking Partnership
15th – Portfolio Meeting DH
20th – Cabinet Briefing
January 2024
2nd - Portfolio Meeting MH TB OJ
3rd – E&C Panel (Teams)
5th – Portfolio Meeting OJ
8th – Cabinet Briefing
10th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
10th – Cabinet Briefing
11th – KLACC Meeting
12th – Leziate PC
15th – Cabinet Sifting
15th – Cabinet
16th – Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)
17th – Budget Session



Council
Wednesday, 31st January, 2024 at 5.00 pm
in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market
Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

Reports marked to follow on the Agenda and/or Supplementary Documents

1. **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS - Councillor Rust updated report**
(Pages 3 - 10)

Contact

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31st January 2024

COUNCILLOR – JO RUST CABINET MEMBER FOR – PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

For the period November 9th – January 25th 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters. –

Housing register

1484 live applications

3 Emergency

216 High

487 Medium

778 Low

102 new or change in circumstances forms received - the application forms were unavailable over the Christmas period whilst there were no staff available to assist applicants which explains the lower number

Housing Options

99 applicants given housing advice, 57 new homeless declarations and/or are ongoing investigations.

Lets advised - 16

I attended my first Internal Drainage Board (IDB) meeting on Friday 10th November at Pierpoint House (There are a number of ways that this is spelt, which I commented on). I found it really interesting and useful. As ever, with any of the meeting that I attend, I am happy to provide a photo copy of the notes that I took while present. I attended my second meeting on the 19th of January. If anyone is interested, as the information we hear does affect our communities and it certainly effects the amount of council tax we have left to spend, Id be happy to provide further information. You might be surprised to know that for every £1 we collect in Council tax, 43 pence of that goes to the IDBs.

Later that day I visited Regis House and met a few of the Care and Repair Team. Much like the other teams in my portfolio they provide an absolutely vital service, which is very often under the radar and overlooked. I was

incredibly impressed with what I heard and I believe that our borough really benefits from the services that are available. These services all enable our more elderly or vulnerable residents to be able to live independently and healthily, for longer. The intention and plans as we move forward are that local councils such as ours, take steps to ensure that local residents don't need to go into hospital. There is a lot of work that needs to take place in order for this to happen, and the financial burden is increasingly being placed on local government. Sadly, with no significant additional extra funding to support our delivery of these services.

I continue to have regular meetings with the Freebridge Chief Exec and I raise concerns with them about the number of empty properties that there are and the time that it's taking to turn these around and make them available for our residents to bid on. We met on Friday 10th November and then again on Friday 12th January. We also had a councillor briefing from the CEO and the Director of Operations on Thursday 18th January. At this briefing all councillors were told of the strategic plans that the organisation has and how they plan to release 55 homes back for bidding by the end of March and a further 25 in April. We were advised that 86% of Freebridge homes have had a stick conditions survey completed. It's important that the organisation has an accurate picture of the state of the properties that they maintain. This will also affect their dispersal strategy. Like many of you I'm contacted by residents who are in need to social housing and we're very aware of the impact that a lack of housing has on our communities. However, I have been reassured that the plans are on track to turn around the empty homes and the first step to this was permission from the board to obtain contractor support. Freebridge have priorities over their properties, the first is over safety, ensuring the homes residents live in are safe to do so. The second is to deal with the damp and mould problems, then to turn around the voids and then to make those repairs our residents are in need of. It's important for us to remember that 270 homes were brought back in the year to date. I attended a meet and greet with some of the Board Members of Freebridge on the 13th November. It was good to meet residents who were giving up their time to sit on the board and play a part in the decision making process.

I attended the first Homelessness and Housing delivery sub group meeting, which has not met since the May local elections. I previously sat on this sub group as a member. I will now attend as the portfolio holder with responsibility for homeless and housing standards.

On the 15th November I attended the AGM of Homestart, a community network of trained volunteers and expert support in helping families with young children. This group won an award from King Charles for the amazing volunteer work that they do. It was an honour and a privilege to meet some of the volunteers and staff. There are 185 years of combined experience in the current Norfolk Homestart staff team. They gained 77 new volunteers in 2022/23 and in Norfolk, Homestart has had a presence since 1986. Many of the organisations in our borough are reliant on the support of volunteers. In our corporate strategy we set out our vision for recognising and supporting the role that volunteers play. If anyone has time to fill and an interest in

supporting families who are in need, then I'd urge them to contact Homestart with a view to becoming a volunteer.

On November 14th I meet with our energy efficiency officer who continues to promote the energy efficiency schemes that area available to residents who meet the criteria – earning less than £31,000 a year, having a health condition or long term illness, and being in receipt of certain social security payments. If you have a resident that you think might be eligible, please do contact Jacob. He has recently made councillors aware that the team are doing some joint work with the ICB in identifying residents who would be eligible due to having a health condition which is adversely affected as a result of living in a cold home. The ICB will provide the team with a list of individuals, their data will be cross checked and then the team will make contact with the residents with a view to beginning the application process for ECO flex (Energy Company Obligation Flexible Eligibility). It's important for us to remember that while we have the benefit of an officer to help our residents access these schemes, the schemes themselves are not ours and once the declaration has been issued, technically our involvement ends. However, the team do check in on the progress of the works being undertaken and check the condition of the property once the work has been completed. As a result of the Housing Standards Teams work, our borough has saved 254 tonnes of CO2. Impressive I hope you will agree. So there are more than just one benefit to having your home well insulated.

The work that the Health and Wellbeing partnership does is progressing well, with a teams meeting on Thursday 16th November and a face to face meeting on 11th January. We had presentations from several of our partner organisation about the success of earlier funding of projects such as the YMCA SOS bus, which helps to reduce pressures on the ambulance service and to provide a variety of people from different demographics with the support that they need, when they need it. We discussed the accessible play equipment which we have applied for funding for and will be located in the Walks and allow children with a disability to play with their friends in a way that there are barriers to currently We were able to agree to some funding to go to groups which provide service that meet our local needs to keep people healthy and mentally strong and so continue to participate in our communities and contribute positively to society. The impact of this on our communities shouldn't be underestimated. It is part of the work that our council is expected to undertake. We received reports on the work funded by the covid recovery grant. 12 projects were funded including the Community Alcohol Partnership, Lily, the Hanseatic Union among some. Over 5000 people were supported. This funding was a one off and it made a huge difference to the lives of people. Officers were commended for the work that they did. We also heard about the work being undertaken by Public Health Their reach is much further than many imagine and they can do social prescribing which also helps and supports us to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in Norfolk and reduce the health inequalities, with a focus on prevention. It costs us far more once a person is in any kind of system, than it does to help stop them entering it in the first place. On November 24th I attended a meeting to try to look at ways that our health and wellbeing partnership could work more closely with

the Place Board. These terms are new to many of us and we aren't all familiar with what they actually mean. But the place Board are more responsible for the health aspect - those who need hospital treatment, while the H&WB P take steps to avoid people needing to go into hospital. But there is overlap and we want to work more collegiately to overcome any potential duplication.

On November 17th I attended a United for Warm Homes event, where I was able to give a flavour of the work that our Energy Efficiency Team are undertaking and provide information about the various schemes available. It was a well attended event and I hope that some of you were contacted by your residents as a result.

On 28th November I took part in some online training about Community led Housing. This initiative sees members of a local community lead, develop and drive forward local housing developments in a way which suits their community. It allows housing to be built or brought back into use by local people. It helps to build community cohesion, leading to a lasting legacy and better, higher quality housing stock. It also provides affordable properties for local people. It is an initiative that I've been speaking about with our officers for a little while and one which I am keen to see come to fruition in a suitable location. Nothing is planned at the moment, but I look forward to being able to announce a positive move forward about this while holding this portfolio.

I, along with my fellow cabinet member Simon Ring and Cllr Henegan, attended a Friends of the Walks meeting on at the end of November with a view to re-establishing the group of volunteers who looked after the walks alongside our amazing open spaces team. I think we can all agree that the work the teams does ensures our central park and play area is a jewel in our crown. It's beautiful and a really well used area. But previously volunteers had added value to that work. Sadly covid saw us lose many volunteers but there is a move to get them up and running again. The meeting was well attended and there is another meeting planned to move forward with the group. This again contributes towards our corporate plan, and as the portfolio holder for people and communities, I look forward to seeing this section of our community grow and thrive.

I attended alongside Cllr Ring, a Classical Music Rocks events at Greyfriars school on December 5th. The pupils were treated to a recital of The Nutcracker by an amazing flautist and pianist. They really brought it to life and the children were enthralled and captivated. They actively participated in the event and it was a joy to see and to join in with. I hope that CMR gets the local support it deserves as it ensures that classical music is accessible to all and not just the preserve of an elite few. They have scheduled a number of shows, one of which is Alice in Wonderland on July 5th. 3 artists will narrate the magical story whilst playing a dazzling range of exciting pieces. There are spaces still available and I urge you to make contact with CMR and book tickets.

On 6th December I spoke on Radio Norfolk about the closure of the Norfolk Street Vape Shop and the dangers posed to young people by the use of illegal vapes. While this might appear to some to be a victimless crime, the sale of illegal vapes is all a part of an organised crime group. The substances used in the vapes can be incredibly harmful and they are not manufactured in a legal way. The OCG can also involve people trafficking, money laundering to name but two linked matters. These groups are dangerous to the health and well being of our community. If you are worried that such things are going on in your community, please speak to CSNN.

I visited the Open Road on December 12th and learnt about the amazing work they're doing to help students who have been left behind by mainstream education. They offer a safe place to learn that is fun and exciting. I saw for myself how the young people in attendance were actively engaged in the learning, which was different to that offered in schools. The organization also provides volunteering opportunities. The young people who attend learn the value of hard work and where their application, positive attitude and teamwork are acknowledged and rewarded. Ultimately the students gain industry recognized qualifications as opposed to dropping out, which might have been the result had they stayed in mainstream education.

I attended a Place Partner Inception Meeting on 14th December. I have found that often the titles of meetings don't accurately reflect what they mean! In this case, Sports England want to extend the work that they are doing and our area will be one of the new "Places" that they do it in. It will aim to increase the activity that people here do, decrease the activity, it wants to tackle inequality and improve children's experiences. I know some will say that we've had initiatives like this before, and I don't disagree, but at this moment in time we need all the help that we can get to make things better for our residents, many of whom are really struggling. This will be a longer term initiative not just a single year of funding and then it stops. They want to empower people to lead, which will fit in well with the Community Led Housing. Sports England will offer leadership support to help develop a local leader and for elected politicians so that they understand the role that they will play. As such I will be attending some training on 28th and 29th February. I look forward to letting you know what I gained from the sessions.

I attended a Beat the Bills session in Downham market on 19th December. Despite the horrible weather that stopped many people from venturing out that day, there were still lots of people in attendance who really benefitted from the information that they gained, finding out the social security entitlements that they may not have been claiming and ways to cut their heating bills. A huge thank you to all the officers who attended and who worked really hard to make it such a success. There was another BtB event on 23rd January and well over 100 people attended. I had planned to attend but was then diverted to an emergency homelessness and temporary accommodation summit in Westminster. If you have a Beat the Bills event taking place in your ward, I'd urge you to attend and to encourage your residents to do the same.

I'm a proud member of our local political community and as such, enjoyed

taking part in our social event on 18th January at Titash in Downham Market. The food was amazing and the company even better. Thanks to Sandra for doing the leg work and to the others who made it such an enjoyable evening. On 19th January many councillors were treated to a tour of the Salters Road development, a partnership between ourselves, Lovells and Freebridge Housing. The quality of the accommodation was first class. There will be 78 homes of which 10 will be shared ownership and 68 being affordable rents. 54 will have PV panels and 28 EV charging. I was so impressed with the development and know that these houses will make wonderful and much needed family homes for our residents.

The Holocaust Memorial Day was a moving event and it was heartening to see so many sections of our community present. The participation of pupils from two local schools was lovely, in particular the children from St Marthas who sung beautifully.

The Housing summit I earlier referred to was even more of an eye opener that I had anticipated. I learnt that Eastbourne council spend 49 pence out of every £1 Of Council Tax that they collect on temporary accommodation. This emergency is not going to get any better until central government provide more funding. While the increase in LHA is welcomed, it's no good if it doesn't continue to keep pace. In addition, the amount of money that councils can reclaim from the LHA is capped at the 2011 rates meaning that councils are paying hugely for every person they are forced to place in temporary accommodation. The government can and must rectify this.

We've had two recent briefings on the state of play with dentists and dental services. Or rather the lack of them. It's a dies situation for too many people.

I wanted to save the best bit of news for the end, or nearly the end. This news is the work that is being undertaken to see our area become a Marmot Place. this is exciting and could be genuinely transformational. The six marmot Principles are to give every child the best start in life, to enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives, to create fair employment and good work for all, to ensure a healthy standard of living for all, create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities and strengthen the role and impact of ill-health provision. You can see how these principles link in to the work that is already being undertaken by the health and wellbeing partnership and would dovetail with the Sports England initiative around Place and also with my aim to introduce Community led housing in our area. It also reinforces the need for our council to have more control over the local housing that we provide. The fact that there have been around 130 bids on the houses on Salters Road is evident of the need for more decent homes that our currently not coming forward in the numbers that we need. Decent housing is one of the wider determinants of health and we have a responsibility to our residents to deliver on it. Becoming a Marmot Place would help this.

Finally, apologies. The report I submitted earlier was not this one. A lesson learnt for me, that when overtyping a previous report on my iPad, save that

version before sending it! I was not best pleased to have to write half of this all over again. But it does include items that you would otherwise have had to have waited for. It's also made this report 8 pages long. Sorry! And for any typos.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

10/11/23 - IDB meeting Pierpoint House
10/11/23 – Regis House Care And Repair team meeting
10/11/23 – Freebridge meeting
13/11/23 – Homelessness and Housing delivery meeting
13/11/23 – Freebridge Board meeting
14/11/23 – Meeting with Energy Efficiency Officer – South Lynn Community Centre
14/11/23 - Environment and Community
15/11/23 – Homestart AGM – Norwich
16/11/23 – Health and Wellbeing partnership meeting
16/11/23 – Ethics in Politics meeting
16/11/23 – Housing briefing
16/11/23 – KLACC special meeting re special expenses
17/11/23 – United for Warm Homes
20/11/23 – Statement of accounts meeting
20/11/23 – Housing Officer meeting
20/11/23 – CIL meeting - Cabinet
22/11/23 – Cabinet Briefing
23/11/23 Portfolio Meeting
23/11/23 – Full Council
24/12/23 Padel Tennis Meeting
24/11/23 – Place and Health and Wellbeing Partnership collaboration meeting
28/11/23 – Community Led Housing meeting
28/11/23 – R&D
29/11/23 – planning training
30/11/23 – Falls project meeting
30/11/23 – Friends of the Walks meeting
01/12/23 – Meeting with officer re contributions to foodbank
04/12/23 – Joint group meeting
05/12/23 – Greyfriars School – Classical Music Rocks
05/12/23 – Cabinet meeting
06/12/23 – Cabinet briefing
07/12/23 – health and Wellbeing partnership Health Inequalities group
08/12/23 – Portfolio Officer meeting
12/12/23 – Open Road visit
14/12/23 – Housing Portfolio Briefing
14/12/23 – Place partner inception meeting
19/12/23 – Beat the Bills Downham Market
19/12/23 – Padel tennis meeting

20/12/23 – Cabinet Briefing
21/12/23 – portfolio briefing
22/12/23 – Licensing sub committee meeting
04/01/24 – Portfolio meeting
05/01/23 – Cabinet meeting
08/01/23 – Cabinet Briefing
09/01/23 – Planning meeting
09/01/23 – Company Training
10/01/24 – KLACC run through meeting
10/01/24 – Cabinet Briefing
10/01/24 – R&D
11/01/24 – Health and Wellbeing Partnership Meeting
11/01/24 – Housing Portfolio Briefing
11/01/24 – KLACC special meeting
12/01/24 – KLACC sifting
12/01/24 – Freebridge CEO meeting
12/01/24 – Officer meeting
13/01/24 – attendance at the local Peace and Justice forum held by Churches Together – Gaywood Allotments Trust
15/01/24 – Cabinet sifting
15/01/24 – Cabinet
16/01/24 – Residents meeting
16/01/24 – Council companies training
17/01/24 – Budget development session
18/01/24 – Meeting re local parking issues
18/01/24 – Portfolio Meeting
18/01/24 – Freebridge member meeting

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31st January 2024

Councillor Simon Ring - Cabinet Member for Tourism, Events and Marketing

23rd November 23 to 31st Jan 24

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

This period is a quiet time for a number of my portfolio areas. For events in particular this is a period of rest and repair. A number of physical resources have needed replacement and repair, funded by set aside reserves.

Tourism and Marketing

Visit West Norfolk - An Update for 17/11/23 - 17/01/2024:

For the Christmas/New Year period we continued to promote a substantial amount of local seasonal events and activities, from pantomimes to Christmas-related family activities.

Digital Promotions

During this winter period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our visitor contacts:

- Festive Events this December in West Norfolk 2023 [sent 30/11/2023]
- Mark your Calendars! 2024 Holiday Inspiration in West Norfolk [sent 14/12/2023]
- Winter Days in West Norfolk 2024 [sent 04/01/2024]

During this winter period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our tourism business contacts:

- Reminder: Love Your Grant Scheme [sent 23/11/2023]
- Book the Hunstanton Observatory for your visitors and last call for Tourism Forum event [sent 29/11/2023]
- KLIC and connect Business Networking Event and Grant Support [sent 07/12/2023]
- FREE Promotion on the Visit West Norfolk website [sent 21/12/2023]
- Leadership Training, Accessibility Toolkit and Recruitment Support [11/01/2024]

We uploaded the following new content on the *Visit West Norfolk* website

during this time too:

- 'New Year's Eve in West Norfolk 2023' blog post [published 05/12/2023]. Highlighted New Year's Eve events and accommodation offers in west Norfolk.
- 'Rainy Day Activities in West Norfolk' blog post [published 08/12/2023]. Featured indoor activities or attractions including museums, historic sites, indoor play areas, cinemas, and art galleries.
- 'Mark your calendars! Unique events in West Norfolk 2024' blog post [published 13/12/2023]. Promoted holiday inspiration and upcoming events in west Norfolk.
- Updated: 'Free Things To Do in West Norfolk | Winter 2024' blog post [02/01/2024]
- Updated: 'Dog Friendly West Norfolk' blog post [05/01/2024]

We also created and uploaded the following social media posts during this time:

- o **Social media posts about our blogs:**
 - 'Christmas in West Norfolk 2024' blog post.
 - 'Free Things To Do |Autumn 2023' blog post.
 - 'New Year's Eve in West Norfolk 2023' blog post.
 - 'Mark your calendars! Unique events in West Norfolk 2024' blog post.
 - 'Wintertime in West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'Road Safety Awareness for Pedestrians and Cyclists' blog post.
 - 'Dog Friendly West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'Sustainable Transport in West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'Rainy Day Activities in West Norfolk' blog post
 - 'Nature Reserves and Wildlife Parks in West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'Free Things To Do in West Norfolk | Winter 2024'
 - 'Golfing in West Norfolk' blog post.
 - '20 Historical Figures with Connections to West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'Fishing in West Norfolk' blog post.
 - 'West Norfolk... Naturally' page.
 - 'Safe and Responsible Travel' page.
 - 'Shopping' page.
 - 'Food & Drink' page.
 - 'Parking' page.
- o **Social media posts about local events:**
 - 'Christmas at the Guildhall' event [10/12/2023]
 - 'New Year's Day Walk' [01/01/2024]
 - 'King's Lynn Christmas Lights Switch-On' event [26/11/2023]
 - 'Downham Market Christmas Lights Switch-On' event [26/11/2023]
- o **Social media posts about general tourism themes:**
 - New Year inspiration
 - 'National Walk Your Dog' month [January]
 - Black Friday
 - Tourism Industry ['Business Listings', 'Event Uploads', 'Tourism

Trade News', 'Economic Impact of Tourism' reports, and more].

- Visitor newsletter sign-up form.
- King's Lynn
- Downham Market
- Hunstanton
- West Norfolk coast and countryside.
- King's Lynn Architecture
- Explore West Norfolk website
- History and heritage
- Walking and cycling trails.

We continue to upload events to the Visit West Norfolk website event listings and to proactively contact tourism businesses who are not yet featured on the Visit West Norfolk website for future inclusion.

New Projects

Software

After recently being granted authorisation by the BCKLWN ICT Working Group to use such new software, from early December 2023 we have been using the User Generated Content Platform Snapsea (www.snapsea.io) through our Instagram account for the very first time - to enhance, inform and grow our future promotional interactions with potential visitors to west Norfolk by utilising high quality authentic visitor content of the local area. It is early days, of course, but the first month of our use of the software does look promising.

West Norfolk Tourism Business Event

After the recent West Norfolk Tourism Forum AGM (held Wednesday 6th December 2023), we are currently finalising the booking of presenters and the full agenda for the first West Norfolk Tourism Business Summit event, to be presented by the tourism forum and held in King's Lynn in March 2024.

Shared Prosperity Fund Projects

We are continuing various work and tender processes on a set of SPF funded projects, which include regeneration of items at the West Lynn Pavilion, enhancements to certain Downham Market Town Centre public realm assets, and the formation of a Hunstanton Observatory events programme for a series of four events of varied themes.

The Hanse League

With King's Lynn being an active member of the Hanse League, we have now taken over the Vice Chair and administrator roles for the Europe-wide Modern Hanse League splinter group called the *Hanse Sustainable Working Group*. Our first meeting with the group in these new roles was held on 16th January 2024, with the working group primarily focusing on sharing best practice and

learning examples, across the sustainable development goals set by the UN, on a Europe-wide basis. These goals include the implementation and growth of sustainable tourism business practices and much more.

Members of this working group include representatives from many other Hanse towns and cities across Europe

As you can see, the Tourism and Marketing team have kept busy.

Alive West Norfolk Corn Exchange

Theatre:

- New brochure came out at the end of November.
- Pantomime sales reached 21,000 with secondary spends up 8% on previous year.

Cinema

Number 1 place in October was the colourful *characters Trolls Band Together* followed by Martin Scorsese latest masterpiece *Killers of the Flower Moon*. *The Great Escaper* did well returning after a huge success in early in October along with *A Haunting in Venice*. November has performed well with the epic *Napoleon*, 2 *Lithuanian films*, 4 sold out *silver 60's* screenings and extra screenings of now popular *Toddler Tuesdays*.

December saw a slate of major family flicks, comedies, and a couple of awards contenders. The biggest film of the month was the blockbuster origin story *Wonka* a Timothée Chalamet-led family favourite, portraying the rise of the iconic chocolatier *Willy Wonka*. Disney's new animation *Wish* started early December. We also had 4 sold out screenings from *Andre Rieu* for our Christmas Event Cinema audience, followed by a re-release of the beloved Christmas classic *Elf*, starring Will Ferrell. Plenty of Christmas titles, including *Muppets Christmas Carol*, *The Grinch*, *It's a Wonderful life*, leaving the Majestic Cinema to show *Love Actually* & *Home Alone*.

Marketing.

We have in the past asked to advertise on the "A" board and the new LED screen on the Tuesday Market Place, also the poster sites at the Multi-story car park and bus stops, not necessarily all at once or for free but want the opportunity to use these spaces as they are not always being used to their full potential. We have had pushback from Council staff not been able to get a yes from anyone.

We are now being asked to advertise on our AWN digital screens by

regeneration, Lily & Careline, which we are happy to do free of charge.

Can I ask the board to investigate and help going forward between us and the Council so that a contra deal could be set up? This would be mutually beneficial for both parties and show good cooperation across the businesses.

Town Hall

Currently:

- Wedding bookings are good for 2024.
- Town Hall had a stand at the Kings Lynn Wedding Fayre on 7th January.
- Staff arranged an archives coffee morning which was well received and has led to some future paid for bookings from Hickathrift House.

Culture at the Guildhall

Generally Increased Numbers for the run up to Christmas and events now running at capacity (I would like to increase 'capacity' and am looking at ways to do this).

Dickensian Christmas at the Guildhall was booked to capacity: families engaged with Father and Mother Christmas, craft activities, games, food, drink, carol singers and live animals in the form of owls. Feedback from the event has been really good and an event on this theme is planned for 2024. This event also had the benefit of volunteers from CWA as part of the scheme we are running with them (we have been and given talks at CWA to inspire students to come and get involved and it seems to be working).

Our partnership with the Ministry of Justice is continuing with community payback people assisting in maintaining the garden at the Guildhall.

School plays returned to the Guildhall in December which has not happened in a while with schools using the space for both their in house and public facing Christmas shows.

We partnered with Norwich Puppet Theatre to offer schools a truly magical version of Midsummer Night's Dream. This was featured on the one show with the Guildhall in November and schools came and packed the auditorium for two showings of this production.

We have started a bi-weekly Art Club at weekends. The first one was sold out with a waiting list so we have increased capacity.

The Guildhall is hosting the Heritage Education Network meeting which is an attempt to bring all the schools together and provide support to learning across the town in the areas we know the Guildhall is strong.

We have an exhibition opening shortly and activities for families in February Half Term.

AWN Lynnsport etc

Health, wellbeing and commercial.

Improving community health and wellbeing remains the main priority on the AWN agenda, and the AWN Wellness Referral scheme continues to grow and become embedded into the Primary Care Network to offer specialist exercise referral across our sites.

With 171 referrals to date, the work we are now doing with Active Now has really engaged local GP surgeries, which historically have been challenging to onboard and build partnerships with. Prior to Active Now, referrals from our local surgeries were less than 5% - they are now the lead contributor into our scheme at 62%

We have gained further funding to support the Active Now Falls Prevention programme, that will be rolled out early 2024. This will see 14hrs per week of engagement from AWN staff to support the programme - a majority of which will be out in the community. To support this, 8 staff members have undertaken a seated based exercise class qualification and a one-day specialist course in 'behaviour change' was undertaken on 5 Dec, training 10 AWN staff.

The company, on behalf of the council, is currently in discussion with Sport England and in partnership with Active Norfolk in relation to potential new national funding to support the borough's work in promoting health and wellbeing via physical activity. This is at the earliest stages and an update will be available once there is more detail to report

AWN continue to be active in the community in terms of outreach to further improve awareness and support local business and charities. AWN offered a day of health checks for the BCKLWN to support International Men's Day in November, providing a valuable educational day for staff. The rotary club and a local Parkinson's support group also benefited from the same health checks, breaking down barriers for these special populations to engage with our services and we were pleased to see a good uptake of participants joining our membership scheme.

Commercially – membership sales continue to outperform last year since the gyms have been refurbished and we have for the first time introduced a fully flexible monthly membership which makes membership at our venues more affordable and without the need for a full year up front commitment. The

annual membership remains to give people the choice of monthly or annual – but early signs in January show a healthy sales upturn compared to last January. However a number of people are suffering from the cost of living crisis and have had to consider their financial priorities when it comes to having a membership. With a focus on retention, plans to further improve our member experience over the upcoming months include scheduled member education sessions to help customers understand how to get the most from the technology and capability of the cardio equipment, gym floor-based classes, and further virtual class provision. A recent marketing commission to highlight the breadth of what Alive offer the community for marketing campaigns will be used in our January campaigns. These member testimonials have also helped highlight the great work the team are doing.

Events:

In late October Kaset skatepark held the annual Halloween Hell skate jam, with keen skaters travelling from Bristol, Newcastle and Manchester to attend one of the UK's largest Halloween skateboarding events. Norfolk County Council's Targeted Youth Support Services (TYSS) are now hiring the skatepark on a weekly basis to provide a safe space for young people who can speak to youth workers, the Matthew Project and other support services. The police also attend to provide advice, engagement and bike security tagging free of charge.

November saw Alive Downham host a pool party for the West Norfolk Autism Group who provide support and guidance to individuals of all ages whose lives are affected by autism. The pool party gave families from the group the opportunity to have fun in the pool using the large floats with their family members in a controlled environment.

During December, all sites hosted an event aimed at engaging members and the local community, Lynnsport sold out their Christmas lunch serving 80 people, and customers at Oasis and Downham enjoyed a social morning of Mince pies and coffee. These events provide great community spirit and support those suffering from loneliness.

Events

This is a time of rest and repair for the events team, as well as a time for planning the huge number of events, both by the Council and supporting outside bodies. We are not only planning for all of the now well established events, but we are also looking to maximise the assets we have to provide new events without utilizing additional resource. It is important, at a time of financial difficulty for our residents, that we put on as many free events as we can both afford and cope with, and that we will continue to do. I will be listing the planned events in a future update.

Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies

Officers

Oliver Judges
Duncan Hall
Martin Chisholm
Philip Eke
Bethany O'Brien
Philip Bayfield
Jemma Curtis
Tim Fitzhigham
Honor Howell
David Ousby

Outside bodies

Civic Society
Town Guides
Festival
Hunstanton Action Group
Old Lenensians
Norfolk Records Committee
Norfolk Museums Committee
Friends of the Walks
Kings Lynn Museum
Stories of Lynn and Archives
Conservancy Board
Downham Market Town Council Committee

I have regular scheduled meetings with most of the above officers and will continue to meet and fact find with outside bodies including those already met with.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31st January 2024

COUNCILLOR MORIARTY- CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

For the period 19 October 2023 to 18th January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

I would first like to thank officers for their work in compiling this report.

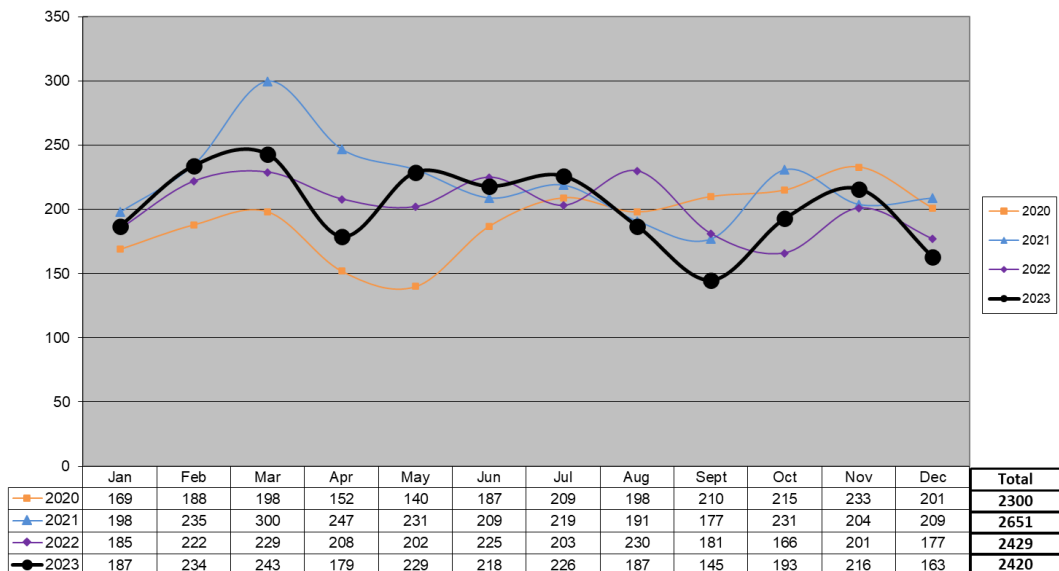
In my role as Chair of the West Winch Local Stakeholders Meeting I assisted in publicising the recent Information Evening on the access road organised by Norfolk County Council. It was very well attended and I am grateful to residents for the interest shown, and to officers and members of the road design team for being there and contributing to the five hour event.

The West Winch Housing Access Road application has been submitted to the County Council and is currently being validated. A meeting of the Local Stakeholders is due on Monday 22nd January and I may add to my report verbally at Full Council.

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers finished almost identical to the previous year.

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Progress with recruitment

Planning Control – A Planner left the Authority on 14th January. A recruitment campaign held before Christmas was unfortunately unsuccessful with 3 vacant posts remaining, including the vacant South Team Principal Planner post. Contract planners have been instructed in the interim but we will review and go back out to advert in the next month.

Planning Policy – following a successful recruitment process I can confirm Alex Fradley has been appointed commenced on 29th January. Some of you will remember Alex as he has worked in the Policy team previously. The Graduate Planner post has been filled, one of the validating officers was successful.

Planning Enforcement – the Customer Support Officer post has been filled. One of the Enforcement Officers has left, and another will be retiring early February. The recruitment process has commenced.

Planning validation – as a result of a validating officer being successfully recruited to the Planning Policy team, we are going through the recruitment process and currently shortlisting candidates for interview.

Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received comparison

	1/1/21 – 31/12/21	1/1/22 – 31/12/22	1/1/23 – 31/12/23
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	27	17	15
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	328	302	253
No. of Householder applications rec'd	902	755	616
Total	1257	1074	884

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2022/23 performance for determining planning applications 1/1/23 – 31/12/23

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	88%
Non – Major	70%	86%

Appeal Performance – decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate 1/1/23 – 31/12/23

	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning appeals	32	18
	64%	36%

Enforcement appeals	6	0
	100%	0%

The higher the number of appeals allowed, the more The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) is going against the council's decisions, so a low figure of appeals allowed (upheld) is clearly preferable. For context the national average for planning appeals allowed annually has historically been around 34% post NPPF.

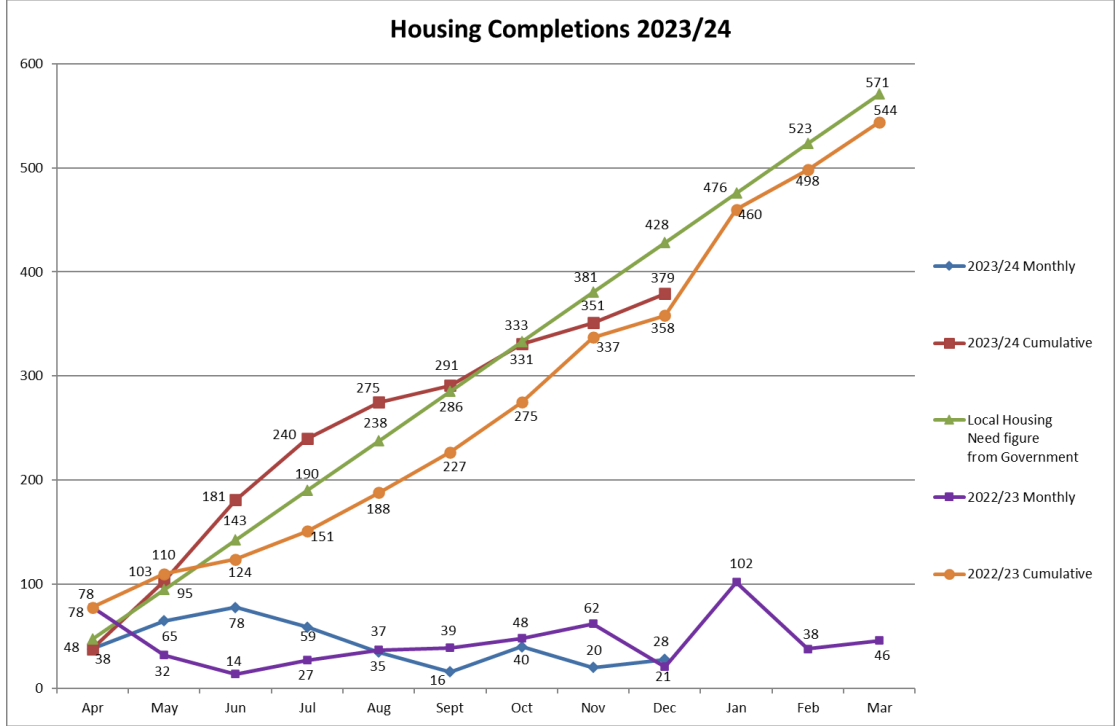
Revenue income 2023/24

Planning fees have increased and came into force on 6th December 2023. Fees for Major applications increased by 35% and Non-Major applications by 25%. Pre-application fees will also increase as they are based on a percentage of the planning fee.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 23 – Dec 23	April 23 – Dec 23	
£825,000	£747,212	-£77,788

Housing Completions

20 houses completed in November and 28 in December. Currently completions are down 49 on projected based on a local housing need figure from Government of 571 but up 21 compared to the same time last year.



Planning Control update

On 19th December 2023, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) update,

effective immediately, was published. The update was announced during the Secretary of State's speech about the government's ambitions for housing and infrastructure and the roll of planning in helping achieved them.

The NPPF update covers placemaking, housing delivery, neighbourhood plans, custom and self-build and greater protection for agricultural land amongst other topics. Training will be rolled out to Planning Committee Members in the coming months regarding NPPF changes.

The Secretary of State (SoS) also announced his ambitions on improving planning performance including planning decisions being taken on time and be robust in their reasoning and all authorities must have an up-to-date local plan. The SoS requires greater transparency and faster processes and will be taking direct action on poor performing LPAs.

Additional financial support has already been provided in the form of increased planning fees (came into effect 6th December 2023) and up to £100,000 Planning Skills Delivery Fund monies per LPA to clear the backlog of planning applications and to develop specialist skills and expertise. Officers have been successful in securing a £100,000 grant.

CIL Update

CIL Infrastructure Projects – 2024 Applications

Cabinet approved the CIL Governance Policy Document in December. The CIL Funding Applications opened on 1st January, and will be accepted up to 5pm on 1st February.

CIL infrastructure funding for 2024, will be selected by the Spending Panel, to projects that fall within the following criteria:

Green Infrastructure Projects

- Projects relating to public open spaces such as new or improved footpaths and cycleways to support new development.
- Installation and improvement of public play areas and equipment.
- Open spaces used for education, to support environmental initiatives.
- Improvement of habitats for wildlife and nature, to alleviate the effects of new development.
- Environmental services such as flood defence or absorption of air pollution.

Leisure Time Activities Infrastructure

- Infrastructure projects, to support accessible leisure time activities such as new facilities, improvement of existing facilities or upgrade of facilities to enable an increase of usage, to support new development of an area.

The amount of CIL available, to be allocated in this round of applications, is £878,336.31.

CIL Project Update - to date:

- £3.2m of CIL has already been allocated to 205 projects within the Borough.
- 118 Projects have been completed and £1.7m paid.
- As projects require match funding, additional funding excluding CIL, used for these projects totals £3.9m

CIL Parish Payments – to date:

In addition to funding Projects, Parishes with development also receive CIL Parish Payments. To date £1.1m has been distributed to 81 parishes.

Local Plan Update (ongoing examination of the replacement Local Plan 2021-2039)

A summary of the representations received through the recent consultation on the additional evidence base (which ended on 20 October 2023) was reported to the Local Plan Task Group on the 22 November 2023. The original representations and summary representations (together with the Council's response) have been sent onto the Planning Inspectors, for their consideration.

Since November 2023, the Planning Policy team has been focused upon the need to put forward land allocations to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS), identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), June 2023. A programme/ timeframe for the ongoing GTTS work for the Local Plan examination is set out below:

- 8/ 10 January 2024 – Consideration of cabinet report regarding Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Potential Sites and Policy Consultation document by Local Plan Task Group and Regeneration & Development Panel.
- 15 January 2024 – Cabinet approval of GTTS Potential Sites and Policy Consultation document, for public consultation.
- 26 January – 8 March 2024 (inclusive) – GTTS Potential Sites and Policy Consultation document consultation.
- w/c 22 April 2024 – Possible extraordinary meeting of Full Council, to approve GTTS site allocations and policies for submission to the Planning Inspectors.

Dates have also now been agreed for the reconvened Local Plan examination hearings, as follows:

- 26-28 March 2024
- 16-19 April 2024

Further hearings dates for the Gypsy and Traveller policy examination are likely to be end of June or July 2024. This would be followed by consultation on Proposed Main

Modifications to the Local Plan by late 2024.

Neighbourhood Planning Update

During 2023, several Neighbourhood Plans have come forward. As of January 2024, there were 18 “made” (adopted) Plans in place. Details of recently made (since 2023) and emerging Neighbourhood Plans are set out as follows.

Recently “made” Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Burnham Market Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022-2036	Passed at referendum, 21 September 2023; “made” 26 September 2023
Gayton and Gayton Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036	Passed at referendum, 9 November 2023; “made” 20 November 2023
Stoke Ferry Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036	Passed at referendum, 24 August 2023; “made” 29 August 2023
Watlington Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036	Passed at referendum, 7 December 2023; “made” 13 December 2023

Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Downham Market Neighbourhood Plan	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation October/ November 2021 – preparation subsequently stalled; Plan submission anticipated 2024
Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036	Examination commenced August 2023; anticipated to finish, spring 2024
Marshland St James Neighbourhood Plan	“Call for sites” December 2023; 1 st draft (Regulation 14) version Plan anticipated for publication, summer 2024
North Wootton Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036	Submitted, 12 September 2023; followed by pre-examination (Regulation 16) consultation (finished 24 November 2023) Examination to commence early-2024 – appointment of examiner expected to be confirmed late January/ early February 2024
Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036	Decision Notice issued 20 November 2023; due to go to referendum, 8 February 2024
Pentney Neighbourhood Plan	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation March-May 2023; Plan submission anticipated 2024
Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan	Preliminary draft Plan subject to consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England (March/ April 2023), regarding Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment – further work needed before publication; 1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation anticipated early 2024
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown or at an early stage	Burnham Overy (designated 5 December 2023); Dersingham; Docking (designated 22 December 2023); Great Massingham; Ingoldisthorpe; Outwell; Shouldham; Syderstone; Tilney St Lawrence; Walpole; Walpole Cross Keys (review of 2017 Neighbourhood Plan); West Dereham

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

Wednesday 31st January 2024

COUNCILLOR TERRY PARISH - LEADER

For the period 23 November to 31 January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

The New Year is moving along and there is always much to do so it is fortunate that we have an extra day in which to do it. New Years are often a time for reflection, so it is apposite that I have had occasions to meet both with New Starters and those officers of Long Service in the Borough Council. The wheel turns and I hope that the new will, in the fullness of time, become the 'old', perhaps with diversions elsewhere to gain different experiences.

We are particularly good at providing training to our officers to make them better at their jobs and to allow them to aspire to posts of more responsibility. We also take on apprentices and their appetite to get on is well supported. This requires mentoring by senior staff who must be in post and likely need to be on site more as it is difficult to foster inhouse staff development without that level of expertise. Consequently, I have no regrets at enabling such staff to have pay conditions in 2023 which recognised their value and encourage necessary internal or external recruitment.

The New Year has also generated a plethora of news stories, in fact they began around Christmas time. Some provided 'sensational' news headlines. One was concerned with planning conditions. These are important and should be followed and, if not, enforcement should follow. Contrary to the beliefs of some people, they cannot be dismissed at a whim. If changes to them are considered necessary, then an application to amend them can be made to planning who may refer the request to planning committee. A significant complaint from Parish Councils has been the failure to follow up on breaches of planning conditions. I am glad to say that things are improving with additional staff in the enforcement team.

In italics below is part of the content of an email recently received from a Parish Council. It nicely sums up concerns that parish Councils have and the need to ensure that they are properly informed about planning matters. I am having second meetings with all Chairs or their representatives on 21st February, 2.30 start and 6pm start. I ask all Borough Cllrs to take note of concerns raised at those meetings (I will copy you in) and to help and support Both Borough and Parish's to resolve them.

'XXX from the Parish Council attended (meeting last November) and was very pleased to hear that Parish Council views and comments are being taken seriously especially surrounding planning. The Parish Council look forward to working constructively bringing the Borough Council and Parish Councils together.

Similarly, we would welcome additional measures to ensure that Parish Councils are consulted on revised applications and discharge of conditions applications – which

again, have often been determined without the PCs being made aware of the process. We see these as very positive initiatives which would build trust and co-operation between the two tiers of government.

This will assist in giving the Public more confidence that the democratic process is working correctly and that their voices are being heard.

Overall, the Parish Council were very impressed with the way in which this consultation/discussion was held on very pertinent and important matters which would make a significant difference to the positive and effective functioning of all parties. We would therefore like to thank you for initiating this process and look forward to supporting you and the Council in bringing these elements forward in the future.'

Another significant issue raised by Parish Councils last November was the increasing number of vexatious or difficult actions being taken against Parish Councils or members of. I am glad to say that some help that can be provided by the Borough is now being organised.

Returning to news stories, newspapers feed on soundbites which they acquire from either people, agenda items or minutes. The better journalists ask for a reply or check the veracity of such quotes before publication. Some don't. Feeding newspapers half-truths at best, does not serve a useful purpose and wastes resources.

Money seems to be a looming story and others may have made the position clear. The Council spends more than it receives and tops up the shortage from general reserves. The general reserve pot is falling and will currently reach the minimum permitted before the next Borough elections. This is not due to us; it has been the case for some years. There are other reserves, ring fenced reserves, which have purposes to serve. Extracting money from those is a risky and short-term measure and could create further financial problems down the line unless investigation reveals it can be done with little risk. The Peer Review said, '(Use of reserves) it is not a sustainable strategy for the medium term'. And. 'A plan needs to be developed to bring the council's finances back into alignment and peers saw evidence that this is underway in the development of a Cost Management Plan.'

We need to spend less and earn more. Many councils are in the same position and much of the problem is down to government hence my letters to our MPs which were prompted by a request from the District Council Network.

I did try and get a fair share for west Norfolk of the business rates growth which would be retained via the Norfolk business rate pool for 2024/2025 but it required an agreement with the other Districts and County. They appeared happy with their lot. This year we are continuing to pursue IDB finding from government and Liz truss MP is helping with that. We are also asking Council agreement on council tax changes to second homes and empty properties. Other changes will come forward in the budget.

I briefly mentioned the peer review in which some of you, (160 including those external to the Council), were involved. The report identifies strengths and weaknesses and suggests strategies which might address the latter. The new administration had a mention, 'the new political leadership have hit the ground running'. We also had, 'There has been a positive reception to the new administration among partners. The new corporate strategy and financial management got positive

comments as did changes of governance to the Council's companies.

There were 8 recommendations, all of which are set out in the report. Most had work started on them before the report and work has been progressed since. Some require consultation, reorganisation and change all of which will be examined and plans developed as part of the action plan which we are required to prepare as part of the Corporate Peer Challenge Review process. The action plan will be considered by Cabinet at the 5th March 2024 meeting.

May the next 11 months be happy for you (and me).

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Session for all Parish Councillors on 21st February 2.30 pm and 6 pm
Tour of the new build health hub in King's Lynn
Celebration event for the apprentices
Opening of the Mart

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

In addition to cabinet meetings, cabinet briefings, communications briefings and multiple one offs with officers or councillors:

28/11/23	Leaders and S151 officers North Norfolk
29/11/23	Conservative Leader/Leader Weekly Meeting Independent Leaders/Labour Leaders Weekly Catch-up Hunstanton Advisory Group update call
30/11/23	Norfolk Leaders Group Meeting
01/12/23	James Wild MP Unison
04/12/23	Planning FCH CEO and Chairs/Leader LGA Independent Council Leaders Meeting Coastal Working Group meeting Joint Group Meeting
07/12/23	Local Government Finance Policy Statement webinar Meet Arboriculture officer Budget Development Group Mayor at home
08/12/23	Leader/Deputy Leader and MO Catch-up
09/12/23	Meeting regrading 2nd homes council tax/additional council tax Guildhall
12/12/23	Climate change Solar Farm
13/12/23	Member Major Project Board
14/12/23	LGA Leadership Academy
15/12/23	LGA Leadership Academy
18/12/23	LGA Independent I Leaders Meeting
19/12/23	Portfolio Meeting – Central Services
20/12/23	Gypsy/Traveller sites meeting Pay award
22/12/23	Leader/Deputy Leader and MO Catch Up
02/01/24	CEX/Leader Briefing

03/01/23	E and C Panel
04/01/23	Cllr Adams North Norfolk CPP
05/01/24	Leader/Deputy Leader and MO Catch Up
08/01/24	Local Plan Task Group Council companies training
10/01/24	R and D Panel
11/01/24	Training on statement of accounts Special KLACC meeting
15/01/24	Conservative Leader Meeting
16/01/24	Council companies training
17/01/24	Pay award Meet New Starters Budget development session
18/01/24	Long service awards Consultation with Representative Bodies of Non-Domestic Ratepayers and Voluntary Sector Representatives about proposed Borough Council Budget Plans for 2024 – 2028 Freebridge member briefing
19/01/24	Unison Springwood School
23/01/24	Council/companies training
24/01/24	Norfolk Rivers IDB
25/01/24	Labour Leader meeting
26/01/24	Public Sector Leaders Board
30/01/24	NHS tour
31/01/24	Apprentice event HAG update call Full council

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31st January 2024

COUNCILLOR BEALES - CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS

For the period 24th November 2023 to 31st January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Nar Ouse Regeneration Area.

Councillors may be aware that it was necessary for an emergency item to be taken to Cabinet in November last year regarding this project. Although there are known areas of contamination on this brownfield development site and an agreed Contaminated Land Method Statement, discussions with the relevant regulatory body, the Environment Agency, concluded that there was now a requirement to remove the contaminated material from site and for this spoil to be deposited at an appropriate waste site. This remediation exercise has now been concluded and was budgeted for within the Capital Programme.

Major Housing Project

Florence Fields (Gaywood, near King's Lynn Academy))

The ongoing difficult weather, either persistent rain and/or high winds continues to cause logistical problems. The 3 – 4 inches of rainfall from Storm Babet that fell within 24 hours or so and ongoing rainfall since, deposited large amounts of water on the site that Lovell, our contractor, have managed by constructing temporary reservoirs. This has attracted comment about the amount of water on the site, but it is actually a positive move as it allows work to continue and manages the amount of water flowing into the drains and ditches. A Council owned culvert running under the cycle path (to the southwest of the site) has been repaired. The Network Rail repair to their culvert under the adjacent railway line is still awaited but work is anticipated to start this month. This delay has not impacted the project with works being rephased to accommodate. The original contract included an allowance for surface water management, which has covered the additional costs incurred to date.

There have been two minor complaints since I last updated Council. These are both from the same neighbour and investigation and follow up leads the team to believe that these complaints stem from a wider frustration with the scheme rather than specific issues.

Complaints are taken very seriously and in order to keep neighbours informed of works on site, newsletters were issued to over a thousand homes, and the parents of pupils at the three adjacent schools at the start of the school term.

Two existing gas mains, known to have crossed the site historically but precise location uncertain, were found in recent excavations. They had previously been declared defunct by Cadent (the regional gas distribution company) but in line with the precautionary approach taken by the Borough and Lovell our contractor and build partner, they were re-inspected by Cadent at our request. There was some concern when Cadent declared the pipes to be live after all, but further significant investigations have confirmed beyond doubt that the pipes are dead. They will be removed and Cadent will discharge their easements over the site. Again, operations have needed to be re-phased, but this doesn't look to have delayed the overall project.

Members will be aware that the Borough has invested in flood mitigation measures on all the homes in this development. One of those measures, relating to insulation, has recently become more difficult to implement due to changes in our warranty providers requirements. The Borough Council and Lovell have worked together to find a new solution that both increases the properties resilience whilst being easier to construct. There will also be a cost saving to build cost. A good example of how the need to protect our climate and environment can lead to innovative and cost effective solutions.

Piling the first phase of properties was completed without issues and bricklaying will soon start, somewhat ahead of schedule. Overall, we remain on programme, but should poor weather continue, and/or Network Rail works are delayed, the programme may yet slip.

Salters Road (King's Lynn close to Lynnsport)

This site continues to progress well. The handover of the first properties has been pushed back from early January to the end of the month to allow fitting of carpets and other flooring. This is a late addition to the contract, but Freebridge are to be applauded for the decision which will be financed by them and bring a greatly improved quality of life to future residents. The extra couple of weeks has also allowed the Lovell team to attend to the usual snagging issues and will ensure that the properties handed over meet the high expectations of both the Borough and Lovells.

The next phase of handovers is due for early March. Properties in the final phases are progressing well and are currently ahead of schedule for handover.

A creating communities event is planned for the 3rd of February to help integrate those moving into the area over the next year with the existing community. I am looking into this being the subject of a short pre Council

briefing.

Members visited the site on 19th of January in cold but sunny weather and seemed pleased with both progress on site and quality of the homes. Thanks to our officers, and the Lovells and Freebridge teams for making this possible.

Southend Road (Hunstanton)

Weather delays at Southend Road continue. The wind is hampering efforts to install the final roof trusses and the cold weather is limiting when bricks can be laid. To help combat delay, windows and screeding have been brought forward to create semi watertight units despite the roof not being completed. This has allowed internal trades to commence with partition walls going up and electrical and plumbing work underway. On areas where all the roof trusses are all installed, tiling and zinc work has started.

Completion is forecast for June of this year and the first 7 properties went on sale on Boxing Day. There have been twelve serious sales enquiries and William H Brown are working through them to ensure that locality requirements are met. The corporate projects team receives a weekly update from the William H Brown team and meet with them monthly.

Protocol for press enquiries

Media enquiries are by their nature, often at very short notice and a protocol is being developed to help guide the media, officers, members and Lovell on how to deal with short notice interviews. This will balance the Council's need to communicate with the media with the importance of site security and safety. Among other things, it will be important that the protocol identifies who needs to be aware of any interview, what topics can be discussed (some will be commercially sensitive) and agreeing specific "safe locations" on and off site where interviews can safely be undertaken.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Funding of council housing companies – should Council approve the recommendation from Cabinet of 15th January 2024. Should that approval be forthcoming, the Shareholder Committee will consider the technical aspects and possible timing of any funding offer in detail. Those Members that are interested are urged to attend.

Cabinet report on Lynnsport 1 development (to be considered by Cabinet on 6th February 2024).

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

24th November – Town Deal Board
27th November – Teams meeting re The Place
28th November – visit to The Epicentre (Haverhill)
28th November – MMPB planning meeting.
28th November – R&D Panel
29th November – Teams meeting re MMPB
29th November – Planning Committee training
1st December – meeting with James Wild MP
1st December – Town Deal Board comms meeting
4th December – Mayors Business Awards shortlist meeting
4th December – Teams meeting of Riverfront/Rail To River Project Board
5th December – planning induction training
5th December – meeting with Exec Director for Place re Grant Thornton report
5th December – Cabinet
6th December – Cabinet briefing
7th December – Budget briefing to Cabinet
13th December – MMPB (Members Major Project Board)
13th December – update re Active Travel Hubs
13th December – portfolio meeting
14th December – meeting with Cllr. Ware re Housing Companies
18th December – portfolio meeting (finance)
19th December – Teams meeting re Riverfront (TDB)
20th December – meeting with Leader of the Council
20th December – Cabinet briefing
3rd January – E&C Panel (apologies given)
4th January – CPP
5th January – Cabinet informal
8th January - Teams meeting of Riverfront/Rail To River Project Board
8th January – Teams meeting re projects on MMPB list
8th January – Cabinet briefing
10th January – Cabinet briefing
10th January – R&D Panel
14th January – Teams meeting re Riverfront (TDB)
14th January – Cabinet sifting
14th January – Cabinet
16th January – Teams training on Shareholding Committee & Council companies
17th January – Mayors Business Awards judging visits
17th January – Cabinet sifting (finance and budget)
18th January – update from TDB Chair on Teams
19th January – Member tour of Salters Road
22nd January – Cabinet sifting (finance and budget)
22nd January – meeting with CEO/Cllr Ware re Housing Companies
22nd January – West Norfolk Economic Strategy
22nd January Council companies training
24th January – Cabinet briefing

25th January – Teams portfolio meeting
26th January – TDB at COWA
26th January – tour of School of Nursing at COWA
29th January – visit to Hethel and Scottow innovation centres
30th January – R&D Panel
31st January – full Council

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 February 2024

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL de WHALLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

For the period 26 January 2024 to 10 February 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Norfolk Net Zero Communities

The local launch at Marshland St. James held on 12 February 2024 included a range of agencies including Lily, Beat your Bills Roadshow, County Council Family Support Hub, The Wellness on Wheels Bus and Norfolk Constabulary. Marshland St. James Parish Council was awarded a certificate to mark their selection and the start of the Fast Followers project.

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership

The Partnership Portfolio Group met in February 2024. At the Regional Climate Change Forum advocacy themes were discussed to take back to the Government. We are advocating the need for clear messaging and actions to be taken around the decarbonisation of agriculture and associated land use. We have also advocated for the equity of the emerging wind industry in the North Sea so that Norfolk's communities receive commensurate benefit for hosting the infrastructure including cable corridors.

The partnership received an update on the progress towards an Energy Plan which is being progressed by partners at Norfolk County Council. The Partnership is taking an active role in the development of community energy in the county working closely with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub to ensure more communities in Norfolk are successful in securing funding through the Government's Community Energy Fund and the partnership will be organising a webinar at the end of March for interested communities.

A thermal imaging loan scheme for community groups to help people assess the heat loss of buildings in their community and connect them to advice and information to address any issues identified is being piloted.

Community Climate Literacy training is going to be provided to create a network of engaged communities for the partnership and its partners.

Climate

January 2024 was the warmest January on record globally, the eighth such consecutive month, with an average surface air temperature of 13.14°C, 0.12°C above the temperature of the previous warmest January, in 2020.

January was about 1.52°C warmer than an estimate of the January average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period.

The average global sea surface temperature (SST) for January 2024 over 60°S–60°N reached a record 20.97°C, 0.26°C warmer than the previous warmest January, in 2016, and second highest value for any month, within 0.01°C of the record from August 2023 (20.98°C). Since 31 January, the daily SST for 60°S–60°N has reached new absolute records, surpassing the previous highest values from 23–24 August 2023.

In early February 2024, a record high was set with the 180-day running mean for the global surface temperature crossing 1.7°C above the pre-industrial 1850-1900 IPCC baseline.

Data source: European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts - ERA5.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

We intend to update the Environment and Community Panel on the Action Plan, latest Council Carbon Footprint and Climate Change Reserve Fund on the meeting scheduled for 9 April 2024.

Re:Fit 2

With the support of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding, eleven sites were retrofitted with energy efficiency measures. Ground and air source heat pumps were installed across nine sites; other measures included insulation upgrades, timer/clock controls (hot water) and solar photovoltaics.

Performance monitoring has revealed that the heat pumps are not achieving the anticipated savings, although officers are working with our contractor to resolve identified issues. Other measures are shown to be performing as expected.

Further Decarbonisation

Following the conclusion of two major retrofit exercises, under Re:Fit 1 & 2, much of the low hanging fruit has already been had in terms of energy savings. BCKLWN officers continue, however, to explore options for further decarbonisation and cost savings. In the current climate of elevated energy costs, measures previously discounted due to excessive payback may now be considered viable. Additional grant funding may also become available in future (i.e. Swimming Pool Support Fund).

Works have recently been instructed to replace external and stairwell lighting at Old Cattle Market Car Park with LED lighting.

Outline proposals to expand LED lighting for the external pitches at Lynnsport are being investigated. New Electric Vehicle charge points are under consideration at the BCKLWN Depot, with a view to maximising the use of on-site solar generation.

Officers are also investigating the possibility of more solar photovoltaic installations, as well as a Power Purchase Agreement, as a means of directly procuring renewably generated energy.

Further solar PV

As per below, based initially on the figures from the Ameresco High Level Assessment, officers have identified three sites which could achieve payback within/around ten years, based on the latest price projections for 24-25 and assessments of the half-hourly consumption data at each site.

Site	Size of Array	Annual Generation	kWh Used on Site	kWh Exported to Grid	Capex	Unit Rate (p/kWh)	Annual Savings (import)	Payback Period (years)
Corn Exchange	30.3kWp	26583	26583	0	£61,306.98	24.185	£6,429.03	9.54
Downham Leisure	39.75kWp	34873	30228	4646	£74,651.69	24.185	£7,310.60	10.21
Oasis	90kWp	81012	63322	17690	£136,489.68	24.185	£15,314.34	8.91

Please note that energy prices are predicted to fall over the medium term, but remain elevated compared with historical (i.e. 19-20) levels.

Beat Your Bills Roadshow

Hunstanton (Town Hall) – 27/02/2024 10:00-14:00

Wereham (Village Hall) – 05/03/2024 10:45-13:00 (Pop Up Café)

Emneth (Central Hall) – 13/03/2024 10:00-12:00

Brancaster (Village Hall) – 16/03/2024 10:30-15:30 (Green Day)

Downham Market (Town Hall) – 26/03/2024 10:00-14:00

Stow Bardolph (Church Farm) – 02/04/2024 09:00-15:00

Downham Market (Primary School) – 20/04/2024 10:00-15:00 (Earth Day)

Feltwell (Village Fete) – 15/06/2024 10:00-15:00

Downham Market (Marketplace) – 26/07/2024 09:00-14:00

King's Lynn (Boots) – 02/08/2024 10:00-14:00

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Mayor's Business Awards - Environmental Champion
 Forestry Commission & Norfolk County Council - Trees
 Beuys' Acorns Project
 West Norfolk Transport and Infrastructure Steering Group
 Wild Downham Market
 Biodiversity Task Group

Town Deal Board Active and Clean Connectivity Project Board
Cabinet - Non-Budget Items
Cabinet Budget
Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Portfolio Holders Group
Apprentice Celebration Event

Portfolio Holder Briefings and updates:

Climate Change Weekly Updates

Meetings Scheduled:

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Portfolio Holders meeting 10 April 2024.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 February 2024

COUNCILLOR SANDRA SQUIRE - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL

For the period Jan 31st 2024 to Feb 22nd 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Flooding & Coastal Matters:

On 6th February I attended the public meeting organised by the Parish Council in Burnham Market regarding flooding issues. Along with two of our Borough officers, Councillor Sam Sandall as the ward councillor, Cllr Andrew Jamieson as the County Councillor, James Wild MP and representatives from the EA, Anglian Water, NCC Highways, NCC as Lead Local Flood Agency and the IDB.

It was good to hear from residents directly of their experiences with several options for measures discussed for tackling the issues both in the short, medium and long term. Multi-agency meetings will continue, which officers will continue to engage in.

It is worth noting that while we are actively engaging in these works, we are not the lead agency (this is Lead Local Flood Authority and Anglian Water), nor do we have any ownership of assets in those areas (e.g. we are not responsible for any of the ditches / drains). We will consider assisting with welfare issues on a case by case basis.

Tenders for the geotechnical investigations to the Hunstanton Coastal Defences have now closed and submissions are currently being reviewed.

Licensing:

The Licensing and legal team have been preparing for two upcoming prosecutions:

- Unlicensed dog breeder, summons has been served and is due at Norwich Magistrates Court in May 2024
- Unlicensed private vehicle hire, operator and driver – summons yet to be served

No further information will be made available until after the cases have been to court.

In December, Licensing worked with the Graphics and Communications teams to create some information to raise public awareness of licensed vehicles and how important it is to confirm that your vehicle and driver are licensed. Cases of abuse against taxi drivers are rising so posters regarding respecting taxi drivers were reissued. (Copies attached) The message was sent out on social media and posters were positioned within licensed premises and takeaways within the Borough.

We are looking at the costs and implications of supplying body camera's to all 3 of our licensing enforcement officers to obtain better evidence during search warrants, inspections and whilst investigating complaints for all licensing disciplines. The Police, CSNN and BC's fly tipping team already use them and central control is in the CCTV room.

Fly Tipping & Recycling:

Two fines for fly tipping were recently issued:

One fine of £200 was issued to a resident on the Fairstead Estate for dumping furniture and packaging. Another resident in Dodmans Close was charged £250 for the removal of an illegally dumped chair.

Both investigations involved working with our partners at Broadland Housing & Freebridge Housing. My thanks go to our investigation team who deal with complaints, interviews and investigations. Fly tipping is un-necessary and will not be tolerated.

The recycling statistics for the year to March 2023 have been published. 41.3% of household waste in the Borough was sent for reuse, recycling or composting. While this is a modest increase, generally recycling rates have been falling.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Our current recycling rates do not currently match with our ambitions, as such we are committed to increasing recycling rates across the borough, starting with Food Waste Action Week at the end of March, which focuses on increasing the amount of food waste captured to go for Anaerobic digestion.

We will be producing an information video which will be going out on social media. The team will visit some local schools and a farmers market to promote food waste action week. Caddies and liners will be available at events and at council for councillors. Keep an eye out for events and information in March.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Various portfolio briefings
Visit to RSPCA East Winch Wildlife Centre
Burnham Market Public Meeting on Flooding Issues
Cabinet
Cabinet Sifting
Cabinet Briefing
Food waste promo video
LGA Coastal SIG water quality briefing

Upcoming meetings in March:
NEWS Board Meeting
Norfolk Waste Partnership
East of England Local Authority Water Summit
Joint Waste Contract Review & Development Board
Norfolk Coast Partnership CMG & Strategy Group meetings
Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance



Respect your Taxi driver

Your taxi driver is:

- Earning a living
- Working late
- Taking you home

Their vehicle is their place of work and they pay to look after it and insure it so it is safe for you.

Please treat them with respect.



don't get into an unlicensed



Know the dangers!

Don't put yourself at risk of:

- Physical assault • Overcharging • No public liability insurance
- Unvetted drivers • Unsafe vehicles

Safety checklist

A pre-booked Private Hire Vehicle should have:

- Yellow windscreen licence
- Yellow rear licence plate
- Confirm pre-booking with the driver, before entering
- Pre-Booked Only sign (both front doors)



A taxi (Hackney Carriage) from a rank or flagged down should have:

- White windscreen licence
- White rear licence plate
- White roof light
- Fare charge card
- Taxi meter

Always check that the driver is wearing an identification badge

If you are unsure of a vehicle or suspect a vehicle is unlicensed, contact the Borough Council's Licensing Team on 01553 616200

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22nd FEBRUARY 2024

COUNCILLOR CHRIS MORLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

For the 31st January to 11th February 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

REVENUE PROGRAMME.

The Final Local Government Finance Settlement was released on 5th February to enable the Finance Team to put (almost) the last touches to the Financial Plan. I add “almost” because further details to support Authorities affected by IDB Levies will be announced “in the coming months”. For this forthcoming year £3m has again be allocated but there are more Councils now claiming a share of this money and our allocation may be less than the £205k we were awarded last year.

This final settlement has however given us additional money from its distribution of Business Rates following the Governments change to the standard rate multiplier (although small business rate stays the same) plus compensation for holding the multiplier through periods of CPI increases.

This change has enabled us to put £1m into our General Reserve and £0.7m into a holding earmarked for Alive which has announced that it cannot afford to pay the Management Fee due to its parent, the Council.

We have also been granted small increases to the Rural Services Delivery Grant and the Funding Guarantee Grant.

Taken together and as tabled in the Medium Term Financial Plan, we estimate, using Reserves, that we will deliver a fully funded budget for both 24/25 and 25/26, leaving the last year of this Administration with some funding still to find.

However, there is much water to flow under the bridge between now and then, which I think is an apt simile, as a change to the funding of IDBs will make a huge difference.

Meanwhile, the Government is still encouraging us to use reserves to balance the books and this we are doing whilst maintaining our Service and Quality levels. They are also looking for demonstrable productivity improvements. Through the finance system and the work that is nearing completion on identifying our service processes, we are working towards giving Portfolio Holders more granular information to manage efficiencies within their remits and continue to pursue cost management and income generation opportunities.

CAPITAL PROFILE

The capital programme is more than a considerable challenge. It totals just over £170m over the term of this Administration and project costs are higher than forecast

due to cost increases and refining designs. There will therefore be corresponding delays to capital receipts which are and will be an intrinsic need for the financial viability of this Council.

GENERAL

Finally for this section of my Report, a parallel offering to the Financial Statement, I would wish to give wider visibility of the recent LGA data that more than 9 in 10 Councils are experiencing staff recruitment and retention difficulties across a wide range of skills and professions. I trust that the recent pay award which we managed to accommodate within our financial profile will go a considerable way to keeping that issue from West Norfolk's door.

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS (IDBs).

A presentation to MPs was given by representatives of the Special Interest Group (SIG) at a reception in the Houses of Parliament jointly hosted by Liz Truss and Sir John Hayes, MP for South Holland and Deepings. It was considered a successful evening with many MPs in attendance. Numbers were limited and the S151 Officer, Michelle Drewery, represented this Authority.

The Right Honourable Michael Gove has announced that a long-term solution will be implemented and this Borough, mainly through the SIG, will continue to remind the Government of this "promise".

The total bill across the country to support IDBs is, in Government terms, comparatively small, but its impact on Councils such as ours is huge and disproportionate. The IDB Levy for us in 2024/5 is £3.5m, an increase of 8% over the current year.

EXTERNAL AUDITS

At last, year 2019/20 Statement of Accounts has been agreed without qualification and document signed off by Chair of Audit and S151 Officer. We have yet to receive the external audit charge for that year and Officers are meeting with EY (the Auditors) to discuss next steps for the overdue audits. Once EY have scoped their work they will notify us and the PSAA (Public Sector Auditor Appointments) of their proposed fees.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

KLACC (new KLAC) Budget/Special Expenses and Constitution Agreement.

Extensive community Grant Programme and associated SLAs. In particular Community Transport, Mobility and Advice Services.

Usual round of Portfolio, and Cabinet Meetings.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

1/2 CPP
Joint Panel

2/2 Small Grants Panel
5/2 Joint Group Meeting
6/2 Cabinet
7/2 Add. Cabinet (Budget)

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 January 2024

COUNCILLOR BAL ANOTA - CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

For the period 23 November to 31 January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Management and maintenance of council owned property assets: including industrial estates, Kings Court, Town Hall and the Depot, Public conveniences, Crematorium and Cemeteries.

The staircase improvement works to King's Court have been largely successfully completed. There are a few finishing touches to be completed and some redecoration to be undertaken. The team has also started to look at King's Court office layouts, we still have some teams located off-site and some space at King's Court may be being freed up by one of our sub-tenants. This gives us the opportunity to explore more options with the office accommodation in terms of layout, function, and potential co-location opportunities with other public organisations.

On the wider council property portfolio, the team is starting to look at the longer-term strategic approach to the overall property estate and they will be working on a corporate wide asset management strategy. This will take time to develop and put into place. A largescale overall assessment of the condition of the property portfolio was last undertaken in 2008 and we are keen to do this exercise again in order that we can strategically manage our overall expenditure on repairs and maintenance particularly, however, this will only be one element.

Car Parks and Open Space

I have been holding ongoing conversations with Officers and Portfolio holders regarding revenue generation and cost saving opportunities to enable a well thought through budget proposal to be presented and we will continue with these discussions.

It was quite humbling to attend the quarterly meeting of the Norfolk Parking Partnership to hear such praise for our Parking Operations team who, at the beginning of November 2023, took over the back-office functions for the parking services delivered on behalf of Norfolk County Council for Norwich City Council and for Norwich City Council themselves. Having seen the effort, determination, and pressures this put that team under to ensure it was

delivered on time I must make the unusual step of naming some individuals as without their commitment this scheme would not have been delivered. Whilst times are hard in all public services, work such as this brings valuable contributions towards our corporate overheads, alongside protecting the livelihoods of those officers involved in delivering services. Those senior officers are David Morton, Charlotte Martin and Louise Gayton, and their respective teams.

I always take a keen interest in the parking stays within our car park areas and whilst there are always a number of factors that influence peaks and troughs the figures for November and December are always particularly interesting specifically within our town centre areas and the way in which parking is supporting our town centre vibrancy. I am pleased to report that the King's Lynn Town Centre long and short term stays not only held their numbers over last year but showed a marginal 0.26% increase over 2022 which was, in my opinion, a demonstration of how important our communities see the Town Centre offering: especially during times of cost-of-living pressures and a greater move towards online shopping. Hunstanton saw an even greater, 9% increase in stays but clearly a much milder Christmas than is the norm influenced this and it was great to see large numbers of people visiting the coast to enjoy it over the Christmas period.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Portfolio Meetings – TBC
- Wave 4b
- Hethel Innovation Centre

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

November 2023

9th - Portfolio Meeting – MH TB

10th - Leziate Parish Council

14th - Portfolio Meeting – MH

16th - Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)

28th – Epicentre (Haverhill)

29th – KL Parking Strategy (Teams)

29th – Hunstanton Parking Strategy (Teams)

29th – Planning Committee Training (Teams)

30th – Portfolio Meeting MC

30th - Portfolio Meeting MH

December 2023

4th – Planning Committee

5th – Village Green Meeting

5th – Cabinet

6th – Portfolio Meeting MC

6th – Cabinet Briefing
6th – MintyIn Carol Service
7th – Budget Development
8th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
11th – Cabinet Sifting
12th – Directorate Plan Setting
13th – Portfolio Meeting MC DM
14th – Norfolk Parking Partnership
15th – Portfolio Meeting DH
20th – Cabinet Briefing
January 2024
2nd - Portfolio Meeting MH TB OJ
3rd – E&C Panel (Teams)
5th – Portfolio Meeting OJ
8th – Cabinet Briefing
10th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
10th – Cabinet Briefing
11th – KLACC Meeting
12th – Leziate PC
15th – Cabinet Sifting
15th – Cabinet
16th – Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)
17th – Budget Session

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22nd February 2024

COUNCILLOR – JO RUST CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

For the period January 25th – February 8th 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters. –

Housing register

1508 live applications

3 Emergency

217 High

488 Medium

800 Low

256 new or change in circumstances forms received

Housing Options

168 applicants given housing advice, 88 new homeless declarations and/or are ongoing investigations.

Lets advised – 16

Some of the properties that have been advertised on the housing list have had in excess of 130 bids. One property received 140 bids, one received 130 and the next lowest was 114. This is clear evidence of the need for more social and affordable housing.

On January 26th I attended my second Wave 4b Health engagement meeting. I learnt of some of the issues relating to the South Lynn Health Centre. This centre will not be staffed by GPs, but by additional health role staff, such as social prescribing, health and well-being and physio staff to name but a few. These staff are employed through the PCN – Primary Care Network which is a group of GP surgeries working together over a geographical area. Its purpose is to be more responsive to very local health needs, not all of which involve or need a GP. The centre will be occupied by staff from the ICB and the PCN and it will also accommodate services offered by the QEH such as a maternity Hub and a Physiotherapy outpatients' clinic. It will have the capacity to accommodate GPs if that is decided in the future, but for now, it will not.

This links in with the direction of travel with the health and wellbeing partnership and the Integrated Care Board and health. The aim is to keep people out of hospital. This centre can achieve this through things like social prescribing. The following Tuesday I attended the centre in person. It looks an amazing premises to hold these services. There were many QEH staff who also attended the tour of the facility and they certainly looked impressed. Before we went on the tour, we were given a briefing by the Darwin Group, who are the construction company building it. Their intention is to build outstanding healthcare facilities which combine quality, innovation and integrity using modern methods of construction. It was very interesting to hear from them because of course, the intention is to use modern methods of construction (MMC) when the new QEH is built. The new health hub is being built with sustainability and net zero carbon in mind. We were given a few myth busting pieces of information about MMC, one being that they have a minimum of 60 years of design life and can be built to 7 or 8 storeys high. This building is HTM and HBM compliant. Health building notes give best practice guidance on the design and planning of new healthcare buildings and on the adaptation or extension of existing facilities. Health Technical Memoranda (HTMs) give comprehensive advice and guidance on the design, installation and operation of specialised building and engineering technology used in the delivery of healthcare. These are standards that are already tried and tested, so it's a bit of a puzzle as to why the government claim Hospital 2.0 is necessary. In addition, we've seen what happens when a single solution which is not tested is rolled out across multiple site – RAAC and Asbestos to name but two examples of its failure. Perhaps we should be making a case for more diversity and a hospital on a new site.

The morning of the tour of the Health Hub, I also attended the Food for Thought session taking place in Hunstanton. For the first such event there were a good number of people there. The first session was focussing on making your own bread and the chef, Jenny, showed how easy it could be. I attended the second session the following Tuesday and was pleased to see even more residents in attendance. At this session a simple, but incredibly tasty, risotto was made. I left before the veggie curry was served up, but I would urge councillors to let residents know about these sessions and encourage them to attend.

The following day I drove to Norwich for the Integrated Care Board meeting where we took part in some group work setting out what was being done in our area and what more could be done by working in partnership. We heard about the very first stage of preventing ill health – the primordial stage. It is this stage which our Health and Wellbeing Partnership work aims to achieve and these wider determinants of health are most certainly what we want to achieve by being a Marmot Place. We learned about the data hub and the shared care records. The data hub takes out all individual, personalised information and leaves behind a huge amount of information that can guide the provision of our services.

I was disappointed at our last full council meeting that we ran out of time for our cabinet reports to be moved. I hope that you did read it.

On Thursday 1st February I met with the CEO, Estates Director and newly appointed Programme Manager for the new hospital at the QEH. I expressed my grave concerns about the fact there has been no progress with any building needed to pave the way for the new hospital. We had been told that we must have both phases of the Multi Storey Car Park up and running by January 2025 in order to be ready to open the new QEH by 2030. I said at this point I had no confidence that any money would be released due to the likelihood of a general election and change of government. I have written to Wes Streeting, Daisy Cooper and our own Cllr Pallavi (Green Party Health spokesperson) about the matter and any guarantee that they can give to reassure us that a new incoming government would progress with the commitment to replace our RAAC built hospital. I also said that at this stage I felt we should be lobbying for a new QEH on a better site. It was questioned at what stage should we stop one plan and go with the other, and I agree that we can't just cease work on plans on the current site, we have to be prepared should that funding be released. I was also advised that the panel had reviewed an off site option – 4 or 5 sites were considered, and the decision of the panel was that this site was the preferred option. In respect of Hospital 2.0, we will be an early follower of it and so won't be a full adopter. So, to be clear, our hospital won't be built 100% using the model designed under Hospital 2.0. It is planned that an outline business case will be submitted by April 2025 and the Full Business Case submitted by April 2026. For the MSCP an OBC will be made in March this year, with the FBC following in June. It is hoped (planned) that the build will commence in December this year and last for 12 months. This means that we've lost all our Flex Time. We will also have to attract one of a limited number of construction specialists who can build hospitals. There are only about 19 and of them only 4 or 5 tier 1 contractors who would be interested. We might be able to bring in European contractors, Standardisation and industrialisation will be key to making this an easier roll out. In addition, the hospital themselves are planning the design of the construction village which will be needed and this too will help the progress. We are still waiting for the demand and capacity work which has been done to be published. It was this which was going to guide the size of the building. I was told that it wouldn't be built to the same size and the new building will be bigger. But the demand for space isn't the same as it used to be, for example, we know longer carry out procedures such as tonsillitis removal. We will also do much more day cases which will cut down on the length of stay. The space will have to be built to be used flexibly so that it can be repurposed when there is a change in the services that are offered. Finally, there will be a bus terminus located at the entrance of the current site. It is hoped that this move will help encourage more bus companies to put on services to the QEH as currently there is a reluctance to do so due to getting stuck on site. They're asking us as a council to help with this by speaking to the companies.

On Friday 2nd February a meeting was held between ourselves, NCC and trustees and staff from the Swan Project. We have provided some funding for the group which offer an amazing service to children and families in the Downham market area, but they really need guaranteed core funding. Like all

other charities they're having to face tougher competition for an ever decreasing pot of money. NCC will provide some grant application support so that the management don't have to spend the majority of their time undertaking this task. We have earmarked funding for them to help.

Following on from this meeting Cllr Moriarty and myself met with a local resident about the future of Hardings Way. As we have previously said, there are currently no plans to develop the land allocated as a brownfield site but if plans do come forward, the current bus lane will remain as it is, with the bus gate in the same place and the length unchanged. We were able to give this reassurance to the resident to allay his concerns.

I attended a Creating Community Event in the Beacon Church North Lynn on Saturday 3rd February along with the local Borough Councillor. It was a really well attended event with lots of the local community coming along to enjoy the refreshments and the variety of stall providing information, advice and also some freebies like books for children. Thanks to all staff who gave up their day to make this event such a success.

On 7th February I visited a new MIND facility called Birch Tree House in Barrowway Drove. It was an absolutely lovely building and will be used for Crisis Recovery Care. 4 residents will be able to stay for 5 days in order for them to make a full recovery. It was good to hear from the staff who will be working at the facility and learn about the provision.

Finally, I attended a meeting with other councillors to discuss the practicalities of the motion which came to council about dentistry. A fuller report will be made at the appropriate time.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

23/02/24 – Right to Play – signing of pledge for accessible play equipment

28/02/24 – Sports England and Briefing for councillors for local leadership programmes – This is a change from the planned two day attendance on the full training due to councillors pressures on budget setting. A new date for attendance will be scheduled.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

19/01/24 – IDB meeting

19/01/24 – Tour of Slaters Road Development

21/01/24 – Holocaust Memorial Day Event

22/01/24 – Cabinet Sifting

23/02/24 – Homelessness and Temporary Housing Summit

23/01/24 – Council Companies Training

24/01/24 – ICB dentistry briefing

24/01/24 – Budget Development Session

25/01/24 – Informal Dentistry Meeting

25/01/24 – Group Meeting

26/01/24 – Wave 4b Primary Care Hub meeting

29/01/24 – KLACC

30/01/24 – Food for Thought Hunstanton Town Hall

30/01/24 – Health Hub Tour
30/01/24 – R&D
31/01/24 – Health and Wellbeing/Integrated Care Partnership session
31/01/24 – Full Council
01/02/24- QEH meeting
01/02/24 – CPP
01/02/24 – Joint Panel meeting
02/02/24 – Swan Project meeting
02/02/24 – Resident meeting re Hardings Way
03/02/24 – Creating Communities Event
05/02/24 – Joint Group Meeting
06/02/24 – Food for Thought
06/02/24 – Cabinet
07/02/24 – Drop in to Birch Tree House
07/02/24 – Cabinet
08/02/24 – Meeting with Interim Director of Alive Leisure
08/02/24 – Housing Portfolio meeting
08/02/24 – Dentistry practicalities meeting
09/02/24 – Community led housing meeting
09/02/24 – West Norfolk Carers meeting
09/02/24 – Freebridge exec meeting
09/02/24 – Apprentice Week Celebration
12/02/24 – Beat the Bills Marshland St James
12/02/24 – Cabinet Sifting
13/02/24 – Targeted Youth Support Service
13/02/24 – Special KLACC Meeting
13/02/24 – KLCCF trustees meeting
14/02/24 – Mart Opening
14/02/24 – Cabinet training session
15/02/24 – West Norfolk Community Transport meeting
15/02/24 – Portfolio briefing
15/02/24 – Portfolio Briefing
15/02/24 – Gaywood Allotments Trust
20/02/24 – R&D
21/02/24 – ICS District Council meeting
21/02/24 – Parish Councils meeting
22/02/24 – Health and Wellbeing Partnership meeting
22/02/24 – Support for carers of people living with MND
22/02/24 – Full Council

Cabinet Members Report to Council

22nd February 2024

COUNCILLOR SIMON RING - CABINET MEMBER FOR TOURISM, EVENTS AND MARKETING

23rd November 23 to 12th Feb 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Little has happened since the report put forward for the last Council meeting and as there were no questions to portfolio holders I have copied the report here. In addition I have the following to report

- 50% of our tourism and marketing team have resigned, leaving us needing to fill a large whole in what was already a stretched team.
- Work is being done on reviewing the SLAs, many of which land in this portfolio.
- Following a presentation to HAG on the feasibility of a Lido, a meeting was held with two members and Chris Starkey from NCC to discuss a way forward. This will have been relayed to the HAG by the time of this Full Council meeting.
- I have had a meeting with interested parties with regard to re-introducing the Hanse Festival this year. A committee was formed, and enthusiasm enhanced.
- A tender document has been advertised for the creation of the Cultural Strategy with funding from the Arts Council. Interviews planned for 26th Feb.

This period is a quiet time for a number of my portfolio areas. For events in particular this is a period of rest and repair. A number of physical resources have needed replacement and repair, funded by set aside reserves.

Tourism and Marketing

Visit West Norfolk - An Update for 17/11/23 - 17/01/2024:

For the Christmas/New Year period we continued to promote a substantial amount of local seasonal events and activities, from pantomimes to Christmas-related family activities.

Digital Promotions

During this winter period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our visitor contacts:

- Festive Events this December in West Norfolk 2023 [sent 30/11/2023]
- Mark your Calendars! 2024 Holiday Inspiration in West Norfolk [sent

14/12/2023]

- Winter Days in West Norfolk 2024 [sent 04/01/2024]

During this winter period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our tourism business contacts:

- Reminder: Love Your Grant Scheme [sent 23/11/2023]
- Book the Hunstanton Observatory for your visitors and last call for Tourism Forum event [sent 29/11/2023]
- KLIC and connect Business Networking Event and Grant Support [sent 07/12/2023]
- FREE Promotion on the Visit West Norfolk website [sent 21/12/2023]
- Leadership Training, Accessibility Toolkit and Recruitment Support [11/01/2024]

We uploaded the following new content on the *Visit West Norfolk* website during this time too:

- 'New Year's Eve in West Norfolk 2023' blog post [published 05/12/2023]. Highlighted New Year's Eve events and accommodation offers in west Norfolk.
- 'Rainy Day Activities in West Norfolk' blog post [published 08/12/2023]. Featured indoor activities or attractions including museums, historic sites, indoor play areas, cinemas, and art galleries.
- 'Mark your calendars! Unique events in West Norfolk 2024' blog post [published 13/12/2023]. Promoted holiday inspiration and upcoming events in west Norfolk.
- Updated: 'Free Things To Do in West Norfolk | Winter 2024' blog post [02/01/2024]
- Updated: 'Dog Friendly West Norfolk' blog post [05/01/2024]

We also created and uploaded the following social media posts during this time:

o **Social media posts about our blogs:**

- 'Christmas in West Norfolk 2024' blog post.
- 'Free Things To Do |Autumn 2023' blog post.
- 'New Year's Eve in West Norfolk 2023' blog post.
- 'Mark your calendars! Unique events in West Norfolk 2024' blog post.
- 'Wintertime in West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'Road Safety Awareness for Pedestrians and Cyclists' blog post.
- 'Dog Friendly West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'Sustainable Transport in West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'Rainy Day Activities in West Norfolk' blog post
- 'Nature Reserves and Wildlife Parks in West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'Free Things To Do in West Norfolk | Winter 2024'
- 'Golfing in West Norfolk' blog post.
- '20 Historical Figures with Connections to West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'Fishing in West Norfolk' blog post.
- 'West Norfolk... Naturally' page.
- 'Safe and Responsible Travel' page.
- 'Shopping' page.
- 'Food & Drink' page.
- 'Parking' page.

o **Social media posts about local events:**

- 'Christmas at the Guildhall' event [10/12/2023]

- 'New Year's Day Walk' [01/01/2024]
- 'King's Lynn Christmas Lights Switch-On' event [26/11/2023]
- 'Downham Market Christmas Lights Switch-On' event [26/11/2023]
- **Social media posts about general tourism themes:**
 - New Year inspiration
 - 'National Walk Your Dog' month [January]
 - Black Friday
 - Tourism Industry ['Business Listings', 'Event Uploads', 'Tourism Trade News', 'Economic Impact of Tourism' reports, and more].
 - Visitor newsletter sign-up form.
 - King's Lynn
 - Downham Market
 - Hunstanton
 - West Norfolk coast and countryside.
 - King's Lynn Architecture
 - Explore West Norfolk website
 - History and heritage
 - Walking and cycling trails.

We continue to upload events to the Visit West Norfolk website event listings and to proactively contact tourism businesses who are not yet featured on the Visit West Norfolk website for future inclusion.

New Projects

Software

After recently being granted authorisation by the BCKLWN ICT Working Group to use such new software, from early December 2023 we have been using the User Generated Content Platform Snapsea (www.snapsea.io) through our Instagram account for the very first time - to enhance, inform and grow our future promotional interactions with potential visitors to west Norfolk by utilising high quality authentic visitor content of the local area. It is early days, of course, but the first month of our use of the software does look promising.

West Norfolk Tourism Business Event

After the recent West Norfolk Tourism Forum AGM (held Wednesday 6th December 2023), we are currently finalising the booking of presenters and the full agenda for the first West Norfolk Tourism Business Summit event, to be presented by the tourism forum and held in King's Lynn in March 2024.

Shared Prosperity Fund Projects

We are continuing various work and tender processes on a set of SPF funded projects, which include regeneration of items at the West Lynn Pavilion, enhancements to certain Downham Market Town Centre public realm assets, and the formation of a Hunstanton Observatory events programme for a series of four events of varied themes.

The Hanse League

With King's Lynn being an active member of the Hanse League, we have now taken over the Vice Chair and administrator roles for the Europe-wide Modern Hanse League splinter group called the *Hanse Sustainable Working Group*. Our first meeting with the group in these new roles was held on 16th January 2024, with the working group primarily focussing on sharing best practice and learning examples, across the sustainable development goals set by the UN, on a Europe-wide basis. These goals include the implementation and growth of sustainable tourism business practices and much more.

Members of this working group include representatives from many other Hanse towns and cities across Europe

As you can see, the Tourism and Marketing team have kept busy.

Alive West Norfolk Corn Exchange

Theatre:

- New brochure came out at the end of November.
- Pantomime sales reached 21,000 with secondary spends up 8% on previous year.

Cinema

Number 1 place in October was the colourful *characters* *Trolls Band Together* followed by Martin Scorsese latest masterpiece *Killers of the Flower Moon*. *The Great Escaper* did well returning after a huge success in early in October along with *A Haunting in Venice*. November has performed well with the epic *Napoleon*, 2 *Lithuanian films*, 4 sold out *silver 60's* screenings and extra screenings of now popular *Toddler Tuesdays*.

December saw a slate of major family flicks, comedies, and a couple of awards contenders. The biggest film of the month was the blockbuster origin story *Wonka* a Timothée Chalamet-led family favourite, portraying the rise of the iconic chocolatier *Willy Wonka*. Disney's new animation *Wish* started early December. We also had 4 sold out screenings from *Andre Rieu* for our Christmas Event Cinema audience, followed by a re-release of the beloved Christmas classic *Elf*, starring Will Ferrell. Plenty of Christmas titles, including *Muppets Christmas Carol*, *The Grinch*, *It's a Wonderful life*, leaving the Majestic Cinema to show *Love Actually* & *Home Alone*.

Marketing.

We have in the past asked to advertise on the "A" board and the new LED screen on the Tuesday Market Place, also the poster sites at the Multi-story car park and bus stops.

We are now being asked to advertise on our AWN digital screens by regeneration, Lily & Careline, which we are happy to do free of charge.

Town Hall

Currently:

- Wedding bookings are good for 2024.
- Town Hall had a stand at the Kings Lynn Wedding Fayre on 7th January.
- Staff arranged an archives coffee morning which was well received and has led to some future paid for bookings from Hickathrift House.

Culture at the Guildhall

Generally Increased Numbers for the run up to Christmas and events now running at capacity (I would like to increase 'capacity' and am looking at ways to do this).

Dickensian Christmas at the Guildhall was booked to capacity: families engaged with Father and Mother Christmas, craft activities, games, food, drink, carol singers and live animals in the form of owls. Feedback from the event has been really good and an event on this theme is planned for 2024. This event also had the benefit of volunteers from CWA as part of the scheme we are running with them (we have been and given talks at CWA to inspire students to come and get involved and it seems to be working).

Our partnership with the Ministry of Justice is continuing with community payback people assisting in maintaining the garden at the Guildhall.

School plays returned to the Guildhall in December which has not happened in a while with schools using the space for both their in house and public facing Christmas shows.

We partnered with Norwich Puppet Theatre to offer schools a truly magical version of Midsummer Night's Dream. This was featured on the one show with the Guildhall in November and schools came and packed the auditorium for two showings of this production.

We have started a bi-weekly Art Club at weekends. The first one was sold out with a waiting list so we have increased capacity.

The Guildhall is hosting the Heritage Education Network meeting which is an attempt to bring all the schools together and provide support to learning across the town in the areas we know the Guildhall is strong.

We have an exhibition opening shortly and activities for families in February Half Term.

AWN Lynnsport etc

Health, wellbeing and commercial.

Improving community health and wellbeing remains the main priority on the AWN agenda, and the AWN Wellness Referral scheme continues to grow and become

embedded into the Primary Care Network to offer specialist exercise referral across our sites.

With 171 referrals to date, the work we are now doing with Active Now has really engaged local GP surgeries, which historically have been challenging to onboard and build partnerships with. Prior to Active Now, referrals from our local surgeries were less than 5% - they are now the lead contributor into our scheme at 62%

We have gained further funding to support the Active Now Falls Prevention programme, that will be rolled out early 2024. This will see 14hrs per week of engagement from AWN staff to support the programme - a majority of which will be out in the community. To support this, 8 staff members have undertaken a seated based exercise class qualification and a one-day specialist course in 'behaviour change' was undertaken on 5 Dec, training 10 AWN staff.

The company, on behalf of the council, is currently in discussion with Sport England and in partnership with Active Norfolk in relation to potential new national funding to support the borough's work in promoting health and wellbeing via physical activity. This is at the earliest stages and an update will be available once there is more detail to report

AWN continue to be active in the community in terms of outreach to further improve awareness and support local business and charities. AWN offered a day of health checks for the BCKLWN to support International Men's Day in November, providing a valuable educational day for staff. The rotary club and a local Parkinson's support group also benefited from the same health checks, breaking down barriers for these special populations to engage with our services and we were pleased to see a good uptake of participants joining our membership scheme.

Commercially – membership sales continue to outperform last year since the gyms have been refurbished and we have for the first time introduced a fully flexible monthly membership which makes membership at our venues more affordable and without the need for a full year up front commitment. The annual membership remains to give people the choice of monthly or annual – but early signs in January show a healthy sales upturn compared to last January. However a number of people are suffering from the cost of living crisis and have had to consider their financial priorities when it comes to having a membership. With a focus on retention, plans to further improve our member experience over the upcoming months include scheduled member education sessions to help customers understand how to get the most from the technology and capability of the cardio equipment, gym floor-based classes, and further virtual class provision. A recent marketing commission to highlight the breadth of what Alive offer the community for marketing campaigns will be used in our January campaigns. These member testimonials have also helped highlight the great work the team are doing.

Events:

In late October Kaset skatepark held the annual Halloween Hell skate jam, with keen skaters travelling from Bristol, Newcastle and Manchester to attend one of the UK's largest Halloween skateboarding events. Norfolk County Council's Targeted Youth Support Services (TYSS) are now hiring the skatepark on a weekly basis to provide a safe space for young people who can speak to youth workers, the Matthew Project and other support services. The police also attend to provide advice, engagement and bike security tagging free of charge.

November saw Alive Downham host a pool party for the West Norfolk Autism Group

who provide support and guidance to individuals of all ages whose lives are affected by autism. The pool party gave families from the group the opportunity to have fun in the pool using the large floats with their family members in a controlled environment. During December, all sites hosted an event aimed at engaging members and the local community, Lynnsport sold out their Christmas lunch serving 80 people, and customers at Oasis and Downham enjoyed a social morning of Mince pies and coffee. These events provide great community spirit and support those suffering from loneliness.

Events

This is a time of rest and repair for the events team, as well as a time for planning the huge number of events, both by the Council and supporting outside bodies. We are not only planning for all of the now well established events, but we are also looking to maximise the assets we have to provide new events without utilizing additional resource. It is important, at a time of financial difficulty for our residents, that we put on as many free events as we can both afford and cope with, and that we will continue to do. I will be listing the planned events in a future update.

Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies

Officers

Oliver Judges
Duncan Hall
Martin Chisholm
Philip Eke
Bethany O'Brien
Philip Bayfield
Jemma Curtis
Tim Fitzhigham
Honor Howell
David Oudsby

Outside bodies

Civic Society
Town Guides
Festival
Hunstanton Action Group
Old Lenensians
Norfolk Records Committee
Norfolk Museums Committee
Friends of the Walks
Kings Lynn Museum
Stories of Lynn and Archives
Conservancy Board
Downham Market Town Council Committee

I have regular scheduled meetings with most of the above officers and will continue to meet and fact find with outside bodies including those already met with.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 February 2024

COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

For the period 1st to 11th February

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Planning Performance

Just before Christmas, the Secretary of State set out his ambitions for planning performance, namely that planning decisions must be taken on time and should be robust in their reasoning, and all authorities must have an up-to-date local plan.

In order to support authorities in meeting those expectations, the Secretary of State made a number of announcements, including the following:

Greater transparency

- **Developing a new planning performance dashboard** that will provide greater transparency and accountability for local authority performance, including exposing performance without Extension of Time agreements.
- **Reviewing the use of Extension of Time agreements in managing performance issues**, considering proposals to limit their use on minor and householder applications. DLUHC intend to consult on this in early 2024.

Faster processes

- **Establishing Accelerated Planning Services**, improving on the patchwork approach of Planning Performance Agreements by regularising arrangements so that they're offered across England, that clear milestones have to be agreed, that fees are set at an appropriate level, and that those fees have to be refunded where milestones are missed.
- **Reviewing Statutory Consultees**, which will scope and examine the operation of statutory consultees in the planning application process, in particular their role in providing advice to local planning authorities. This will not cover the role of statutory bodies in plan-making or the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Planning regimes.
- **Focusing on planning committee decisions**, with the Planning Inspectorate being asked to start reporting to the department about cases where a successful appeal is made against a planning committee decision, and the final decision is the same as the original officer's recommendation.

Some of these initiatives are already underway with the planning guarantee for non-major applications now set at 16 weeks, major applications remain at 26 weeks.

We are taking a proactive approach to meeting the new performance standards set by DLUHC, such as:

- Invalid applications will need to be made valid within 21 days of the invalid letter, otherwise the application will be returned.
- There will be a need to reduce the number of EOTs put in place. To achieve this, we will have to be much firmer with making decisions based on what has been submitted with the application, and unless any suggested changes are negotiated and received in a timely manner then the application will be determined. We will be working up clear and transparent processes so that expectations are managed and decisions are issued expeditiously.
- The government has made it clear that in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system, pre-application engagement and front loading applications is necessary. Whilst LPAs cannot insist that agents/developers submit for pre-application advice, it is strongly encouraged. Further, recent appeal decisions have confirmed that there is no legal requirement for the Council to negotiate on live planning applications and that the time for negotiation is through pre-application discussions. As a result, we will be reviewing our pre-application advice service to ensure that it is fit for purpose and to provide advice in a timely manner.
- If EOTs are removed for householder applications, then a decision will have to be made within the statutory 8 week period.

There will need to be a significant shift in the way planners and agents work together, and we will provide more information at the next informal and formal agents meetings.

DLUHC will also be reviewing statutory consultee responses to planning applications as there is a recognition many consultees provide a holding response to meet the 21 day response time but this doesn't enable the application to be determined until the detailed response is received.

The key message is that DLUHC are introducing more stringent performance measures, and we will need to change the way we work to meet the new measures.

Local Plan

We have recruited Alex Fradley to the Planning Policy Manager role.

Dates for the reconvened Local Plan Hearing Sessions have also now been agreed and will be held at Knights Hill Hotel on the following dates:

- 26-28 March 2024
- 16-19 April 2024
- Further hearings dates for the Gypsy and Traveller policy examination are set for 3-4 September 2024.

This would be followed by a formal consultation period on Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan during autumn 2024.

Mayors Design Awards

Applications are being invited for the Mayor's Design Awards to celebrate local architectural excellence and craftsmanship. The closing date for receipt of applications is Tuesday 30th April 2024. The ceremony will take place on Tuesday 17th September 2024 https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20081/conservation_and_listed_buildings/312/mayors_design_awards

Progress with recruitment

Planning Control – officers will shortly be engaging with Personnel on a new recruitment strategy for the remaining vacant Principal Planner post.

Planning Enforcement – as reported previously one of the Enforcement Officers has left, and

another retired early February. Both were on part-time hours and the posts have now been merged to create one full-time post. Following the recruitment process the current enforcement customer support officer has been appointed to the vacant enforcement officer post.

Planning validation – following the recruitment process the vacant position has been offered and subject to satisfactory references they will commence in March.

Planning Control update

In my previous report I reported that officers had been successful in securing £100,000 grant from the Planning Delivery Skills Fund. DLUHC have since notified officers that DLUHC had made a mistake and only £25,000 grant has been secured. Officers will be challenging this decision with DLUHC.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a way of creating and improving natural habitats. BNG makes sure development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development.

Developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This means a development will result in more or better quality natural habitat than there was before development.

- **Ways to achieve BNG: on-site units, off-site units and statutory biodiversity credits**

Through site selection and layout, developers should avoid or reduce any negative impact on biodiversity. They must deliver 10% BNG, as measured by the statutory biodiversity metric.

There are 3 ways a developer can achieve 10% BNG:

1. They can enhance and restore biodiversity on-site (within the red line boundary of a development site).
2. If developers can only achieve part of their BNG on-site, they can deliver through a mixture of on-site and off-site. Developers can either make off-site biodiversity gains on their own land outside the development site, or buy off-site biodiversity units on the market.
3. If developers cannot achieve on-site or off-site BNG, they must buy statutory biodiversity credits from the government. This must be a last resort. The government will use the revenue to invest in habitat creation in England.

Developers can combine all 3 options, but must follow the steps in order. This order of steps is called the biodiversity gain hierarchy.

- **Creating, enhancing and maintaining habitats to deliver BNG**

The land manager is legally responsible for creating or enhancing habitat, and managing that habitat for at least 30 years to achieve the target condition.

If you make on-site gains or sell off-site gains on a site you own, you are the land manager. If you buy off-site units, you are paying the land manager to manage the land for 30 years to achieve the target condition.

The local planning authority will be required to monitor sites over a 30 year period.

BNG is effective from:

- Major planning applications (large sites) – 12th February 2024
- Non-major planning applications (small sites) – 2nd April 2024
- National Infrastructure Projects – November 2025

More information is available at: [Understanding biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-biodiversity-net-gain)

Local Plan Update (ongoing examination of the replacement Local Plan 2021-2039)

The Inspectors' Matters Issues & Questions are expected during early to mid-February. These will inform the Local Plan Hearing Sessions.

Since November 2023, the Planning Policy team has been focused upon the need to put forward land allocations to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS), identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), June 2023. A programme/ timeframe for the ongoing GTTS work for the Local Plan examination is set out below:

- 26 January – 8 March 2024 (inclusive) – GTTS Potential Sites and Policy Consultation document consultation (with draft Full Sites Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment supporting documents).
- March 2024 – review and process representations/ preparation of finalised Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents.
- w/c 8 April 2024 – Special Cabinet Meeting, to approve finalised Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents for consultation and submission to the Planning Inspectors.
- w/c 22 April 2024 – meeting of Full Council, to approve GTTS site allocations and policies for submission to the Planning Inspectors.
- 10 May – 21 June 2024 – consultation on Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents.
- End of June 2024 – submission of Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents to Planning Inspectors.

Dates for Local Plan Hearing Sessions have also now been agreed as follows:

- 26-28 March 2024
- 16-19 April 2024
- Further hearings dates for the Gypsy and Traveller policy examination are set for 3-4 September 2024.

This would be followed by consultation on Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan during autumn 2024.

Housing Delivery Test

The 2022 Housing Delivery Test results were published by Government on the 19 December 2023. This is an annual measurement of housing delivery in the local planning authority area and looks back over the previous 3 financial years - 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The result for King's Lynn & West Norfolk is 90%. The minimum target is 95%.

The consequence of the result is the requirement for the preparation of a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan. It does not mean that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is engaged. It is important to recognise that this is not the same as a 5-year housing land supply, which looks forward over a period of 5 years to establish if there is a supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of housing land against the housing need figure. The Housing Delivery Test is concerned with actual housing delivery over the previous 3 years.

Total Number of Homes Required (FY 2019 -20, 2020 - 21, & 2021 -22)	Total Number of Homes Delivered (FY 2019 -20, 2020 - 21, & 2021 -22)	Housing Delivery Test 2022 Result	Housing Delivery Test 2022 Consequence
1413	1271	90%	Action Plan

CIL

This will be the 6th round of CIL funding allocations.

We received 24 CIL Funding Applications, which will be reviewed by the CIL Spending Panel on 19 Feb:

- **£829K available to be allocated;**
- £850k requested with 35% match funding;
- £20k shortfall – not all applications will receive funding;
- 21 Applications will be reviewed and funding allocated up to £50k by Panel;
- 3 Applications over £50k will be reviewed by Panel and go to Cabinet for a formal decision in April.

Update on CIL funded Infrastructure Projects ,already allocated CIL Funding to date: by Financial Year:

	Allocated	Spend	Allocated Not Spent
FY21/22 Totals	£1,207,813.47	£116,354.13	£1,091,459.34
FY22/23 Totals	£1,369,740.31	£1,010,410.50	£1,521,441.15
FY23/24 Totals	£1,325,419.89	£812,874.86	£1,981,516.20
TOTALS	£3,902,973.67	£1,939,639.49	£1,963,334.18

Project Progress by Application Rounds:

		Completed Projects	Active/Part Paid	Open Projects started not paid	Not yet started
17	Total No Apps				
18	FY21 48	44	2	1	1
19	FY22_1 28	26	1	0	1
20	FY22_2 39	28	0	4	7
21	FY23_1 39	28	0	4	7
22	FY23_2 47	36	3	0	8
24	Totals 201	162	6	9	24

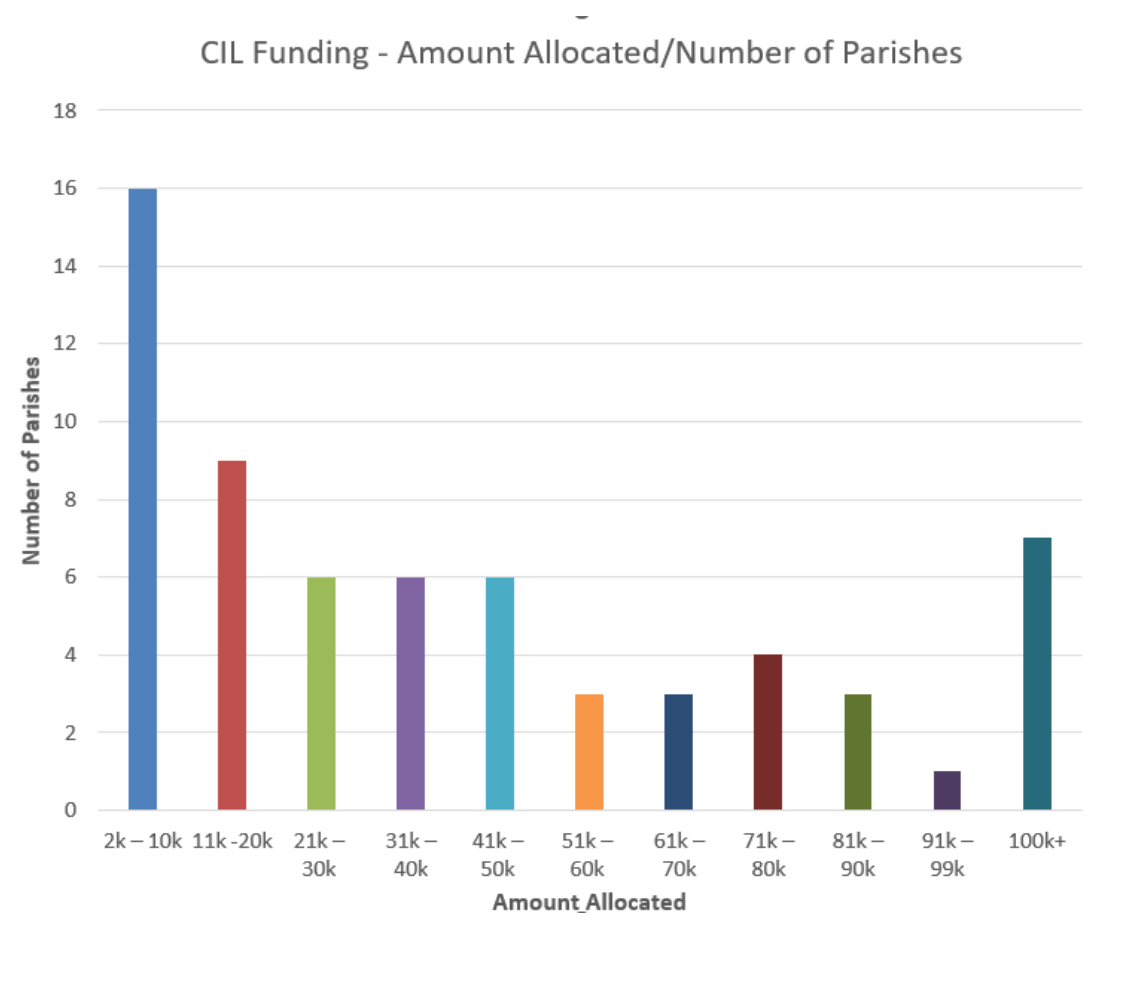
To date, CIL has been allocated, to the 3 main towns as follows:

- Kings Lynn - £941k (40 applications)
- Downham Market - £189k (9 applications)
- Hunstanton - £83,757 (11 applications)

Parishes allocated over £100k

- Brancaster £303k
- North Wootton £147k
- Snettisham £113k
- Shouldham £109k
- Watlington £104k
- Denver £100k

Funding has been allocated to 64 Parish Areas in the Borough, the chart shows how many Parishes have received funding within each category:



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

Thursday 22 February 2024

COUNCILLOR TERRY PARISH - LEADER

For the period 1 February - 22 February 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

The budget is the thing today. No doubt others will reference it in their reports, and it forms a substantial and wordy set of documents that I hope you have taken note of. There was an excellent opportunity to consider the budget and ask questions or put forward views at the joint panel meeting. I thank Cllr Bearshaw for his excellent chairing of that meeting and the Section 151 officer for her very clear explanation of the details. Almost a week later, there was another opportunity to comment on the budget at the extra cabinet meeting set aside just for it. Indeed, I would have allowed questions as I have done at other cabinet sessions. Several cllrs attended under SO34 but did not comment. I assume that a budget which is the first step towards achieving a true financial balance whilst still providing services, discretionary activities and money to those organisations who meet appropriate criteria and can use it effectively, can be accepted by all.

To secure the Council's financial future significant income needs to be raised or significant outgoings curtailed. Council agreed to changes to empty homes council tax and to doubling council tax on second homes. At present, most of this extra revenue benefits the County. A meeting was arranged with County to discuss the issue. They cancelled it but we will be pressing forward and expect co-operation. I ask all twin hatters to consider their position on this matter.

The thrust to reduce outgoings centres on IDB fees. Last year, government gave us around £200K; the bill was £3.2M. This year, so far, we will likely receive about the same. However, early in the month, there was a House of Commons event hosted by MP Liz Truss. This was due to a group of 29 Councils, The LGA Special Interest Group, lobbying for IDB fees to be picked up by someone else, preferably government. I introduced her to this group at one of our regular meetings. The section 151 officer attended the meeting on our behalf and reported that it was organised well. We await results though any significant change will not happen before 2025. I was interviewed on the same subject by Countryfile. If it is used it will appear in March. My excuse, if it is below par, is that trying to make sense whilst walking along a muddy track into a half gale is difficult.

Something different. It was National Apprenticeship week, and a gathering was held to celebrate our apprentices. An edited version of my official 'speech' below gives some details though the highlight was a 'video' of apprentices telling us how good the experience is. This was produced by an apprentice in the communications team and will be used for promotional purposes at secondary schools and at the college.

'110 people have taken Apprenticeships since we started the current scheme. We currently have 35 working across our organisation including planning, accountancy, democratic services, Lily, tourism, communications and others.

Not only do our apprentices benefit from learning new skills while on the job, the

Borough benefits from the knowledge and enthusiasm they bring into the organisation.

Agreeing to be an apprentice takes commitment and is taken on alongside the day work they do. Additionally, it takes commitment from our managers to give our Apprentices the time and support they need to undertake this additional learning.

As a council we encourage lifelong learning, and an apprenticeship is an excellent way of achieving career progression and motivation for individuals.'

I visited two health related sites, the NHS Kings Lynn Health Hub at South Lynn and Birch Tree House outside Downham Market run by Mind. The former is a new build and is currently at the fitting out and cladding stage. It has taken a few months as it is a smart modular construction. Very impressive and it will reduce pressure on the hospital services. I asked about building a hospital. This company could have a 500-bed hospital functioning in under 4 years and that includes a lead in time of 2 years (when they could start). Food for thought.

The Mind property is a large, new, open market house. No modifications have been needed and it should prove an excellent facility. They have three such properties and they are hoping for a fourth. This is the first one in West Norfolk and it will provide respite and support for up to four people for 5 nights. I was there in the morning and Cllr Rust and Cllr Rose were also engaged in discussions with staff. Other cllrs may have visited later.

I had two meetings related to the Oasis Centre in Hunstanton. The first was an item within a wider discussion about Alive Leisure. The company directors, Cllr Ben Jones and Cllr Jim Bhondi, called it and it was good to see their enthusiasm to move things forward. A paper will come to cabinet in due course. The second linked, to an extent, the Oasis with a proposal for a Lido which originated before my time. A member of the Hunstanton Advisory Group attended along with a County officer. Work will be done to consolidate appropriate data which is already held as it was considered unnecessary to engage more external consultants at this stage as £50K (County) had already been spent.

There have been some local flooding issues which the portfolio holder, Cllr Squire, will no doubt answer questions on. To be clear, Borough officers will consider problems experienced by the public and related to floods and sewage on a case-by-case basis for particularly vulnerable or elderly residents. Indeed, they have done this in the past by providing portaloos when appropriate authorities were, for whatever reason, unable to respond quickly. These 'goodwill gestures' (an MP's words) were, apparently, wrongly attributed to Anglian Water in a letter I received. The same letter asked me to establish a protocol which would allow our officers to work with Anglian Water. I have, as yet, not fully considered my response but I found it interesting that, in the last financial year, Anglian Water made £169M profit and, in the last 10 years they paid dividends amounting to £1.5 billion. I don't think they need us to sub them but I am willing to discuss how they can better support our residents.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Pay award

FCH Liaison meeting

Meeting the senior team at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Mayors Business Awards

East of England – LG White Paper Roundtable

East of England Local Authority Water Summit

College of West Anglia

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

In addition to cabinet meetings, cabinet briefings, communications briefings and multiple one offs with officers or councillors:

01/02/24 Norfolk Leaders Group

02/02/24 West Norfolk Transport and Infrastructure

05/09/24 BBC TV filming

09/02/14 Apprentice event

14/02/24 Opening of the mart

19/02/24 Personal safety and conflict resolution training for all councillors

21/02/24 Meeting with all of the Parish Councils

22/02/24 EELGA Assembly meeting
Council meeting

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL ON 21 MARCH 2024 FROM CABINET ON 5 MARCH 2024**CAB130 ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING POLICY**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube](#)

Cabinet considered a report which set out that Regulated Authorities must have provisions in place relating to 'Money Laundering', as a Local Authority the council were not legally obliged to apply the provisions of the Money Laundering Regulations 2007. However, as a responsible public body, the Borough Council who doesn't undertake any such regulated activities should employ policies and procedures which reflect the essence of the UK's anti-terrorist financing, and anti-money laundering regimes. Such legislation had been considered by professional bodies, resulting in best practice guidance being issued that required local authorities to establish internal procedures to prevent the use of their services for money laundering.

The policy review was to replace the current Anti-Money Laundering Policy which was formally approved on 21st April 2020. It amended titles and officers with roles within the policy, and further developed the policy to include more robust details and information regarding CDD (Customer Due Diligence) and KYC (Know Your Customer/Client) within an accompanying set of procedures to assist officers should the need arise to follow this process through providing a step-by-step guide. One legislative change had occurred since April 2020, and had been captured in section 5.5 of this new policy.

It was noted that the policy had been slightly amended following the Panel meeting and the updated copy had been distributed for consideration.

Cabinet discussed the suggestion in the Panel meeting that Councillors be involved in the process to which it was advised that officers had a legal requirement to immediately report incidences of money laundering akin to RIPA and the information was not for wider discussion. However information on numbers could be reported retrospectively.

RECOMMENDED: That the amended Anti Money Laundering Policy Review be put forward to Full Council for formal adoption.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the Council's anti-money laundering policy and associated procedures remain up to date and fit for purpose including changes in legislation. This policy looks to provide a clear process for officers/members who wish to report suspicions of money laundering and to the same end helps to raise suspicions of serious crime to the relevant responsible officers and other organisations (the National Crime Agency – NCA). As well as to protect officers/members who may have a suspicion and may require assistance to prevent further offences and/or obtaining guidance to prevent themselves from inadvertently becoming 'involved' in money offences.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**21st March 2024****COUNCILLOR BEALES - CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS**For the period 23rd February 2024 to 21st March 2024**1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.****Major Housing Scheme****Florence Fields (Gaywood, near King's Lynn Academy))**

Florence Fields reached an important milestone this period with the start of brick laying on the show-home, which is planned to be the first property to be completed, sometime this autumn. Ground conditions and the extremely poor weather conditions continue to challenge progress. The project team is actively seeking a long-term solution to the collapsed Network Rail culvert, which is complicating the project. A resolution needs to be found in the coming weeks to avoid delays to the wider works programme. Positive conversations are ongoing with the Internal Drainage Board regarding their support on this matter. We believe these discussions will lead to a long-term, improved relationship between the authorities. A review of each properties EPC rating is ongoing to ensure we continue to deliver higher and higher environmental standards.

Salters Road (King's Lynn close to Lynnsport)

Works continue to progress well at Salters Road. The first 15 units are occupied, with a further 8 being handed over to Freebridge Community Housing by the end of March. The final handover date is now likely to be delayed from October to November due to the difficult weather conditions experienced this winter and Freebridge Community Housing requesting additional flooring works for each unit.

Southend Road (Hunstanton)

Southend Road remains a complex and challenging build. Weather continues to limit progress in some areas. However, roofing work nears completion, with areas now watertight. Internal trades are progressing in some sections, with plastering beginning in the first flats.

The zinc detailing, a key architectural element, has proven particularly difficult. We are balancing multiple considerations to find a solution that meets our architectural and financial goals, complies with home warranty

provider requirements, building control regulations, and minimises future maintenance costs, all while aligning with the zinc provider's warranty. Areas where zinc detailing is complete, including several dormer windows, showcase exceptional detailing and build quality exceeding expectations. This high standard aligns with the council's goals and the wider town's expectations, considering the site's location next to the conservation area. Completion is now expected in late summer.

Lynnsport 1

Contractual due diligence and pre-start conversations are underway with Lovell following Cabinet decision to proceed with the Lynnsport 1 development. Work hope to commence in late spring, an opportune time for the ground engineering works needed.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Active Travel Hubs

Following a positive feasibility study by Morgan Sindall that demonstrated the viability of the active travel proposals, work continues to produce a programme of works.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

23rd February – meeting with Exec. Director for Place
23rd February – Town Deal Board
26th February – portfolio meeting on Teams
26th February – CPP
27th February – E&C Panel
28th February – Cabinet informal briefing
29th February – visit to British Sugar, Wisington
29th February – planning training.
1st March – Mayors Business Awards Dinner
5th March – Cabinet
6th March – meeting with ITC service manager
8th March – Shareholder Committee sifting on Teams
11th March – portfolio holder meeting
13th March – portfolio meetings
13th March – Cabinet briefing
14th March to 21st March - TBC

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 March 2024

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL de WHALLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

For the period 11 February 2024 to 12 March 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Norfolk Net Zero Communities

Procurement of project facilitators is now underway and once appointed will work with each of the selected communities, including Marshland St. James.

Solar Together

The scheme, which is a group buying initiative for householders to purchase solar panels and battery systems will recommence in the summer providing the final figures are acceptable.

Schools Climate Competition Project

Evaluation feedback responses are awaited from each of the participating schools. These will help inform next year's competition.

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership

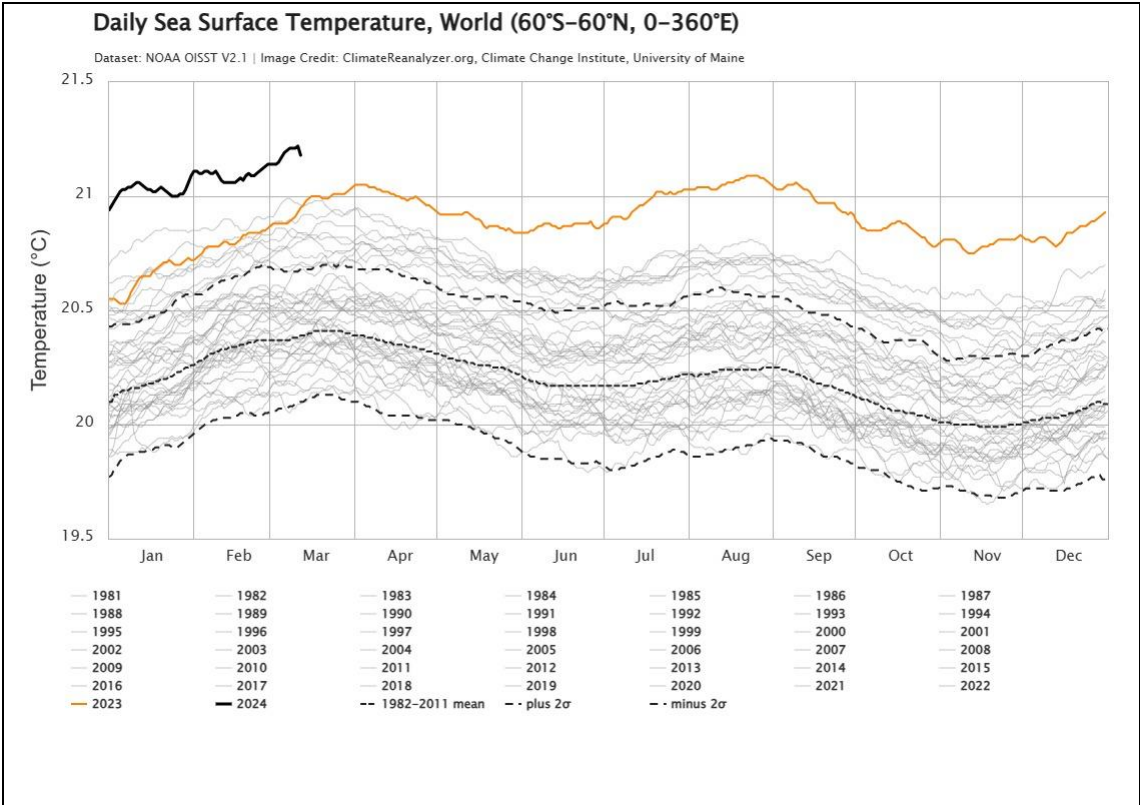
The partnership (officers group) met on 28 February 2024. The partnership's draft annual report for 2023/24 was considered. Once finalised in April, it will be published on the partnership's website.

Climate

February 2024 was the warmest February on record globally, the ninth such consecutive month, with an average surface air temperature of 13.54°C, 0.12°C above the temperature of the previous warmest February, in 2016. January was about 1.77°C warmer than an estimate of the January average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period.

The average global sea surface temperature (SST) for February 2024 over 60°S–60°N was 21.06°C, the highest for any month in the dataset, above the previous record of August 2023 (20.98°C). Sea surface temperature is defined over the global extrapolar ocean, from 60°S to 60°N. This is used as a standard diagnostic for climate monitoring.

Data source: European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts - ERA5.



2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan

An update is to be given to the Environment and Community Panel on the Action Plan, latest Council Carbon Footprint and Climate Change Reserve Fund at the meeting scheduled for 9 April 2024.

Beat Your Bills Roadshow

- Downham Market (Town Hall) – 26/03/2024 10:00-14:00**
- Stow Bardolph (Church Farm) – 02/04/2024 09:00-15:00**
- Downham Market (Primary School) – 20/04/2024 10:00-15:00 (Earth Day)**
- Feltwell (Village Fete) – 15/06/2024 10:00-15:00**
- Downham Market (Marketplace) – 26/07/2024 09:00-14:00**
- King’s Lynn (Boots) – 02/08/2024 10:00-14:00**

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

- Marshland St. James: Net Zero Communities/Beat Your Bills
- Mayor’s Business Awards - Environmental Champion
- Norfolk Records Office
- CIL Spending Panel
- Greenyard
- Regeneration and Development Panel

Environment and Community Panel

Planning Committee

Biodiversity Task Group

Environmental Groups

Conservancy Board

British Sugar

Biodiversity Competition Proposal

Cabinet Training

Cabinet

East of England Local Authority Water Summit

NORSE Materials Recycling Facility

Portfolio Holder Briefings and updates:

Climate Change Weekly Updates

Meetings Scheduled:

Norfolk Climate Change Portfolio Holders meeting 10 April 2024.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 March 2024

COUNCILLOR SANDRA SQUIRE - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL

For the period 23rd Feb 2024 to 21st March 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

As you may have already seen in the press and on the council's social media:

A West Norfolk resident recently thought that paying an absolute stranger who knocked on his door and offered to take his old fridge and some other waste away was getting an absolute bargain. He did not bargain for the fact that his waste would be fly tipped and the council's Clean Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer would track him down.

His bargain deal has cost him an extra £150 Fixed Penalty Notice for not complying with law to make sure his waste was lawfully disposed of.

If you do not dispose of your waste responsibly, our officers will be knocking on your door. Fly tipping will not be tolerated and enforcement is ongoing.

Officers are attending regular multi agency meetings to discuss ongoing flooding issues in the Borough. We are engaging with Anglian Water to discuss welfare facilities for residents affected if issues are ongoing. February saw unprecedented rainfall levels across the country with 248% of the 1991-2020 Feb average, our area experienced around 236% of the average rainfall.

My thanks go all of our staff involved involved in flooding response, enforcement and waste. It is an honour to be your portfolio holder and to witness your passion for our Borough and your drive to make our campaigns work.

Special mention this week goes to the clean up teams trying to keep sand off the prom during the high tides, a near impossible task at times.

You may also have seen the launch of the Coastal Water Quality Report from the LGA Coastal SIG. Highlighting how many councils around the country still have concerns about coastal water quality and the effects can have on public health, coastal habitats and the tourism industry.

The report can be downloaded here: <https://lgacoastalsig.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Coastal-Water-Quality-Working-Group-Survey->

[Report FINAL.pdf](#)

In response to this we are hoping to organise a conference on coastal water quality here in King's Lynn, for councils to discuss the issues, next moves and initiatives. News and further details will be released when they are finalised.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Food Waste Action Week runs from 18-24th March this year, coinciding with Full council. Prior to full council, the team will be at the Town Hall distributing food waste caddies and liners to councillors who need replacements.

As a part of our plans to increase recycling rates across the Borough, we will be promoting food waste recycling at several events and schools across the Borough. Including in Kings Lynn on 12th March, Downham Market on 15th March and Docking on 20th March.

New caddies and liners will be available to anyone needing them at all events. For anyone unable to attend the events, new food caddies can be ordered **for free** [here](#).

Using your kitchen caddy and putting your large grey food waste caddy out for collection with your waste or recycling collection each week reduces CO2, can create electricity to power our homes and creates nutrient rich biofertilizer used by farmers to grow crops.

Even if you think you don't have enough food waste, remember you can put in vegetable peelings, tea bags and egg shells for example. I would urge everyone, especially councillors who can lead by example, to get involved by using your food waste caddy, stopping food waste going in the refuse bin, reducing carbon emissions and to help increase our recycling rates.

You can see our food waste video here: <https://youtu.be/yKiVSMs36zA>.

Leaflet is attached.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Various portfolio briefings
Environment & Community Panel
Meetings regarding flooding in the Borough
Norfolk Coast Forum
Cabinet
East of England Water Summit
LGA Coastal SIG Water Quality Briefing

Cabinet briefing
Norfolk Coast Partnership Strategy Group meeting
LGA Coastal SIG Water Quality Working Group
Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance
LGA Coastal SIG Quarterly meeting

Recycling your food waste has never been easier

YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY PROVIDES A CONVENIENT
WEEKLY FOOD RECYCLING SERVICE

- 1 Please bag your food waste, any bag will do.



Top tip

If you would rather use your own indoor container that's fine – do whatever works for you.

- 2 Whenever you need to empty your caddy, tie the top and put it in your outdoor food recycling bin.



Top tip

Remember to not let your caddy get too full before emptying it.

- 3 Remember your food recycling bin comes with a lockable handle.



Please put your food recycling out for collection by 7:00 am, every week with your green or black bin.

Request a free replacement at [west-norfolk.gov.uk/foodwaste](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/foodwaste)

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



713-184

Food Recycling

Let's get it right

Find out
more inside



Request a free replacement at [west-norfolk.gov.uk/foodwaste](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/foodwaste)

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk





More and more of us are recycling food waste Now let's get it right

When you recycle food waste, it gets taken to a special processing plant where it's used to generate green electricity and produce fertiliser for farming.

When you put your food waste in your rubbish bin, its potential is lost forever. So let's let's all keep recycling better, together.

6 recycled tea bags

6 recycled tea bags could produce enough electricity to boil a kettle for another cuppa.

Top tip

You don't need to use kitchen caddy liners, you can use any bag in the indoor caddy or the outdoor caddy. It keeps everything clean and gives bags a second life.

Food for Thought

Remember there is no amount too small. The best thing we can do with our food is enjoy it but some waste like banana skins, vegetable peelings, tea bags and plate scrapings are inevitable.



Remember to recycle

- All uneaten food & plate scrapings
 - Tea bags & coffee grounds
 - Mouldy or out of date food
 - Bread & pastries
 - Dairy products (inc. egg shells)
 - Rice, pasta & beans
 - Meat, fish & bones (raw & cooked)



Please do not recycle

- Packaging of any kind
- Liquids such as milk
- Oil or liquid fat
- Any material that is not food waste

Remember
any bag
will do



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21st MARCH 2024

COUNCILLOR CHRIS MORLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

For the 22nd February 2024 to 7th March 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

REVENUE PROGRAMME.

The budget monitoring report for Q3 was published on 1st March. Our aspirations are to publish this more frequently, however, we have a bottleneck of work at present caused by the audit backlog, peer review action plan and staff/resource issues. Once we have cleared the backlog and fiscal year end close down, we plan to produce these reports more frequently.

One highlight of the budget monitoring report is that we anticipate that we will hit our revised cost management target of 2% (£1m). Due to a late start we reduced our interim target of 2.5% but we will be aiming to hit our target of 5% next year.

Members will note that we have brought the IDB funding, which we were allocated in early 2023, (£205,450), to account in the general reserves this year. The combination of these two aspects means that the balancing sum from the general fund will be less than previously anticipated.

The IDB Special Interest Group still continues to lobby the Government for a change in the funding of IDB's. It is still questionable as to whether anything will come of this (although see later comment on the recent Government's budget). We are still awaiting news on how the £3m promised funding for 2024/25 is to be allocated but note the number of authorities in the Special Interest Group has doubled to 30.

The counterpoint to the above is majored on two issues:

1. Our housing programme is delayed meaning capital receipts we expected are £486k less.

2. ALIVE –We moved into this period with an adverse position of £314k for leisure provision and this has now gone up to £530k in anticipation that they will not be able to pay their Management Fee this year.

On the upside, we had set aside £860k for the pay award but we are only drawing down £572k to pay for this.

The Department of Levelling Up and Housing and Communities is demanding that local authorities produce a Productivity Plan by July 2024. We were developing one for our own efficiency initiatives. Our proposals for the Cost Management and Income Generation, Peer Review and Corporate Action Plan will be weaved into one for both the Department and our purposes, including personal objectives and Performance Related Pay.

CAPITAL PROFILE

The spend to date is 63% of the much reduced forecast. This is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through the year. The year end spend is looking to be nearer £30m which is half of the original budget estimated by the previous administration and as I report above capital receipts are down.

One point to note is that one of the projects in the exempt scheme section has been pushed back to 2026/27.

EXTERNAL AUDITS

As previously reported, 19/20 audit is completed and signed off. However, the external auditors are claiming twice as much in their fees than we had anticipated (fee claimed is £195k). The fee is being examined and questioned before final payment is made. Whilst it can be paid within current funding available, this could mean an issue later in the audit process. We do not currently know the detail of what audit costs are likely to be in the context of reduced audits as part of the backlog of work to be completed.

RESERVES

To fund the current budget we are estimating drawdown of £2,441,230 bringing our projected balance down to £7,203,329 but we are working on Q3 postings and Q4 forecasts and financial adjustments will be made after year end following the audit

process which we anticipate will require reasonable minor and hopefully beneficial, changes to the current figures.

EXPANDING THE LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS

By now, Members will know that Kings Lynn has been allocated support worth up to £20m to invest in 10 years of endowment style funding. I have no doubt the Town Board will have this on their Agenda but I trust we will not have to submit to the same Treasury Green Book rules as hitherto. The bids for the current schemes necessitated the last Administration to engage consultants totalling over £1m in cost and I wouldn't wish for this to be repeated.

Other budget items of interest are:

Platinum Village Hall Fund supplemented by £5m – there may be some opportunities here for Parish Councils.

Agriculture – the Government is providing £75m to bolster investment in IDBs. We will find out, in due course, if this will lessen any levies on us,

Community Led Housing – there is further social funding available which also needs further information.

PROCUREMENT

One of the benefits of the Town Deal is to use the projects to act as leverage for growing local business. There is a presentation planned for 19th April, a “Meet the Buyer” event in the Town Hall, at which our Major Contractors will explain their needs of and from local suppliers and our Procurement team will explain the process for getting on board.

This procurement presentation will be a precursor to the revised Government Act which follows our departure from the EU and which is scheduled to come to Council (date TBA).

The changes from this Act will mean alterations to the Constitution,

WINS

A local person and organisation each won a bumper prize of £1000 each from the lottery and fate couldn't have picked a better winner. Starz Fostering in Emneth do grand work in placing and

supporting fostering for and placing young people coming out of the social system. Their winnings will go on further training for their staff and volunteers. They have the backing of Fatima Whitbread (who has placed her own life as a fostered person in the public domain) and Ringo Starr is editing a Christmas Record of theirs. From the ticket sales there is a ground swell of support for this worthy organisation.

A £1 ticket can lead to such good things and I encourage all Members to partake and spread the word. Our Community Fund from this scheme has helped food banks and I am supporting Cllr. Rust in researching opportunities for using some of our existing pot by the KLAC executive and their constitutional priority process for identifying a good funding cause.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

IDB Funding – more lobbying.

Numbers of and reaction from local SMEs at “Meet the Buyer”

Empty and 2nd Home Council Tax – negotiations with preceptors for allocation.

Housing Companies – Shareholder Committee.

The Productivity and Action Plan will take up considerable Member time.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

26/2 CPP

28/2 Procurement Review

1/3 Flooding Issues – meeting

4/3 Joint Group

5/3 Portfolio

Cabinet

6/3 Bircham PC

8/3 Public Sector Leaders Board (for Leader)

Norfolk Districts 2nd Home Council Tax – discussion

11/3 Audit Cttee

19/3 Webinar Net Zero

12/3 Portfolio

20/3 Shareholder Cttee.

Cabinet Sifting

19/3 Portfolio

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 January 2024

COUNCILLOR BAL ANOTA - CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY AND CORPORATE SERVICES

For the period 23 November to 31 January 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Management and maintenance of council owned property assets: including industrial estates, Kings Court, Town Hall and the Depot, Public conveniences, Crematorium and Cemeteries.

The staircase improvement works to King's Court have been largely successfully completed. There are a few finishing touches to be completed and some redecoration to be undertaken. The team has also started to look at King's Court office layouts, we still have some teams located off-site and some space at King's Court may be being freed up by one of our sub-tenants. This gives us the opportunity to explore more options with the office accommodation in terms of layout, function, and potential co-location opportunities with other public organisations.

On the wider council property portfolio, the team is starting to look at the longer-term strategic approach to the overall property estate and they will be working on a corporate wide asset management strategy. This will take time to develop and put into place. A largescale overall assessment of the condition of the property portfolio was last undertaken in 2008 and we are keen to do this exercise again in order that we can strategically manage our overall expenditure on repairs and maintenance particularly, however, this will only be one element.

Car Parks and Open Space

I have been holding ongoing conversations with Officers and Portfolio holders regarding revenue generation and cost saving opportunities to enable a well thought through budget proposal to be presented and we will continue with these discussions.

It was quite humbling to attend the quarterly meeting of the Norfolk Parking Partnership to hear such praise for our Parking Operations team who, at the beginning of November 2023, took over the back-office functions for the parking services delivered on behalf of Norfolk County Council for Norwich City Council and for Norwich City Council themselves. Having seen the effort, determination, and pressures this put that team under to ensure it was

delivered on time I must make the unusual step of naming some individuals as without their commitment this scheme would not have been delivered. Whilst times are hard in all public services, work such as this brings valuable contributions towards our corporate overheads, alongside protecting the livelihoods of those officers involved in delivering services. Those senior officers are David Morton, Charlotte Martin and Louise Gayton, and their respective teams.

I always take a keen interest in the parking stays within our car park areas and whilst there are always a number of factors that influence peaks and troughs the figures for November and December are always particularly interesting specifically within our town centre areas and the way in which parking is supporting our town centre vibrancy. I am pleased to report that the King's Lynn Town Centre long and short term stays not only held their numbers over last year but showed a marginal 0.26% increase over 2022 which was, in my opinion, a demonstration of how important our communities see the Town Centre offering: especially during times of cost-of-living pressures and a greater move towards online shopping. Hunstanton saw an even greater, 9% increase in stays but clearly a much milder Christmas than is the norm influenced this and it was great to see large numbers of people visiting the coast to enjoy it over the Christmas period.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Portfolio Meetings – TBC
- Wave 4b
- Hethel Innovation Centre

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

November 2023
 9th - Portfolio Meeting – MH TB
 10th - Leziate Parish Council
 14th - Portfolio Meeting – MH
 16th - Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)
 28th – Epicentre (Haverhill)
 29th – KL Parking Strategy (Teams)
 29th – Hunstanton Parking Strategy (Teams)
 29th – Planning Committee Training (Teams)
 30th – Portfolio Meeting MC
 30th - Portfolio Meeting MH
 December 2023
 4th – Planning Committee
 5th – Village Green Meeting
 5th – Cabinet
 6th – Portfolio Meeting MC

6th – Cabinet Briefing
6th – MintyIn Carol Service
7th – Budget Development
8th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
11th – Cabinet Sifting
12th – Directorate Plan Setting
13th – Portfolio Meeting MC DM
14th – Norfolk Parking Partnership
15th – Portfolio Meeting DH
20th – Cabinet Briefing
January 2024
2nd - Portfolio Meeting MH TB OJ
3rd – E&C Panel (Teams)
5th – Portfolio Meeting OJ
8th – Cabinet Briefing
10th – Portfolio Meeting MH TB
10th – Cabinet Briefing
11th – KLACC Meeting
12th – Leziate PC
15th – Cabinet Sifting
15th – Cabinet
16th – Portfolio Meeting MH (Teams)
17th – Budget Session

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21st March 2024

COUNCILLOR – JO RUST CABINET MEMBER FOR – PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

For the period February 8th – March 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters. –

It doesn't seem like a week ago that I submitted my last report! But here's my most recent cabinet report on what I've been doing as your portfolio holder covering People and Communities.

On Friday 9th Feb I took part in an internal discussion about Community Led Housing. I really feel that there is scope here for our council and our communities to make a difference to the lives of the communities that we live in. With the help of a fellow Independent Partnership Cllr I would offer this information

Community Housing encourages local communities to take control of solutions to local housing problems. Places where it has worked are areas of housing that is in real need of a refresh – e.g. Toxteth, Hull.

In our area, we have

1. A need
2. A community of parish councils
3. A supply of housing needing improvement
4. Credible local skills, supported by KLWNBC with advice and support
5. Possible access to grants.

A potential model that alleviates many of our calls as Ward Cllrs, might be that FB transfers ownership of properties, either for a leasehold period or freehold to Participating Parish Councils.

PPC's then funds these through access to the Public Works Loans Board and established local community groups to (1) repair (2) manage these homes, with the intent of providing truly affordable local homes. It is clear that one aspect is the terms on which FB might release homes. It might be that refurbishment sites might allow for new build as well to the advantage of FB. They could, after all be leased out for a peppercorn on one model. There will be other models.

Such a scheme might involve grants from KLWNBC to guarantees from

KLWNBC underwritten by the property values. If so KLWNBC might retain control of a number of properties for our own homelessness needs. There is no doubt that there will be other sources of grants such as DHULC, Homes England, NCC. This is especially so as it meets so many different criteria and we may have a new government coming soon.

I also met with the CEO of West Norfolk Carers about the financial situation this organisation finds themselves in. This service is sadly not a statutory function that we are funded to commission, but I think I speak for all of us when I say we feel that there are too many people who get support, advice, and guidance from WNC and we should work to find out what can be done to support it to continue. Our officers and I are still working to assess the situation and see what can be done. We did provide some funding to tide the group over last year and could do the same again. But we must always do a sense check to ensure that this is the best use of our funds. Potentially a better option could be to provide a site to work from and other administrative supportive to alleviate the pressures of those costs.

I went on to take part in a meeting with the head team of Freebridge where we had some of our usual discussions.

This was followed by a celebration of our Council's amazing Apprenticeship students. I don't want to appear as if I'm lecturing, but it's well worth remembering that at any age we can use the apprenticeship route to gain an advanced qualification.

Well done to all those who took part in the Swim for Rotary event on Saturday 10th Feb.

On 12th Feb I took the day off from looking after my grandchildren to attend the Beat the Bills event in Marshland St James. It was another brilliant event that our council puts on to provide support for our residents. Whatever the financial situation our council finds itself in, the officers who provide these services are absolutely doing everything that they can to try to ease the very real financial struggles residents in our borough finds themselves in. The Parish Council were also awarded a net zero certificate as they're taking part in an initiative that falls under Cllr De Whalley's portfolio area to decrease the amount of carbon their community generates.

I met with a Norfolk County Council youth worker, two of our local police offices and the Rector at St Faith's to discuss setting up a targeted youth project on the Fairstead Estate and then, at South Lynn. We're currently making good progress with this and it's expected that the Pizza Project will start on Fairstead in April, running from the Community Centre.

On 13th February we held a special KLACC meeting where it was agreed that we wanted to move forward with a different method of operating; one which gave KLACC members a real say over decision making. With this in mind it was agreed we would move towards becoming an Area Committee, something that wasn't an option under the former administration.

Following that I attended my first meeting as a trustee of King's Lynn Community Football. It was enlightening to see how much was on offer by this group all around community engagement through sport. The group were established in 2002 to develop footballers in the local community and has evolved to engage lots of people in sport, not just football. They are accredited with the FA and cover the ages from 2 – 78. They have an active community programme which goes out to areas of disadvantage to offer free sports courses. I look forward to the work I do with them.

What else would any of us do on Valentine's Day but attend the opening of the Mart. Led by our Mayor and our Leader the opening went smoothly and was very well attended. I attended on the last day with my grandchildren and family and it was reassuring to see the crowds still supporting the Mart. It plays such an important part in the history of our town and long may that continue.

In Thursday 15th I and other cabinet members attended a meeting with the director and the head of West Norfolk Community Transport. It was incredible to hear how much they already offer and their plans for the future. Also illuminating to understand more about the different type of license they hold and what this means they can offer in the way of services. The organisation has been running since 1992 and started its public bus service in 2018. They help overcome rural isolation, with the Go to Town service providing funds to help support the charitable side of the operation. Most of the work that they do is under a section 19 permit and they also offer their dial a bus service which is door to door and can be used for medical appointments, hair appointments or shopping trips. They also offer a rural Dial a Bus which mainly offer shopping trips and runs around school contracts and day care contracts so has a later start. The office is located in St James Car Park and you can also hire a scooter from them to use around town. If you have a resident who is without a car, it's well worth pointing them in the direction of West Norfolk Community Transport to see how they can help.

I attended a meeting as trustee of Gaywood Allotments Trust that evening and was pleased to be able to award some funding to a family in need.

On Wednesday 21st February I attended the District Councils meeting for the Integrated Care System. We spoke about how we can work to address the needs within local populations by working together in multi professional teams to link community organisations and support the local population to live better and healthier at home together. We also provided information about our work to become a Marmot Place and the work that we will do with the Institute of Health Equity to see this come to fruition. From a health perspective this is the right thing to do and it will be led from the bottom up. We had a presentation about the impact that housing has on our health. Poor housing costs the NHS £1.4 billion a year. We have higher than average winter deaths due to cold homes. 15% of our households live in fuel poverty compared to 13% nationally. This is a shocking and distressing situation and reinforces the case for our council to provide decent and secure homes for

our residents. Housing issues are highlighted as one of the key wider determinants of health. In the county we have a number of different schemes to try to alleviate fuel poverty for our residents and ours is led by our Housing Efficiency Officer and uses the ECO Flex 4 scheme to get GPs to make referrals of vulnerable, poorly people with the aim to get their homes retrofitted with energy efficiency measures and so reduce their costs as well as improve the carbon emission levels. We learnt of the difficulties we experience due to a lack of staff to carry out the necessary work and the potential to establish a housing retrofit academy to address this shortage.

The following day I chaired our local meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership. The meeting produced such a lot of information and debate that we overran time wise, but it was well worth it. We heard how our population is expected to grow by about 8000 people between 2020 and 2040 with the largest growth expected in the older age bands. Around 23,300 people in our borough live in areas that are among the 20% most deprived in England and the life expectancy of both men and women are lower here than the England average. The strategic actions we are working to address are to enhance mental health and wellbeing, improve weight management and reduce alcohol consumption. We work with partner organisations to run schemes and embed changes to help us achieve this. I have previously reported on some of the ways we are doing this.

I later met with a representative of the Motor Neurone Disease association and learned more about the tragic condition and that once this terminal diagnosis has been made, 1/3 of sufferers will die within the year. I was asked to move forward with our council signing the MND charter and to promote Carers Assessments, which I have started to look into.

On Friday 23rd February I attended the launch of Everyone has the Right to Play at Barnham Broom. I was pleased to attend with one of our officers and hear about the need for accessible play equipment. Our Borough has already recognised this need and we're in the process of applying for funding to add accessible play equipment to the area at The Walks. However, so enlightening was the presentation that we're considering pausing our plans with a view to widening the scope of what we provide to ensure that we fully integrate the scheme rather than merely add on. Article 31 on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that the right of all children to have rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activities. We heard how YABs (Youth Advisory Board) have trained 270 young people to act as youth commissioners and commissioned 50 projects including anti bullying campaigns and 20 youth led campaigns. Young people are the experts in what it means to be a young person in Norfolk today and we should be doing more to engage with them to find out what they need. It was depressing to hear how 1 in 8 households have no access to a private garden and 793 playgrounds have closed in the last 10 years. One of our local people, Lexy, spoke of her campaign, which was delivered to our KLACC group last year, to get accessible play equipment. We heard from Miram Guard who had set up an accessible play area in Exeter and it is the which we would love to mirror in The Walks. Disabled children are 4 times more likely

to feel lonely and excluded than their able-bodied peers. In February 2024 a national Disability Action Plan was launched which specifically refers to accessible play equipment in actions 16 and 17. There is a long list of benefits to having accessible play equipment. It costs 3 times more to raise a child with a disability and this is all too often overlooked. We saw a clear image of the difference between inclusion, segregation, exclusion and integration. We want our play areas to be fully inclusive and it's for this reason we may choose to pause our process and go back to the drawing board. I've spoken with YAB about this, and they want to work with us on this project to make sure that we get it right. 24% of the UK have a disability and 11% of those aged 0-16 do, this reinforces the need to get it right, for everyone. Less than 50% of play areas are accessible. We were encouraged to include an affirmative statement in any play area and community amenity policy that all play areas have inclusion and accessibility to all. Making play areas more accessible prevents issues and concerns and I really want our Borough to get this right.

On Saturday 24th February I attended two events, one in Sainsburys foyer with survivors of Child Sexual Abuse and in the afternoon a service of reflection to remember two years of the war in Ukraine. Both were very moving and involved hearing of the personal accounts of people who had suffered and were still suffering.

I attended CPP on Monday 26th February and spoke about both the need to form an Area Committee for the unparished area of King's Lynn and briefly about the Annual Complaints monitoring report which had been compiled by one of our officers.

On Tuesday 27th February we held another well attended beat the Bills session in Hunstanton Town Hall. Food for Thought was also running in the community hub downstairs, so we had a very visible presence in Hunstanton that day. I spoke to several residents as well as the Town Mayor. Everyone commented on how helpful the event was, with some people finding out from our officers that they were entitled to more financial support than they had been claiming. The event really does do what it says it will. Once again, a big thank you to those staff who go all out for the residents.

E&C was later in the day and it was good to hear from Freebridge about the work they're doing to reduce their carbon emissions and improve the energy efficiency of their housing stock. While there remains a lot of work to do, the commitment to do this is there. It was also amazing to see the presentation about their proposal for a nature area off Dairy Way. I had been made aware of this some time previously but it was great to see it being presented to others and the positive response it received. This area will be a not-for-development site and a native wetland habitat of nearly 22 acres.

I attended a briefing about the potential for an alternative hospital site on Wednesday 28th February. This is something I am now in support of due to the failure of government to release funding in a timely way and the additional pressures that the development of the current site would have on patients and

staff. I think we were sold a vision, which had it come to fruition would have been satisfactory, but I have no faith that it will come to fruition so we must instead work towards something better. This would be an off-site development with real scope to grow.

There was a homelessness and housing delivery task group on Thursday 29th February. We discussed our strategy and the review on homelessness and the need to work at pace, but to get it right. With that need in mind, the timeline is going to be extended. We are gathering the voice of those with lived experience and ensuring that this is fully incorporated into the review and then strategy. It's important that we seek the views of wider contributors and not just work in an echo chamber. We will look to holding a cross partnership launch in October. As a borough we're looking to make sure that we are data driven and led. While it's gratifying that our numbers of rough sleepers are relatively low in comparison to elsewhere, we know this is not good enough as we want to eradicate rough sleeping entirely. We have seen a 325% increase in households with a Full Housing Duty owed who are awaiting social housing, while we have a 41% decrease in available social housing. We had no properties available for private rent that were at the rate paid by Local Housing Allowance in King's Lynn during the snapshot working period.

Later that day I took part in a Sports England Briefing for Councillors on the extension of Place areas. It's about supporting and encouraging our residents to get out and be more active. It's not necessarily about getting people to run a 10k race, or go to a gym session, but to move more in whatever way that's best for them – dancing, walking, going to the park. There are so many things that we can be doing that don't involve scary thoughts of gyms or strenuous activity. We hear how 30% of our children are inactive, but also how 40% of those who go to gyms have been affected by the cost of living. The government have a Get Active strategy and wants 2.5 million more adults and 1 million more children and young people to be active by 2030 and we will only do this by embedding physical activity of part of everyone's day to day life. This helps to tackle health inequalities too. But we also know that councils have a growing financial crisis and there are significant problems being faced by local authorities. I'm hopeful that with the work we're doing with Sports England and our work to become a Marmot Town, we will be able to bring about these improvements to the lives and activity of our residents.

I met with the director of the Night Shelter on Friday and we established a new way of working away from me being a volunteer there, which I will step back from. We remain in dialogue with the organisation and I look forward to seeing their governance review and strategy later this year.

On Tuesday 5th March I had a meeting with the chair and trustees of Open Road, an amazing organisation which helps young people remain in study, albeit a different type of study. Young people there gain qualifications which they can use to get employment. The organisation is looking to improving their premises so they become a more modern building better suited to the needs of those who use it. Open Road are also happy to share their building

with other charities who might be struggling to pay for their own premises.

We had cabinet that evening and we heard that for the first time we now have a comprehensive list of the statutory and discretionary services that we offer. We will be looking closely at these as we work through our transformation process. We also heard from the CEO who has since publicly announced her resignation. We have a long run-in time to find a replacement and do a handover, but from my personal perspective, we will sorely miss Lorraine's calm and experienced hand at the lead.

On Wednesday 5th March I attended the regular Integrated Care Partnership meeting at Norfolk County Council. This meeting was chaired by the Right Honourable Patricia Hewitt in the absence of the usual chair. We heard that the 18-22nd March is Social Workers Week. Thank you to all those who take up this challenging position. We had a report from the director of public health – Stuart Lines and this report was themed around smoking and the cost to our society. Smoking hasn't gone away and it's the single biggest contributor to poor health and the single largest cause of death. While rates have come down our Norfolk rates stand at 13% which is some way off the government target of 5% by 2030. Diabetes, stroke and dementia are risk factors and there are deprivation factors too, with their being higher rates of smoking in more disadvantaged communities. Our smoking rates for pregnant women are higher than the national average. Yet people can save £3000 a year if they quit smoking, as well as getting their taste and smell back and reducing the likelihood of dying of heart disease after 10 years. We also heard that neonatal deaths were 100% smokers. We then had a report on the Better Care Fund which is the driver for closer integration work with the Health and Wellbeing partnership which referred to the excellent collaboration between local government and health and social care as we're all looking after the same people. However, we also heard from the QEH explaining that 20% of people in hospital beds didn't need to be there, so evidently there remains a lot of work to do to get it right. We had the annual report from the NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB who have to provide a narrative about how they have contributed to the work of the Health and Wellbeing boards. We then moved to the ICP part of the meeting where we were presented with the Learning Disability Plan. This was changed from a strategy to a plan as that language better suited the people it was aimed at. There was an imperative to listen and to take notice of people who are disabled and their carers. An easy read plan was produced first which went to the group for their approval. The co-production won't end there though. There were 5 priorities for how people with learning disabilities and their carers wish to live their lives. Concerns as raised about the potential for a reduction in the Minimum Income Guarantee and how that might limit the ability of those with a learning disability to live the plan. The chair of the QEH asked about the transition for young people with LD. This is an area which in any group often slips through the net or takes too long to come into being. I asked about what support was being given to carers to help them get a carers assessment. As I have referred to earlier in my report, having met with a representative from the MND association, getting a carers assessment is an important step to see what might help make their life easier. I might recommend things like:

- someone to take over caring so they can take a break
- gym membership and exercise classes to relieve stress
- help with taxi fares if they don't drive
- help with gardening and housework
- training how to lift safely
- putting them in touch with local support groups so they have people to talk to
- advice about benefits for carers

A carer's assessment is free and anyone over 18 can ask for one.

We saw the health Inequalities strategic framework for action which had the engagement of over 100 organisations and is the first step towards a whole system approach towards tackling health inequalities. It seeks to address unfair and avoidable differences in our health outcomes. There was a clear message – that everyone needs something, but that some people need more. We saw the priority action areas. Housing is a vital component in this, and community led approaches are a part of the foundation that we want to build on – empowering communities to take their own action is one way to achieve success. This links well with our hopes for community led housing in our area. We went on to the recommendations for committing to the Hewitt review. Which focuses on shifting the focus to promoting health and preventing illness. I endorsed the review and referred to our work on becoming a marmot Place, working with Sports England on the expansion of Place and trying to bring on some Community Led Housing. Sadly, we also heard how there is a Wellness on Wheels bus in Norwich which goes out to children with rickets. How have we come to a situation where something like this, which was common in the past, but almost disappeared in the world during the early 20th Century after foods and cereal were fortified with Vitamin D, have made a resurgence. The cost-of-living crisis is very real for too many people. I referred to the Nourishing Norfolk scheme which was the subject of a radio four show recently. We had a cancer report which showed that while overall mortality rates for cancers are lower in Norfolk and Waveney compared to England, early deaths (under 75 years old) are higher than expected in the more deprived areas. Patients from more deprived areas are more likely to have cancer diagnosed at a later stage and have lower survival rates. Smoking is the largest single preventable cause of cancer, accounting for 15% of cases. As deprivation increases the proportion of people with higher risk health behaviour also increases. In Norfolk and Waveney there were 3226 deaths from cancer in 2020, a quarter of all deaths in the area. Across N7W early deaths are higher than expected in the most deprived areas. There is an excess of 50 deaths out of a total of more than 200 deaths per year in the most deprived 20% of people under the age of 75. People from deprived communities are less likely to recognise symptoms, less likely to attend screening and are more likely to report barriers to seeking treatment. 38% of cancers are preventable and smoking is the largest single preventable cause of cancer – 15%. As deprivation increases the proportion of people with higher risk behaviour also increases e.g. smoking, alcohol, healthy eating and excess weight. **This all reinforces the need for a more equitable society.** We hope that our new Diagnostic Assessment Centre at the QEH will help us overcome some barriers to screening. There were a few more reports, but the one which was of most interest to me was the one on the

Norfolk and Waveney NHS System Capital Distribution for 24/25. The Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL) distribute system resource to the N7W organisations for capital infrastructure investment. Of the £77.9 million available in our area, the QEH received £33.1 million of it for the RAAC remediation work. It shows how much money is spent propping up our hospital.

In the afternoon I attended a friendship café, which I go to every week. It's for friends, carers and people with Dementia. The previous week I had organised that some of our careline team would attend the café and speak about the careline work and what equipment could be installed to help them (as many are elderly). This week I got some amazing feedback. Everyone was so impressed with the two team members and they'd had equipment installed just days later. I have attended events with both officers so I know how hard they work and the whole of the wider Lily team. On a week when Radio five had a call in where councils and the work they do was being discussed ahead of the budget, I was proud to get this positive feedback.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Saturday 9th March – Attendance at an International Women's Day event in Wisbech.

Tuesday 12th March – Informal Dentistry Meeting

Saturday 16th March – Opening St Faith's Spring Fair

Sunday 17th March King's Lynn Minister to celebrate our Young People

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

23/02/24 – Right to Play Barnham Broom

24/02/24 – CSA Exhibition

24/02/24 – Service of Reflection for Ukraine

26/02/24 – CPP

27/02/24 – Beat the Bills

27/02/24 – E&C

28/02/24 – AHL briefing

29/02/24 – Homelessness and Housing Delivery Briefing

29/02/24 – SLA review with Cllr Ring

29/02/24 – Planning Training

01/03/24 – Flooding and AW meeting

01/03/24 – Meeting with Night Shelter Director

04/03/24 – Joint Group Meeting

05/03/24 – Open Road meeting

05/03/24 – Cabinet

06/03/24 – Integrated Care Partnership Meeting at NCC

08/03/24 – Freebridge CEO monthly meeting

08/03/24 – Sisterhood Village meeting

12/03/24 – Tender meeting for homelessness and money advice services

13/03/24 – Cabinet Briefing

14/03/24 – Housing portfolio briefing

14/03/24 – Portfolio briefing – Care and repair etc

14/03/24 – Portfolio briefing – CIC etc

14/03/24 – KLAC

18/03/24 – Group meeting

21/03/24 – GRT briefing

21/03/24 – Full Council

Cabinet Members Report to Council

21st March 2024

Councillor Simon Ring - cabinet member for tourism, events and marketing

12th Feb to 12th March 2024

Leisure

There is a deep dive into the running of Alive West Norfolk and whether the facilities should continue to be run through the wholly owned subsidiary, be brought back in to Council running in part or whole, and/or make use of a charitable structure form some or all of it. This conversation has been ongoing since day one of this administration and will hopefully come to Cabinet shortly.

The financial position of AWN continues to be challenging. Despite some misinformed opinion, apart from the covid grants period, AWN in any of its historic forms has never paid the Borough Council the service fee budgeted for and has always been a cost to the council. I prefer to call it a spend as the health and wellbeing of our residents, particularly in the areas most affected by deprivation, is a moral obligation to do something about.

The following is a brief extract from the report recently made to the Board

“At the end of Q3 AWN has an operating deficit of £191k, £249k behind budget. Income is performing well at £341k above budget largely due to Theatre, grants, and sports course performance. The deficit can be attributed to delaying the implementation of fees and charges, cost of living payments, budget gaps reported by the accountant in September and some sport income lines not achieving target. Attendances are up by 30k to the end of January at 1.2m with good performances notably at the theatre, cinema, community sessions, and fitness.”

As is clear from this part of the Executive Summary, the impact of the interference on setting fees and charges last year has had a significant hit on the finances despite another year of very encouraging attendance figures.

There are also many challenges from a capital cost point of view that are being, and will continue to be addressed. I won't list them here but suffice to say that there are major costs on the horizon which will need addressing. Some, such as the work to the Gymnastics area, will be carried out asap as there is a valuable income lost if the works are not done, some will be scheduled in on a longer term basis.

Meanwhile, AWN have commissioned an independent benchmarking exercise looking at the performance of the leisure venues in comparison with other similar venues across the UK. A full report will be presented to the Board in due course, but the early main headline so far is (as expected) that the venues perform relatively well on income and customer satisfaction but require above average subsidy as a result of high costs.

AWN have secured, through Active Norfolk, £132k of funding for the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) delivery for 2024 covering activities in Hunstanton, Kings Lynn, South Lynn and Downham Market. The £150k request to the BCKLWN will cover the activities that HAF does not cover, subsidising holiday clubs for those that do not qualify for HAF, provide meals for all and £1/50p activities including swimming during all holiday periods. It is estimated the council may save £10k-£20k on this figure depending on attendances.

Sport England announced £250m in the latest round of Place Expansion. King's Lynn and West Norfolk are in the first round of eligibility and work is currently underway to develop a plan with key stakeholders for West Norfolk. AWN are well positioned to support this work and will be represented on the initial Place Based Board to work up formal proposals. Stakeholder meetings are taking place in March with research ongoing to develop a plan for April. Early indications are that focus areas will include children and young people, tackling health inequalities, inactive older people, those in isolation and deprivation. The council will be represented on the stakeholder group to agree priorities.

This really does highlight the challenges that the team at AWN are facing up to in our Borough with great enthusiasm.

Culture

Capital work on the Guildhall project moving forward. Business plan review consultants commissioned.

Cultural and Heritage Strategy interviews are happening on 20th March. This is an extremely positive step forward for the Council as this is funded by the Arts Council England (ACE) and the presence of a Cultural Strategy is quite understandably a pre-requisite to any significant funding from them and other funders, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The lack of a strategy was stated as a significant reason why the Guildhall bid failed. Whilst this has put the Guildhall project on a backfoot right from the start, the horizon is beginning to look a lot brighter.

21 schools are now engaged in Guildhall project activities.

New Art Club is completely full (happens every other Saturday).

New youth drama club now up and running on Tuesday evenings in association with the KL Players.

Highest visitor numbers for a January since we began keeping records (double last year).

Over 20K visitors to the Guildhall in 2023 this is over double the year before.

Tim Fitzhigham attended the Shakespeare Folger Library in Washington DC and met with the Director Dr Michael Witmore and had a very productive discussion. Tim and I are off to Ipswich for the Norfolk and Suffolk Culture Board Briefing Event on Friday 15th.

A great deal of work has been carried out by me and officers behind the scenes with cultural and heritage groups, and with some exciting projects now getting well and truly started through the Town Deal Board, we are starting to see a great future for the Heritage and Culture of this borough working with many wonderful volunteers.

Two examples of this are the restoration and rejuvenation of the Friends of the Walks and the Hanseatic Festival. Myself, Cllr Rust and Cllr Heneghan were present at the first meeting to restore the Friends of the Walks and I chaired the first new meeting of the Hanseatic Festival. My emphasis was for these two organisations to be run entirely by volunteers but supported by the Borough Council. That is the model that I believe is sustainable for volunteer groups and festivals. The Hansa Festival planning is well under way for a small celebration this year on 16th June and planning for a larger event for the 20th anniversary next year. I am very grateful to all of the volunteers that have shown the enthusiasm to get these things going again, and of course all of those wonderful volunteers that keep this sector so lively in the Borough.

Tourism and Marketing

Visit West Norfolk - An Update for 17/01/24 - 12/03/2024:

Departmental activities for the 'winter to early spring' period of time.

Digital Promotions

During this period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our visitor contacts:

- Dog Friendly West Norfolk [sent 18/01/2024]
- Valentine's Day in West Norfolk [sent 30/01/2024]
- What's On this February Half Term in West Norfolk 2024 [sent 14/02/2024]
- Mother's Day in West Norfolk 2024 [sent 29/02/2024]

During this period of time we have sent out the following e-shots to our tourism business contacts:

- Training Grants, Workshops and Business Awards [sent 26/01/2024]
- National Apprenticeship Week and Festival of Knowledge Event [sent 08/02/2024]
- You are invited to the West Norfolk Tourism Summit 2024 [sent 14/02/2024]

We uploaded the following new content on the *Visit West Norfolk* website during this time too:

- Celebrate Valentine's Day in West Norfolk 2024 [published 26/01/2024]
- Mother's Day in West Norfolk 2024 [published 12/02/2024]
- Springtime in West Norfolk – a summary including a highlight of the forthcoming *West Norfolk Seasonal Food Festival* [published 11/03/24]

We also created and uploaded the following social media posts during this time:

- o **Social media posts about our blogs:**
 - February Half-Term Activities in West Norfolk 2024
 - Wintertime in West Norfolk
 - West Norfolk... Naturally

- Mark your calendars! Unique events in West Norfolk 2024
- Celebrate Valentine's Day in West Norfolk 2024
- Free Things To Do in West Norfolk – Winter 2024
- Dog Friendly West Norfolk
- Arts and Crafts in West Norfolk
- Mother's Day in West Norfolk 2024
- **Social media posts about local events:**
 - WWT Welney Winter Swan Feeds
 - Love West Norfolk Day
 - West Norfolk Seasonal Food Festival (a series of posts)
- **Social media posts about general tourism themes and venues:**
 - King's Lynn Minster
 - Walking Trails
 - Accommodation
 - Holiday inspiration
 - Norfolk Coast
 - Brancaster
 - Attractions
 - World Wetlands Day
 - Burnham Overy Staithe
 - Drove Orchards
 - Villages
 - Shopping
 - Events
 - Business: Submit Your Event
 - Maritime King's Lynn
 - History and heritage sites
 - King's Lynn architecture

We continue to upload events to the Visit West Norfolk website event listings.

Personnel

One full-time member from the Tourism department team of two has now formally left the authority for exciting opportunities elsewhere in the region. A temporary 6-month post is currently advertised as a replacement for that role in the department, with the deadline for applicants being Thursday 21st March 2024.

New Projects

West Norfolk Tourism Business Summit Event '24

The Senior Tourism Officer was the organiser of the Wednesday March 6th *West Norfolk Tourism Business Summit* evening event, presented on the evening by the independent business-led West Norfolk Tourism Forum and held in the Guildhall of St George, King's Lynn.

Registered attendees of this business support event included:

- Abacus Hotels
- Bircham Windmill

- Christine Pike - Artist
- Church Farm Barns Disabled-Friendly Cottages (Promotions)
- College of West Anglia
- Creake Abbey
- Culture Babylon
- Deepdale Camping
- Downham Market Town Council
- Florence Cottage
- Fountain Partnership
- King's Lynn Civic Society
- King's Lynn Town Guides
- KL 1 Radio
- Larking Gowen
- Manor Farm Business Park (Coates Bros Ltd)
- Metro Dynamics
- New Anglia Growth Hub
- Norfolk Arena
- Prontaprint
- RSPB Snettisham
- RSPB Titchwell Marsh
- Searles Leisure Resort
- Searles Sea Tours
- St Jude's B&B Dersingham
- Tammy Mallett – Businesswoman
- Visit North Norfolk
- Visit West Norfolk
- Watatunga Safari and Wildlife Reserve
- Whatahoot Distillery

Lots of positive feedback was received from attendees about the event and the four business-oriented presenters, with the hope that this event marks the first of what could be an annual major tourism business support event.

The Tourism & Travel Show 2024 – Birmingham NEC

The Senior Tourism Officer has continued to support various practical elements for the forthcoming King's Lynn Town Guides 2-day trade stand appearance at the leading national Tourism & Travel Show at the Birmingham NEC (This KL Town Guides project being supported by SPF funding). Trade stands at this event aims to attract coach and tour guide businesses to their respective localities. The KL Town Guides aims to attract more coach and group tour companies to King's Lynn as a main destination and itinerary for their guests.

The tourism officer will be attending the 2-day event too, on 20th and 21st of March (www.tourismshow.co.uk).

Other Shared Prosperity Fund Projects

We are doing ongoing work on a set of SPF funded projects, which include regeneration of items at the West Lynn Pavilion, enhancements to certain Downham Market Town Centre public realm assets, and the formation of a Hunstanton Observatory events programme for a series of four events of varied themes. The West Lynn Pavilion Waiting Room redecoration and minor repairs to the room have now been completed, and there is ongoing work with the Norfolk Museums Services in adding brand new heritage items to the walls of the room, as well as similar information for the three exterior interpretation boards nearby. A draft

orientation/interpretation board for an area of Downham Market has also now been completed, with an installation scheduled in the near future.

Software

As previously reported, we have been using the User Generated Content Platform Snapsea (www.snapsea.io) through our Instagram account to enhance, inform and grow our future promotional interactions with potential visitors to west Norfolk by utilising high quality authentic visitor content of the local area. We are now 3 months into our subscription and have built up a modest collection of user-generated content, which has subsequently been posted across Visit West Norfolk's social media pages.

The Hanse League

Previously being the Vice Chair, The tourism department has now taken on the Chair and administrator roles for the Europe-wide Modern Hanse League group called the *Hanse Sustainable Working Group*. Our second meeting with the group, and an 'online event' series of presentations, is currently being worked on, focussing on shared best practice and learning on a Europe-wide basis regarding the growth and adoption of sustainable business practices. The Tourism department is now also a member of both the KL Hanse Club and the KL Hanse Festival Committee.

Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies

Officers

Oliver Judges
Duncan Hall
Martin Chisholm
Philip Eke
Bethany O'Brien
Philip Bayfield
Jemma Curtis
Tim Fitzhigham
Honor Howell
Jane Hamilton

Outside bodies

Civic Society
Town Guides
Festival
Hunstanton Action Group
Old Lenensians
Norfolk Records Committee

Norfolk Museums Committee
Friends of the Walks
Kings Lynn Museum
Stories of Lynn and Archives
Conservancy Board
Downham Market Town Council Committee
Lord Lieutenant Lady Dannatt

I have regular scheduled meetings with most of the above officers and will continue to meet and fact find with outside bodies including those already met with.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 March 2024

COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

For the period 23rd February 2024 to 6th March 2024

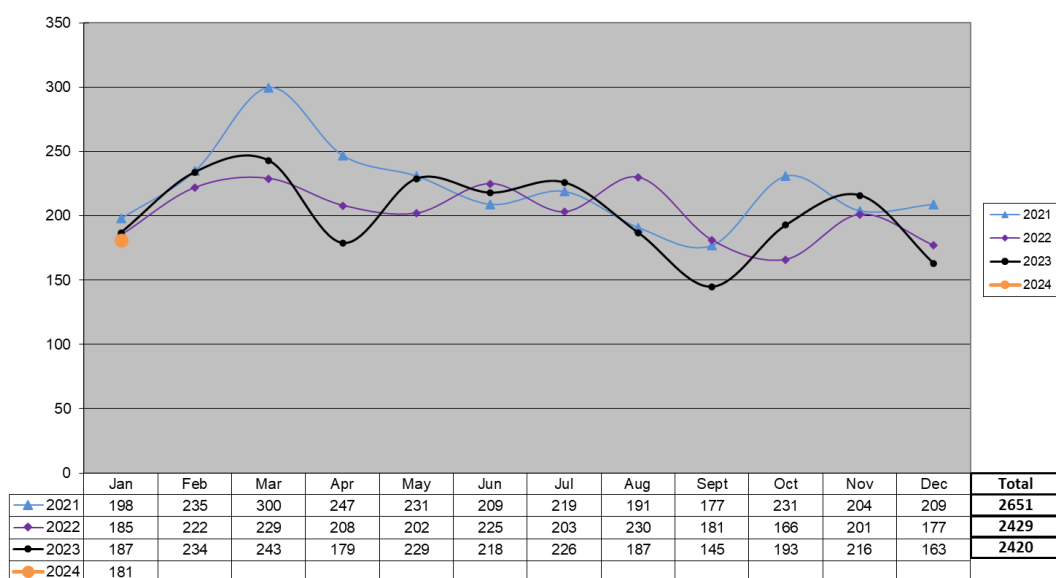
1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

I would first like to acknowledge the work of officers in helping compile this report, particularly given the pressure the department is under preparing for the resumed Local Plan inspection.

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers for January 2024 are very similar to previous years.

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received

comparison

	1/2/21 – 31/1/22	1/2/22 – 31/1/23	1/2/23 – 31/1/24
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	24	19	15
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	323	310	237
No. of Householder applications rec'd	902	743	615
Total	1249	1072	867

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2023/24 performance for determining planning applications 1/2/23 – 31/1/24

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	89%
Non – Major	70%	87%

Appeal Performance – decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate 1/2/23 – 31/1/24

	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning appeals	31	16
	66%	34%
Enforcement appeals	6	0
	100%	0%

The higher the number of appeals allowed, the more The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) is going against the council's decisions, so a low figure of appeals allowed (upheld) is clearly preferable. For context the national average for planning appeals allowed annually has historically been around 34% post NPPF.

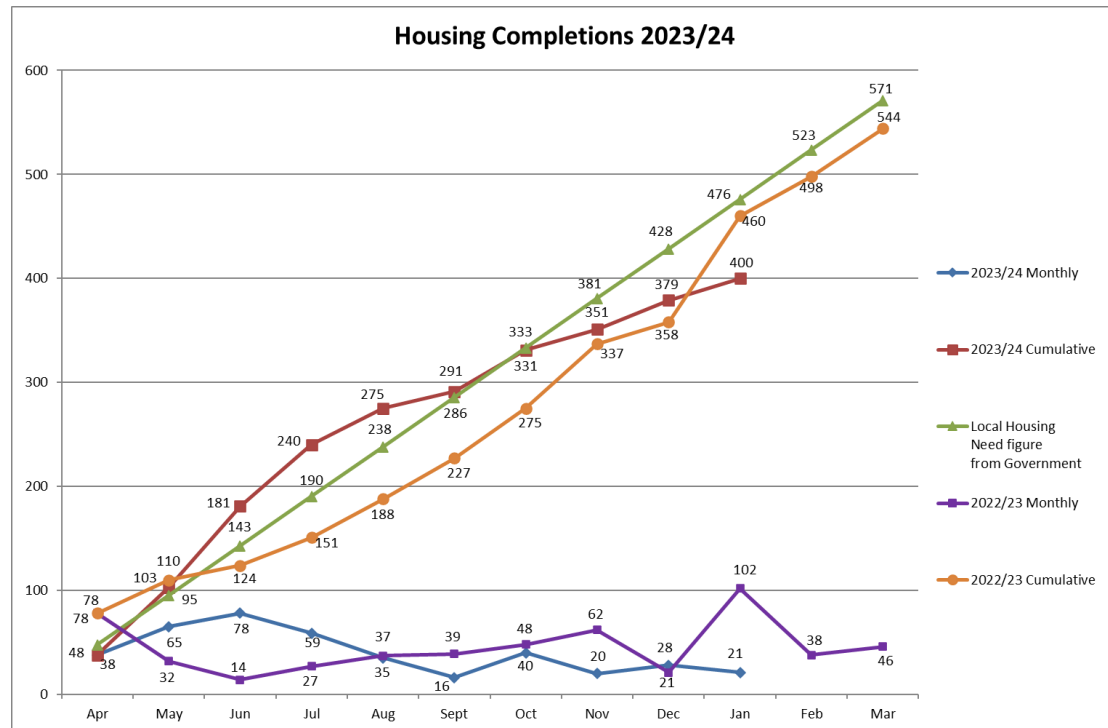
Revenue income 2023/24 (Planning and Discharge income)

Figures are based on a full year projected income budget of £1,100,000.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 23 – Jan 24	April 23 – Jan 24	
£916,667	£884,845	-£31,822

Housing Completions

21 houses completed in January 2024. Currently completions are down 76 on projected based on a local housing need figure from Government of 571 and down 60 compared to the same time last year.



Local Plan Update (ongoing examination of the replacement Local Plan 2021-2039)

The Inspectors’ Additional Matters Issues & Questions (AMIQs) and Hearing Programme for the Local Plan Hearing Sessions have been received and are available on our Website [here](#). The Borough Council has been asked a total of 117 AMIQs which need responding to. 37 of them need submitting to the Inspectors by midday on the 8 March and the remainder are due midday 29 March. There is an added complication in that the first set of hearing sessions and preparation work for these cuts into this time.

Dates for Local Plan Hearing Sessions are as follows:

- 26-28 March 2024
- 16-19 April 2024
- Further hearings dates for the Gypsy and Traveller policy examination are set for 3-4 September 2024.

In addition to answering the AMIQs, and preparing for the Hearing Sessions, the Planning Policy team also continue to work upon the need to put forward policies and site allocations to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS), identified in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), June 2023. As a reminder the programme/ timeframe for the ongoing GTTS work for the Local Plan examination is set out below:

- 26 January – 8 March 2024 (inclusive) – GTTS Potential Sites and Policy

Consultation document consultation (with draft Full Sites Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment supporting documents).

- March 2024 – review and process representations/ preparation of finalised Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents.
- w/c 8 April 2024 – Special Cabinet Meeting, to approve finalised Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents for consultation and submission to the Planning Inspectors.
- w/c 22 April 2024 – meeting of Full Council, to approve GTTS site allocations and policies for submission to the Planning Inspectors.
- 10 May – 21 June 2024 – consultation on Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents.
- End of June 2024 – submission of Proposed Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites and Policies paper and supporting documents to Planning Inspectors.

This would be followed by consultation on Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan during autumn 2024.

Neighbourhood Planning Update

As of 27 February 2024, there are 19 “made” (adopted) Plans in place. Details of recently made (since 2023) and emerging Neighbourhood Plans are set out below:.

Recently “made” Neighbourhood Plans (during 2023-24 financial year)

	Current position
Old Hunstanton Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036	Passed referendum, 8 February 2024; “made” 15 February 2024
Burnham Market Neighborhood Plan 2022-2036	Passed at referendum, 21 September 2023; “made” 26 September 2023
Gayton and Gayton Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036	Passed at referendum, 9 November 2023; “made” 20 November 2023
Stoke Ferry Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036	Passed at referendum, 24 August 2023; “made” 29 August 2023
Watlington Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2036	Passed at referendum, 7 December 2023; “made” 13 December 2023

Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Downham Market Neighbourhood Plan	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation October/ November 2021 – preparation subsequently stalled; Plan submission anticipated 2024
Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036	Examination commenced August 2023; anticipated to finish, spring 2024; referendum May/ June 2024
Marshland St James	“Call for sites” December 2023; 1 st draft

	(Regulation 14) version Plan anticipated for publication, spring 2024
North Wootton Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036	Submitted, 12 September 2023; followed by pre-examination (Regulation 16) consultation (finished 24 November 2023). Examination to commence early-2024 – appointment of examiner expected to be confirmed February 2024; examination anticipated to conclude summer 2024
Pentney Neighbourhood Plan	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation March-May 2023; Plan submission anticipated 2024
Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan	1 st draft Plan published for consultation by Ringstead Parish Council, 22 January – 3 March 2024 (inclusive). Plan submission anticipated summer/ autumn 2024.
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown or at an early stage	Burnham Overy (designated 5 December 2023); Dersingham; Docking (designated 22 December 2023); Great Massingham; Ingoldisthorpe; Outwell; Shouldham; Syderstone; Tilney St Lawrence; Walpole; Walpole Cross Keys (review of 2017 Neighbourhood Plan); West Dereham

CIL Update

The Cill Spending Panel met on the 5th March and made the following decisions/recommendations (to Cabinet should the sum in question be above £50,000#).

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Approved
North Runcton Cricket Club	Facility Upgrade - Accessibility/inclusion	£39,396.00
Gaywood Church Rooms Trust	Renovation of Church Rooms	£29,560.00
Sedgeford Parish Council	Village Hall Refurb & Security	£3,428.00
Marshland St James Parish CI	Inclusive Playground	£30,000.00
Brancaster Staithe and Burnham Deepdale Village Hall	Play Equipment - Village Hall/Playing Field	£20,000.00
Hunstanton Town Council	Community Orchard	£4,000.00
St Peters Church, Upwell	New Drainage & associated masonry repairs	£30,000.00
RSPCA Norfolk West	Rehoming Centre-Air Source Heat Pump	£12,500.00
Terrington St John Parish CI	Purchase of former church as Village Hall	£150,000.00#
Wiggenhall St Germans Memorial Hall	Resurface Car Park	£48,000.00
Magdalen Academy – Primary School	Outdoor Classroom	£17,623.70
Westacre Arts Foundation Ltd (Westacre Theatre)	New theatre costume & props storage	£9,000.00
West Norfolk Mencap	Beach Hut Upgrade	£7,500.00
Welney Parish Council	Hurn Drove resurfacing	£15,000.00
North End Trust - Trues Yard Community Museum	Replacement Boiler/Storage	£6,348.00
RSPCA Norfolk West Shop	LED Lighting	£2,000.00
Gaywood Community Centre		
Gaywood Play Park 2 -	Extension to play area	£50,000.00
Castle Rising PC	Village Gateway	£4,875.00
Castle Rising PC Cricket Club	Seating	£2,760.00
Totals		£481,990.70

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

Thursday 21 March 2024

COUNCILLOR TERRY PARISH - LEADER

For the period 22 February – 22 March 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Let's hope that councillors refrain from emulating hares this season. The budget was passed, though some cllrs seem to insist on clinging on to false assumptions and make unhelpful statements. The truth is quite simple, the budget for 24/25 is the start of a process which will enable this council to function as it should beyond the next council elections. The road to ruin has been diverted but a new destination will take a little longer.

At the last council there were two amendments to the budget proposals. £50K to food banks was agreed without debate and discussions have taken place with interested parties. This money will be allocated to energy vouchers during the autumn so freeing up money for more diverse provision that food banks provide. The way forward for the £50K for domestic abuse support is currently being considered.

I attended the King's Lynn Festival launch and there are many programme events planned which will be quite outstanding. It is worth noting that continued financial support for such non statutory events depends upon a healthy income from whatever sources the Council can utilise. The only secure ones are Council Tax and fees and charges. We are, as you should know, pursuing a better share of increased council tax from empty properties and second homes and chasing, with partners, a different funding structure for IDB's. I had a meeting with officers from other districts to talk about the taxes and Cllr Morley had a meeting with some District Leaders too (I was at a conference). Both meetings were positive, but a sensible outcome has yet to be realised.

I spent some hours reading all the many nominations for the Local Hero Awards and joined others, including the Mayor, to compare notes. I look forward to the forthcoming ceremony and warmly thank Your Local Paper for the great effort they put into this event.

The conference I attended was the East of England Local Authority Water Summit. This was attended by many delegates from across the Eastern region and was fully funded. There were several topics but the thrust of it, to me, was ensuring

sustainable water resources. After a season in which too much water has been of concern, it is easy to forget that drought might follow. In addition, there is an insufficient water supply to meet the needs of an increasing population and, also, growth in and sustainability of industries such as agriculture. This has come to a head in Cambridgeshire where the government's desire to significantly develop science parks etc cannot be achieved without water supply problems being resolved. We are experiencing similar difficulties in West Norfolk when use by farmers is restricted and extraction increases with the summer influx of visitors. Managing down public demand is one route to follow but I was intrigued by the fact that there are targets for national reductions in use which are most significant for new builds. Cambridgeshire and others have a water management strategy in their local plans. Perhaps we need to think of one when we amend ours.

Flooding was also part of the day and I signpost you to the EA's 'Reclaim the Rain' concept which seeks to stop all the excess water in winter being pumped straight out to sea and to create storage, ponds, on land for use in the summer. (Over simplified and my apologies to the portfolio holder who will, no doubt, pull all the facts together rather better than me).

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Meeting with James Wild MP
 Meeting with Liz Truss MP
 Local Plan Examination

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

In addition to cabinet meetings, cabinet briefings, communications briefings and multiple one offs with officers or councillors:

26/02/24	Junior School visit
	CPP
27/02/24	Pay award 2024/25

28/02/24	2nd Homes Funding and projects for the West Freebridge Community Housing Unison
29/02/24	Planning Training
01/03/24	Meet QEH team King's Lynn Festival launch Mayors Business Awards
05/03/24	Local Heroes nominations
06/03/24	King's Lynn Foodbank College of West Anglia
08/03/24	E of E Local Authority Water Summit
12/03/24	Gender and pay Recruitment initial consultation
16/03/24	Groundwork Gallery
19/03/24	QEH Member Briefing
20/03/24	CPC Review with LGA

