

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



# **COUNCIL MEETING**

## ***Agenda***

Thursday, 31st October, 2024  
at 5.00 pm

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

23 October 2024

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, 31st October, 2024** in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn to transact the business shown below.

Yours sincerely

Kate Blakemore  
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 29 August 2024 (previously circulated).

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Page 7)**

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. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF LICENSING COMMITTEE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MUNICIPAL YEAR (Page 8)**

**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: 17 September 2024 (Page 9)**

CAB46: Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy

**2) Cabinet: 17 October 2024 (Pages 10 - 11)**

CAB59: Hunstanton bus station and library proposals  
Recommendation 3

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

- i) To consider the following Notice of Motion ( 3/24 ), submitted by Councillor B Jones:

**Youth Council**

The borough Council believes that it is vital to engage young people in decisions that affect their lives and services that they receive. They are a huge part of our communities, but they are often left out of discussions about how to make things better now and for the future. Our future belongs to them and it is essential that their voice is heard and, that they feel included in the democratic process. Our local democracy will be stronger for it. It has been noted that Youth Advisory Board have a youth Council and that the QEH also are making strides for youth provision but we would like a joined up approach to avoid duplication of work.

In support of this, council resolves:

To acknowledge the work already been done by various youth agencies;

To commit to establishing a cross-party working group - led by the council youth champion and by the cabinet member for people and places - to meet with partner youth agencies to explore if setting up a borough youth council would provide the right vehicle for youth ideas to be fed into the council's policies.

ii) To consider the following Notice of Motion ( 4/24 ), submitted by Councillor A Ware:

### **White Ribbon Motion**

Violence and cruelty to women, whether mental, verbal or physical, and whether occurring within the workplace or outside of an organisation, is a serious, prevalent and preventable issue.

The Government has pledged to halve violence against women and girls in the next decade and has recently announced new police and justice system initiatives to achieve this. Working towards the same goals, White Ribbon UK is a charity which focuses on interventions in this area. It issues Accreditation to organisations which work towards transformational change within their staff culture, systems and communities.

Achieving White Ribbon Accreditation would demonstrate this Council's commitment to its residents in preventing and combating the harmful culture, attitudes and behaviours around toxic masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and violence against women and girls.

This Council will therefore actively seek to gain White Ribbon Accreditation, and it will adopt policies, instigate projects and activities and work with partners to achieve this.

iii) To consider the following Notice of Motion (5/24) submitted by Councillor A Kemp:

### **Wisbech**

### **Incinerator**

This Council maintains its opposition to the Wisbech Incinerator. Not only is there no need for this facility due to overcapacity in the East of England, but the facility would lead to a breach of the Proximity Principle impacting on West Norfolk. The latest research confirms the anti Climate Change effects of incineration. The previous Conservative Government had said it would halt new incinerators. Council asks the Leader to write to the Labour Government and ask for the consents to be reviewed and withdrawn.

## **11. CABINET MEMBER'S REPORTS (Pages 12 - 66)**

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.)**

**Climate Change and Biodiversity – Councillor M de Whalley**

**Planning and Licensing – Councillor J Moriarty**

**Environment and Coastal - Councillor S Squire**

**Finance – Councillor C Morley**

**Events and Open Spaces– Councillor B Anota**

**People and Communities – Councillor J Rust**

**Deputy Leader Business and Culture – Cllr S Ring**

**Leader - Councillor A Beales**

## **12. MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

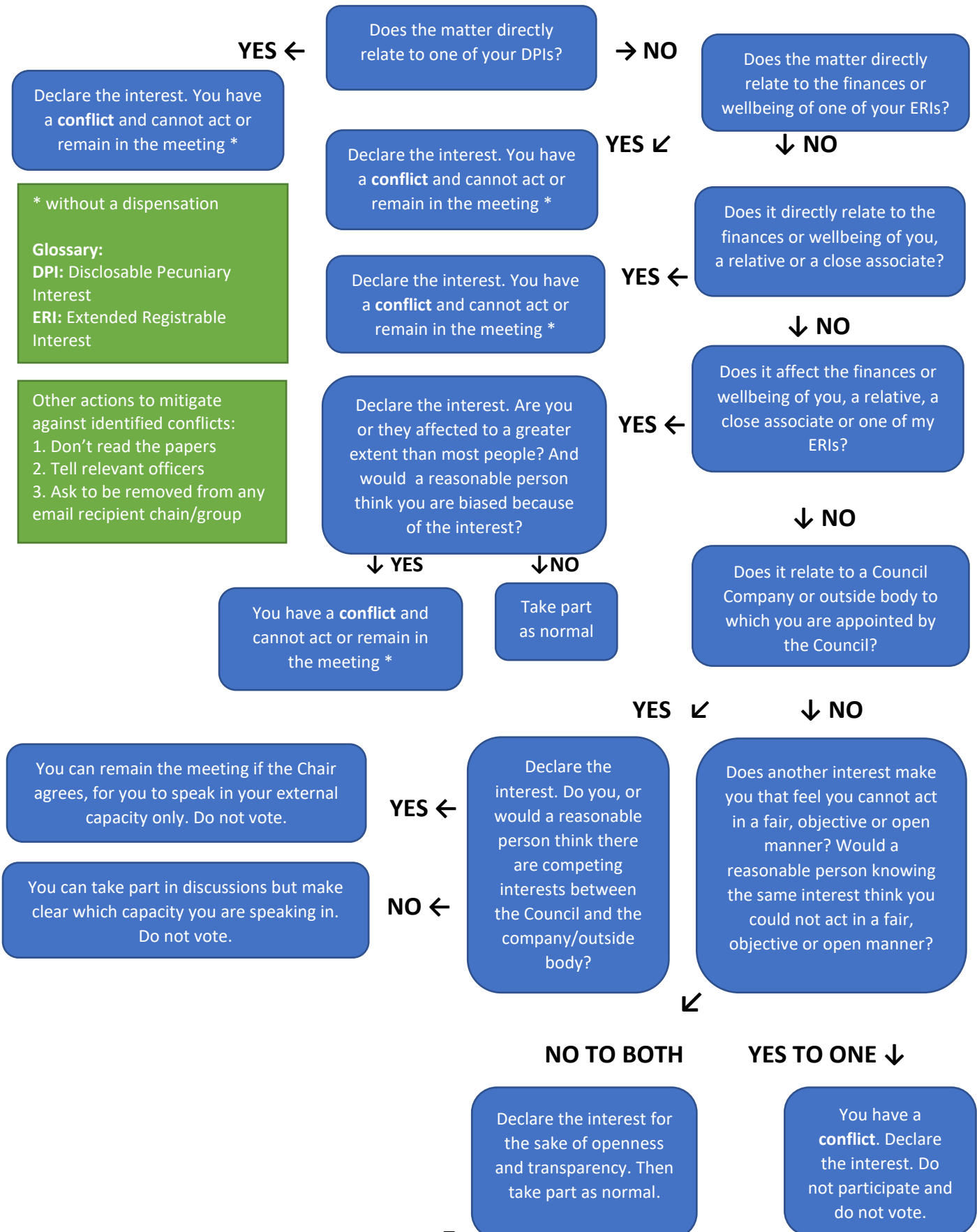
In accordance with Standing Order 11.2 (b), Members of the Council may ask any questions of the Chair of any Council Body (except the Cabinet).

Kate Blakemore  
Chief Executive

# DECLARING AN INTEREST AND MANAGING ANY CONFLICTS FLOWCHART



## START



**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

Lead Officer: Sam Winter E-mail: sam.winter@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616327			Other Officers consulted: Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer		
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd NO	Risk Management Implications NO	Environmental Implications No

Date of Meeting : 31 October 2024

**APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Following the resignation of Councillor Micaela Bartrum as Chair of the Licensing Committee and Councillor Jim Bhondi as Vice Chair of the Committee, Council is invited to appoint a replacement Chair and Vice-Chair for the remainder of the Municipal year.

Councillor James Moriarty has been nominated as Chair, and Councillor Sam Sandell has been nominated as Vice Chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

**RECOMMENDED: That Council consider the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.**



## RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2024

### CAB46: HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

Councillor Rust presented the report which explained that all housing authorities were required by law to produce a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy once every five years. The report set out the process by which a new Homelessness & Rough Strategy had been developed and how progress would be monitored and evaluated.

Before publishing the strategy, housing authorities had the power to carry out a review of homelessness services in their district.

A Homelessness Review was carried out in the autumn/winter of 23/24, was published in April 2024, and laid the foundation for developing an effective strategy: led by data and supported by professional and lived experience. The Homelessness Review considered the current situation and analysed the reasons, causes and wider factors affecting homelessness in this area. The Homelessness Review and its findings were endorsed by the Environment and Community Panel on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

The new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 responded to the issues identified in the review and provided a framework for responding to homelessness in Borough. It replaced the 2019- 2024 strategy. The draft strategy was considered by the Environment and Community Panel on 16 July 2024.

In presenting the report Councillor Rust confirmed she was proud to bring the report which was informed by the review of partners and people with lived experience of homelessness and rough sleeping. It was aimed at ending homelessness person by person. The report was written with the worst case scenario of no Government money coming forward.

The Housing Services Member re-iterated that it was a new strategy with the input from partners, and understood the views of those with lived experience, she thanked all those who had had input and the Senior Housing Manager for producing the report.

The Chair commended the work and re-iterated the thanks given for all those involved.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the 2024-2029 Strategy is adopted and that the role of the Environment and Community Panel group “Homelessness and Housing Delivery Task Group” in overseeing the delivery of the Action Plan within the strategy is endorsed.

#### **Reason for Decision**

The Council has a statutory duty to produce a homelessness strategy (Homelessness Act 2002) setting out the issues it faces locally and what it is doing to prevent homelessness. The Council’s commitments to preventing homelessness are set out in the Corporate Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET ON 17 OCTOBER 2024**

### **CAB59 HUNSTANTON BUS STATION AND LIBRARY PROPOSALS**

The Housing Services Manager presented a report which set out proposals for the Borough Council to deliver 21-24 affordable housing units as well as a library on behalf of Norfolk County Council (NCC) on the Hunstanton Bus Station site alongside the NCC transport interchange improvements.

The Borough Council obtained capital funding from Homes England under the Accelerated Construction Programme (ACP) in 2018. This was a fund to accelerate housing delivery on sites in public ownership. The Hunstanton Bus Station site was one of 7 council owned sites funded through the programme. In February 2023 the Council's Cabinet resolved not to proceed with housing on the Bus Station site but would continue to support Norfolk County Council in delivering an improved library and improve the current bus station as a transport interchange. The Council now had an opportunity to revisit the 2023 Cabinet decision. The report presented an option to achieve both the interchange along with 21-24 affordable homes and a new library.

The purpose of the report was to seek Cabinet approval to designate the Hunstanton Bus Station site as a strategic site for affordable housing delivery. This would involve designing and costing a housing scheme of 21-24 affordable housing units at the Bus Station Site in Hunstanton plus NCC delivering a library in concert with the NCC Transport Interchange scheme and to amend the Capital Programme to include this new housing scheme funded from a combination of funds ring-fenced for affordable housing which were already held by the Council and some funds as supported by the Council through the Capital Programme. A decision on whether to enter into a contract to deliver the housing scheme would be taken by Cabinet once the scheme had been designed and costed. If it was determined to enter the contract, it would be classed as one of the Council's Major Projects.

Under standing order 34, Councillor T Parish attended the meeting and addressed the Cabinet seeking the extension of the affordable homes element of the scheme to be further than just Hunstanton, or the provision of private rented properties which were difficult to find all along the coast as most rentals were for holiday homes.

Assistant Director, D Hall explained that the scheme was in the early stages of housing design. An assessment would need to be made of local need for the area, and a decision on tenure made at that point.

The Chair drew attention to the fact that the scheme ensured that £800,000 which was due to be returned was being utilised jointly by the Borough and County Councils, with both sides being pragmatic on the scheme to be delivered. He drew attention to the improved toilet facilities in the scheme. He highlighted the good working relationship the council had with Homes England as it had a record of delivering affordable homes in its schemes.

Councillor Morley asked if there was a contingency sum included in the scheme, to which it was confirmed there was.

**RESOLVED:** 1) That a housing scheme of 21-24 affordable housing units at the Bus Station Site in Hunstanton plus a library in partnership with Norfolk County Council and in consort with the NCC Transport Interchange Scheme (the “Hunstanton Bus Station Proposed Housing Scheme”) shall be designed and costed up to RIBA Stage 4 with an approved budget of £250,000.

2) The Bus Station Site in Hunstanton is deemed a strategic site for affordable housing delivery.

**This section is the recommendation to Council:**

**RECOMMENDED:** 3) That the Capital Programme be amended to include Hunstanton Bus Station Proposed Housing Scheme based on the initial cost estimate of £4m to be funded from affordable housing funding held and ringfenced by the Council of £2.2m and internal borrowing against the capital receipts from the eventual sale of the affordable housing units estimated to be £1.8m.

**Reason for Decision**

The decision to designate the site for Affordable Housing creates an opportunity to deliver much needed affordable housing in Hunstanton to meet identified need; it will see the delivery of a new library by NCC; and the development will sit alongside a planned refreshed bus station with modern accessible facilities

**CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**31 October 2024**

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

For the period 20 August 2024 to 16 October 2024

**1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

**Vehicle Fleet Review**

The project seeks to decarbonise the Council's vehicle fleet. To inform this, a report, including an options appraisal, is required. A preferred bidder has been selected pending due diligence checks, following a thorough tendering process which received thirteen responses. The final report is expected late 2024 or early 2025.

**Schools Climate Competition Project**

Following a tender exercise, Groundwork East have been selected as the provider. A presentation to the borough's headteachers network is planned for the 28<sup>th</sup> November and will seek to engage schools ahead of activity in early 2025.

**Solar Together**

The group buying scheme is being promoted this year and following a targeted mailshot over 500 households across the borough have expressed an interest. This is similar level of interest to the previous campaign in 2022. Registrations close on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024. Those interested in obtaining a price for the installation of solar panels, battery storage or an EV charger can find further information on <https://solartogether.co.uk/kings-lynn-and-west-norfolk/home>

**Carbon Audit**

Final datasets are being collated with an aim of having a first draft of the annual carbon audit available for December 2024.

**Carbon Literacy Training**

Final content testing with a staff panel is underway ahead of our e-learning providers creating the training material for use in the council's e-learning platform.

**Ferry**

**Short Term/immediate repairs and condition**

Richard Jackson Engineering Consultants were appointed on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to conduct a structural inspection and load assessment of the West

Lynn and King's Lynn Ferry landings and ramps. This survey took place on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and for which a report is due imminently.

Three steps on the King's Lynn landing were replaced by our contractor along with re-securing a loose tread plate on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

The Ferry Operator was contacted and offered the opportunity to discuss funding and business support on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024, as of writing, we await their response.

### **Medium-Long term options**

Legal services were instructed to review legal ownership of ferry infrastructure on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

The project to improve the infrastructure at the terminals has been included in the long list of potential projects for investment, subject to suitable funding becoming available.

### **Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP)**

BCKLWN and North Norfolk District Council will be piloting a thermal imaging camera project. Six cameras have been purchased by the partnership that will be shared across the districts. The initiative is based upon a Suffolk Climate Change Partnership project where parish councils or community groups can use the cameras for two-week intervals. Initially the project will be focused on the Norfolk Net Zero Communities areas with an aim to extend coverage to further parish councils or community groups. Training is being undertaken on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024 with information packs in development.

Partnership meetings have focused on the latest territorial carbon emissions published by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, reviewing partnership priorities and work plan and community energy.

### **Norfolk Net Zero Communities**

The project is working through a listening phase with all the participating communities across the county. Hubbub attended a farmers market event held in Marshland St James on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 and spoke with residents about the Solar Together scheme and other retrofit options along with barriers to change. The findings from this research will be collated and potential solutions identified for the barriers to decarbonisation will be explored with the communities.

### **Solar Photovoltaic (PV)**

A desktop study has been commissioned to investigate the feasibility of installing additional solar photovoltaic arrays. This would be to supplement the pre-existing arrays we have already installed across seven sites (BCKLWN Depot, Lynnsport, St. James Pool, Downham Leisure, Oasis, King's Court and South Lynn Community Centre).

Initial calculations would suggest that KLIC, Alive Downham Leisure and the Corn Exchange could be particularly favourable candidates for further solar

PV, although other sites are under consideration. Based on the desktop assessment (and the figures provided), these three sites could support an additional installed capacity of 290.84kWp which, for a combined capital expenditure of £327,915.00, could deliver annual carbon savings of 220 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e and financial payback within a ten-year period. The proposals will be explored and scrutinised in more detail.

### **ReFit**

Performance from the new heat pumps has unfortunately continued to not meet with expectations.

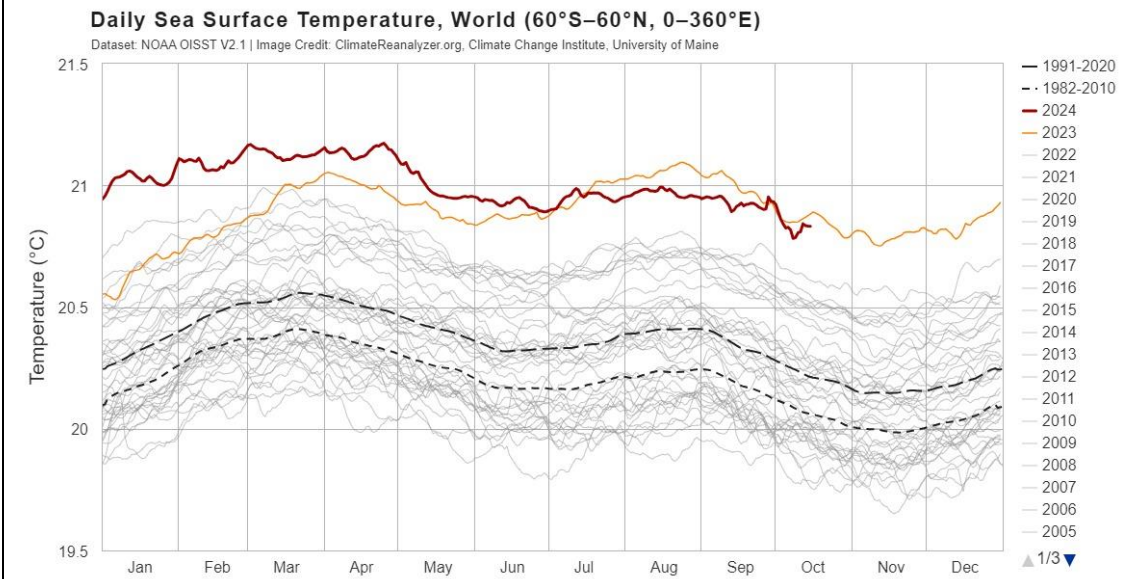
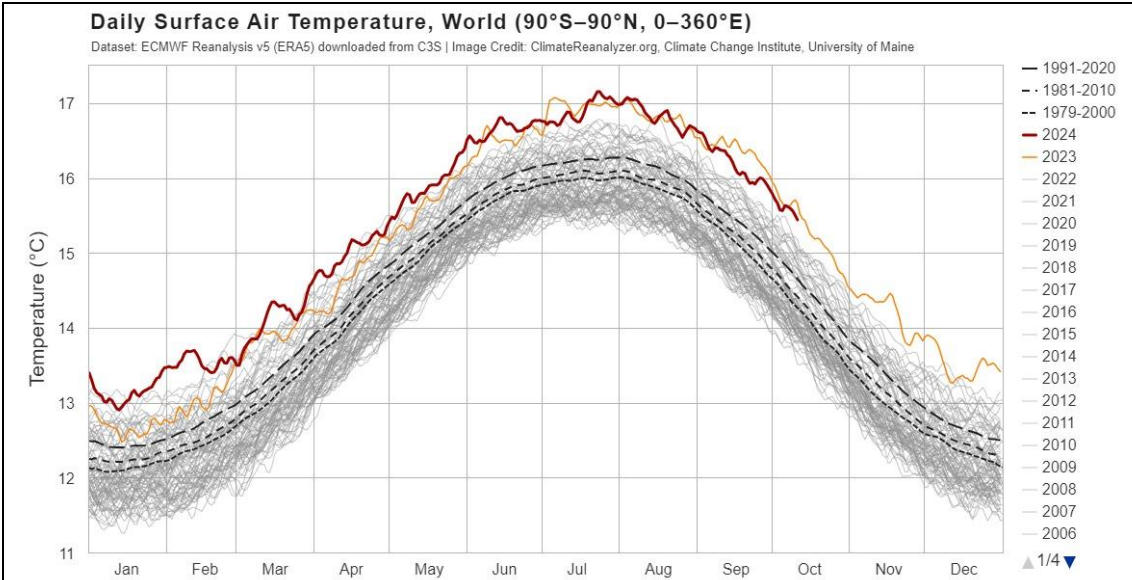
The council have now invoked the support of Local Partnerships, who own the ReFit framework under which we appointed Ameresco. Ameresco have committed to provide a plan of action for remedial works and addressing the shortfall in savings this month (October). This will form the basis of a three-way discussion with Ameresco, Local Partnerships and the Council.

### **Climate**

September 2024 was the second-warmest September on record globally, with an average surface air temperature of 16.17°C, 0.21°C lower than the record set in September 2023. September was about 1.54°C warmer than an estimate of the September average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period and was the 14<sup>th</sup> month in a 15-month period for which the global-average surface air temperature exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The average temperature anomaly for the remaining months of 2024 would need to drop by more than 0.4°C for this year not to be warmer than 2023, making it almost certain that 2024 is going to be the warmest year on record.

The average global sea surface temperature (SST) for September 2024 over 60°S to 60°N was 20.83°C, the second-highest for the month in the dataset, only 0.09°C below the record set in September 2023. The equatorial and central Pacific had below-average temperatures, indicating a developing La Niña; however, SSTs across the ocean remained unusually high over many regions. 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.

### **Mayors Awards**

The Environmental Champion category will feature within the Mayors' Business Awards 2025 with the winner announced on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025. Nominations are now open and close on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024.

### **Beat Your Bills Roadshow**

**Thornham** (Village Hall) – 05/11/2024 11:00-14:00

**Snettisham** (Memorial Hall) – 08/11/2024 10:00-12:00

**Emneth** (Village Hall) – 20/11/2024 10:00-12:00

**King's Lynn** (Windsor Park) – 02/12/2024

**Outwell** (Beaupre Hall) – 11/12/2024 10:00-12:00

**Dersingham** (Village Centre) – 07/01/2025 11:30-13:30

### **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Cabinet Briefings  
Cabinet Sifting  
Cabinet  
ICT Development Group  
Biodiversity Task Group  
Environmental Groups  
Lynnsport and Alive West Norfolk Tour of Facilities  
Environment and Community Panel  
South Lynn Community Orchard/Beuys' Acorns Project  
Equality Impact Assessment Training  
King's Lynn IDB  
Lynnsport Meadow  
Active Travel Briefing  
Local Plan Task Group  
Development Services Directorate Morning  
CIL Spending Panel  
Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Portfolio Holders Group  
Budget Review  
King's Lynn Transport Strategy Stakeholder Consultation  
Norfolk Coast National Landscape Management Plan  
Tour of Aikman's Yard (Museum's Committee)  
Regeneration and Development Panel

#### **Portfolio Holder Briefings and updates:**

C EX Portfolio Update  
Climate Change Weekly Updates  
Air Quality Briefing

#### **Meetings Scheduled:**

College of West Anglia Sustainability Event



## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

31 October 2024

### COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & LICENSING

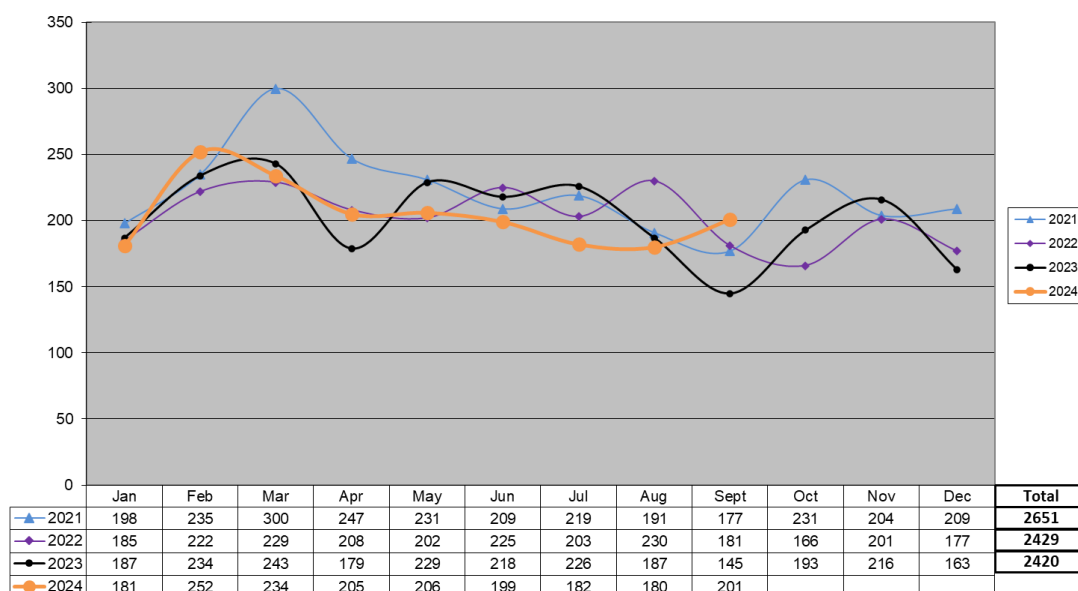
For the period 30<sup>th</sup> August to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024

#### 1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

##### Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers at the end of September 2024 are almost identical compared to the same period last year (-8 applications).

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



##### Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received comparison

	1/10/21 – 30/9/22	1/10/22 – 30/9/23	1/10/23 – 30/9/24
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	19	17	16
No. of Minor dwelling	314	287	224

applications rec'd			
No. of Householder applications rec'd	801	665	604
<b>Total</b>	<b>1134</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>844</b>

\*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units      Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

**2023/24 performance for determining planning applications 1/10/23 – 30/9/24**

	<b>National target</b>	<b>Performance</b>
<b>Major</b>	60%	96%
<b>Non – Major</b>	70%	91%

**Appeal Performance – decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate 1/10/23 – 30/9/24**

	<b>Officer delegated</b>		<b>Committee overturns</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed
Appeals						
Planning	34	16	3	7	37	23
	68%	32%	30%	70%	62%	38%
Enforce-ment	4	3				
	57%	43%				

**QUALITY OF DECISIONS**

This measure calculates the percentage of the total number of decisions made by the Authority on applications that are then overturned at Appeal.

The Assessment period for this measure is the two years up to and including the most recent quarter plus 9 months. Therefore, the performance for Q3 (end of September 2024) is calculated as follows:

Planning applications determined between 01/1/2022 to 31/12/2023 plus 9 months = 30/09/2024.

The threshold for designation for both Major and Non-Major is 10% - this is the figure that should not be exceeded, otherwise there is a risk of the Authority being designated by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
97	5	5.15%

NON-MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
2949	24	0.81%

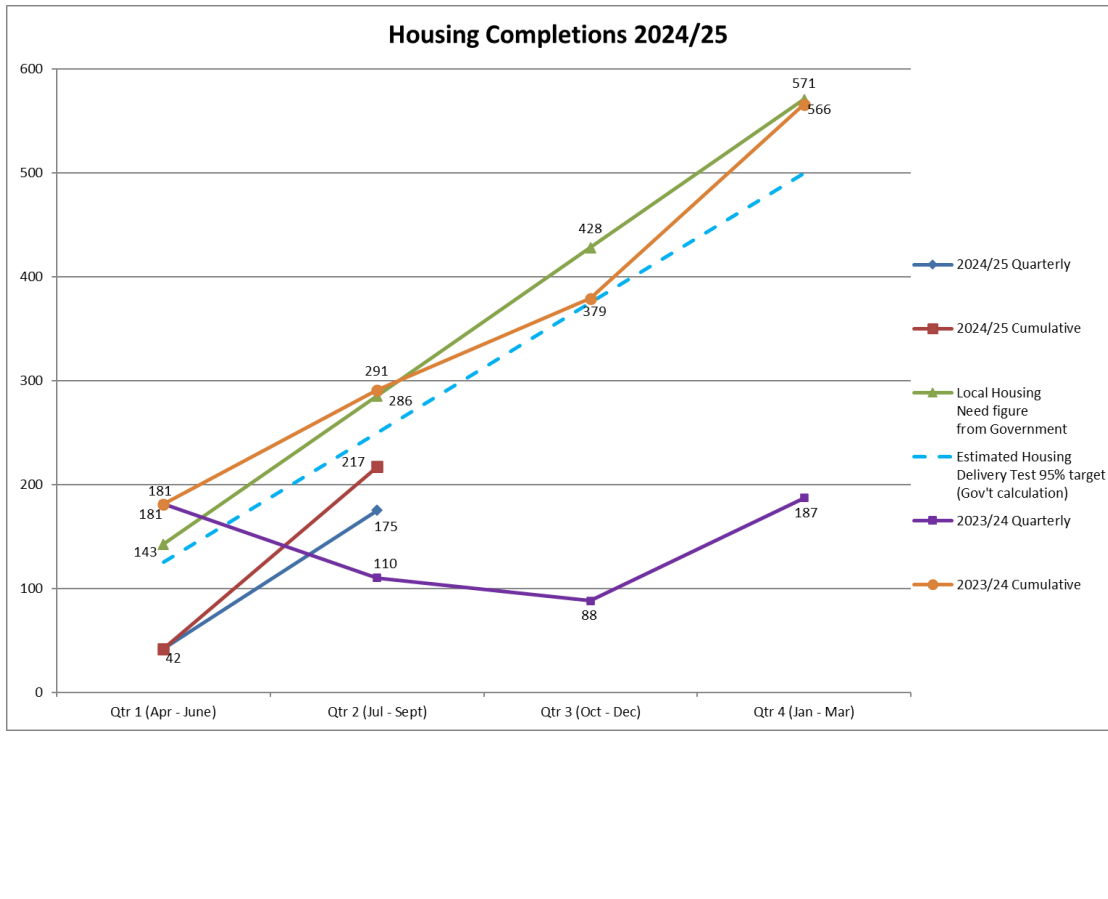
**Revenue income 2024/25 (Planning and Discharge income)**

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

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 24 – Sept 24	April 24 – Sept 24	
£550,000	£434,678	<b>-£115,322</b>

**Housing Completions**

There were 175 completions in quarter 2 (1 April 24 – 30 September 24). Despite this, completions are still lower compared to the same period last year. We will continue to monitor completions very closely, particularly as our new housing delivery need will increase under the new Government.



## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT STAFF UPDATE**

In my previous report I said we have appointed 3x Graduate Planners, all 3 are now in post and progressing well.

All of the contract planners have now been released.

The recruitment process for a Planning Officer was successful and they are also in post. The successful candidate has worked for us previously and are therefore familiar with our procedures and the local area.

## **PLANNING POLICY STAFF UPDATE**

Interviews have taken place, and a Graduate Planner has been appointed and will commence in the coming weeks.

## **LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

The Borough Council formally submitted its Local Plan in March 2022 for Examination. In doing so we made a formal request to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) that the appointed Inspectors recommend any modifications required to make the Local Plan legally compliant and sound.

I'm pleased to report that the scheduled Local Plan Examination Hearings have now concluded. The agreed accelerated timetable through to adoption (please see the Local Development Scheme available to view [here](#)) will, all being well, result in the Local Plan being adopted before the conclusion of this financial year (March 2025).

On October the 2nd the Part 1 Main Modification Consultation closed. This enabled representation on the Main Modifications required to the submitted version of the Local Plan to ensure it is legally compliant and sound to be made. It was open for 8 weeks, 2 extra as covered the summer holiday period. In total in the region of 220 representations from some 70 respondents have been made. These will be sent to the Inspectors and will inform their Local Plan Report.

Part 1 covered the majority of the Local Plan. Part 2 relates solely to Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople policies. As mentioned, the hearing sessions have concluded, and the last session was on this subject and took place on the 3rd of September. Following on from this there will be a Part 2 Main Modification Consultation, for a period of 6 weeks. This will commence in due course. Again representations received will be passed on to the Inspectors for their consideration.

When we receive the Inspectors' Local Plan Report, anticipated early in the new year, a report will be prepared and taken to Cabinet and Full Council recommending that the Local Plan be formally adopted (February / March 2025).

## **Borough Council Response to the Government Consultation on Proposed changes to the National Planning Policy and other changes to the planning system.**

The new, Labour, Government within 3 weeks of coming into power launched a planning consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy and other changes to the planning system. This consultation began on Tuesday 30 July 2024 at 2pm and closed at 11.45pm on Tuesday 24 September 2024. The

consultation package can be viewed [here](#).

The material was circulated to the Local Plan Task Group (LPTG) as part of the agenda for the meeting of 12/09/2024 for review. Prior to the meeting Cabinet Members were invited to participate. At the meeting Members received an overview presentation from Officers. Members provided their thoughts, which were captured by Officers. The agenda, minutes, copy of presentation, and recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Officers then prepared a draft response to the consultation. This was shared with the Chair of the LPTG and Portfolio Holder (Cllr Moriarty) and the Vice Chair of the LPTG (Cllr Blunt) for review. A meeting took place on the Friday afternoon of 20/09/2024 between the Chair, Vice Chair, and the Planning Policy Manager, in which it was agreed that the proposed consultation response was appropriate, captured the views shared, and should be submitted.

The headline capturing changes proposed included a new method for calculating local housing need (LHN). This would see the LHN for King's Lynn & West Norfolk rise from 554 to 1,042 new homes required each year. The implication is that we should continue with our emerging plan and see this through to adoption. Then start preparing a new Local Plan, which is based on the higher LHN figure, in the new plan-making system when in place.

Our response outlined concerns with this proposed approach, as a doubling of housing numbers raises serious challenges including for; the environment, infrastructure, resources, support/finance, the construction sector (would they be able to deliver), and that our Borough is broadly rural in nature. We suggested that the method should be refined to account of such constraints and that new LHN figure needs to be realistically achievable.

The Government have said they will respond to this consultation before Christmas. It is likely that we can expect further consultations on the planning reform in due course. This is likely to include the subject of a new plan-making system, which is currently anticipated to be on-line Summer/Autumn 2025.

## **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING UPDATE**

As of September 2024, there are 20 “made” (adopted) neighbourhood plans in place, including 5 which were made during the previous financial year (2023-24). Details of recently made (during 2024-25 financial year) and emerging neighbourhood plans are set out below:

### **Recently “Made” Neighbourhood Plans**

	<b>Current position</b>
Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036	Passed at referendum, 22 August 2024; “made” <b>27 August 2024</b>

### **Emerging Neighbourhood Plans**

	<b>Current position</b>
Marshland St James	Preliminary draft Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment

	<p>consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England (June/ July 2024)</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation anticipated late-2024</p>
North Wootton Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036	<p>Submitted, 12 September 2023; followed by pre-examination (Regulation 16) consultation (finished 24 November 2023).</p> <p>Examiner's Report published 23 July 2024. Referendum date: 14 November 2024; anticipated adoption, end-November 2024</p>
Pentney Neighbourhood Plan	<p>1<sup>st</sup> draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation March-May 2023; Plan submission anticipated spring 2025</p>
Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036	<p>Submitted 22 April 2024. Pre-examination (Regulation 16) consultation, 14 June – 26 July 2024 (inclusive).</p> <p>Examination commenced September 2024; anticipated to conclude October 2024. Referendum anticipated early-2025.</p>
Syderstone	<p>Preliminary draft Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England (September/ October 2024)</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation anticipated early-2025</p>
Walpole	<p>Preliminary draft Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England (June/ July 2024)</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation anticipated late- 2024</p>
Walpole Cross Keys (review of 2017 Neighbourhood Plan)	<p>Preliminary draft Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England (June/ July 2024)</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation anticipated late- 2024</p>
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown or at an early stage	<p>Burnham Overy (designated 5 December 2023); Dersingham; Downham Market; Docking (designated 22 December 2023); Great Massingham; Ingoldisthorpe; Outwell; Shouldham; Tilney St Lawrence; West Dereham</p>
Expressions of interest	<p>King's Lynn Area Committee; Little Massingham Parish Council; Titchwell Parish Meeting</p>

## **PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September there were two events organised to update Parish Councils on Planning Issues. The agendas covered CIL, Enforcement, Biodiversity Net Gain, Street Naming and Numbering, Local Plan update and Planning Control. Attendees on the 12<sup>th</sup> included representatives from Dersingham, East Winch, Fincham, Great Massingham, Holme-Next-The-Sea, Ringstead, Runcton Holme, Shouldham, Terrington St John, Walsoken, Wiggenhall St Germans. The 19<sup>th</sup> included Brancaster, Castle Acre, Docking, Downham Market, East Rudham, East Winch, Emneth, Holme-Next-the-Sea, Marshland St James, Middleton, North Runcton, Pentney, Sedgeford, South Wootton, Southery, Stoke Ferry, Upwell, Walpole Highway, Walsoken, and Wretton.

Copies of all the presentations have subsequently been sent to all Parish Councils and Councillors and the intention is to continue to hold such events on an annual basis, but we recognise that there continues to be an issue with the acoustics which needs addressing.

## **LICENSING**

- Taxi fee level calculations and changes to the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire licensing procedures and conditions booklet have been finalised and are out for consultation until 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024. Reports will be produced through E&C, Cabinet and then Full Council in January 2025.
- Two prosecution cases have both been heard at Magistrates Court – unlicensed taxi/unlicensed dog breeder. Unlicensed dog breeder pleaded guilty and is awaiting sentencing. The unlicensed taxi driver case was heard in court earlier this month. He failed to attend. Total of £2,090 in fines, costs and victim surcharges to pay along with 8 points on his DVLA Driving licence for no insurance (awaiting proper summary from NP Law before going to press).
- The revised Gambling Act Statement of Principles consultation ended on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Been through E&C, next to Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov and then to Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> Nov – to be effective from 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2025.
- There have been two taxi driver hearings recently. Both failed to attend. One revoked in absence and the other adjourned as was away on holiday.

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**31 October 2024**

**COUNCILLOR SANDRA SQUIRE - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & COASTAL**

For the period 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

It's been a busy week for the waste and recycling team out and about for Recycling Week - Visiting Emneth & West Lynn schools, where over 200 children were treated to the Horrible Histories version of recycling from our waste & recycling manager. There was also much excitement at Emneth with the addition of a bin lorry to the playground. There were also visits to a supermarket and the Market in Downham, where more than 150 food caddies were also given out.

Thank you to all the councillors who came along and supported the team at the various events during the week, huge thanks must go to the whole team for their boundless enthusiasm for getting the "Look at the Label" message out there.

Further school visits are planned around West Norfolk over the coming months. It's also great to see that over 45,000 impressions were made on borough council social media accounts with the message were well supported.

More and more packaging on the products we buy has a readily identifiable label which tells you if the packaging and which parts of the packaging can be recycled. This label, created by the On Pack Recycling Label Scheme (OPRL), is used on both brand packaging and own label packaging. It will help give everyone more confidence to understand what can be recycled and therefore hopefully recycle more.

Look at the label also extends into non-food packaging, such as bathroom products. In West Norfolk everything that can be recycled is recycled but only if it is put correctly in the green recycling bin in the first place.

Collection vehicles will continue to display their new OPRL message branding to encourage everyone to Look at the Label.



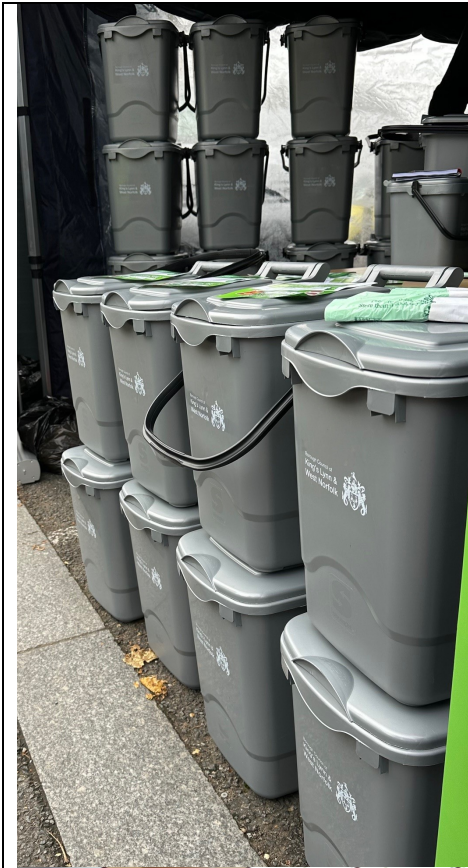
# DON'T BE CONFUSED ABOUT RECYCLING



OPRL

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk







It was also Flood Action Week. Which aims to increase awareness of flooding and what actions we can take to prepare. More information is available here where you can check your risk of flooding and sign up for flood warnings:

[Prepare for flooding: Protect yourself from future flooding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding)



I've recently visited Hunstanton Prom to look at recent and upcoming repairs including where ongoing erosion of beach material has resulted in a drop of just over 1 metre from the end of a beach access step (at What3Words location [marker.tango.belief](#) ~ opposite the pier head building).

The underlying Carstone bedrock is now exposed at the base of these steps. This drop in beach level has resulted in these steps becoming unsafe to use, the steps will have to be extended to make them safe to use. Just one example of the constant ongoing repairs that are required.

I also inspected the groynes which are scheduled to undergo health and safety works, which should have been completed by the 25<sup>th</sup> October. The groynes are subject to regular health and safety inspections with remedial actions being undertaken whenever required.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> September I represented our council and the LGA Coastal SIG Water Quality working group as a speaker at a Westminster Energy, Environment & Transport Forum Policy Conference on "Next Steps for tackling water pollution in England".

Alongside speakers from the Office of Environmental Protection, Water UK, Natural England, Earthwatch Europe, the NFU, Environment Agency and Anglian Water, I spoke on how poor water quality affects coastal communities and councils.

I was struck by how every speaker spoke of collaboration to tackle the issue of water quality and agreed on how it is everyone's problem and that we all need to work together to find solutions.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

Our coastal water quality conference has sadly once again been postponed. The new date is June 18<sup>th</sup> 2025. This will also coincide with the quarterly meeting of the LGA Coastal SIG, so we will be hosting two days of conferences (18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> June) with councillors from around the coast.

We have numerous speakers once again confirmed, more details will be provided nearer the time.

We have now received the Marine Licence to start the Geo Technical investigation of the Hunstanton Sea Defences. We are also discharging the Marine License conditions which includes the Harbour Master publishing a Notice to Mariners.

Concept Engineering Ltd will start work from 21<sup>st</sup> October and will be on site for up to 26 working days. We expect work to be completed no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

The works will involve digging a series of 25 trial pits at the base of the sea wall to assess the depth of foundations and their condition.

There will also be a ground penetrating radar survey of the promenade.

## **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Various Portfolio Briefings  
Norfolk Coast Partnership Core Management Group Meeting  
Environment & Community Panel  
Joint Agency Water Quality Report Meeting  
Joint Waste Contract Review & Development Board Meeting  
Various Cabinet Briefings  
Cabinet sifting  
Sustainable Hansa Group meeting on Water  
Westminster Forum Water Pollution Conference  
LGA Coastal SIG AGM  
Cabinet  
Budget Review meetings  
Bathing water meetings  
Special cabinet  
Recycling Week visit to Emneth School  
Recycling Week visit to Downham Market  
Visit to Hunstanton Prom and Groynes

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

17 October 2024

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS MORLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE**

**29 AUGUST – 31 OCTOBER 2024**

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

#### **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 20/21 TO 22/23**

The external auditors (EY) have carried out their assessment in respect of value for money and effective use of resources against the statement of accounts across these three financial years. (Full details are contained in the record of the recent Audit Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October).

In Summary:

We did receive a black mark for the overall delay in submitting a full statement, with particular reference to those relating to property evaluations and bank reconciliations. However, these issues have since been rectified in the 22/23 accounts and therefore should not be repeated going forward..

The overall conclusion was that through this period 20-23, the Council had proper arrangements in place to enable it to plan and manage its resources to ensure that it can continue to deliver its services.

In this report, having regard to 20-23 performance, it would be fair to report that the previous Administration, against the Medium Term Plan, delivered surplus funds to General Reserves of £0.6m (20/21), £0.3m (21/22) and £0.7m (22/23).

However, the Auditors did observe that we had no Fees and Charges policy in place. This will be addressed as one area of improvement this year but in the absence of an ongoing policy, the decision not to increase fees and charges for **23/24** and rely on General Reserves to balance the budget, presented the incoming Administration with a financial headwind that made it difficult not to transfer some £2.4m from reserves and only reduce the net requirement by some £100K.

**For 24/25** we now have a potential need for £2.7m out of Reserves, which we are addressing with an enhanced focus on cost management. However, first ¼ figures indicated that the downside risk is greater than the current estimates. ½ year results will be available shortly and I may be able to update Members on the risk parameters at the Council meeting.

**DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENTS for 20-23** have also been completed, led by the Monitoring Officer and for Finance, the Head of Internal Audit. They are published on the Council's website with the Statement of Accounts and I commend them to all as an excellent representation of the way this Council governs its affairs and highlights areas for improvement.

I trust that with these accompanying complimentary documents, the full

accounts will shortly be signed off by the external auditors.

### **23/24 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Work is underway to meet the Government target to approve the accounts by 28/2/25. The draft documents will be published this month for the statutory inspection period.

Throughout the above period the Finance Department has been frustrated by the lack of an effective complement of resources. Recruiting of skilled people has proved difficult and we have recently lost the Deputy S151 Officer to South Holland. There have been no adequate responders to our job advert so it has been necessary to fill the role on a temporary basis. Laz Mafuko is covering this role, working predominantly from the Midlands.

All of the above commentary relates predominately to our Revenue budget and expenditure. Our capital programme is still under budget for varying reasons but we have sufficient capital headroom for our immediate needs. However, we do have ambitious plans which will need considerable detailed assessment and governance.

### **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT**

In addition to qualifying pensioners we intend to continue to provide 100% support for working age residents who qualify for help in 25/26. In accordance with the regulations we have consulted on this plan with our tax preceptors and the public. The County Council and Police Commissioner are content that we retain the scheme and this year, only 8 responses were received to the consultation with the majority supporting the proposal.

This system is becoming, very much, business as usual and with an extra 646 properties being added to the tax base, we can accommodate the financial impact (£725K) within our financial plan.

It does provide significant help to those working households on low incomes to the tune of some £1,200 per year.

The full report has attracted the appropriate scrutiny and governance.

### **2<sup>ND</sup> HOME COUNCIL TAX**

Negotiations with the County are being led by the Council Leader and are ongoing. Town and Parish shares have been assessed with various sensitivities for eligibility. More anon.

### **IDBs**

The Special Interest, lobby, Group (SIG) has a new member, Herefordshire, which takes the total Councils to 37.

A lobby presentation was made to MPs at Parliament on evening of 8<sup>th</sup> October, we were represented by our S151 Officer, and Terry Jermy MP attended but, as yet, I have had no confirmation about James Wild.

The general consensus was that all had to wait for the impending economic announcements from the Chancellor.

A further face to face discussion between the Minister Jim McMahon and the SIG Chair (Paul Redgate of South Holland) took place on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

However, hot off the press at the time of writing is an announcement from DEFRA as follows:

“We are about to start a research project, working with the IDB sector and MHCLG to review IDBs’ current funding and costs. It will be a research/evidence gathering project, which we and MHCLG colleagues, will use to inform Ministers on what, if any, changes are needed. We are currently discussing it with our preferred contractor with the hope it will start late October/early November. All being well the contractor will conclude their part by March 2025. Within the project specification we have identified stakeholders with an interest and which the contractor will wish to engage with, and this includes the SIG. Will keep you updated on this and can put you in touch with the contractor once they’ve started.”

The SIG has submitted the presentation material that was used on 8th October at the House of Commons.

We await to hear further.

### **PROCUREMENT**

The Government has delayed the introduction of the new legislation (Procurement Act 2023) and it is now due to come into force on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Contract Standing Orders are being re-drafted and are scheduled for full Council appraisal on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025, following a passage through Audit, CPP and Cabinet.

Our significant project is the Guildhall complex renovation and four contractors attended the market engagement day and since then, the first stage of inviting tenders took place by a Standard Selection Questionnaire being placed on the national procurement portal on 11<sup>th</sup> October. 14 companies have submitted interest (including the 4 at market engagement).

This phase closes on 11<sup>th</sup> November and a selection of the most favourable submissions will be selected for the full tender stage.

This stage of invitation, receipt and evaluation will be critical to secure our best partner but we aim for an award of commitment by July 2025.

Prior to then the Council will have to agree on funding, presumably at the Budget setting meeting in February.

### **WINS LOTTERY**

The sale of tickets is fairly steady now at about 400 players per month. I encourage all who consider this form of fund raising to be acceptable, to sign up for a regular small donation to their favourite cause. There are 78 causes in the scheme at present and the total annualised funds they receive is nearly £25k per annum.

The total raised for charities since the Lottery was recommended, by I believe Cllr. Long, has reached £192K and we are holding a community pot of £46K. I think we should regard that as an ongoing success and a fun way to help.



**2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

Half year budget monitoring report.  
Reports from DEFRA on IDB funding.  
Budget setting across the Council.  
Improvements to our intra and internet.

**3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Regular briefings Cabinet and finance portfolio.  
Monthly Procurement reviews.  
Ward Parish Councils  
CPP 4/9 & 16/10  
Taxi fees 6/9  
IDB Sig Review 10/9  
Shareholder Committee 11/9  
Local Plan Task Group 12/9  
Downham Market meeting 2/10  
Audit Committee 3/10  
ICT Development Group 10/10.

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

17 October 2024

### COUNCILLOR BAL ANOTA - CABINET MEMBER FOR OPEN SPACE AND EVENTS

For the period 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024

#### 1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

##### Parking Matters

I have asked officers to add some more detail to the car park usages figures I routinely report. The additional monthly, and cumulative variances demonstrate quite clearly the impact of weather on the resort area stays. Whilst there was good recovery from the poorer weather early in the season, that did not continue into September, when we saw a return to more unsettled weather.

I am again pleased to see that King's Lynn remains within 1.6% of last year, this confirms my belief when visiting the town centre that, unlike many others, King's Lynn continues to be a well-supported destination for locals and visitors which will continue to thrive as our planned investments come to fruition.

		April	May	June	July	August	September		
Burnham Market	2023	2631	2443	2571	3403	4992	2940		18980
	2024	1894	2478	2442	3178	5126	2656		17774
	Monthly Variance	72%	101%	95%	93%	103%	90%		-1206 93.6%
	Cumulative Variance	72%	86%	89%	90%	94%	94%		
Heacham	2023	3404	3647	4239	3836	5736	4200		25062
	2024	2338	3253	3506	4363	5934	2971		22365
	Monthly Variance	69%	89%	83%	114%	103%	71%		-2697 89.2%
	Cumulative Variance	69%	79%	81%	89%	93%	89%		
Hunstanton	2023	35143	34330	38475	37585	62436	36041		244010
	2024	25257	35179	32963	42429	70121	26409		232358
	Monthly Variance	72%	102%	86%	113%	112%	73%		-11652 95.2%
	Cumulative Variance	72%	87%	87%	93%	99%	95%		
Kings Lynn	2023	112900	115773	111492	122682	119448	111029		693324
	2024	111213	114776	112496	115576	118752	109487		682300
	Monthly Variance	99%	99%	101%	94%	99%	99%		-11024 98.4%
	Cumulative Variance	99%	99%	100%	98%	98%	98%		

##### Pay and Display Machines

I can report that there is only one new machine left to be installed in the Central Car park in Hunstanton, as always, power the obstacle has delayed the process and where new machines have been installed the old ones have been removed once the testing has been completed. New machines are

working well, with customers enjoying the additional payment method via Credit Card/Apple-Google Pay. With the new machines receipts on card payments are now optional, and customer has to confirm if they would like one, this will hopefully prevent the littering issue we encountered in Hunstanton when people either didn't realise or just left their receipts.

### **Grounds Maintenance and Public Open Space**

West Norfolk won big at the annual Anglia in Bloom awards 2024.

This is an amazing result and recognition of the fantastic teams who look after our public open spaces. Council staff care passionately about our parks and green spaces so these are well deserved wins for them but there are also many volunteers and community groups that make a real difference in West Norfolk, and they deserve recognition too.

“I was particularly pleased to see the additional win for the Walks fountain in Britain in Bloom for the special 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary feature. The floral display created by our team really adds colour to that part of the park. I would like to thank our staff and many others who make west Norfolk such a great place to live.”

The full list of west Norfolk results is below:

#### **Full face-to-face judging**

- Coastal - Hunstanton - Gold and CATEGORY WINNER
- Town - Downham Market - Gold

#### **Kings Lynn virtual entries**

- Public Park - The Walks - Gold and CATEGORY WINNER
- Public Park - Tower Gardens - Silver Gilt
- Special 60th Anniversary Feature for Britain in Bloom - The Walks Fountain awarded Gold and JOINT CATEGORY WINNER with Huntingdon
- Care Home/ Nursing Home - Goodwins Hall - Gold and CATEGORY WINNER
- Cemeteries/Crematoria/graveyards and burial grounds - Mintlyn Crem - Silver and CATEGORY WINNER
- Churchyards - The Minster - Silver Gilt
- Pub/Restaurant/Hotel - The Wennis - Silver Gilt
- Nature Conservation Area - Salters Sanctuary (Gaywood Valley Conservation Group) - Silver

#### **South Wootton in Bloom virtual entry**

- Public Park - Wootton Park - Gold

- Special Lifetime Achievement Award for Nolan Mills



### **Downham Market**

Refurbishment of Downham Market public toilets - Information about forthcoming works:

Work is due to start on 30 September on a Borough Council project to improve the toilet facilities in Downham Market town centre.

The new toilets will include an accessible toilet and two self-contained unisex toilets with one having a baby-changing facility added.

It was originally hoped that work would be completed in October but the

challenges of delivering the project on a very small site in a busy location and the wish to make sure the Christmas Lights switch-on is not affected mean it will now start later and take longer.

Important dates and activities

**Monday 30 September:** the Town Hall car park will be closed for one day to allow deliveries for construction work to begin.

Fencing will be put up around the site area but during the works the car park will be unaffected. A small welfare unit for construction workers will be put up outside the Town Hall.

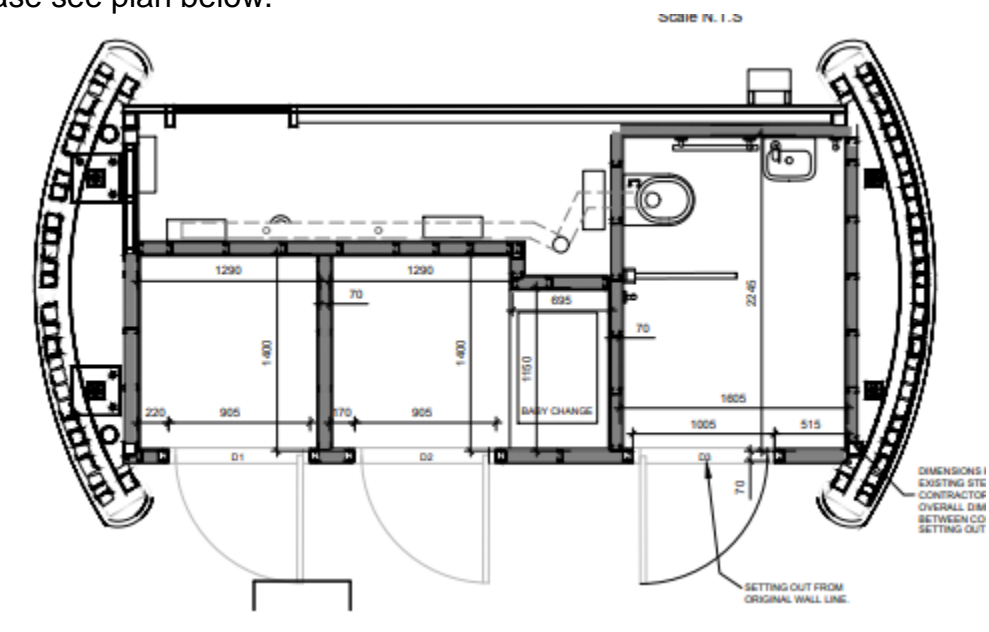
Two existing traders in the car park will temporarily move closer to the shops during the works.

**Thursday 21 November:** the Town Hall car park will be closed for one day and the construction welfare unit will be removed to maximise space available in the car park for the Christmas Lights switch on.

**Monday 25 November:** the Town Hall car park will be closed for one day to put back the welfare unit and allow some more deliveries.

The work is due to finish in early 2025.

Please see plan below.



## Events – Kings Lynn

### Classic Car Day

This well-established car event had been fully-booked for months and over 225 vintage vehicles of all makes and ages were on display, from old Fords to the American classics. Thankfully it was a nice sunny day which really brought out the crowds to this great event.



### Heritage Day 2024



## Soap Box Derby

The return of the Hunstanton Soap Box Derby, more than 58 unique karts were on display, Simon Rowe, from Radio West Norfolk, interviewed the teams on The Green before the race. Racing started at 11:15am, 58 teams from across the country took to the circuit for their first run of the course which sets off near the town hall, up on Greevegate, hops over a new improved ramp and heads down towards the finish line, overlooking the sea, on Beach Terrace Road. The second run started around 2pm, but during the interval we had some precipitation which only added to the fun.

The street circuit racing and live music was enjoyed by thousands of people in the town, I was especially pleased to see the event brought the biggest crowd ever to Hunstanton and some I talked to travelled as far as Birmingham, Kent and Wales. This makes all the hard work and dedication from our borough council teams and many volunteers worth it. I enjoyed watching all the action on our street circuit, the rain that made the track slippery and wet for the second run but didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the spectators or the racing team's spirits, it only made our track faster and more challenging.

Team Apex Legend from Stoke Ferry completed the circuit in the fastest time of 30 seconds. The veteran's group (aged 50+) was won by Nutty's Speed Shop from Hinckley in Leicestershire, they completed the course in 31 seconds. Ram Racing from Holbeach won the under 16's category (aged 13-15) with a time of 43 seconds and Team Devil Juniors, from Clacton-on-sea in Essex, won the under 13's category racing down the track in 59 seconds.

The Concours d'Elegance award for the best looking/most outstanding kart, was awarded to Hunstanton Fire Station









But I must mention the Team and volunteers after the event, as soon as the event was over the hard work began, to ensure all the straw bails were removed and put on the side for residents to take home for free, make sure all debris was cleaned from the streets and event areas and the metal fencing was removed.



Whilst it's time to reflect on an incredibly busy event season, I would like to personally thank from all Members of the Council, our officers, event teams, contractors and partners for delivering, we must not forget the annual Fawkes in the Walks fireworks scheduled for Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November, there's more information on the council website.

These events not only attract visitors but help to maintain footfall in our town centres and whilst the unpredictable weather this year has hampered some of these activities, the determination of our staff and partners has always shined through. These events not only meet our core objectives for health and well-being but wider provide fun filled activities and days out for free for families on low incomes, and lets face facts here, we have all seen a increase in costs to day-to-day life, so if we can provide free events during the summer for all age

group this can only be a good thing. Also, it's a great asset for local business with secondary spends in and around the towns and villages. Now Looking at how we can make this bigger and better than ever next season. All events this season have been well received by visitors and businesses within the Borough

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

Portfolio Meetings planned.  
Fawkes in the Walks 1<sup>st</sup> Nov  
Sebelco Liaison Meeting  
ICCM Cheque Presentation

## **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

August 2024

13<sup>th</sup> – MD Ward Matters –  
14<sup>th</sup> – Ward Matters – Congham  
14<sup>th</sup> – Grimston Cricket Club Visit –  
15<sup>th</sup> – David Flux – Ward Matters  
20<sup>th</sup> – Licensing Appeals Board – TH  
20<sup>th</sup> – Cabinet Sifting – LO  
22<sup>nd</sup> – Resort Services Visit – MC AB DM  
28<sup>th</sup> – S Planning Committee – Hopkins  
29<sup>th</sup> – Pre-Council Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> – Full Council  
30<sup>th</sup> – Lynn Sport AWN Tour

September 2024

Planning Committee – TH  
5<sup>th</sup> – Portfolio Meeting – MC DM  
12<sup>th</sup> – MAG001 – Teams  
13<sup>th</sup> – Leziate PC  
16<sup>th</sup> – Group Meeting  
17<sup>th</sup> – Norfolk Parking Partnership – NCC  
17<sup>th</sup> – Cabinet – CC  
27<sup>th</sup> – Oliver Judges – Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> – Portfolio Meeting – MC CD

October 2024

2<sup>nd</sup> – Downham Market Memorial Field Meeting – DM  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Portfolio Meeting – MC MD  
7<sup>th</sup> – Planning Committee – TH  
14<sup>th</sup> – Meetings KC

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

29th August 2024

**COUNCILLOR – JO RUST CABINET MEMBER FOR – PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**

For the period 12<sup>th</sup> August – October 17<sup>th</sup> 2024

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters. –**

#### **Housing register**

<b>Total number applicants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	
4-Low	749	55.73
3-Medium	443	32.96
2-High	152	11.31
Total	1344	100.0

231 new or change of circumstances received

#### **Housing Options**

152 were given housing advice, of these 76 progressed into new homeless declarations and/or are ongoing investigations.

#### **Lets**

We were advised of 73 lets in September. Please see attached list of properties advertised.

Last Month - 1527 live applications

1 Emergency  
198 High  
504 Medium  
824 Low

210 new or change in circumstances forms received - the forms were unable for a week to allow for essential maintenance by our IT provider

#### **Housing Options**

133 applicants given housing advice, 80 new homeless declarations and/or are ongoing investigations.

Lets advised – 38

I'm receiving a number of comments about the information shared with other councillors. This cabinet report is the way that I share with you all the work that I have been doing as cabinet member for People and Communities. I

keep the report as concise as I can, but there is some gap between one report and another and as such the information does build up. These reports are also available to the public so they can be informed.

Community Action Norfolk is an organisation which supports our local VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) groups to be effective and efficient in achieving their goals and aims, and also ensuring their governments is strong. I met with their CEO on the 14<sup>th</sup> August to get a better understanding of the role that they play in the west. They're an infrastructure body, providing the support for the organisations that use the volunteers. They do training, find funding sources and provide legal advice. They are all about strengthening the community base that so many of our residents rely on. They are currently undertaking a project to audit the energy efficiency of our village halls and communities centres. I've referred several organisations to them for support and would draw them to your attention for any local groups providing community services that you have which might benefit from being aware of them. Importantly, CAN help us to meet our corporate strategy and this is what we are measured on. They also work in partnership with Voluntary Norfolk to empower communities, with VN concentrating on the volunteers and CAN the infrastructure.

CAN are also providing advice and guidance about something called ABCD – Asset Based Community Development. This is the approach which is being used for a project the borough council is working collaboratively on with several different organisations including the police and Active Norfolk. This way of working emphasises the strengths, capacities and the assets of individuals, communities and institutions and uses them to build sustainable development on and enhance the community. They work on what is already there and strong and not what's wrong. There'll be more to follow about the project, but it's all a part of some exciting work our council is doing in the community to try and make things better for our residents in the ways I referred to in my August cabinet report (becoming a Marmot Town, working with Sports England & the Clear, Hold, Build initiative).

I was one of a group of people who met with South West Norfolk MP, Terry Jermy. I must say it was really refreshing to have been contacted by him to request a meeting as opposed to seeking one. He was informed and knowledgeable about the situation with both the QEH and the IDB (Internal Drainage Boards). Some of you will be aware that the IDBs formed the basis of Terry's maiden speech and his intervention helped our council secure additional funding to help with the costs we shoulder because of them that many other councils don't face.

My regular meetings with Freebridge continue and we have seen a few more voids turned over and made available. What we don't know currently is the number of internal transfers as that impacts on the availability of those we have waiting on the housing register.

Our town hosted the annual Pride celebration on Saturday August 17<sup>th</sup> and once again, while the glitter and rainbows were amazing and everyone

enjoyed themselves, there's a very serious message that runs alongside the fun. Those in the LGBTQ + community still face discrimination and isolation and it's something that causes divides in our community. Until we're all equal, none of us are. And I'd like to use this report to have it on record that our outside spaces team and Claire Thompsett provide amazing support to ensure that Pride runs smoothly. While our council doesn't fund Pride, it certainly provides benefits in kind which are invaluable. So thank you to all of the team who work so hard to help make it happen.

I was honoured to have been invited to attend the Ukrainian Independence Day event Organised by our own Oksana B on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August and well supported by staff from the Lily Team, who always pull out all the stops to support events which bring together our community and help provide cohesion and overcome loneliness.

I helped organise two tours of the Alive West Norfolk Facilities week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> August. They were very well received even if they weren't a large number of councillors in attendance. We all got to see the range of services on offer which I know was a surprise to some. Our AWN staff offer far more than mere leisure services and incorporate health and NHS as well as rehabilitation. They're a real asset to us and by bringing them back in house, we can maximise and strengthen their offer to our residents.

We had a full council meeting on Thursday August 29<sup>th</sup> where I faced a public question about the work our energy efficiency team is doing and whether the work that they have done so successfully in getting our residents accepted as eligible for the grants, can be shared on our website or, at least, publicly. Work is being done to do this.

I attended another regular Health and Wellbeing Board meeting followed by the Integrated Care Partnership meeting at Norfolk County Council. At these meetings we get high level presentations about the work being undertaken by Health and Wellbeing partners such as NCC. This time we saw the 2023-24 Children and Young people's Annual Report from the Norfolk Safeguarding Children partnership, which is celebrating the voice of children and young people and listening to what they have to say. Young people from Norfolk's Youth Advisory Boards, Youth Parliament and the Matthew Project took part to produce the report. It's what young people have said needs to happen to keep them safe. This link will take you to the agenda and presentations - [Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com/Document.ashx)

It is important to prioritise prevention through early help and to tackle inequalities in the communities. However, with millions of pounds more of cuts to come to all our councils, that work is going to be harder and harder to do. While I don't want to be cynical, I find it harder and harder to retain confidence in the effectiveness of systems which have been cut to the bone. We were next presented with the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report. These reports are a legal requirement to present. Some of us will have attended the safeguarding training put on in October so we will be aware of our responsibilities because it is down to all of us. The report does state that

we need to consider how we can improve the contributions to both safeguarding throughout our own organisation as well as to the joint work of the board. I hope that those who did attend the training feel more confident of our own role as a result.

Following that we had a Better Care Fund report. The BCF is a national programme introduced in 2013 to try to join up Health and Adult Care Services and to help people to manage their own health and wellbeing and live independently and healthily for longer. We do a lot of work at a borough level on the Health and Wellbeing Partnership to support this. Part of the BCF is the Disabled Facilities Grant which can be applied for to undertake adaptations in houses.

Please use the link contained within the report to read more fully all the presentations that we received, there are over 200 pages! Some bedtime reading perhaps.

On 10<sup>th</sup> September I visited True's yard and heard all about the work that they do in our community and how they received approximately 4000 people between October 2023 and the end of March who needed to stay warm. True's Yard is used as a warm space for which our council contributes funding. They also ran a breakfast club to help local families. They provide a wonderful variety of different types of entertainment for children of all ages during the holidays including Slime and Bubbles, Vikings and Victorians and the Victorian Fair Ground. They welcome approximately 13000 visitors during the year and are gradually increasing numbers to pre covid levels. While there is a small charge, free open days are also on offer. It's well worth a visit and not just for a piece of cake.

I met with a young entrepreneur on September 11<sup>th</sup> who is proposing to set up an organisation for black and brown women who currently feel that they have no community which understands their needs. I am pleased to be able to provide some signposting for support to CAN.

Later that day I had a meeting with Relate about the services that they provide for some of our residents through a Service Level Agreement with us. These SLAs that fall under my portfolio are currently being reviewed to ensure that they do meet our corporate objectives in the way we expect them to. Our relate service was previously provided by an affiliated branch - Norfolk and Suffolk relate. It then merged with national relate and underwent a restructure. Now most of the services delivered in the West are provided online. Relate have a number of services which they're piloting which could be available in our area at an extra cost.

That evening I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the award evening of Open Road. There were a number of guests in attendance as well as all those being presented with awards and certificates in front of their families and friends. The education and training provided by Open Road means that young people who would have been at risk of falling through the education/training net, have been able to achieve and gain recognition which

they can use to gain employment or go on to further education. It was very uplifting.

I met on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> with Krystal of the Sisterhood Village. This group had received some funding from the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and I was keen to hear how just a 5 months on, they'd been able to reach 30-35 families with the baby and toddler group, were holding successful book clubs at no outgoing cost and have had a keyring produced which would allow women to reach out to others if they needed. The group have period packs that they are donating and there are plans to start a coffee morning twice a week. They plan to survey their clients at the end of 6 months to see if they're meeting expectations.

I attended an online session on Healthy Homes in the East of England where we looked at smoking cessation, particularly in social housing. Retrofitting energy efficiency measures and data sharing, which we do with the ICB. There were also discussions on how the built environment and regeneration can support good health. As you can hear throughout my reports, our health prior to needing acute or primary health care, is a real focus of work. More and more of it is being seen as work to be done by our local councils – us!

I attended the first food for thought of this 12 week session which are being held at the London Road Methodist Church halls. I persuaded my mum to attend this week (15/10) and she was really pleased that she did, not least because she heard from our very own waste and recycling manager Barry B. he was there with his team talking about recycling, reducing our waste first and foremost, but then reusing or recycling it. Some of you might have read the BBC report also out today which stated energy for waste incinerators and burning our rubbish is as bad for the environment as using energy from coal. If there is a recycling session near you, do attend. But do attend the Food for Thought sessions which will be running from 9.30 until 11.30 until December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

I met with some of the exec team of the QEH to chat about restructures and changes that were taking place which were causing staff concern.

I also visited some new temporary accommodation we've purchased to enable us to better accommodate our families. They are lovely houses and I can only imagine how happy families will be to be placed there, possibly after having lived in some really unsuitable properties. Our temporary accommodation situation is not as bad as some areas, but we have high aims for all our local families and decent and secure tenancies is one of them.

We also welcomed our new CEO, Kate on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

I chaired our regular Health and Wellbeing Partnership meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September where we welcomed Kelly who is our new partnership coordinator. She's already made a big difference to the group and she comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience which our area and our residents will benefit from. Kelly has put together an Ebulletin which shares all our partner information. It contains a lot of really useful information which you might want

to share with your parish councils. Please let me know if you'd like me to forward it on to you.

I attended some online training around LGA finance. It was quite useful and is one of a wide variety of training programmes available to us all free of charge.

We had a three month follow up of our 2 day place expansion training on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September

I visited Lavendar View in Hunstanton on September 25<sup>th</sup>. The plans for this started a very long time ago and it was only because officers of our council ensured that this site was allocated over and above the housing numbers needed that it was able to come to fruition. Officers also worked to ensure that those properties won't be able to be snatched up and used for second homes by placing conditions on the properties thus ensuring that we will be able to enjoy affordable housing alongside affordable supported living for those with care needs. It really will be a development that will benefit local residents.

I attended a smoking a social housing session on 26<sup>th</sup> September. This is an issue which I have written about previously and I'm sure that you'll hear about from me again. Suffice to say it appears plans are developing on how we can support our residents to either cut back or to give up entirely. Stopping smoking saves residents a lot of money as well as helping improve their health and we have a slightly higher prevalence of smoking in Norfolk, with smoking in social housing being considerably higher at 35%. I've written before that we want to cut out rate down in the west from 21,300 to 14,200. A big ask, but one which would have a significant positive impact.

I attended the National Police Memorial Day at the Minster on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September which recognises those officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty. It was very poignant.

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September I and other councillors took part in the safeguarding training I referred to earlier in my report. The training was very interesting, useful and informative and at the end of it we gained a certificate from St Thomas Training.

I also attended a three day session (2.5 hours a session) training course on Fuel Debt Advice in the Community. It will enable me to signpost, support and advice residents who are in fuel debt or poverty. It was held by National Energy Action and we were taken through reasons why residents might be in fuel debt and the responsibilities of fuel providers. On Friday I took the 2 hour exam and I will hear within 4 weeks whether I have passed the exam and gained a City and Guilds Level 2 accreditation. In order to do so one must achieve an 80% pass rate.

On Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October I attended the Integrated Care System District meeting which was online and didn't require a drive to Norwich! We heard more about the Health Inequalities Framework and the pillars that sit underneath it and



the living and working conditions pillar, with questions posed about economic development and our role as employers. I suggested that we would also benefit from having a trade union input. We also heard about the proactive interventions being taken to support our older and more vulnerable residents which will keep them living healthily, independently and safely in their own homes for longer. And we finally talked about the Health and Wellbeing Partnership event which I will be attending in Norwich tomorrow.

I attended an online event on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October about promoting children's oral health and the government's commitment to rolling out a programme of supervised toothbrushing programmes in the most deprived areas and the role of the LA in this. The LA will roll out supervised toothbrushing programmes while schools and nurseries will run supervised toothbrushing clubs. It will reduce health inequalities and has been proven to work. You can read more at [www.supervisedtoothbrushing.com](http://www.supervisedtoothbrushing.com)

Like others I've had to attend budget review meetings where we ensure that we're doing the best for our residents in the way we use our budgets.

I attended a meeting to discuss the potential for a youth forum.

I attended an event hosted for the police force around the ABCD I referred to earlier in this report. It was a really uplifting meeting providing hopes for doing things differently going forward.

Groundworks gallery hosted a launch of a display called Ground up on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October which was amazing. The art on display was thought provoking and interesting.

On Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October I visited Downham Market to hear of the work which had been undertaken there to try to establish a dementia friendly town and how, once it's revived and relaunched, we might be able to create then same here. This is all work which will be of benefit to our residents.

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October I attended the Kings Centre in Norwich for the ICS conference. We needed to look and consider how far we had progressed since the conference last year. From my personal perspective I could see that in the West we had made significant progress on what was needed to do – work on a preventative strategy. The ICB's job is to develop and deliver new models of care and there is progress on that which can be seen with the new Health Hub which will negate the need to use the QEH. More work needs to be done but there's progress. Our area is ahead of the game in the preventative work and that was seen by many of our partners present today. There were videos with the lived experienced of our Norfolk residents which included the Youth Advisory Boards. They had surveyed 11,736 young people to find out what was important to them. As a result of their survey they have put out tenders for contracts to provide the services that the youth commissioners said they wanted. Locally our YAB hasn't received many bids for the contracts and so is extending the deadline. We all discussed what the priorities should be and we also accepted our limitations and barriers as well as the opportunities. It was quite inspiring and I'm happy to share my notes if

anyone would like to see more.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

White Ribbon Meeting – 17<sup>th</sup> Oct  
QEH Visit 18<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Equality Impact Assessment Training – 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct  
Freebridge meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct  
Emergency providers afternoon tea 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct  
Cares Voice 24<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Downham Market Foodbank 25<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Beat the Bills Downham Market 25<sup>th</sup> Oct  
All Saints Church Service 27<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Norwich YAB meeting with the Exec Director of Play England 29<sup>th</sup> Oct  
MAP meeting 30<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Light up the Corn Exchange for national Carers week 30<sup>th</sup> Oct  
Health and Wellbeing Partnership 31<sup>st</sup> Oct  
Full Council 31<sup>st</sup> Oct

## **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

CAN  
Terry Jermy MP  
VJ Day Commemoration  
Ukrainian Independence day  
Tour of LynnSport and AWN  
KLAC  
Portfolio Briefing – Housing  
Planning Committee  
Equality Training  
Trues Yard  
Classical Music Rocks  
Open Road Award Ceremony  
LGA Finance Training  
Lavendar View turf cutting  
Smoking and social housing  
National Police memorial Day  
Fuel Debt Advice in the Community  
Safeguarding Training  
Cost of living meeting  
Audit Committee  
Dementia Friendly Town – Downham Market  
Wellbeing Day Discovery Centre  
Portfolio briefings – Health and Wellbeing  
Portfolio Briefings – CIC  
Full Council  
Health and wellbeing partnership meetings (monthly)  
West Norfolk Community Transport  
E&C

Freebridge briefing  
Joint Group Meetings  
Cabinet/special cabinet/cabinet sifting/Cabinet Briefings  
IDB meetings  
Food for Thought  
King's Lynn Community Football AGM  
Homelessness and housing delivery briefing  
Staff survey feedback  
ICS at NCC  
Guildhall Briefing  
Bus and public transport meeting  
SLA meetings with relate and West Norfolk Befrienders  
QEH  
Carers Voice

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

30<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### **Councillor Simon Ring – Deputy Leader and cabinet member for Business and Culture**

#### **Culture**

I begin this report with culture with the exciting news that work has begun on the Guildhall and Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust (Stratford Upon Avon) Folio Project. 4 locations have been chosen: Stratford Upon Avon, Shakespeare North Playhouse, Alwick Castle and the Guildhall in King's Lynn. Children from a local school will be working with the Birthplace Trust to produce Midsummer Night's Dream at the Guildhall in November. This is the last of the 4 performances of various plays across the country and the culmination of a national project to mark the publication of the children's folio.

This is just part of a continuation of the story unfolding with the Shakespeare connection and the possibilities for marketing are endless.

The total people engaging with Guildhall stories in August was in excess of 80 million this was due to the release of the story about the new (very old) doorway. In September there was still a very respectable 200,000 people engaging with Guildhall stories.

The total footfall for the year to date appears to show that 14.7% of the Borough population have interacted with the Guildhall in the last 12 months which is a huge uplift on the year before.

Planning permission was granted unanimously for the projects RIBA stage 4 plans and the tender for the full works are attracting significant interest.

The highly successful summer exhibition Magic of Middle Earth Exhibition closed having been visited by around 2000.

Lay of the Land opened in two galleries (Shakespeare and Fermoy): an exhibition of 34 of the most high profile contemporary East Anglian Artists opened with the accompanying schools work.

I also attended the opening of Collusions 'Kinema of Dreams', which is being shown in clips at the Majestic Cinema and projected onto the Greyfriars Tower until early November.

More broadly, work continues on the Cultural and Heritage Strategy with a further two workshops which happened in September.

#### **Business**

The 2025 Business Awards nominations are now open and we will once again be sponsoring the event and the Business of the Year category.

The Norfolk Economic Strategy has had airings at both R&D and Cabinet. It is still in

its draft stages and members expressed some concerns regarding the lack of exposure that a number of significant West Norfolk industries have been given, including Bircham Newton Construction College, COWA and the School of Nursing, and the wealth of the tourism offerings including the Guildhall's Shakespeare connections and world exposure.

There was a desire by members for our concerns to be reported back to the authors and edits made where possible.

Our own Economic Strategy is in it's advanced stages and we hope that the granular detail that was missing from the Norfolk strategy will be provided by our own.

I had meetings and conversations with a number of potential investors in sites in West Norfolk and am pleased to hear that there is growing interest in the NORA site from potential tenants.

The retail Rail to River pods on Purfleet Street are now available. We currently have a list of 15 businesses who are keen to make use of them. They will be available from one week to 3 months, and it is intended that they are used by businesses who offer something slightly different to what is already available in town. The F&B pods are not yet available, due to delays in connecting services. It is hoped that we will get one of the 15 businesses interested in these in by Christmas. These pods will also be bookable for a minimum of one week but with the set-up costs being higher, we will be allowing them to be occupied for as long as 6 months. It is essential that we turn these pods over, giving everyone a fair chance of their use. There will be a requirement that they be open 5 out of 7 days a week.

I attended the pitches for the 'Love Your Town' grants of £2,000. There were some very good ideas put forward. It was particularly encouraging to see so many from Downham Market, most of which were supported, especially considering the fact that there were none last year.

### **Leisure**

A number of Councillors went on two tours of our leisure site in Lynn, Downham and Hunstanton. Staff presented us with a great deal of information about what AWN delivers and the tour of the facilities opened a lot of eyes to both the importance of these assets to the Health and Wellbeing of West Norfolk residents, but also the very real financial issues facing us with the current physical state of some of the buildings.

We have begun the planning, with a small working group, of the reintroduction of the AWN business within Council control, and I am happy to report the businesslike efficiency being shown in developing the plan. All, at present, is on target for end of this tax year.

At the end of P5 AWN Attendances are up by 4% with good performances across the board but especially community & events. Fitness performed well on the back of the Paris Olympic offer.

There are a range positive projects currently underway both in the community and at AWN sites working with a range of partners.

There are some updates on Projects some which have been halted with the move back to the Council.

There are some significant risks the AWN board should be aware of currently including Downham Market Academy and flood damage at Lynnsport.

There are productive discussions taking place with the council about future operating models for the venues and options for remodelling and reinvesting in the venues.

## **PERFORMANCE**

### **Cinema**

August box office saw the latest Marvel epic *Deadpool & Wolverine* hit our screens. The duo have since gone on to become the highest grossing film of all time. Also doing well in our cinema was the dramatic novel adaptation *It Ends with Us* with Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni, with uplifting animation *Despicable Me 4* making the summer a huge success. Following the summer, September was packed with an eclectic mix of exciting features. Leading the box office this month was the long-awaited sequel to the eccentric eighties classic, *Beetlejuice Beetlejuice*. King's Lynn Middle-aged audiences will not be forgotten this month with true story-inspired *Lee* with Kate Winslet and Alexander Skarsgard and the dark mystery *The Critic* with beloved star Ian McKellen. The Cinema has had a good couple of months with good audience numbers. We had 6 sold out screenings of the Lord of the Rings trilogy shown in collaboration with the Guildhall exhibition, as well as 5 new screening of National Theatre Live *Prima Facie*. The Nov/Dec film slate is looking promising

### **Theatre**

On the other hand, theatre has had a disappointing September. It's still above target but some shows which sell out, have only hit 75% of their projected sales. Comedian Dom Jolly was moved from the Corn Exchange to the Guildhall due to poor sales. However, October & November have great sales and Panto is looking promising, as the sales are the highest they have ever been at this stage. Spring 2025 looks like it will be a record also with many shows already sold out.

### **Membership, Sales, and Retention**

To align with the excitement surrounding the Paris Olympics and Paralympics, AWN introduced a limited-time "Go For Gold" membership promotion from July 1st to September 8th. This offer provides unlimited access to all facilities, including gym, swim, classes, Biocircuit, and the athletics track. Responding to feedback provided from parents to him in Cllr Ben Jones' ward, the offer incorporated Kaset access into the "Go For Gold" junior promotion.

The "Go For Gold" campaign exceeded expectations, surpassing membership targets and generating a total of 756 new memberships, including 381 Gold memberships.

This successful initiative not only increased membership yield but also validated our existing pricing strategies. Additionally, it demonstrated the value and popularity of the Kaset facility among junior members, reinforcing the importance of providing

accessible and engaging fitness options for all ages.

As of September 2024, membership numbers stand at 6,674, representing a 437-member increase compared to July 2023. This ongoing positive trend is reflected in the consistent sales performance, with 1,700 membership agreements sold by September 19th, 2024, a 25% increase from the same period last year. The financial impact of these increased memberships is evident in the monthly direct debit income which is up 12.5% compared to the same period in the previous year.

To further promote physical activity and engage the local community, the Leisure sites participated in National Fitness Day on September 18th. By offering a range of free activities, the event aimed to inspire residents to adopt a more active lifestyle. While the full impact of this initiative is still being evaluated, it is expected to have a positive influence on membership and community engagement.

### Attendances

Attendances to the end of P5 are up 4% over the same period the previous year at 620,506. Some headline attendances:

	% Difference to end of P5 vs pre
Theatre	7%
Cinema	-15%
Stories of Lynn	0%
Town Hall	35%
Community	18%
Fitness	9%
Swimming	-1%
Group Ex	-3%
Sports Hall	-7%
3G	-1%
Events	130%
Gymnastics	3%
Football	72%
Kaset	41%
Barn	12%

Areas for focus include the cinema, sports halls and swimming due to budget gap. Sports Hall income is good due to a large rise in events.

### Summer Holiday 2024

Another positive summer holiday programme including Big Norfolk Holiday Fun and BCKLWN funded clubs and Summer of Play £1/50p activities saw 16,198 attendances. This included 1503 Big Norfolk Holiday Fun attendances, 1910 Holiday Clubs and 12,114 Summer of Play activities subsidised by the BCKLWN. The support of the BCKLWN and the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) provided 3,413 free meals for children attending holiday clubs. At present, Christmas is due to be

the final HAF funded holiday period despite lobbying nationally there has been indication of an extension or replacement fund yet.

**Community**

Active Community sessions have seen a large growth over the summer period with attendances up 84% on Aug 23. This has mainly been due to the UKSPF funding enabling the extension of the programme and the range of events delivered over the summer including Town Centre Olympic activities, Hunstanton Beach Sports and Tower Street Games.

**Sports Courses**

Sports Courses continue to do well marginally up on the same period 2023. Drop off in swimming and tennis has been offset by growth in football and gymnastics.

	<b>Swimming</b>	<b>Gymnastics</b>	<b>Football</b>	<b>Tennis</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>Aug 2023</b>	1789	922	432	100	3
<b>Aug 2024</b>	1624	959	605	79	3
<b>Diff</b>	-9%	4%	40%	-21%	1

Tennis (Junior) – Following the successful delivery of the LTA Youth Start 6-week course in June, we launched another course at the start of this month after the August break. Both age specific sessions were full and extended to accommodate the demand.



LTA Youth start: Racquet, t shirt and sweat bands provided as part of the affordable package in partnership with the LTA

Tennis – (Adults) –The new Intermediate+ session has been a success with all 16 spaces booked! We now have customers on the waiting list and will look to grow the session with potentially adding a second coach.

Swimming lessons have started slower than usual for the September pick up, that



said numbers have still increased following the return to school. We have now moved to teaching in water at stage 1 and 2 in St James after a trial period and customer consultation, as the changes were very well received with perceived quality and progress higher in all participants. With most of our competition in Kings Lynn, this will help us remain competitive with the private swim schools in the area whom all deliver in water teaching.

Football has seen a fantastic return to the new season with 605 players now on direct debit programmes as well as PAYG customers for First Touch, Walking Football, All to Play For and Social Soccer. This represents a 40% increase on the same time last year. Pre-season saw our U9-U14 Elite Teams invited to the Canary Cup at Norwich CSF's Nest. This Cup is an invite only for elite football programmes with our teams facing Norwich City, Aston Villa, Watford, West Brom and Brighton to name a few. As you can imagine this is a difficult competition for us but our U14's did make the final against Brighton but narrowly missed out.

Time to Talk Football Cup took place in August with 16 wellbeing teams from across the country descending on Lynnsport with football, music, magic and fundraising for the 8:56 Foundation.

Gymnastics had a busy summer with 6 competitions, 2 of which we hosted at Lynnsport. Many top placings and wins with a notable performance from one of our tumblers coming 3<sup>rd</sup> in the National Finals. Over the summer we also had a national coach come and do a Tumbling Camp with our Senior Elite Tumblers which was a great experience for them. Numbers continue to grow all be it at a slower rate.

Climbing Club – The Adult climbing club at Lynnsport hit its capacity for the first time in a few months this week, with 20 climbers in attendance!

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

### **3G Resurface**

Contractors are onsite and working to replace the existing 3G surface. All sessions have been able to be relocated to other areas of the Lynnsport site. Unfortunately, the base is in a poor state of repair, so we have had to agree a further £83k to tarmac the base, bringing the total amount to £413k. We are expecting to reopen the 3G mid-November.

### **New 3G**

This planning application has been withdrawn. We considered that River Lane is not the most appropriate site and a decision was made to conduct a Borough wide site feasibility for up to 4 3G pitches, a call for sites will be part of that study. We met with both the Football Foundation and the Norfolk FA to give them our reasons and work with them going forward.

### **Padel**

Initial feasibility work for the development of Padel in West Norfolk has been followed with meetings with potential developers, operators and investment partners. Partners have been requested to provide short overviews of their interest in the project by the 11 October from which point proposals will be pitched to the council.

### **Town Hall weddings**

We have just completed a new video and photographs for the new wedding brochure.

### **Corn Exchange**

We have started the trial of card payments only at the bar. We have decided to do this as a soft approach with signage saying our “preferred payment is card/contactless”. Although there was an initial backlash on Facebook (this was mainly due to our message being incorrect) we have not received any complaints.

We are working with the Council & BID for the Christmas Light Switch on. We are hiring a Cinderella coach and horses to bring Cinderella to the stage to switch on the lights.

We have just extended our Patronbase box office system contract for another 5 years. We went through procurement & legal to get an exemption from the tender process as Patronbase are already in the framework and were offering us a far better contract of £45K over 5 years.

### **EDI reassessments and improvements across sites**

Downham Leisure Reception social area. Following a visit from Dragons on the move, new tables and chairs have been put in place to encourage a more social / community feel that are accessible to wheelchair bound users. A full EIA assessment on the site will follow this to establish further reasonable adjustments. The same process following the Dragons visit to Lynnsport will also be undertaken. St James changing rooms: Additional beacon alarm lights (visible red beacons) have been installed following feedback from a profoundly deaf user that this would be beneficial. The full EIA assessment on the site also highlighted the need to amend some changing room signage to gender neutral, so that's also been completed. We are in the process of ordering wider access graded steps to the pool too, as currently it's the hoist or steep steps, so this is an easy reasonable adjustment to help with accessibility for those with limited mobility/post partem/obesity.

### **NEW PROPOSALS AND INVESTMENT**

#### **Facility renewal plan**

Proposals for investment into a renewal plan for pools and leisure facilities will be presented to Cabinet in December. The plan highlights four priorities with a total capital cost to deliver the long term programme at around £80m. The plan will offer a total of around £1.3m net annual revenue improvement for the council – as well as in excess of 250,000 annual increase in visits - many of which will be new users. The proposed first priority is the replacement of St James pool at Lynnsport, closely followed by the replacement of Oasis in Hunstanton (site tbc).

The report attempts to present a compelling case for the council to invest in facilities renewal, with the twin aims of breaking out of the spiral of decline and escalating costs, combined with synchronising, as far as practicable, the closure of old facilities and their replacement with new.

This is an approach which has tried and tested results in terms of significant reductions in running costs, major increases in usage and income and improved health, social and economic outcomes.

The key to trigger this virtuous circle is to secure upfront capital resources; the report demonstrates that significant elements of this capital can be 'DIY funded' by the

savings on annual running costs released by the new facilities – thereby shifting the council's spend away from ever increasing day-to-day subsidy into investment in a legacy of new high quality, low carbon, high usage, long term assets. A classic 'invest to save' approach with today's subsidy being transformed into tomorrow's investment.

## **Tourism**

### **West Norfolk Tourism Development Plan - Actions**

The Tourism department continues to work on actions directly related to the six strategic aims highlighted within the *West Norfolk Tourism Development Plan 2022-26*. We prepared and presented our progress to borough council members across two *Tourism Informal Working Group* meetings (these meetings held in August and September 2024).

### **The East Anglia LVEP**

Ourselves and Visit East of England, successful in their Summer 2024 application to become a nationally-recognised LVEP (the East Anglia Local Visitor Economy Partnership), arranged an online Q&A session on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2024 for officers and members, about what the new LVEP status for the East of England could mean for the area. The Tourism department then attended and contributed to the Visit East of England LVEP Destination Management Plan working group session on 11th September, alongside peer tourism bodies from across East Anglia.

As a Visit East of England partner organisation, the west Norfolk Tourism department attended the Visit East of England & Partners Visitor Economy Conference held on 16th October 2024, with the LVEP status and 'AI tools for the tourism industry' being two main topics of focus throughout the day's conference programme, based in Norwich (which was attended by almost all partners across Norfolk and Suffolk).

### **Other Partnership Working**

#### ***Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape***

The Tourism department continues to be an active attendee at important workshops recently held by the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape team. These workshops are intended to help shape and influence the Norfolk Coast Protected Landscape Management Plan, which includes aspects of sustainability, business practices and possible visitor pressures in vulnerable areas of the local environment. The latest workshops we attended were:

Management Plan Workshop: *Nature Recovery Targets* - 10th October.

Management Plan Workshop: *Sustainable Tourism* - 15th October.

#### ***Downham Market Town Council***

Ourselves, joined by Cllr. Anota, attended the Downham Market Business & Tourism Committee's local business engagement session on 18th September and we gave a presentation to the businesses and organisations in attendance.

The presentation we gave was focussed on identifying between 'quick wins' and 'long-term vision' when it came to forming new projects within the town of Downham Market to boost footfall and trade.

#### ***Hanse League***

The Tourism department, as Chair of the Sustainable Hanse Working Group, arranged and held a well-attended online event in September dedicated to the sustainable topic of 'Water', with speakers from the following three businesses:

1. Walpole Highway: Tamar Nurseries.

2. Deventer: Room for the River Programme.
3. Beverley & East Riding: Changing Coast East Riding project.

A good deal of climate change officers and environmental leads from across northern Europe attended this Hanse event arranged by ourselves, with another similar event to be arranged in the New Year.

#### **West Norfolk VENI Steering Group**

The Tourism department, an active member of this steering group after it was recently granted SPF funding to roll out a programme of business support to the west Norfolk tourism industry is now actively working alongside the VENI project to create multimedia content for the SPF-supported West Norfolk Tourism Ambassadors E-Learning Course. This includes filming and presenting a small range of content for this forthcoming online course.

#### **King's Lynn Walsingham Way Working Group**

The Tourism department represented their ongoing work with the King's Lynn Walsingham Way Working Group at the St Olav's Way Conference at Norwich Cathedral on 10th September, gaining insight on getting more national and local support for such a new major (29-mile) trail linking Walsingham to King's Lynn. We also produced and gave a presentation about this new King's Lynn Walsingham Way project to members of the King's Lynn Civic Society on 3rd October 2024.

#### **Tourism Statistics for 2023**

The report of the last calendar year of volume and value tourism statistics for west Norfolk was released in September 2024.

This report indicated that more people are coming to visit west Norfolk compared to the year before and, when compared to recent years, they are spending more whilst they are here.

Compared to 2019 there was a major increase of visits to the west Norfolk coastline in 2023.

#### **Print Advertising and Promotions**

During the post-summer season each year the Tourism department concentrates on **out-of-season tourism** promotions, as well as marketing to help **boost all-year-round group and coach tours** to the area in the future.

A selection of actions we undertook for this period include:

- **'Who's Who in Group Leisure 2025'** magazine (December 2024 Edition, glossy magazine which goes out to group tour operators) - we created two full-colour half-page paid promos in September for this forthcoming group tour operator magazine, one advert dedicated to *Hunstanton* and the other advert dedicated to *King's Lynn*.
- **'Coach Touring Magazine'** (December 2024 Edition, glossy magazine, which goes out to group tour operators) - we created a full-colour full page paid advertorial for *Hunstanton*, with the aim to help boost group tour bookings for the town.
- **'Norfolk Magazine'** (September 2024 Edition, well-established glossy magazine focussing on the county of Norfolk) - we created a paid full-page advert for *King's Lynn*, the aim being to help encourage out-of-season tourism with the piece.  
This mirrors the 'A Love Letter to...King's Lynn' theme of that particular edition of Norfolk Magazine.
- **'The Stir'** (October 2024 Edition, glossy magazine for craft spirits) - we

created a 2-page 'Winter in West Norfolk' illustrated feature as paid advertorial in this magazine to promote out-of-season tourism to affluent demographics.

#### **Other Printed Marketing and Promotions**

- **'The Downham Market Gingerbread Trail'** - Following on from its successful mid-summer public launch event in Downham Market (Discover Downham Heritage Centre), a second print of the department's new self-guided town trail title, *The Downham Market Gingerbread Trail* booklet, was necessary in September 2024.
- **'Norfolk Coast Myths & Legends'** - The first full draft of the Tourism department's new 'Norfolk Coast Myths & Legends' booklet was finished on 25th September, for a soft launch at the 'Fear in the Fens' Festival on 25th October, before wider public distribution in early 2025 with a small series of public events linked to the release. This new tourism product primarily celebrates and promotes out-of-season tourism and all-year-round experiences and folklore along our coastline.

#### **Online Promotions**

We remain very busy in creating and posting new media and online content as regular promotional elements to support west Norfolk tourism businesses and organisations. We have focussed a good deal of time and resources on capturing new promotional media from the west Norfolk coast and some major rural tourism businesses. We have also engaged with a variety of great Downham Market Town Centre food and drink premises for current social media and future planned print projects aiming to highlight that particular growing aspect of the town's strong tourism offer.

#### **Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies

##### Officers

Kate Blakemore  
Michelle Drewery  
Tina Underwood  
Lorraine Gore  
Debbie Gates  
Oliver Judges  
Duncan Hall  
Martin Chisholm  
Jemma Curtis  
Tim Fitzhigham  
Honor Howell  
James Grant  
James Arandale  
Alexa Baker  
Tommy Goode  
Lynne Fawkes

Outside bodies

Civic Society  
Hunstanton Action Group  
Conservancy Board  
Town Deal Board  
BID  
The Garage  
Museum Services

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**

**31<sup>st</sup> October 2024**

**COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR BEALES – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

For the period 29<sup>th</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> October

**1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

**Florence Fields**

The construction of the pumping station and wet-well continues to advance at a satisfactory pace. This critical infrastructure is essential for managing water flow and preventing flooding in the development. Meanwhile, the team is diligently working to address the remaining planning conditions before the initial plots can be handed over to buyers.

The show home is nearing completion, and its completion will be a significant milestone for the project. Potential buyers will be able to visit the show home in December to get a sense of the quality and design of the homes on offer.

Overall, the project is progressing well, and the team is confident in its ability to deliver the high-quality development on schedule.

**Lynnsport 1**

Ground engineering works are progressing steadily, laying the groundwork for the construction of the development. Concurrently, preliminary civil engineering tasks are underway to ensure necessary services are available on the site.

A significant milestone was achieved recently with the groundbreaking ceremony, attended by the Mayor and ward councillors. This event served as a public declaration of the start of the project.

In the coming months, the process of piling will commence. While this activity may inevitably cause some disruption to local residents, we have implemented a comprehensive communications programme to inform the community about the anticipated impact. Furthermore, we have planned measures to minimise disruption to the extent reasonably practicable.

### **Salters Road**

The Salters Road development of 78 entirely affordable homes is nearing completion. All properties are watertight and have been plastered. Just over half of the properties have been over to Freebridge Community Housing. The project is on track for the full delivery of these much-needed homes by the end of the year, with a target completion date of January 2025. This development is a crucial step in addressing the local housing crisis and providing much-needed affordable accommodation for the community.

### **Southend Road**

Despite our best efforts, the initial target of delivering the units by October 2024 has not been achieved. Several factors have contributed to these delays, with the complexity of certain finishing works, such as the zinc cladding, proving to be particularly challenging. To address these setbacks and ensure a timely completion, we are actively exploring a revised delivery date. Our current aim is to complete the project before Christmas, though this timeline remains subject to ongoing assessment and potential adjustments.

In light of the revised timeline and evolving project circumstances, we are conducting a comprehensive review of the sales process. This evaluation is designed to ensure that our assumptions and appraisals remain aligned with our goal of maximizing the council's return on investment whilst also delivering wider strategic objectives.

### **Southgates**

Design development is progressing steadily, as our architects finalise the concept designs for the development plots and public realm areas of the site. The BCKLWN and NCC teams continue to collaborate with stakeholders through various briefing and consultation events, preparing for NCC's upcoming Outline Business Case Submission. Following the completion of the concept design phase, the team will concentrate on assessing the project's feasibility in greater detail, exploring potential funding options, and determining the most effective delivery mechanisms.

### **Item of urgency at Cabinet on 17 September 2024**

Council will be aware that at the 17 September 2024 Cabinet meeting, the Chair of the Corporate Performance Panel had agreed to an urgent decision being taken by Cabinet under (Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012), on the Strategic Property Acquisition in King's Lynn. This was because it was intended to make a key decision at least 28 days before the Cabinet meeting with the item not having been advertised on the Forward Decisions List as it was impracticable due to special urgency.



## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

The first 100 days of any administration seems to attract excitement and appears to be seen as an indelible indicator of method and policy. In my view, method maybe, policy, not so much. The method of this administration is to always put our community first and seek consensus

wherever appropriate and possible in pursuit of that. Easier said than done on occasion! As for policy, I am a pragmatist and always have been, and policy will always seek to advantage our community but is essentially the art of the possible. To that end, I have spent many of the first 100 days of my leadership meeting officer teams and departments across the Council. Firstly to meet as many staff in person as possible but importantly to better understand the complexities and breadth of our organisation. We face huge financial challenges in the near future, and it is important that we understand the services of most value to our community to inform how we respond. Whilst you should all be in no doubt that there will be some difficult decisions in front of us, I am confident we can meet those challenges.

Of those first 100 days, nearly half (44 days) elapsed from the calling of the General Election on 22<sup>nd</sup> May to polling day itself on 4<sup>th</sup> July. With the summer holiday period of August, retirement of senior management and our former CEO and the recruitment and start of Kate Blakemore our new CEO, it has been far from business as usual! So a few things have been delayed and one of those is the routine meetings between Leader & Deputy Leader and the leaders of other political groups. These are now arranged or being arranged and will proceed shortly. Such meetings are essential for the smooth running of our Council (a duty we owe to our community) and I am looking forward to them very much. Ward visits were also delayed but I am delighted that these will now be both Leader and CEO, and the first visits have started and proven extremely useful.

I will be attending the LGA Conference w/c 20<sup>th</sup> October. This will be my first visit and I look forward to reporting back in due course.

## **3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

I had 23 formal meetings w/c 14<sup>th</sup> Oct and 27 meetings the week before that. I don't think listing them all offers much value for anyone and I will discuss with Democratic Services how to make my diary available as a pdf file or some such and append as a hyperlink.

One meeting I would like to mention is the councillor visit to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October. The QEH executive team gave a presentation and organised a tour of the hospital followed by a Q&A session.

A huge amount of time and energy had been devoted to our visit and I for one found it extremely useful, at times very sad (Peddars Way) and at times immensely uplifting (also Peddars Way!). But always informative. I have passed on my/our grattitue to Alice Webster and her team.