



COUNCIL MEETING

Agenda

Thursday, 27th November, 2025
at 5.00 pm

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

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



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

19 November 2025

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, 27th November, 2025** 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 (Pages 6 - 12)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 2nd October 2025.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Page 13)

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. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To receive petitions and public questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 20.

8. 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) **Electoral Arrangements Committee: 4 November 2025** (Pages 14 - 15)

4. Burnham Market Community Governance Review – Next Steps

5. Hilgay Community Governance Review – Next Steps

2) **Cabinet: 11th November 2025** (Pages 16 - 17)

CAB89: Review of Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy

CAB90: Council Tax Support: Final Scheme for Working Age People for 2026/2027

CAB91: Adoption of Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy

CAB94: Quarter 2 – 2025/2026 – Budget Monitoring

9. APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICERS (Pages 18 - 23)

10. APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER (Pages 24 - 29)

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

To consider the following Notices of Motion:

(03/25), SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR KIRK:

The Reform Group wishes to put forward the following motion to full council

This Council notes that:

- It declared a climate emergency in 2021 and set a corporate net zero target for 2035.
- Policies include the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan, decarbonisation of 11 council buildings, Norfolk Net Zero Communities pilot, Eco Flexible Eligibility Scheme, and £3.8m spent on solar, heat pumps, and EV points.
- These unfunded mandates raise council tax and divert funds from local services — hitting the poorest residents hardest.

This Council believes that:

- Its first duty is to protect the poorest and most vulnerable residents, not to chase costly net zero targets.

This Council resolves to:

- Scrap all net zero policies and targets immediately, including the 2035 target, Climate Change Strategy, building decarbonisation programme, and Eco Scheme.
- Publish a full audit of net zero spend within 3 months and consult residents on priorities for the savings.

(04/25), SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SAYERS:

This Council notes that:

1. "Fleecehold" refers to properties sold as freehold where homeowners remain liable for annual estate management charges to private companies for roads and communal areas councils would traditionally maintain through council tax.
2. One million homeowners across 20,000 estates face escalating charges with no meaningful ability to challenge unreasonable fees or poor service.
3. Eighty percent of new freehold properties by the 11 largest housebuilders now include estate management charges, making fleecehold standard industry practice.
4. Research shows the average new-build home comes with 157 defects, up 96% since 2005, yet residents pay twice - through council tax and private estate charges.
5. The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 received Royal Assent in May 2024, but most provisions await secondary legislation. The High Court dismissed a judicial review challenge on 24 October 2025, removing obstacles to implementation.
6. The property management sector remains unregulated, leaving residents with no recourse against excessive charges.

This Council resolves to:

1. Request the Leader writes to the Secretary of State urging immediate implementation of secondary legislation and regulation of property management.
2. Establish support for affected residents through information and signposting to campaign groups.
3. Engage with developers to discourage fleecehold arrangements and require transparent costings.
4. Use planning powers to require adoption agreements for roads and communal areas, and discourage fleecehold through planning policy and Section 106 agreements.

12. CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS (Pages 30 - 75)

In accordance with Council procedure rule 8, to receive reports from Cabinet Members to be moved en bloc. Members of the Council may ask up to four 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, then non aligned members, 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 60 minutes for all Cabinet Members and the Leader

Climate Change and Biodiversity – Councillor M de Whalley

Culture and Events – Councillor S Lintern

Planning and Licensing – Councillor J Moriarty

Environment and Coastal - Councillor S Squire

Finance – Councillor C Morley

People and Communities – Councillor J Rust

Deputy Leader and Business – Cllr S Ring

Leader - Councillor A Beales

13. MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME

In accordance with Procedure rule 9, Members of the Council may ask any questions of the Chair of any Council Body (except the Cabinet).

Kate Blakemore
Chief Executive

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**COUNCIL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 2nd October, 2025 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor A Bullen (Chair)

Councillors B Ayres, T Barclay, S Bearshaw, J Bhondi, P Bland, R Blunt, F Bone, A Bubb, Mrs J Collingham, S Collop, C J Crofts, M de Whalley, P Devulapalli, S Everett, J Fry, D Heneghan, P Hodson, H Humphrey, B Jones, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Kirk, A Lawrence, S Lintern, B Long, J Lowe, A Moore, J Moriarty, C Morley, S Nash, T Parish, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire and A Ware

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Anot, P Beal, A Beales, R Coates, R Colwell, T de Winton, A Dickinson, J Osborne, J Ratcliffe, S Sandell, M Storey and D Tyler

C:57 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Rev Cannon Ling.

C:58 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anot, Beal, Beales, Coates, Colwell, Dickinson, Osborne, Ratcliffe, Sandell, Storey, Tyler and de Winton.

C:59 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meetings held on 31st July and 18th September 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

C:60 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of Interest.

C:61 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The Mayor provided detail of a fishing fleet tragedy that had happened 150 years ago and the events that were being held to commemorate the tragedy taking place locally and in Fife.

C:62 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

C:63 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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The Mayor invited David Bailey to ask his question as set out below:

“While the Lynnsport Bowls Club embraces and welcomes the proposed upgrade to Lynnsport incorporating new swimming facilities. To achieve the current proposals the Bowls Club will need to sacrifice and reduce their capacity by 60%. The loss of such a high capacity will have a devastating effect not just on the Lynnsport Club, its members (especially the vulnerable) but the local bowls community in general. There are discrepancies in the information and figures being circulated. Can I ask that these discrepancies are looked at then following this to allow a review to see if there is still a need for such a desperate reduction in the bowls capacity?”

Councillor Ring responded to the question appreciating the support of the upgrade of facilities and stating that the consultation period had only just concluded and all responses would be assessed and views carefully considered. Councillor Ring informed Council that proposals for Lynnsport would be presented to the relevant Panel, Cabinet and Council in January 2026 for consideration. Councillor Ring commented that he would be willing to meet with key stakeholders to discuss their concerns.

By way of a supplementary, Mr David Bailey stated that the current proposals would negatively impact the NHS and put pressure on Doctors due to vulnerable people having their regular activities withdrawn. He also outlined that there were discrepancies in the Sports Facilities Strategy and asked if the document was fit for purpose.

Councillor Ring responded by stating that he had confidence in the supporting information and data from consultants which would be used in taking the Lynnsport proposals forward. He did not agree with comments relating to negative impacts on the NHS as the proposals to be brought forward would benefit the overall health and wellbeing of residents by increasing provision across the board. Councillor Ring reminded Council that this was still a work in progress and comments and feedback from the consultation exercise would be taken into consideration as appropriate.

C:64 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

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

CAB75: Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy Adoption

CAB76: Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 – 2025/2026

CAB79: Changes to the Constitution

Councillor Ring proposed deferral of CAB75: Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy Adoption, acknowledging that further consultation needed to be carried out.

Deferral of the item was seconded by Councillor Rust and agreed by Council.

RESOLVED: CAB75 – Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy Adoption be deferred.

Councillor Ring proposed the remaining recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 23rd September, seconded by Councillor Rust.

RESOLVED: The recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 23rd September in relation to the below items were approved by Council:

CAB76: Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 – 2025/2026

CAB79: Changes to the Constitution

C:65 **AMENDMENT OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS TERMS OF REFERENCE - HILGAY AND BURNHAM MARKET**

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

Councillor Ring proposed the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Lintern.

RESOLVED: 1. To amend the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review relating to Hilgay Parish.

2. To amend the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review relating to Burnham Market Parish Council.

C:66 **APPOINTMENTS TO ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE**

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Councillor Ring, seconded by Councillor Long, proposed Councillor Beales be appointed as Chair to this Committee.

Councillor Bone, seconded by Councillor Rust, proposed Councillor Everett be appointed as Vice Chair to this Committee.

There were no other nominations to consider.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Beales be appointed Chair and Councillor Everett be appointed as Vice Chair of the Electoral Arrangements Committee for the 25-26 Municipal Year.

C:67 **NOTICE OF MOTION**

There were no Notices of Motion.

C:68 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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Councillor Ring moved the Cabinet Members reports.

Councillor Long referred to the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategy and asked Councillor Ring if he agreed that the work of consultants should be cross checked for inaccuracies and highlighted concerns that had been raised with him by residents. By way of response Councillor Ring stated that the report had been commissioned in 2021 and things had moved on since then, so the information included should have been updated, but this had not been the case. He explained that further consultation and liaison with the relevant bodies would now take place to ensure that the information included in the strategy was up to date.

Councillor Heneghan referred to the Notice of Motion that she had previously submitted to Council relating to Gambling Reforms and asked the Portfolio Holder for an update. Councillor Moriarty provided an update and read out an update from the lead lobbying authority which set out Government plans to change the law and provide new powers to Councils relating to gambling premises and vape shops, including the potential to introduce cumulative impact policies. Councillor Moriarty thanked Councillor Heneghan for bringing the Notice of Motion forward.

Councillor Kemp referred to the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitches Strategy and asked that consideration be given to keeping a pool in the current location at St James so that it was more accessible. Councillor Ring explained that St James was an aging facility and costly to maintain and alternative locations needed to be considered so that there was a facility available at all times. Redeveloping the current site would mean that there would be no pool provision for a number of years. Councillor Ring highlighted that the swimming club supported the proposals with the additional facilities that would be available at Lynnsport and that it was a requirement to have sufficient and regular access for children.

Councillor Nash asked about the EV vehicle fleet review and information on the makes, models, term of ownership and projected mileage of the vehicles along with details of the companies to be used. Councillor de Whalley explained that this piece of work was ongoing and demonstration work would provide the information Councillor Nash had asked for and would be available in due course. Councillor de Whalley agreed to provide Councillor Nash with details of the companies that were being used to take this piece of work forward.

Councillor Parish asked for an update on Heacham Beach Huts, informing Council that there had been a petition and there was no local appetite for selling these. Councillor Ring stated that an asset management review was being undertaken to ensure best value for the tax payer. Given the views of owners and that the beach status was improving, it had been decided to offer a one year licence to the beach hut owners whilst the right long term approach was considered.

Councillor Long called for a point of order asking for questions and answers to be succinct.

Councillor Crofts referred to the Southend Road development at Hunstanton and comments made by Councillor Rust in her report, and asked for an update on the conditions attached to the properties. Councillor Rust stated that there was originally a local connections condition attached, but this had made it hard for potential purchasers to get a mortgage and also had implications should the properties be resold. Councillor Rust agreed to provide an update on progress and marketing of the properties.

Councillor Heneghan referred to the summer events programme and asked how King's Lynn was being promoted beyond the Borough. Councillor Lintern commented that she was shortly to attend an LGA Culture and Tourism Conference which would present ideas for wider marketing and she was also making contact with her counterparts in other Local Authorities.

Councillor Fry referred to St James and asked what would happen to the site once the swimming pool had been relocated to Lynnsport. Councillor Ring explained that the site would be an investment opportunity.

Councillor Kemp referred to proposals for improvements to the Ferry and Councillor de Whalley explained that some improvements had been made to enable the Ferry to reopen and further work was now being carried out to look at longer term solutions.

Councillor Sayers asked Councillor Rust if she agreed that it was important to treat all with respect and fairness and Councillor Rust confirmed that it was.

Councillor Long was concerned with proposals to reduce funding available to the RFCC and asked Councillor Squire for an update. Councillor Squire confirmed that she too was concerned as there was likely to be a significant funding shortfall and priority would need to be given to what could be funded. She explained that this would need to be raised with Government going forward as residents, homes and businesses needed to be protected.

Councillor Parish asked Councillor Bland if he would be meeting with Heacham Parish Council to discuss car parking. Councillor Bland explained that work was still ongoing to upgrade car parking software, so there was no update for the Parish Council at this time.

Councillor Crofts asked if there were any plans to reinstate the Allotment Competition and Councillor de Whalley agreed to look into this.

Councillor Everett asked Councillor Rust what was being done to encourage Freebridge Community Housing to turn around void properties. Councillor Rust shared Councillor Everett's concerns but acknowledged that there were issues and challenges with voids. She explained that Freebridge Community Housing had indicated that they were working to improve void levels and had adjusted standards from Gold to the basic standard with funding being provided to residents to redecorate themselves.

Councillor Kirk asked if it was time to rethink the Council's stance on net zero as it was an expense to residents and unnecessary. Councillor de Whalley stated that the Greenhouse effect had been proven and why would we want to risk West Norfolk which was low lying and coastal and at risk from the effects of climate change. He felt that Councillor Kirk's comments were irresponsible.

In response to a question from Councillor Kemp, Councillor de Whalley confirmed that village green status for Doorstep Green was being progressed.

Councillor Ware asked what 'out of season' events had been planned for the area and Councillor Heneghan highlighted Myths and Legends, Hunstanton Observatory and that she was looking to strengthen the year round offer in Downham Market and Hunstanton.

Councillor Spikings referred to coastal properties which had a mix of tenures and asked if there were any plans to extend tenures for the whole year. Councillor Squire explained that the reason for restrictions was because of the high risk of winter storms, but acknowledged that work could be done to bring all tenures in line to ensure consistency.

Councillor Hodson referred to the recommendations made by the Panels in relation to Heacham Beach Huts and Councillor Ring

explained that a range of options would be considered, but noted that a ten year lease would incur significant additional costs.

Councillor Kemp asked about Dentistry provision and training and Councillor Rust acknowledged that there was a lack of dental provision, which was concerning. Discussions had been held with the UEA to see if collaborative training was an option. It was noted that the local College did provide some dental training.

Councillor Devulapalli asked that the concerns raised regarding the Lynnsport proposals and the Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategy would be taken seriously. Councillor Ring referred Councillor Devulapalli to his response to the public question answered earlier on in the meeting.

Councillor Long noted that a social influencer had been brought in to promote tourism and asked for assurance that they would promote the right places and ensure that they were promoting sustainable tourism. Councillor Lintern confirmed that they would be respectful of the environment.

C:69 **MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME**

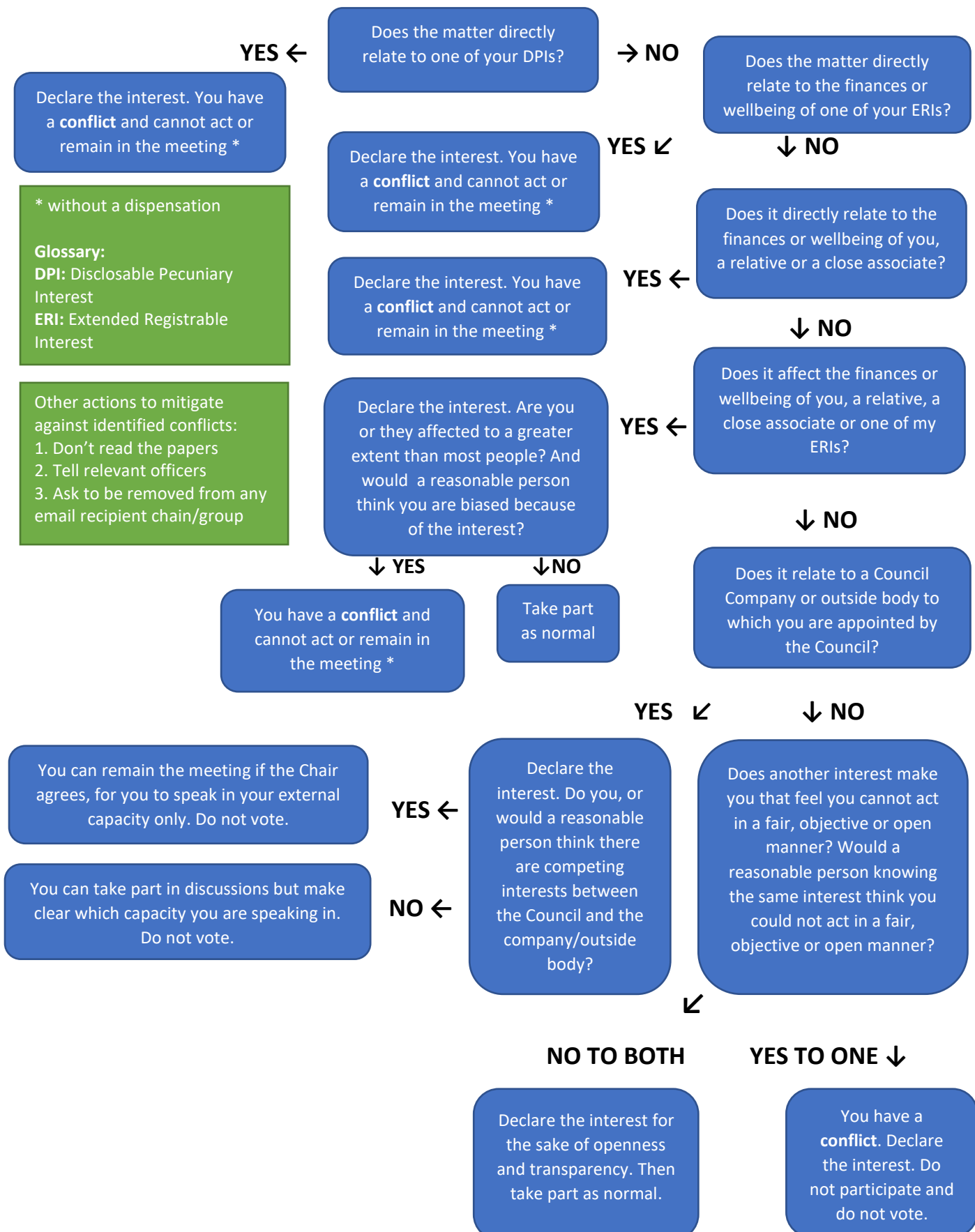
There were no questions.

The meeting closed at 6.23 pm

DECLARING AN INTEREST AND MANAGING ANY CONFLICTS FLOWCHART



START



Declare the interest. You have a **conflict** and cannot act or remain in the meeting *

* without a dispensation

Glossary:

DPI: Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

ERI: Extended Registrable Interest

Other actions to mitigate against identified conflicts:

1. Don't read the papers
2. Tell relevant officers
3. Ask to be removed from any email recipient chain/group

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL 27 NOVEMBER 2025 FROM THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2025

4. Burnham Market Community Governance Review – Next Steps

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

The Electoral Services Manager presented the report as included in the Agenda, highlighting the process and consultation responses.

The Chair, Councillor Beales, thanked the Electoral Services Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

In response to questions from Councillors regarding quorum and minimum numbers of Parish Councillors, the Electoral Services Manager confirmed the minimum number of Parish Councillors was 5 and the quorum was defined as one third of the Parish Councillors (rounded up as necessary).

Councillor Crofts raised concern around a low number of Parish Councillors making important decisions, such as setting the precept, but acknowledged the need for the reduction in numbers and ultimately supported the recommendation.

RECOMMENDED: To recommend to Full Council, a reduction in the maximum number of Parish Councillors for Burnham Market from 11 to 8.

5. Hilgay Community Governance Review – Next Steps

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

The Electoral Services Manager presented the report as included in the Agenda, highlighting the process and consultation responses.

The Chair, Councillor Beales, thanked the Electoral Services Manager for the report and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Lintern, the Electoral Services Manager confirmed that engagement with Hilgay had taken place, but also that Officers were obliged to maintain neutrality and limit advice to factual matters. It was confirmed that there were currently 9 Hilgay Parish Councillors and 2 for Ten Mile Bank with 2 vacancies.

A number of questions were raised regarding Clerk positions, the precept and the length of time the process would take. The Electoral Services Manager advised these would all be determined during the second consultation where discussions would be had around the potential make up of the Parish Councils. It was noted that Community Governance Reviews usually take around 12 months to complete.

Councillor Blunt referred to the recommendations set out in the report and asked if they supported option 2, would option 1 still be viable. The Electoral Services Manager reassured the Committee that conducting a second consultation does not obligate the

Parish Council to split and that status quo could be maintained. The Committee were reminded that Full Council would make the ultimate decision.

RECOMMENDED: That the Electoral Arrangements Committee recommends to Full Council that a second consultation period is triggered for Hilgay, encompassing details including; councillor numbers, financial matters, asset allocations and election detail etc, noting that triggering the second consultation period does not necessarily mean that the Parishes would split and this would be reconsidered by the Committee at the end of the consultation period.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL 27 NOVEMBER 2025 FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2025

CAB89: REVIEW OF LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Cabinet noted that the Environment and Community Panel had considered the report and supported the Cabinet Recommendations.

Councillor Moriarty presented the report and outlined the proposed amendments and consultation process which had been followed.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council be invited to adopt the revised Statement of Licensing Policy in accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003.

REASON FOR DECISION: A new statement of licensing policy must be in place by 14th January 2026 to enable the licensing authority to carry out statutory functions under the Licensing Act 2003.

CAB90: COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT: FINAL SCHEME FOR WORKING AGE PEOPLE FOR 2026/2027

Cabinet noted that the Corporate Performance Panel had considered the report and supported the Cabinet Recommendations.

Councillor Morley and the Revenues and Benefits Manager presented the report, providing detail of proposals and the outcome of the consultation.

Councillor Rust noted the raft of other benefits and support measures available to residents to help them, depending on their individual circumstances.

Councillor Lintern highlighted those residents that fell just outside the brackets of this scheme and the Revenues and Benefits Manager informed Cabinet of the discretionary and hardship schemes available to support residents.

In response to a question from the Chair it was confirmed that along with Norwich City Council, the Borough Council's scheme was the most generous in the County.

RECOMMENDED: Cabinet noted the consultation responses and recommends to Council that the draft CTS scheme for 2026/2027 is implemented as the final working age CTS Scheme for 2026/2027. This must be agreed by full Council by 31 January 2026 ready for the start of the financial year on 1 April 2026.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure a CTS scheme for working age people for 2026/2027 is agreed by full Council by the deadline of 31 January 2026.

CAB91: ADOPTION OF NORFOLK LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

Cabinet noted that the Environment and Community Panel had considered the report and supported the Cabinet Recommendations.

Councillor de Whalley introduced the Strategy with officers providing an overview of its statutory basis, implementation and benefits.

In response to a question from Councillor Lintern it was confirmed that the document was designed to help people understand how they could best manage their land and was not about blocking development.

Councillor Squire spoke in support of the strategy.

Councillor de Whalley provided detail of the launch event.

Councillor Moriarty reminded Cabinet that the Environment and Community Panel had considered this item raised concerns that the final Local Nature Recovery Strategy Document was not available at the time, but supported the Cabinet recommendations. Councillor Ring asked the Chair of the Environment and Community Panel, Councillor Collop, who had joined the meeting remotely if she had any further questions, to which she did not.

RECOMMENDED: That Council adopt the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) by the Council.

REASON FOR DECISION: To formally endorse and adopt the Norfolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and fulfil the Borough Council's statutory obligations, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 (part 6).

CAB94: QUARTER 2 – 2025/2026 – BUDGET MONITORING

Councillor Morley and the Deputy Section 151 Officer presented the Council's financial position, highlighting a positive revenue forecast, capital programme challenges and specific budget adjustments.

Councillor Rust congratulated all those involved in returning a favourable position and asked what could be done to improve the Capital position. Councillor Morley highlighted pressures relating to the Capital Programme including project delays, cash flow pressures and increased borrowing requirements.

In response to questions from Councillor Lintern, officers agreed to review cost centre allocations, event coding errors, and the need for clearer budget notations.

Councillor Ring informed Cabinet that the Property Services Team were currently conducting an Asset Management Review which could result in further capital receipts.

RECOMMENDED: Revision to the Capital Programme 2025/2026 for an additional £30k towards Mintlyn Crematorium Memorial Gardens drainage and related works; £35k for replacement electric vehicle in Property and Projects Team.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep Cabinet informed of performance against budget for Capital and Revenue 2025/2026 based on Quarter 2 data.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Open				
Lead Member: Cllr Alistair Beales Email:				
Lead Officer: Kate Blakemore E-mail:			Other Officers consulted: Appointments Board Executive Leadership Team	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd YES	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting: Thursday 27th November 2025

TITLE: APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF STAFF AND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

RECOMMENDED:

Summary

This report has been authored following a robust and extensive recruitment process led by the Appointments Board where the Board were able to make a recommendation to Full Council to appoint into the role of Chief of Staff and to move the current interim Deputy Chief Executive into a permanent position

In accordance with the statutory provisions for designations of Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer roles, these appointments must be ratified by Full Council. This report therefore outlines the Appointments Board recommendations following completion of a detailed recruitment process.

Recommendation

Council Resolves:

1. That the postholder of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer be confirmed as Emma Hodds, to commence on the date agreed between the postholder and the Chief Executive.
2. With immediate effect, that the post of interim Deputy Chief Executive (including Section 151 Officer) be confirmed as permanent and for Michelle Drewery to continue in this role

Reason for Decision

To appoint officers into the designated statutory roles required by section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Monitoring Officer) and section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (section 151 officer).

1. Background

1.1 Our current Assistant Director for legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer resigned earlier in the year. On the 23rd September 2025 Cabinet therefore resolved to:

- Approve the formalisation of the Chief of Staff/Monitoring Officer role at the Executive Team level.
- Approve the parallel recruitment for both the Chief of Staff/Monitoring Officer and Chief Operating Officer positions confirming both these posts are necessary organisational appointments.
- Note that oversight of the recruitment processes will be undertaken by the Appointments Board, with final appointment recommendations submitted to Full Council in due course.

2. Interview Process

2.1 All longlisted Candidates attended a full Day's Assessment Centre which included a technical interview and stakeholder panel assessment. Psychometric tests were also undertaken.

2.2 The Appointment Board subsequently met on 7th November to interview candidates who had been shortlisted to progress to the final interview stage of the selection process. They also met with the interim Deputy Chief Executive to review her achievements over the last six months to consider whether to recommend to Full Council the making of her post as permanent.

2.3 As a result the Appointments Board recommends to Council

- That the postholder of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer be confirmed as Emma Hodds
- That the post of Interim Deputy Chief Executive (including Section 151 Officer) be confirmed as permanent and for Michelle Drewery to continue in this role.

2.4 Unfortunately the Appointments Board were unable to offer the position of Chief Operating Officer to a suitable candidate but have agreed to commencing a further recruitment process in relation to this role.

3. Policy Implications

3.1 None

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Both posts will be funded from existing budgets.

5. Personnel Implications

- 5.1 Council are asked to note that a provisional job offer has been made to the recommended candidate for Chief of Staff, subject to full Council ratification, satisfactory references and a completed medical assessment, as is standard practice for all Council appointments.
- 5.2 Whilst the recommended candidate will be subject to a three month notice period with their current employer, we are currently negotiating a slightly earlier start date, potentially as we move into the New Year.

6. Environmental Considerations

- 6.1 None

7. Statutory Considerations

- 7.1 Monitoring Officer: It is the role of the Monitoring Officer to report on matters they believe to be illegal or amount to maladministration, to be responsible for matters relating to the conduct of councillors and officers and to be responsible for the operation of the council's constitution. Local Government and Housing Act 1989. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/section/5>
- 7.2 Section 151 Officer: Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), to have responsibility for those arrangements. As such, the CFO must lead on a local authority's financial functions and ensure they are fit for purpose. CFOs must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.
- 7.3 In correspondence with the Local Government Finance Act 1988 the CFO must be a member of one of the following bodies in order to qualify as a responsible officer: (a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, (b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, (c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants, (d) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, (e) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland, (f) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and (g) any other body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being approved by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section.

Local Government Act 1972

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/151>

Local Government Finance Act 1988

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/41/section/113>

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1 Attached



Stage 1 - Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	Appointment of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer and Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function? <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	New	✓	Existing	✓	
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	<p>The report recommends appointment of the Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer, and the Deputy Chief Executive (to include the role and duties of the section 151 officer).</p> <p>Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer are both statutory roles required by section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Monitoring Officer) and section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (section 151 officer).</p> <p>Due to the statutory nature of the Monitoring Officer Role and Section 151 Officer duties these posts require Full Council approval.</p>				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only <i>(identify stakeholders consulted with)</i>	The Appointments Board conducted interviews for the positions and recommend the appointments to Full Council for ratification.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> <p><i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i></p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			✓	
	Disability			✓	
	Sex			✓	
	Gender Re-assignment			✓	
	Marriage/civil partnership			✓	
	Pregnancy & maternity			✓	
	Race			✓	
	Religion or belief			✓	
	Sexual orientation			✓	
	Armed forces community			✓	
	Care leavers			✓	



For more information on health inequalities please visit The King's Fund	Health inequalities			✓	
	Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)			✓	

Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above:

The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer are designated statutory roles required by section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Monitoring Officer) and section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 151 Officer).

Full Council have previously resolved that the post of Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer and Deputy Chief Executive are necessary and agreed that steps be taken to recruit.

These appointments have a neutral impact on the protected groups as the appointments will only affect employment and organisational arrangements. No direct impact on the protected groups can be identified from these recommendations.

Question	Answer	Comments
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No	
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No	

If 'yes' to questions 2 - 3 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:

Decision agreed by EWG member:

4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	n/a	Actions:
		Actions agreed by EWG member:



5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?		n/a	Please provide brief summary:	
Assessment completed by: Name		Rebecca Parker		
Job title		Democratic Services Manager		
Date completed		18 th November 2025		
Reviewed by EWG member		Amy Pearce	Date	18 November 2025

✓ Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

Open				
Lead Member: Leader, Cllr Alistair Beales Email: cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Members consulted:	
Lead Officer: Monitoring Officer E-mail: alexa.baker@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Officers consulted: Chief Executive and Electoral Services Manager	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd YES	Risk Management Implications YES

Date of Meeting: 27 November 2025

TITLE: APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER

RECOMMENDED:

Summary

The purpose of this report is to firstly seek approval of the formal appointment of the Chief Executive to act as the Local Returning Officer (LRO) for the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority Mayoral Elections.

Secondly, amendments to the Council's Scheme of Delegation are sought to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to act as Local Returning Officer for all relevant elections conducted within the Borough Council area.

Recommendation

Council Resolves:

1. The Chief Executive is appointed to act as the Local Returning Officer for the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority Mayoral Elections.
2. The amendment to the Scheme of Delegation set out at section 2.3 of this report is approved so that the Chief Executive is delegated authority to act as Local Returning Officer for all relevant elections conducted within the Borough Council area.

Reason for Decision

The appointment of the Chief Executive as Local Returning Officer ensures the Council meets its statutory obligations for administering elections associated with the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority. Delegating this responsibility within the Scheme of Delegation provides clarity, continuity and operational

efficiency, reducing the risk of non-compliance and ensuring that electoral processes can be delivered effectively and without delay.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority will be responsible for holding mayoral elections as part of the new devolved governance arrangements. Each constituent authority is required to designate a Local Returning Officer who will be responsible for administering the poll within their local area.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive has historically undertaken Returning Officer (RO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) responsibilities for the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, in line with statutory requirements and established practice.

2. Appointment of Local Returning Officer

- 2.1 Under the relevant election legislation, local authorities are required to appoint an LRO for their area where an election is taking place over more than one authority area. The LRO is personally responsible for the proper administration of the election process, including but not limited to:
- publishing the notice of election
 - administering the nomination process
 - printing the ballot papers
 - publishing the notice of poll, statement of persons nominated and notice of situation of polling stations
 - the provision of polling stations
 - appointing Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks
 - managing the postal voting process
 - verifying and counting the votes
 - declaring the result
- 2.2 A Local Returning Officer is a distinct designation to a Returning Officer, applicable where elections are taking place over more than one authority. To ensure compliance and minimise risk to the process, it is recommended that the Chief Executive should be formally appointed as Local Returning Officer for the upcoming Mayoral Elections, with this designation being formalised into the Scheme of Delegation.
- 2.3 The proposed change to the Scheme of Delegation is at section 10 entitled 'Council', and will be the addition of the words underlined and in italics:

Chief Executive

To act as Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer *or Local Returning Officer* for all elections, Parish Polls and Referendums and to take

such action as is necessary to carry out those duties, including appointing Deputy Electoral Registration Officers and Deputy Returning Officers or Deputy Local Returning Officers.

3. Policy Implications

The proposed change aligns with existing electoral governance arrangements and does not alter the Council's established policy framework.

4. Financial Implications

None.

5. Personnel Implications

None, the Chief Executive already undertakes Returning Officer functions.

6. Environmental Considerations

None

7. Statutory and Risk Considerations

The Council is required to appoint an LRO.

The Council's Scheme of Delegation sets out designations for the Chief Executive to act as Returning Officer, however to ensure compliance with the legislation and de-risk any form of challenge on procedure, the Chief Executive should be explicitly appointed and delegated to act as Local Returning Officer.

8. Equality Impact Assessment Pre-Screen (EIA)

8.1 Attached – neutral impact



Stage 1 - Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	Appointment of Local Returning Officer				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function? <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	New		Existing	X	
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	<p>To seek approval of the formal appointment of the Chief Executive to act as the Local Returning Officer (LRO) for the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority Mayoral Elections.</p> <p>Amendments to the Council's Scheme of Delegation are sought to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to act as Local Returning Officer for all relevant elections conducted within the Borough Council area.</p> <p>The appointment of the Chief Executive as Local Returning Officer ensures the Council meets its statutory obligations for administering elections associated with the Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority.</p>				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only <i>(identify stakeholders consulted with)</i>	Leader, Chief Executive and Electoral Services Manager				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> <p><i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i></p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			X	
	Disability			X	
	Sex			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
	Armed forces community			X	
	Care leavers			X	
	Health inequalities*			X	



*For more information on health inequalities please visit The King's Fund		Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)			X	
<p>Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above:</p> <p>This is a technical statutory appointment that the Chief Executive already carries out as Returning Officer.</p>						
Question		Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?		No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?		No				
<p>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 3 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</p> <p>Decision agreed by EWG member:</p>						
<p>4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>		No	Actions:			
			<p>Actions agreed by EWG member:</p> <p>.....</p>			
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?		No	Please provide brief summary:			
<p>Assessment completed by:</p> <p>Name</p>		<p>Alexa Baker</p>				



Job title	Monitoring Officer		
Date completed	17 November 2025		
Reviewed by EWG member	Amy Pearce	Date	18 November 2025

✓ Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27 November 2025

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

For the period 24 September 2025 to 18 November 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Vehicle Fleet Review

Discussions regarding capital programme planning for a project are ongoing. The Council has been invited to submit a final application to the Government's Depot Charging Scheme grant for improvements to charging infrastructure at the Oldmedow Road site. The bid will be submitted by 28 November 2025 and, if successful, the works will be installed by end of March 2026.

Solar Together

The group buying scheme is underway for a third year.

Last year's campaign resulted in:

- 65 solar Photo Voltaic (PV) installations
- 5 battery installations
- 7 EV charging point installations

Household registrations have now closed. For installations in 2026, householders have registered as follows:

- 338 Solar PV
- 30 Battery storage
- 146 EV chargers

Site surveys and detailed quotes are being progressed. All works should be completed by May 2026.

Carbon Audit

The 2023/24 carbon audit is available on our website and work is underway on the 2024/25 audit. We are looking at processes to speed up and automate this and any data collection it requires.

Carbon Literacy Training

Our e-learning provider is processing the training material for use in the council's e-learning platform, which will be made available for all staff and members shortly.

Ferry

The existing design, planning, and stakeholder information provided by the council has been reviewed to establish a baseline for further work on the West Lynn Ferry. The latest WSP report is now two years old so a preliminary design process will be commissioned to verify the most suitable design options for both the east and west landing of the ferry for the current day.

Contact has been made with Drake Towage, a local contractor, who have offered advice as to the suitability of previous design options, including ways to maintain the operation of the ferry during construction of any new infrastructure. Early engagement with contractors like this will prove beneficial in the future stages of the project should funding be secured.

Richard Jackson Ltd have been engaged to produce preliminary designs to inform the updated feasibility costings. Richard Jackson Ltd. surveyed the existing infrastructure most recently in 2024, so they have an up-to-date knowledge of the site. These designs are expected in the next few weeks subject to sign-off terms and conditions.

Engagement meetings have been held with the ferry owner, ferry operator, Harbourmaster, and Environment Agency. These have been positive meetings and have confirmed licensing requirements, end user requirements, and design constraints. Further stakeholder engagement will be carried out late-November/early-December to review the preliminary designs and obtain feedback.

A high-level draft delivery programme has been produced to include a funding period of three months completing in March 2026 and the overall scheme completing in March 2027, subject to estimated timescales. This includes time allowance for a public procurement process and planning application.

A draft feasibility report has been produced, ready to receive costed design options and risks, and issue of this document is scheduled by the end of 2025 to inform the funding process in early-2026.

Village Green, South Lynn

The Town/Village Green application for South Lynn is with Norfolk County Council and is currently being processed.

Volunteers from Harding's Pits Association, Nature Volunteer Network along with the Public Open Space team have planted and mulched a new hedgerow at the South Lynn Community Orchard. The Men's Shed have built raised beds for herbs and vegetables to grow, in partnership with the South Lynn community and Purfleet Pantry.

Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP)

The partnership has again been successful in its bid of approximately £150,000 for Innovate UK funding Work is now underway on the development of a one-stop online hub offering energy advice and retrofit guidance tailored to local

communities and life stages. Information is likely to cover efficient heating and cooling, energy efficiency, and cost-of-living support and incorporate video content such as:

- Retrofit explainers
- Personal retrofit journeys
- Extended case studies
- Technology demonstrations
- Energy tariff guidance

The partnership has funded free Energy Advice Tools for Norfolk Residents through the Norfolk Net Zero Communities project identified that they need support in making their homes warmer in winter, cooler in summer, and more energy efficient all year round. In response, the partnership has funded two free digital tools designed to help residents take action.

These tools will:

- Recommend energy efficiency measures tailored to your home
- Show how much you could save on your energy bills
- Estimate your potential carbon savings
- Create a personalised improvement plan

Homewise

Homewise is a digital energy advice tool for Norfolk homeowners. It helps identify which energy efficiency improvements and renewable technologies could boost a home's energy rating and reduce bills.

With three simple steps, Homewise will guide the user to create a bespoke energy plan for their property. <https://norfolk.homewise.energy/App/Welcome>

Fairer Warmth

Fairer Warmth is a dynamic platform that connects households with organisations working to promote energy efficiency, affordability, and a fairer energy future.

A householder can enter their postcode and a few details about the household, and Fairer Warmth will identify affordable energy-saving measures and connect the user with local support services. <https://app.fairerwarmth.com/>

Norfolk Net Zero Communities

The project concluded in July 2025 with research findings considered by several workshops that involved the 7 participating communities. Workshop attendees discussed the project's legacy and potential for future action.

A final report has been published on the NCCP website for the project's funders Innovate UK see <https://www.norfolkclimatechange.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/nccp-net-zero-communities-report-october-2025.pdf>

LED Lighting

A meeting is due to be held with the Pelican's Club, with a view to securing a contribution to upgrade the Pelican's pitch to LED, alongside the MUGA and

Tennis Courts. All remaining sports pitches at Lynnsport have already been upgraded to LED.

Proposals have also been received for upgrading lighting at the BCKLWN Depot to LED.

A capital bid is expected to be submitted, in due course, to bring these two schemes forward.

Streetlighting Phase II

The Borough Council has met several times with the contractor (Amey) to work through the streetlighting inventory and agree a way forward with the columns in difficult to access locations ahead of works starting.

Re:Fit

Panasonic have recently commissioned an assessment of our heat pumps and officers have been advised, verbally, that no manufacturer warranty faults could be found with the installations. Panasonic are now due to attend on-site to resolve other issues with the heat pump units.

Whilst this is a significant step forward, it is expected that the anticipated gas/carbon savings will not be realised, as per the 'Measurement and Verification' reporting. Discussions are ongoing as to how to progress.

Solar Panels

Detailed designs have been received for Photovoltaic installations at KLIC and Downham Market Leisure Centre, as well as a high-level study for the Corn Exchange. These will form the basis of a capital bid. It is anticipated that these schemes can deliver annual savings of £39,000, carbon savings of 30 tonnes of CO₂e (at grid average emission factors), and a return on investment in around ten years.

Energy Company Obligation Scheme

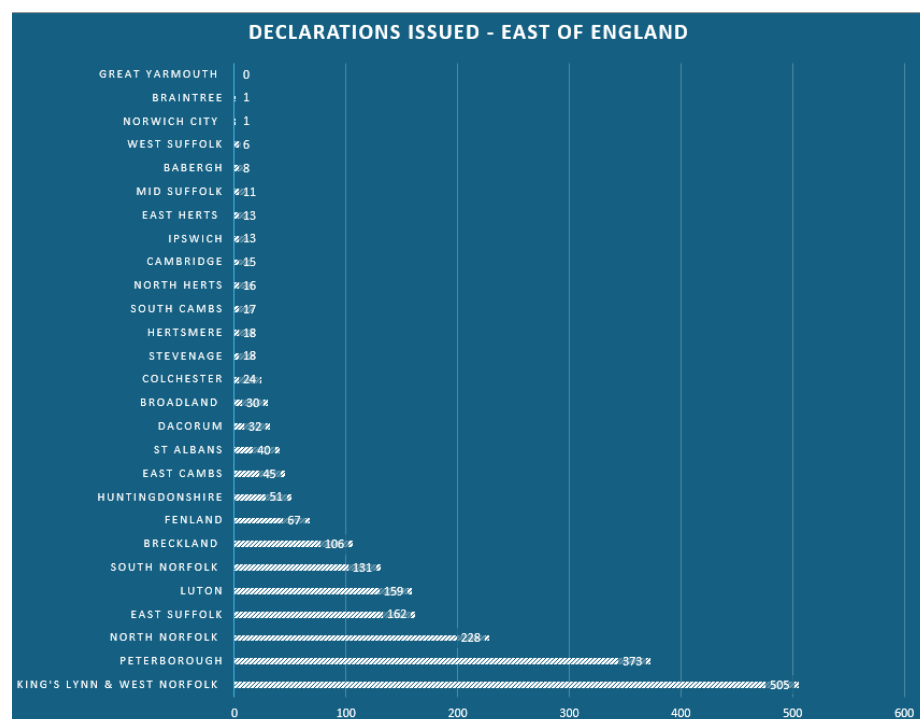
The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an energy efficiency scheme designed to tackle fuel poverty and help reduce carbon emissions. ECO is an obligation placed on energy companies to deliver energy efficiency measures to domestic premises across the United Kingdom. The fourth iteration of this scheme commenced in April 2022 and will conclude in March 2026.

Through the ECO scheme, local authorities can widen the eligibility criteria through a household referral mechanism, 'ECO Flex'.

A declaration of eligibility is a local authority's notification to Ofgem that a household has met the criteria for accessing the scheme's funding for energy-saving measures. Whilst this confirmation doesn't automatically guarantee funding, it does establish eligibility for financial assistance prior to a retrofit assessment and technical survey taking place.

To date, 576 declarations of eligibility have been issued to households with either a collective household income below £31,000 per annum or with an occupant suffering from a long-term health condition.

West Norfolk has been committed to delivering ECO Flex and in accordance to statistics published at the end of August, we are the leading authority in the East of England:



272 properties have an energy performance rating of 'C' or above following the completion of full house retrofits (additional certificates are awaited from installers that could bring the tally to 300+).

1,127 tonnes of domestic CO₂ per annum have been saved in accordance with calculations made by Housing Standards using the Reduced Standard Assessment Procedure (RdSAP) which is used to formulate Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's).

£12,976,685 has been obtained from energy suppliers in accordance with the ECO scheme and spent on improving dwellings across the borough.

Climate

Since the 1980s the UK climate has been warming at a rate of approximately 0.25°C per decade. UK sea levels have risen 19.5cm since 1901.

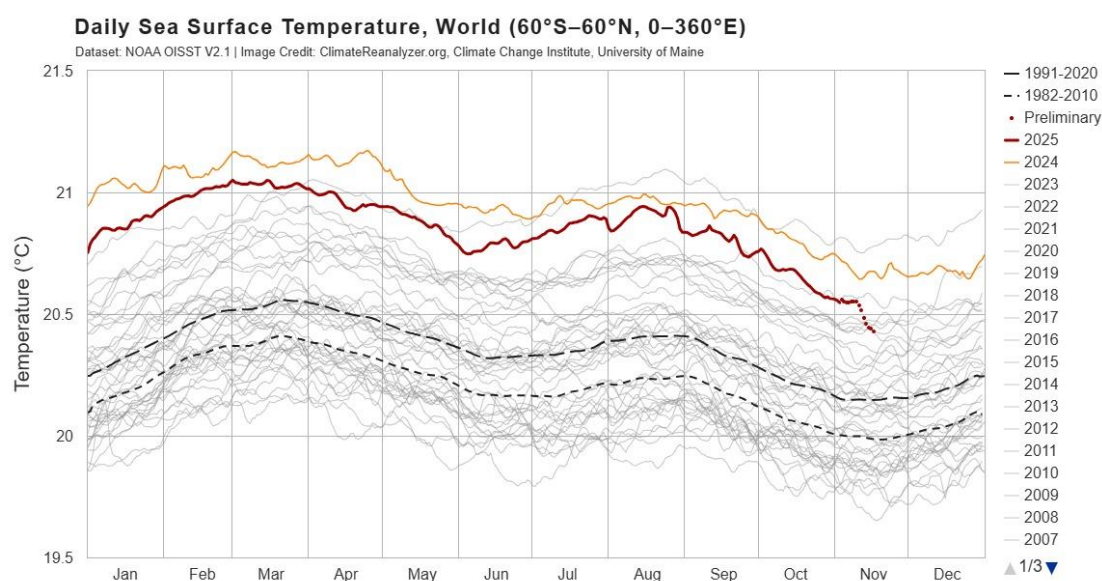
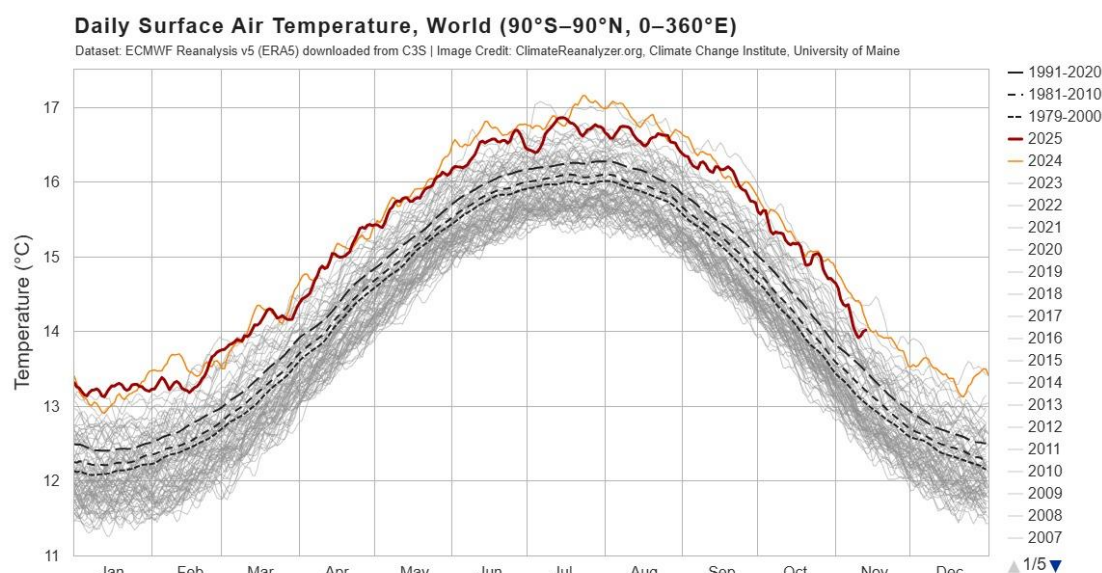
Source: "State of the UK Climate in 2024," Met Office National Climate Information Centre, Exeter, UK.

October 2025 was the third-warmest October on record globally, with an average surface air temperature of 15.14°C, 0.16°C cooler than the record set in October 2023. October was about 1.55°C warmer than an estimate of the

October average for 1850-1900, the designated pre-industrial reference period. It is the 27th month in the data record 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and ends a short period of five consecutive months that were below.

The average global sea surface temperature (SST) for October 2025 over 60°S to 60°N was 20.54°C, the third-highest for the month in the dataset, 0.24°C below the record set in October 2023. 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.



Arctic sea ice extent for October 2025 was 6.8 million km², circa 12% (1.0 million km²) below the 1991–2020 average, the eighth-lowest monthly extent for October in the 47-year satellite record.

The average Antarctic sea ice extent for the month was 17.5 million km², about 6% (1.1 million km²) below the 1991–2020 average, ranking as the third-lowest October extent in the satellite record.

Data source: OSI SAF Sea Ice Index v2.3.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Beat Your Bills Roadshow

Marshland St James (Farmers Market) – 30/11/2025 10:00-14:00

Wimbotsham (Café Connect) – 06/12/2025 10:00-12:00

Hilgay (Christmas Coffee Morning) – 11/12/2025 10:00-12:00

Feltwell (Coffee Morning) – 07/01/2026 09:00-12:00

Hunstanton (Friday Group) – 09/01/2026 10:00-12:00

Dersingham (Coffee Morning) – 15/01/2026 10:00-12:30

West Walton (Primary School) – 22/01/2026 08:00-12:00

Heacham (Chit, Chat & Coffee) – 17/02/2026 10:00-11:30

Mayor's Business Awards

The Mayor's Business Awards publicly acknowledge outstanding business achievement and the contribution that businesses make to the West Norfolk economy. To highlight exemplar local businesses, the Council once again is sponsoring the Environmental Champion category.

Entries will close at 5pm, Friday 28th November 2025. Finalists will be announced in the Lynn News on Friday, December 19th, and Your Local Paper on Wednesday, December 24th, ahead of the awards ceremony at the King's Lynn Corn Exchange in March 2026.

For further information about the awards, visit:

<https://www.mayorsbusinessawards.co.uk/mayorsbusinessawards2026/en/page/home>.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Cabinet Briefings
Cabinet Sifting
Cabinet

Active Travel Hubs Briefing
King's Lynn Transport Strategy Stakeholder Event
Climate Change Informal Working Group
Planning Committee Training
Members Working Group – King's Lynn and Hunstanton Leisure Facilities
Pre-Council Briefing – Careline Community Services
ICT Development Group Meeting
Town Deal Board – Active & Clean Connectivity Project Board meeting
Knights Hill Development Meeting
Depot visit
King's Lynn IDB Meeting
Environment & Community Panel
Corporate Performance Panel
Joint Panel Meeting – Scrutiny Governance Review
West Norfolk Transport & Infrastructure Steering Group
Regeneration and Development Panel
Hunstanton Masterplan Workshop
Member Briefing – Safety and Security
MAG 001 Norfolk Groundwater Challenges
Transport East's Quarterly Webinar
NWN Catchment Partnership Meeting (CaBA)
Hunstanton Masterplan Update
Rural Transport Pilot Project Showcase Webinars
Audit Committee

Portfolio Holder Briefings and updates:

Climate Change Weekly Updates

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27th November 2025

COUNCILLOR SUE LINTERN - CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND EVENTS

For the period 20th September to 14th November

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Guildhall Closure and Borough-Wide Arts Delivery

The closure of the historic Guildhall for major regeneration works has opened an unexpected but exciting chapter for cultural activity across King's Lynn and the wider Borough. Instead of pausing programming, the project team and partners transformed the town into a dynamic cultural campus for the Dragon Festival. Activities normally based at the Guildhall were reimagined and delivered across twelve alternative venues, including the Minster, Corn Exchange, Stories of Lynn, Lynn Museum, St Nicholas' Chapel, True's Yard, the Majestic, the Workshop, King's Lynn Town Guides, and libraries in Dersingham, Hunstanton, Downham Market and Gaywood.

This distributed approach has not only maintained the Guildhall's presence during its closure but significantly expanded its reach. Initial figures show that hundreds of children and families took part in creative, educational and heritage sessions, demonstrating the strength of local cultural partnerships. The dragon-themed activities delivered with the Library Service highlight this new, outward-facing model of engagement.

The Guildhall Project Team is now working with the BID and Visit King's Lynn to support the upcoming Christmas programme.

Number 29 King Street remains open Monday–Saturday (11am–3pm) for anyone wishing to learn more about the project, and live-streaming of the building works is expected to begin in the coming weeks.

Ultimately, the Guildhall regeneration is becoming more than a physical transformation—it is reshaping the borough's cultural offer and strengthening partnerships that will endure long after the works are complete.

HANSA20: Hanseatic Digital Projection Project

HANSA20 marks a bold step forward in the town's creative storytelling. Running from this month through to January 2026, the project sees three landmark buildings—the Custom House, the Minster, and Greyfriars Tower—transformed into illuminated canvases celebrating King's Lynn's maritime history and the twentieth anniversary of its re-entry into the Hanseatic League. What sets this project apart is the depth of community participation. Over the

course of the summer and early autumn, more than 180 residents took part in hands-on workshops, designing ships, sea creatures, maps and motifs that were then digitised and animated by the appointed artists. The resulting projections are not simply works shown to the community—they are works created with the community.

This co-authorship approach not only elevates the artistic impact but reinforces the identity of King's Lynn as a place where heritage is not preserved in isolation but continually reinterpreted by the people who live here. The projections bring together past and present, craftsmanship and digital innovation, creating a nocturnal gallery that animates the town centre throughout the darker months.

Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, HANSA20 also strengthens the town's profile as an outward-looking, culturally confident Hanseatic partner, while enhancing the evening economy and drawing visitors during traditionally quieter periods.

The **Norfolk Coast: Myths & Legends** tourism campaign represents an imaginative new direction in the Borough's tourism offer, designed to bolster year-round visitation and stimulate off-season coastal tourism. Conceived and produced entirely in-house, the project centres on a striking 44-page trails and experiences booklet, enriched by local artistic contributions and crafted in a distinctive blend of black-and-white photography, collage, illustration and contemporary design.

The booklet delves into the region's rich tapestry of folklore, maritime mysteries, crime stories, ghostly tales and uncanny coastal legends—tapping into the growing national and international appetite for “dark tourism” and heritage storytelling. At the public launch events, masterfully narrated by Culture Babylon and introduced by our senior Tourism Officer, audiences were left with the memorable reminder: *“Some of these events really happened, some things exist only in the realm of the imagination, you must decide what you are willing to believe.”* All three events sold out almost immediately, demonstrating the strong public appetite for this creative approach.

Designed as a hybrid print–digital publication, the booklet uses QR codes throughout to give readers access to extended stories, maps, audio-visual materials and additional interpretive content online. This model combines the longevity and tactile appeal of print with the depth and flexibility of digital media—particularly valuable for visitors who may encounter unreliable coastal signal.

Early feedback suggests the booklet has significant staying power as both a practical guide and an attractive keepsake, likely to encourage repeat visits and strengthen awareness of the area's cultural identity. If this positive reception continues during winter distribution at attractions, accommodation sites and key visitor locations, the Tourism Department will explore options for future editions, expanded coastal coverage, collaborative content

development, and potential advertising partnerships.

In essence, *Myths & Legends* is far more than a booklet — it provides a fresh cultural lens through which residents and visitors alike can experience the Norfolk coast, deepening connections to place and celebrating the lesser-known stories that make Norfolk unique.

A special thank you to Phillip for his outstanding work on both the HANSA20 project and the *Myths & Legends* campaign, whose dedication and expertise have been central to the success of these initiatives.

Events Programme

The summer events season concluded in Hunstanton with a highly successful Soap Box Derby, which showcased the creativity and ingenuity of local participants. Entrants designed and built imaginative racing contraptions, highlighting both engineering skill and playful innovation. The event drew enthusiastic spectators and fostered a strong sense of local pride. In keeping with the community-focused ethos of the event, the straw safety barriers used on the day were donated to local residents afterward, ensuring the resources continued to benefit the area.

As the Borough transitions into its winter programme, focus shifts to seasonal highlights that bring residents and visitors together in celebration.

The annual Fireworks Display once again drew an estimated 20,000 attendees, demonstrating the enduring popularity of this much-loved tradition. Families were treated to a vibrant evening of live music, funfair attractions, and a wide variety of food and drink stalls, culminating in a spectacular free firework display. The event continues to serve as a cornerstone of the Borough's community calendar, combining entertainment with accessibility and reinforcing a sense of local identity.

Preparations are now underway for the Christmas Lights Switch-On, which promises to bring festive cheer to the town centre.

A big thank you to the Events Team for their dedication and professionalism in ensuring all our events are delivered safely, smoothly, and to such a high standard. Their careful planning, coordination, and attention to detail underpin the success of every occasion and allow residents and visitors alike to enjoy memorable, safe, and inclusive experiences.

These events also have a significant economic and community impact, boosting local businesses, encouraging tourism, and fostering social cohesion by bringing people together from across the Borough.

Through both summer and winter programming, the Borough's events calendar continues to offer a balanced mix of creativity, heritage, and community engagement, ensuring cultural participation remains inclusive and accessible throughout the year.

Cultural Partnerships

I met with my counterpart at North Norfolk District Council to explore opportunities for joint working and cultural partnership development. Such collaboration will become increasingly important as we move towards LGR. I also attended the Norfolk and Suffolk Culture Board briefing, which highlighted the need for a national strategic position on culture. The Board acts as a collective regional voice and plays a key role in shaping cultural policy. As culture is not a statutory responsibility, there is concern about its position under future devolution arrangements. Continued commitment from the new Mayoral and Unitary Authorities is essential.

LGA Cultural Services Programme

I completed a two-day LGA programme featuring speakers from the Arts Council, the LGA, Birmingham Museum Service, and councillors from Wigan, Essex, and Wandsworth. Topics included:

- innovative programmes from other councils
- social value and community impact
- creative practices and partnerships
- funding approaches
- future developments in AI and virtual reality

This has generated several new ideas to explore with our teams.

Norfolk Records Committee

At the October meeting, the Norfolk Records Office (NRO) confirmed it has received its latest quality stamp and progressed to the next accreditation stage. Preparations are underway to move into additional accommodation in anticipation of increased records arriving through LGR.

The NRO continues to deliver workshops for schools, Heritage Open Days events, and contributions to the Norwich Science Festival. It has also supported a UEA MA module and runs a volunteer blogging programme. A “Follow the Fish” pop-up exhibition on the Herring Girls is currently on display. Additionally, the NRO has secured Heritage Lottery funding and appointed three project staff, who will present their work at the next committee meeting.

Norfolk Joint Museums Committee (NJMC)

The meeting included updates on:

- The successful reopening of Norwich Castle and benchmarking of admissions prices, which remain competitive.
- A “twilight ticket” option and free entry for:
 - Norfolk schoolchildren
 - those on means-tested benefits
 - home-schooled children

Marketing work is underway to strengthen the Museum Pass offer.

Security concerns were discussed following a high-profile theft in Paris. It was reassuring to hear of improvements to collection and building security, though staff vigilance remains essential. The service continues to balance accessibility with preservation.

Visitor numbers across museums remain strong, particularly for school visits. Social media engagement on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn is also healthy.

A new Youth Engagement Strategy will soon launch to strengthen outreach to vulnerable groups.

Arts Council support is extended to 2026/27 and expected to run through 2027/28. Norwich Castle continues to expand its commercial activity, including venue hire, retail, filming and events.

Parish Councils

I continue to support Parish Councils, including mediation between Clenchwarton PC and the football club. Discussions are ongoing but progress towards a fair solution continues.

King's Lynn Festival

I met with the Committee Chair and Artistic Director to review opportunities and challenges ahead of the 75th anniversary programme next year. Planning is well underway with a promising proposed line-up.

King's Lynn Young Players

Alongside Cultural Champion Cllr Ware, I met the Chair of the King's Lynn Young Players. This long-standing amateur dramatics group for young people has been running for 30 years, offering weekly workshops and one or two productions annually. There is currently a waiting list for membership, with participants travelling from across the area, including those with special needs.

Hanse Festival Committee

I am pleased to have been appointed Chair of the Hanse Festival Committee. Our November meeting focused on early planning for next year's festival, including dates, activity proposals and funding/sponsorship options.

Creative Arts East (CAE)

I had a productive meeting with Creative Arts East, which delivers cultural opportunities in rural areas, supported by Arts Council and BFI funding. CAE coordinates touring theatre, live performances, young promoter schemes in schools, and creative workshops for older residents.

This aligns closely with my ambition to expand cultural provision in rural communities, and I look forward to developing collaborative opportunities.

The portfolio has delivered borough-wide cultural and heritage programmes, promoting public engagement, tourism, and strong collaborative networks.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Christmas lights switch on (a day of activities, street entertainment, live music, lantern making and lots more)
Hunstanton – Star gazing on the green
West Norfolk tourism forum
Kings Lynn film festival
Kings Lynn festive market

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

21/9 – Hunstanton Soap Box Derby
23/9 – Cabinet meeting
24/9 – Cultural Champion meeting
29/9 – Planning training
30/9 – Member training
2/10 – Pre-Council briefing - Careline
2/10 – Full Council
3/10 - meeting with Clenchwarton PC + football club
6/10 – Planning Committee
8/10 – Guildhall project board update
8/10 – Cabinet sifting
13/10 – Parish & Town Council meeting with AB
14/10 – meeting with North Norfolk District Council counterpart
16/10 – Kings Lynn Festival meeting
16/10 – Norfolk & Suffolk culture board briefing
17/10 - Portfolio meeting – DH and JC
17/10 - Portfolio meeting – JB
20/10 – Hunstanton photo shoot
20/10 - Portfolio meeting – MC, DM and AW
20/10 – E&C
21-22/10 – LGA Cultural services programme
23/10 – Portfolio meeting – KB, MC, JC and Tech Educators
23/10 – R&D
24/10 – Norfolk Records Committee
24/10 – Norfolk Records tour
24/10 – Norfolk Joint Museums Committee
24/10 – Fear in the Fens
26/10 – Myths & Legends (Kings Lynn)
28/10 – Hunstanton Masterplan workshop
29/10 – Member briefing (safety)
29/10 – Cabinet briefing
30/10 - Portfolio meeting – PE & AW
30/10 – Electoral Arrangements Committee training
31/10 – Kings Lynn Young Players
3/11 – Planning Committee
4/11 – Electoral Arrangements Committee

5/11 – CIL training (teams)
7/11 – Fawkes in the Walks
8/11 – Dragon Festival
10/11 – Hanse Festival Committee
11/11 – Cabinet
12/11 – Guildhall project board
12/11 – Hunstanton Masterplan briefing
12/11 – Kings Lynn Players – Titanic opening night
13/11 - Portfolio meeting – MC & PE
13/11 – Creative Arts East
14/11 - Portfolio meeting – SR, DH & JC
14/11 - Myths & Legends official launch

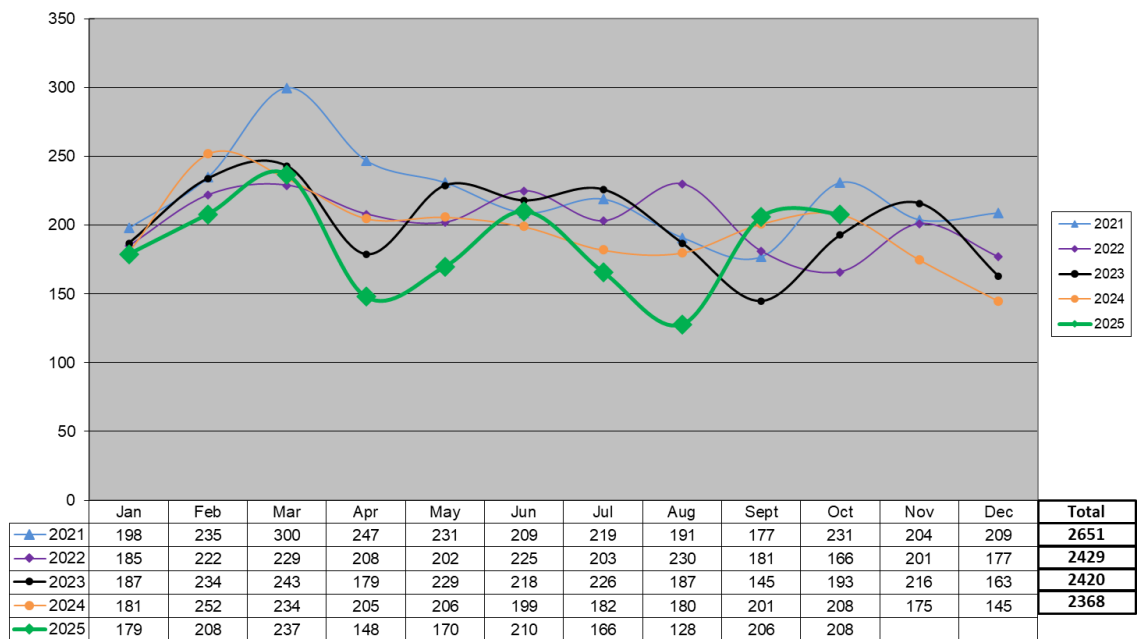
CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL
27 November 2025

COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & LICENSING

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers at the end of October are down compared to same period last year, -188 applications.

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received comparison

	1/11/22 – 31/10/23	1/11/23 – 31/10/24	1/11/24 – 31/10/25
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	18	17	29
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	283	234	286
No. of Householder applications rec'd	644	617	555
Total	945	868	870

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

*Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2025 performance for determining planning applications 1/1/25 – 31/10/25

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	88%
Non – Major	70%	94%

Appeal Performance – appeal decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate between 1/11/24 – 31/10/25. This measure is different to the ‘quality of decision’ measure.

	Officer delegated		Committee overturns		Total	
Appeals	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning	42	11	5	4	47	15
	79%	21%	56%	44%	76%	24%
Enforcement	6	1				
	86%	14%				

Quality of decisions

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

The Assessment period for this measure is two years up to and including the most recent quarter plus 9 months. Therefore, performance at the end of October 2025 is calculated as follows:

Planning applications determined by the Local Planning Authority between 01/2/2023 to 31/1/2024 (not the date the Local Planning Authority receives the appeal decision from the Inspectorate) plus 9 months to allow appeals to be determined by the Planning Inspectorate = 31/10/2025.

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 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
101	3	2.97%

NON-MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
2819	26	0.92%

Revenue income for financial year 2025/26 (Planning and Discharge income)

Figures are based on a full year projected income budget of £1,218,500.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 25 – October 25	April 25 – October 25	
£710,792	£851,329	+£140,537

Development Management (DM) staff update

Interviews for the two vacant Graduate Planner post have taken place and the final stages of the recruitment process is almost complete. Recruitment to the two posts will bring the DM service back up to full strength.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This has been a very busy time for the CIL Team. Following the adoption of the new CIL Spending Strategy and Policy document in September, there has been a complete refresh of webpages, a new CIL Infrastructure Funding application process and the introduction of Parish Infrastructure Investment Plans (PIIP).

In this period, the CIL Team have also 'gone live' with Exacom – public access to developer contributions including details of Parish and CIL Project funding.

To help understanding of all changes and new information, Councillors and Parish Clerks were invited to attend briefing sessions at the start of November, with a recording and guidance notes sent to all afterwards. The briefing sessions presented by the Senior CIL Officer demonstrated how to view online CIL data, help Parish/Wards to conduct an infrastructure audit and provided an overview of the Spending Strategy including the new application process.

The next round of CIL Funding Applications will open on 01 March 2026 at 8am and close on 01 May 2026 at 5pm.

Housing completions 2026/27

Quarter	No. of completions
Q1 – Apr – June	78
Q2 – Jul – Sept	228
Running total	306

Local Plan

The Borough Council's Local Plan 2021-2040 (adopted March 2025) is now supported by a suite of useful documents. These include an [interactive policies map](#) and an [interactive version of the whole plan](#). In addition, there are a number of explanatory notes on specific topic-based policies aimed at aiding the application of policies in practice. These can viewed via the following link: [Local Plan 2021-2040 \(adopted March 2025\) | Local Plan 2021-2040 \(adopted March 2025\) | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#).

The latest note covers Policy LP27 Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). Policy LP27 includes a specific requirement for the Borough Council to produce an Air Quality Management Strategy in relation to the potential impacts from traffic along the A149, for both Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog. After investigating the issues further with Natural England, it was agreed that a separate Air Quality Management Strategy will no longer be necessary to address such issues. This is because Roydon Common is not considered to be significantly impacted and the impact upon Dersingham Bog is minimal and decreasing.

As the Borough Council is no longer producing an Air Quality Management Strategy, this will materially impact part of Policy LP27. Therefore, the Borough Council took the decision on whether to produce a Strategy or not through its Member Delegation process. This decision was taken on 28 October 2025. The Borough Council will, however, readdress this issue in a future Local Plan through its evidence base.

Future Local Plan

Whilst the details of the new planning, and plan-making, system are still to be published by Government (anticipated before the end of the year) the Planning Policy Team have commenced preparation in line with the latest advice from [MHCLG](#). This work has included reviewing development boundaries of all the settlements within the Borough; a review of the settlement hierarchy; a constraints, capacity and opportunities study for each settlement; early scoping work for the sustainability appraisal (including strategic environmental assessment); and potential growth options based on the new local housing need of indicatively 989 new homes per year.

The evidence base requires significantly updating and preparation work towards a new Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA), playing pitch strategy, and a new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) including a water cycle study and review of the approach to coastal change management areas are underway (with relevant teams in the Borough Council and consultees).

In addition, work towards launching a call for sites consultation (anticipated early in the new year) is also in train. This will offer the ability to submit sites digitally with promoters drawing the site through our online platform and is likely to take place alongside a formal launch of the new Local Plan.

To aid productivity, especially with all the work to be completed, the likely 30-month timescale for local plans in the new system, and the resources challenge, the opportunity to utilise AI (as advocated by the Government and many local planning authorities) is being explored with likely uses to include summarising of consultation responses, and initial site assessments. These are tasks that [Cambridge](#) and [Cornwall](#), respectively, have previously completed.

The above will be presented to the Local Plan Task Group once the new planning system has been announced/is in place. This will also be integral to future consultations.

Neighbourhood Planning Update

As of 11th November 2025, there are 24 “made” (adopted) neighbourhood plans in place, covering 27 parishes. This includes, most recently, the Marshland St James Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022-2038 and Syderstone Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2038. These were passed at referendum on 2nd and 30th October 2025, and subsequently “made” on 8th October and 10th November 2025, respectively.

Three further neighbourhood plans are expected to come forward to be “made”/ adopted during the 2025-2026 financial year. Details are set out below:

Neighbourhood plans that have reached submission stage (Regulation 15) and are anticipated to be “made” (adopted) by March 2026

	Current position
The Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan 2022 – 2036	Examiner’s Report issued 28 August 2025 . Due to go to referendum, 13 November 2025 ; anticipated to be “made” during November 2025
Docking Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039	Submitted by Docking Parish Council for independent examination, 14 August 2025 . “Regulation 16” consultation, 29 September – 10 November 2025; examination November 2025 – early-2026; referendum/ adoption by spring 2026
Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan Review 2022-2038	Re-submitted by Walpole Cross Keys Parish Council for independent examination, 26 August 2025 . “Regulation 16” consultation, 29 September – 10 November 2025; examination November 2025 – early-2026; referendum/ adoption by spring 2026

Other Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Ingoldisthorpe	Various draft evidence documents under preparation (e.g. Design Codes, Housing Needs Assessment) prepared, 2024-2025; anticipated Regulation 14 consultation winter 2025/2026
Pentney	1 st draft Plan (Regulation 14) consultation March-May 2023, following which Plan has been significantly amended (e.g. due to adoption of Local Plan 2021-2040).

	New Regulation 14 consultation anticipated late 2025/ early 2026; submission by spring 2026
Shouldham	Preliminary 1 st draft Plan and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report under consultation with Environment Agency/ Historic England/ Natural England, September – October 2025. Regulation 14 consultation anticipated late 2025/ early 2026; submission by spring 2026
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown, or at an early stage	Burnham Overy; Dersingham; Great Massingham; Outwell; Tilney St Lawrence; West Dereham

Overall, it is anticipated that 5 Neighbourhood Plans are expected to come forward to referendum during the current (2025-2026) financial year. Up to 3 Plans may then come forward during 2026-2027.

This is despite essential financial support for developing Neighbourhood Plans, previously provided by Locality, having now been withdrawn (reported to the Council on 31 July 2025). This change may impact the ability of some communities to progress their planning work, and alternative support mechanisms may need to be considered moving forward. However, in the short-term Neighbourhood Planning remains popular, but it remains to see the impact of the withdrawal of Locality funding upon future Neighbourhood Plan preparation and/ or reviews in the medium/ longer term.

Licensing

- Legislation requires we review our Licensing Act Policy this year and have a new one in place by Jan 2026 – consultation ended on 31st August. E+C was 7th October, Cabinet was 11th November and next for approval by Full Council.
- The Tobacco and Vapes Bill is still at committee stage in the House of Lords, and is said to require any premises selling tobacco, vapes and associated products to have a premises licence, and any person a personal licence. <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3879> To be administered by Local Authorities and enforced by Trading Standards (this may change). This will have a big impact on workload if it is implemented as per the bill. Government currently requesting evidence to support legislation.
- We are undertaking the second round of inspections at all Gambling premises licensed within the borough –inspecting twice each year. Premises includes - Adult Gaming Centres, Betting shops, Family Entertainment Centres, Bingo

Premises and Gaming Machines in Pubs. New 'Admiral Casino' Bingo premises has opening in KLTC.

- Two large scale events within our Borough happened in August. Houghton 7-10th August and Sandringham 14-17th August. Licensing have received one complaint directly re Houghton, distress from a horse in a nearby field. Sandringham de-brief through the West Norfolk Safety Advisory Group was on 28th October 2025. We are currently examining comments on social media and intend to meet with the Sandringham event organisers shortly.
- The Government has been seeking views and evidence to 'develop a modern, proportionate and enabling licensing system under the Licensing Act 2003'. Consultation/call for evidence ran from 8 October 2025 to 6 November 2025.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

Council Meeting 27th November 2025

COUNCILLOR CHRIS MORLEY - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE

For the period 23 September 2025 to 17 November 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

We are currently in the throes of preparing the 2025 to 2030 Medium Term Financial Plan which will culminate in a submission for full Council agreement next February. At the time of writing we are waiting for the Chancellor's budget statement and the subsequent settlement arrangements for local councils.

For **25/26** we have released mid-year (Quarter 2) figures showing our spend to end-September and a forecast for year end. The current forecast indicates a stronger than expected performance for our **revenue** account following some earlier doubts. In particular our turnover savings target is being exceeded and should deliver a favourable surplus of nearly £600K and the Government contribution to our IDB Levy costs is higher than expected by £349K (but against a levy of £3.7m).

Against this we under budgeted for benefit payments to those in temporary and unsupported accommodation to the tune of £670K.

However, and with a range of better than expected revenues for our services, we anticipate a positive contribution to our General Reserve of nearly £400K. The **capital** spend on our major housing projects is becoming closer to schedule with an ongoing spend at half year of £15.7m being 44% of the 25/26 full year budget.

However, the housing market is not particularly active which, while we continue house building, creates us with a cash flow issue, to remedy which we are having to borrow through short term loans.

This situation has, in part, together with available S106 monies, to enable us to transfer some properties, designated for market sale, to be contenders for rent through our Register Provider Housing Company. CPP recently had the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals and whilst supporting this change of tenure mix, asked for a clearer financial explanation to be included in the delegated decision report.

FISCAL 26/27

In assessing the data for preparing the budget requirement I feel the need to commend the officers of this Council and their Leadership in the extra control,

prudence and efficiency they have readily brought to bear following the Political Leadership of this Administration in turning around a financial profile which was heading towards unsustainability. In the 23/24 Medium Term Plan there was a significant black hole in the figures for 2026/27. To remedy this and to ensure we maintained our service levels, we have not only tightened control but have also had to raise our fees and charges for our non-statutory services. These increases were made to catch up with inflationary pressures and to ensure our fees covered the cost of service delivery. This has meant some uncomfortable price rises but the following key data rounded from 2024/25 Accounts will indicate why we had to do this.

Cost Base

Pay, insurance and pensions	£25m
Inward services and materials	£17m
Payments – services from other authorities	£13m
Premises costs	£7m
IDBs	£3m
Transport/housing/interest (net)	£3m
TOTAL	£68m

Revenues

Business Rates	£14m
Council Tax	£8m
Grants and support (various)	£9m
Total Government/County support	£31m
Fees and Charges	£37m
TOTAL	£68m

Revenue from fees and charges are therefore mission critical and ensure we remain a going concern.

The net effect however has been to turn a £4-£5m black hole into a surplus of £10m as at April 2026.

However, we recognised that, now that we have caught up with inflation and are transforming our cost base/service delivery through our Transformation Programme we cannot increase our prices disproportionate to general trends. This is one reason why we introduced our fees and charges policy which limits increases to CPI+1%. CPI in September was running at 3.8% and we have capped our prices rises at 4.1% but some will be much lower.

The schedule of rates will be submitted for Council approval next February. Meanwhile, all Cabinet Members have copies of our proposals for discussion with their relative Assistant Directors.

This projected “surplus” will help us deliver our societal and transformative plans for people and place in West Norfolk.

IDBs

Early indications (through finance channels) are that the 26/7 Levy will increase above inflation. I am led to believe that this is the result of the EA seeking more

work from drainage boards following a review of the waterways but is not offering any more funding and also increased electricity charges.

The Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA) believe IDBs, the EA and other operators of pumping stations, are bearing disproportionate costs following the Ofgem charging review. These charges include a “balancing” element to keep the Grid stable and an increase in rates to help fund major projects such as Sizewell C.

The ADA is trawling every pumping station in England for data to lobby the Government, Minister and Ofgem for reduced tariffs.

As I write I find today’s post includes information from the nationalgrid on the Grimsby to Walpole transmission project. The nationalgrid makes no contribution to IDBs for the flood protection services that they receive.

This is something that I raised at a SIG discussion some time ago and is beginning to feature more in various lobbying.

Baroness Pickering is asking an oral question in the Lords this Thursday about water and sewerage companies becoming statutory consultees on new developments and infrastructure projects. Various Peers are being briefed on the work of IDBs, their service to the public good but disproportionate funding, just in case they get a chance to enter the debate.

NB A note for readers who are unaware, The St Germans Pumping Station is the largest in the UK. It is needed but please don’t keep asking the tax payers of West Norfolk to keep paying directly for this part of the county’s national infrastructure.

EXTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25 ACCOUNTS

The Statement of Accounts and corresponding Governance Statement has been posted on the internet. As all should know, the statement of accounts is best analysed with those who have had training, but, the Governance document is much more user friendly and I recommend it be read by all Members and anyone interested in understanding how we operate and that the governance of public money is our prime concern.

The audit of 24/25 accounts started in November and is likely to continue to mid-February at which time a report is due to the Audit Committee.

Due to the backlog of audits following the covid years, the auditor’s report will be a disclaimed opinion but will be reporting on resource economy, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money.

I did take the opportunity following the November Audit Committee meeting to remind the external auditor that I expected EY’s bill to reflect the reduced work and in line with that which other auditor’s were submitting to the PSAA.

ICT

ICT continues to support the Council's operations and transformation program, while ensuring resilience and security across all systems. Staff absence has caused some resourcing challenges, but mitigations are in place to maintain business-as-usual and keep transformation work on track.

Key Highlights

1. Digital Transformation

Progress continues on the Council's digital transformation program, with around 50 projects currently at various stages of planning and delivery.

2. Infrastructure Improvements

A major infrastructure project—the replacement of the core network switch—is scheduled for the first week of December to maintain system resilience and performance.

The core switch is a critical piece of networking equipment that acts as the central hub for all data traffic across our systems. Replacing it is essential to maintain network reliability, speed, and security, ensuring services remain stable and resilient

3. Kings Court Power Down

With King's Court completely shut down, ICT undertook significant work to ensure systems remained available for essential services, including weekend operations at Alive leisure centres.

4. Cybersecurity

Several projects are underway to strengthen our cybersecurity position. The projects are designed to improve protection and reduce risk across the organisation.

5. Governance

Enhanced governance is now operational. A Change Advisory Board ensures all ICT changes are properly managed.

Additionally, terms of reference are being developed for a Design Authority, which will ensure requests for new ICT equipment or systems align with the Council's core strategic objectives.

6. Alive Website

Work on the new Alive website continues. Launch has been delayed until December to allow further testing and ensure a smooth rollout.

PROCUREMENT

Our Procurement Transformation program continues to roll out training courses for all officers whose work includes making purchases or managing contracts

On 12th November we held another successful training event in the Council Chamber. James Arrandale and Amy Pearce presented updated Standard Terms and Conditions which will be used in all our procurements. These use modern, plain English and are easier to relate for both suppliers and officers. Zoe Kirby, Contract Management and Procurement Officer, then gave a short training session on Contract Management, highlighting its importance in ensuring best value is obtained throughout the life of all our contracts. This training will be repeated on Teams next week for those who could not attend in person.

In addition, 26 officers attended training on conducting lawful evaluations within tender exercises, presented by Kieran McGaughey, a consultant solicitor who sits on the executive committee of the Procurement Lawyers' Association (PLA), a membership body for procurement lawyers across the UK. Kieran was previously the National Lead for Procurement Law within Lawyers for Local Government, a membership body for local government lawyers.

Our current major procurement projects include:

- Custom House refurbishment, where the team are currently drafting the Invitation to Tender
- A designer for an immersive visitor experience at the Guildhall
- Purchase of new laptops for all officers to support our new ways of working
- Consultants to support the creation of a new Town Council, this is currently with the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) to approve our specification
- Annual Asset & Valuation of Council properties to meet audit requirements and feed into the annual accounts.

A “Meet the Buyer” event is being held in the Town Hall on 4th December. Our Procurement Team Leader will be there to explain the implications of the Procurement Act 2023 and the shift of focus to the complete purchase lifecycle, including bringing along Smaller Enterprises, social value, KPIs and contract/project management.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Medium Term Financial Plan

Successful completion of IT resilience plans to counter cyber attacks
Ongoing Contract Management being business as usual.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled
regular portfolio meetings. IDB funding SIG meetings (TEAMS) Various Cabinet briefings Cabinet meetings CPP Audit MMPB Appointments Board Ward Parish Council meetings when practical, otherwise written reports.

Cabinet Members Report to Council

27th November 2025

Councillor Jo Rust Cabinet Member for People and Communities

For the period - 22nd September – 17th November 2025

Progress on Portfolio Matters. – Creating Communities

Alongside Cllr Ware, I attended a creating communities event at Gaywood Church Rooms on Saturday 26th October. There were many stall holders, including Careline, who were giving out valuable information to local residents which will help them continue to live independently at home for longer.

I did a walk about with the two beat officer who cover my ward. This contributes towards strengthening our communities by having a visible police presence. Following our session I put them in touch with St Faiths Rector, Kyla Sorensen, so they could formalise relationships with her around our wider community. The following day I attended the police Memorial Day Service at the Minster to remember all those emergency services personally who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

I attended the warm hub in Swaffham where local residents can come together in a warm and comfortable safe space. Knit and natter groups and individual residents who use the group said it was a lifeline.

I met with officers to discuss our position going forward regarding unauthorised travellers encampment after higher than usual occasions that our area was visited.

I attended the Homestart AGM in October where I heard some case studies of people in King's Lynn who were being supported by the service and the difference it made to the life of the parent.

We have officially launched our White Ribbon Campaign now we have gained accreditation. There is training available for staff and councillors.

I attended the AGM of Community Action Norfolk and heard of all the work that they're doing to support those in the VCSE sector. Things are really tough for the voluntary sector at the moment and yet we know that the VCSE reaches places that the statutory services can't.

I had a meeting with Senior leaders from the Purfleet and got an update as to all the work that they're doing to help support former homeless people

manage and sustain their new tenancies and to keep in employment. Their own staff costs have increased due to increases in the NMW and NI, but they've managed to retain a sustainable and viable charity for over 30 years now, going from strength to strength. The spoke highly of their volunteers, 15 of whom gave 1500 hours of volunteering. They support their staff with training to enable them to reach their full potential and have projects that will directly contribute towards our work to become a Marmot Place.

Partnerships with Health

We have been advised that there is to be a pause in the clinical design of the QEH new build, but that this pause won't cause a delay to the opening of the facility. This is due to Jo Segasby coming on board with the intention to unify the design of the James Paget and the QEH.

I had a meeting with the interim manager of the QEH about concerns which had been raised by staff and residents.

Along with Cllr Devulapalli I attended the Local Government Association Health and Wellbeing Committee where we participated in discussions about the health services and the health of the nation. We also heard from the chief medical officer for England, Sir Chris Witty. We were advised that stopping smoking remains one of the key ways that we can improve the health of the nation, air pollution, obesity and a lack of exercise followed by excess alcohol consumption and the main drivers for ill health. The good news is that smoking in younger people has declined hugely. But sadly obesity in children is on the increase. Public health duties are being pushed down to local authorities. Local government deliver on prevention through reducing air pollution, improved homes standards etc.

I've attended several Integrated Care System meetings at Norfolk County Council as part of my role as the chair of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership. All systems are looking to transform the way that services are delivered to ensure there's a focus on preventing ill health in the first place. However, transforming systems which have operated in specific ways for decades is recognised as a big challenge. One of the ways to do this is by focussing on an Asset Based Community Development approach whereby all assets, like buildings, toolkits, people and places are mapped and used to provide community services where they're most needed and where they are wanted as opposed to going into communities and telling them what they want. I attended some training on the approach delivered by Community Action Norfolk.

The Health and Wellbeing meeting I chair continues to be thought provoking and well attended. This month we had a period of the meeting focusing on a project delivered at the QEH in conjunction with the CAB. We look forward to assessing whether this pilot to provide social advice alongside the discharge team and district directs, has the impact we hope it will have in keeping people out of hospital. It's estimated that 1500 patient contacts could lead to 30 avoided re-admissions which would effectively save £75,000 a year.

There are a variety of different pathways offering different levels of support that patients can access to have a safe discharge from hospital.

Housing and Homelessness

I learnt more about Rural Exception Housing Sites and how these contribute towards meeting the needs of residents in rural locations who otherwise might not be able to afford to live in their villages. RES are built outside of the local housing boundary and must be held in perpetuity for people who have a local connection to the area. We have 28 such sites in a variety of different locations, several being along our expensive coastal area. We have recently agreed to local exception rules where a rural site wasn't a RES but a local parish councillor made a strong case for the properties, rebuilt by Freebridge following a fire to be allocated to local people. Not all sites are appropriate for this and we have to be careful that by allocating sites for local lettings agreements, we don't make it harder for those in housing need to bid on suitable properties merely because they don't have a local connection.

We are making good progress on the delivery of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy. The numbers of people in temporary accommodation is down from the last quarter as are our homeless applications. We had 3 people verified as rough sleepers on October 17th.

I had a regular meeting with senior staff at Freebridge where I heard that the plans for completing the Hillington Square development have yet to be finalized due to rising building costs and the challenges associated with the remaining site area. Freebridge have invested heavily in improving their own stock and are also working to make progress on their properties which have damp and mold. There are a number of customers who refuse to allow access to undertake the work, but category 1 and 2 hazards have been rectified. Repairs are currently up to 80%, which is an improvement on the 40% it was previously. The organization are looking at a disposal strategy to deal with those properties which will take too long and cost too much to get to an EPC rating of C.

I went to London for the launch of an IT system by Ascendant called EARL which is a system to manage people who are in temporary accommodation, ensure compliance, cost management and automation to improve service delivery. We will be having a localized demonstration of the system to assess if it would be useful for us.

Housing Standards

I attended a Chamber of Commerce Climate Change Expo at the Corn Exchange on Tuesday 23rd September, along with Cllr De Whalley. At this event members of the public could learn of new and innovative ways that they could insulate and improve their residential property as well as businesses and small traders. We also learned how carbon emissions are counted by businesses when they're measuring their carbon footprint.

I attended an Ageing Better event called Unequal access – Unsafe Homes. And learnt that housing deprivation is 5 times higher for racially minoritized groups than it is for the white population. And although 15% of the UK population are in poverty, over 25% are from minority ethnic groups. Housing adaptations that cost a council £1600 save the NHS £7050 in bed time. Behind the numbers are real people living in homes that deny them comfort, dignity and health. We can't improve what we don't measure and we don't know how many people from ethnic minority groups are living in poor quality housing in our area.

The Renters Rights Act is coming into policy shortly and we will have new burdens funding to assist us to cover the increased costs associated with additional roles the council will have to deliver. This act will be a challenge as well as presenting opportunities.

Beat Your Bills

These events continue to be extremely popular and have even gained the attention of the One Show. So, watch this space to see if any of our team that staff the event make it onto the BBC. Potentially this could see other councils look to replicate this service which provides support for our local residents.

I attended a regular meeting of West Norfolk Community Transport where I heard the concerns of the industry and the challenges that they face. WNCT is part of the vital infrastructure that helps residents to combat social isolation by either using the regular service to get out and about or using the direct hire buses to attend medical appointments. This service is very personalised and one that larger and more nationalised bus companies can't replicate. As we move to becoming a Marmot Place their services will be integral to meeting our obligations.

Healthier Lives strategy– Food for thought is proving very popular in Terrington St Clement and I've been pleased to be able to attend most sessions and see how the those who are attending are enjoying both the social element of it as well as learning how to cook more healthily on a budget. Our council is extending the support that we offer to residents around healthy cooking and eating on a budget with the launch of Five Dinners, an online app developed by celebrity chef Theo Michaels. It's an online meal planning platform that all our residents will be able to access offering meals plans and shopping lists for them and avoiding unnecessary food waste which often comes from food shopping without a meal plan. All the weekly meal plans will be personalised and generate aggregate shopping lists.

Safeguarding – our safeguarding policy is being updated to ensure that we fulfil our legal obligations. It has been rationalised and cut down from an unwieldy 60 pages to a more concise and user friendly 20. It's out for approval in January.

Support and grants (Financial Assistance)– I met with other cabinet members to discuss the financial assistance schemes that we operate which provide funds to some important local organisations.

LILY, Care and Repair, Careline – these teams continue to deliver a valuable service to our local residents, although the function of Lily has now moved to falls prevention due to contact changes at NCC
I have discussed how to progress with the plans to form a youth council, working with the Youth Advisory Board.

Customer relations and CIC – The CIC team do ongoing analysis of their calls and customer feedback. I referred in my last report to a new payments system which has been introduced and which is presenting some challenges. The team are currently collating customer experience with a view to undertaking a review with the intention to improve customer experience. CIC staff take 2 years to train fully up and they are then sometimes lost to other areas of the council. The team have to be knowledgeable about all elements of the work that the council does, They're delivering a better service with fewer staff and utilising new technology to help them do that. Chat bots and IT are now taking the simple and straightforward calls which leaves that team to deal with the complex ones which take longer to resolve. The team are customer focused and they take the time they need so that the customer doesn't have to come back to them later.

Equal opportunities and skills – I attended the launch of Walking with Pride, an augmented reality trail which follows that route of the pride parade and goes into the history of the LGBTQ+I community in our area. It was designed and developed by young people in the area and provided valuable skills that that will be able to utilise in their working lives. I attended a joint Raising skills, aspirations and attainment meeting with local education leaders, about how we can work better together to improve the outcomes for our school age residents. Changes to educational policy means that there will be a model that uses a set of progressive learning outcomes underpinned by learner level objectives to support high quality, meaningful work experience for a minimum of 10 days through secondary education. These will be tailored days or blocked time in all settings tailored to individual needs. They'll be designed to support workplace experiences for all learners. The Pride in Place Board have a 10-year vision that puts skills and aspirations as one of the highest priorities. It was observed that parental knowledge of the jobs market was low. Companies like Mars offer excellent apprenticeships but parents don't know about them. Lovells also offer excellent training opportunities.

King's Lynn Community Football are considering working more closely with King's Lynn Town Football club due to the new management there. It's felt that this could be a positive move if all the issues can be ironed out.

Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

White Ribbon

CMR AGM

Scrutiny of medium-term council finance

LGA effective decision making

Apprentice planning meeting
Values and Behaviours

Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

Portfolio briefings – Health and Wellbeing
Portfolio Briefings – CIC
Portfolio Briefing - Housing
Full Council
Health and wellbeing partnership meetings (monthly)
E&C
Freebridge briefing
Joint Group Meetings
Cabinet/special cabinet/cabinet sifting/Cabinet Briefings
Police Memorial Day Service
Food for Thought
Homelessness and housing delivery briefing
ICB at NCC
ICS District Meeting
ICS Conference
KLAC
West Norfolk Community Transport meeting
Gaywood Church Rooms Creating Communities event
Special council meeting
Health and Wellbeing Board event
Marmot stakeholder launch
Housing standards and ASB portfolio meeting
Leisure facilities meeting
LGR engagement events
Gaywood Remembrance Sunday Day Service
Climate Change Expo
National Rivers Day
Active Norfolk
Planning Training
West Norfolk Community Transport
Raising Skills and Aspirations
Meeting with King's Lynn Bowls Club
ABCD training
LGA Health and Wellbeing Committee
Walking with Pride Launch
Homestart AGM
Headway Meeting
Wisbech support meeting
Carers Voice wellbeing event
CAN AGM
Swaffham Warm Hub visit
CIL Briefing
ABCD Training
Fawkes in the Walks

Dragon Festival Ascent Launch City of London – EARL, and demonstration in house Purfleet Trust Hunstanton Masterplan Better Mental Health for Councillors Active Norfolk QEH management meeting

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL
27 NOVEMBER 2025

Cabinet Portfolio Report to Council – Business, Property & Leisure

Cllr Simon Ring

Period covered: October – to date 2025

1. Introduction

October and November have been among the busiest and most intensive periods since taking on this Cabinet role. With the Guildhall project placed under a communications lockdown until the announcement of the main contractor (Messenger) earlier this week, the bulk of activity shifted toward the Riverfront Programme, the Health & Wellbeing workstream, business engagement, property portfolio review, parking, and a very strong performance across Leisure.

This report provides Full Council with a narrative overview of progress across these areas.

2. Riverfront & Regeneration

2.1 Custom House

Work progressed significantly on the plans for The Custom House. A key element of the emerging scheme had been the proposal to open a second access through the Purfleet-facing blue door, linking new staging to the existing structure.

Historic England raised objections to this amendment. Given the risk of delay to the overall programme, we have withdrawn that element for now and are continuing with the broader plans as intended. Importantly, this does not impact the business case—the visitor uplift associated with two exits had not been included in the original modelling.

We will continue discussions with Historic England, and remain hopeful that the merits of a second exit will be recognised at a later stage.

2.2 Dryside Conversion (Sommerfeld & Thomas)

All tenders have now been received for the dryside conversion adjacent to Sommerfeld & Thomas, and we are aiming to enter contract shortly. Subject to final checks, we anticipate works starting in the spring.

3. Senior Leadership Recruitment

The appointment processes for the Chief of Staff and Chief Operating Officer concluded during this period.

- Chief of Staff: Emma Hodds has been appointed and will start in January.
- Chief Operating Officer: The Board decided not to appoint at this stage and instead to seek a wider candidate pool.

4. Health & Wellbeing – St James Pool & Lynnsport

A significant amount of time has been dedicated to the Health & Wellbeing review. The public consultation has been hugely valuable in shaping the Council's direction. Engagement levels were high, feedback was constructive, and the insights have directly informed the development of the options now being considered.

Since this report was drafted—and ahead of Full Council on 27 November—further updates have been circulated setting out next steps.

5. Business Engagement & Economic Development

Alongside site-specific regeneration work, business engagement has been a major focus this period.

5.1 Business Visits

I visited several local employers, including British Sugar and Lawtronics. From the new year, I will begin a structured programme of visiting businesses of all sizes and sectors to:

- Share the ambitions behind the masterplans,
- Promote the opportunities arising from LGR/Devolution, and
- Strengthen our relationship with the private sector.

5.2 Business Team Headlines

- Pride in Place 10-year Vision

Submitted to government two weeks ahead of deadline following Neighbourhood Board approval. Early submission positions us well for ministerial review and potential early sign-off in 2026.

- Masterplans for King's Lynn & Hunstanton

Member and stakeholder engagement is underway.

- King's Lynn consultation launches early December.
- Hunstanton consultation scheduled January–February 2026.

Engagement will include a mixture of online material and in-person drop-ins.

- Meet the Buyer Event – 4 December

Taking place at the Town Hall to support local businesses to access procurement opportunities linked to:

- QEH New Hospital Programme
- West Winch Growth Area
- St George's Guildhall

Local partners (Growth Hub, CWA, Boost, JCP, FSB etc.) will be present to provide advice and support.

6. Property Portfolio Review

Work continues at pace to create a more streamlined, more commercial, more efficient estate.

- We are identifying assets that offer no strategic value and can be sold, including small plots unsuited to Council development but potentially viable for small builders or adjoining landowners.
- Low-yield assets or ones better suited to private investment are also under review.

This is not to fund new spending or pay down debt—but to ensure the Council holds a relevant, productive portfolio.

- Lease reviews (overdue or upcoming) are underway via Brown & Co, who are making good progress.
- Recruitment remains challenging, and we continue to rely on temporary staff. This emphasises the importance of outsourcing selected technical work where appropriate.

7. Parking

Following Cllr Bland's resignation from Cabinet, I have picked up responsibility for Parking.

Below are the parking visit numbers for the first seven months of the financial year to end October, compared with the same period last year:

The key point is that parking use has remained broadly stable, with only a 0.24% decrease year-on-year despite significantly worse weather this year.

This also provides clear evidence—contrary to recent press commentary—that the parking fee increases have not deterred visitors. Notably, Heacham has seen a 1.34% increase in stays.

This data, alongside permit trends, will feed directly into the parking fees review, which is currently underway.

King's Lynn Short Term										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	84709	87617	85166	88250	91145	83474	86825	607186		
2025/26	83133	88310	82766	87732	87601	79886	88615	598043	-9143	98.49%
King's Lynn Long Term										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	12957	13607	13843	14569	13832	13489	13552	95849		
2025/26	13693	15311	14893	16007	14113	14112	14275	102404	6555	106.84%
King's Lynn Total										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	97666	101224	99009	102819	104977	96963	100377	703035		
2025/26	96826	103621	97659	103739	101714	93998	102890	700447	-2588	99.63%
Hunstanton Resort										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	21375	30254	27952	36822	62198	21286	12070	211957		
2025/26	32415	31227	31632	33362	55172	17736	11385	212929	972	100.46%
Heacham Resort										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	2338	3253	3506	4363	5934	2971	1108	23473		
2025/26	3493	3530	3996	3742	5135	2410	1481	23787	314	101.34%
Overall King's Lynn and Hunstanton										
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	Totals	V's LY	
2024/25	121379	134731	130467	144004	173109	121220	113555	938465		
2025/26	132734	138378	133287	140843	162021	114144	115756	937163	-1302	99.86%

8. Leisure

This period has been exceptionally strong across our Leisure portfolio, in both financial and community terms.

8.1 Corn Exchange Cinema & Theatre

- Outstanding attendance figures for October and November, both exceeding previous years.
- Fear in the Fens Film Festival completely sold out.
- 3rd King's Lynn Film Festival launched with CWA students managing the entire opening event.
- Theatre Box Office turnover reached £382k.
- Alfie Boe national tour coming to King's Lynn in May – we are the smallest venue on the tour and the only Norfolk date. Tickets sold out in 10 minutes, including £178 meet-and-greet tickets (a venue record).

- Pantomime sales are at record levels, with an estimated 23,000 customers expected.

Next year's Sleeping Beauty goes on sale 10 December.

8.2 Town Hall & Guildhall

- Increase in wedding bookings for next year; new hiring pack due March 2026.
- Strong events programme with support from Lizzie (Stories) and Beth Goldsmith (Guildhall), including the highly successful Dragon Festival.

8.3 Sport, Health & Communities

- Sport England Invite:

Following our successful Expression of Interest, Sport England has invited us to submit a full application under their invited-application process. This signals strong early support and an intention to consider awarding up to £2m.

- Membership Income:

Now exceeds £1.1m YTD—the highest on record for Alive.

- Beginners Membership Campaign:

Excellent impact. Over 580 new members joined, many of whom had previously lacked confidence to start exercising.

- Learn to Swim:

Numbers at a YTD peak of 1600+ participants.

- Junior Tennis:

YTD peak of 90 juniors, despite the usual seasonal dip.

- Kaset:

Exceptional growth—250% increase in attendances vs 2023.

September and October attendances up 50–63% year-on-year.

Driven by thematic events, community partnerships, and broader outreach.

- Events & Training:

- Comic Con at Lynnsport
- National Pool Lifeguard Qualification course
- Free CPR sessions for Restart a Heart Day

8.4 Alive Lynnsport – UK Active Awards

Lynnsport reached the Regional Leisure Centre of the Year finals for the second consecutive year, competing against major national operators. Judge feedback highlighted:

- Innovative community initiatives (e.g. Christmas Day café lunch to reduce loneliness)
- Strong inclusivity across all ages and abilities
- Excellent staff and member culture
- Clear future plans focusing on disadvantaged groups and barrier reduction

A hugely positive endorsement for a comparatively small operator.

9. Conclusion

This has been a period of extremely high activity across all parts of the portfolio. Significant progress has been made on major regeneration programmes, business engagement, property rationalisation, parking management, and the delivery of outstanding leisure services.

Despite external pressures—economic headwinds, recruitment challenges, and service demands—the Council continues to demonstrate ambition, delivery, and strong community impact.

I want to place on record my thanks to officers across all teams, who continue to balance major strategic programmes with day-to-day service excellence.

Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

I have had numerous meetings with officers and outside bodies and officers, including

Kate Blakemore
Michelle Drewery
Mark Parkinson
Paul Lowes
Stuart Ashworth
Jason Birch
Devid Gent
Chris Black
Hannah Wood-Handy
Duncan Hall
Martin Chisholm
Jemma Curtis
Connor Smalls
Tim Fitzhigham

Honor Howell
James Grant
James Arandale
Alexa Baker
Tommy Goode
Lynne Fawkes
Siobahn Cleeve
Richard Allen

Civic Society
Hunstanton Action Group
Hunstanton Town Council
Town Deal Board
BID
The Garage
NCC

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

Council Meeting of 27TH November 2025

COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR BEALES – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

For the period 3rd October 2025 to 27th November 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Group leadership – a warm welcome to Cllr Richard Blunt and Cllr. Sam Sandell as the new Leader and Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Cllr. Brian Long for all his hard work as the former Group Leader and the admirable way he conducted himself and the way he sought to undertake his role. Despite inevitable policy differences and disagreements, I am confident that Cllrs. Blunt and Sandell will continue in the thoughtful and considered way that this Council has made its hallmark in recent times. I will certainly do all that I can to help them and all councillors in seeking consensus wherever and whenever possible.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) - since we submitted our proposal to Government it was my hope that LGR would somewhat fade into the background whilst Government made that decision. Of course there is statutory consultation to come, and this and other councils in the Future Norfolk partnership will seek to add parish and town councils and MPs to the list of consultees as they are currently excluded. That is in response to an MHCLG invitation to suggest additional consultees but there is no certainty we will be listened to. It is also very important to note that the consultation will be open to residents and local businesses as well as the statutory consultees, but it is far from clear how much weight will be given to such input by Government.

On a practical note, LGR is being felt in relations with some other councils. In particular the current leadership of Norfolk County Council seems preoccupied by “winning” the LGR debate heedless of impact on relations with other councils. We have heard inappropriate comments directed at “poor people” and a direct attack on the business cases of multiple unitary proposals that have been dismissed as “wilful gerrymandering of figures”. Clearly Cllr. Mason Billig doesn’t actually understand what gerrymandering means but the implication is clear. There was a further attack on a prominent local businessman who dared suggest that road works have an impact on business. All topped by an absurd suggestion that the Health Secretary needs to eat some prunes to speed decision making. Such commentary is not only unpleasant, inappropriate and ill-judged but it is impacting upon matters that directly affect our community. More below.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Second Homes Council Tax – members will no doubt recall that full Council agreed on 21-07-25 to levy this additional tax subject to agreement with Norfolk County Council on the same basis as the previous year. As below.

Class B Second Homes Discount for 2026/2027:

- No reduction i.e. a 0% discount, plus
- An additional premium of 100%, which will only be applied subject to agreement being reached with Norfolk County Council by no later than 30 November 2025 to return a share of their additional revenue raised from the Second Home Premium of no less than the percentage allocation for 2025/2026

The thinking behind this provision was/is very straightforward and it is to provide certainty of budgeting for both the Borough and County Council as well as parish and town councils. Last year agreement was not reached until late January which was well after PC precepts had been agreed and indeed, was well into budget cycles for districts and the County as well. Far from satisfactory and this simple provision sought to address that shortcoming.

Sadly, in contrast to open and transparent decision making at this Council, the NCC Leader and Deputy Leader seem to be the sole decision makers at County Hall with no referral to the normal democratic processes. I first sought a meeting with the two of them on 22nd August 2025 and responses have been non-existent, tardy or just downright difficult. The Deputy Leader has insisted upon discussing “interlocking matters”, said that “I may be minded to agree a split again this year” and would give “an indication of where it might be used”. But “it would have to be on a different basis to last year”.

Frankly, such responses beggar belief. Nevertheless, ever the pragmatist, I took the opportunity to speak directly to the current NCC Leader at a meeting and asked that the temperature be turned down on LGR and a sensible approach taken on Second Homes Council Tax. In return, I was lectured on LGR and the inevitability of it leading to soured relations and that the current NCC leader would “not be held to ransom” on Second Homes Council Tax.

That shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the situation and also highlights the radically different approach that I take to leadership as compared to the current NCC leadership. The position of this Council was agreed openly and transparently with all councillors able to debate and vote upon the matter. The lack of any such openness and transparency from the NCC leadership is not acceptable and hence I feel obliged to lay out the position in this report.

Unless this report has been rendered superfluous by NCC agreement prior to full Council, there will no Second Homes Council Tax levied in 2026/27. That will have a financial impact upon this Council, but so it does upon our residents if levied, and without a fair share as previously agreed with NCC, that can be spent within the very community that pays the tax in the first place, a levy would not be appropriate.

After the 30th November, should a meeting of the full Norfolk County Council propose an agreement that differs from that agreed this year, then of course this Council would consider such a proposal. The timing would be difficult for parish and town council budgets of course, and that is entirely due to the approach taken by the current NCC political leadership. That two councillors can play fast and loose with £3.5 million of NCC income from Second Homes Council Tax is a matter of considerable surprise and distaste to me.

Scrutiny – the Joint Panel meeting of 22nd October 2025 did not support changes to the structure and number of scrutiny panels. As I said at the meeting, that message was clear and unequivocal and no changes will be proposed. However, I was also clear that whilst scrutiny can operate at a high level, it needs to do so more of the time, and more consistently. That is a cultural change more than structural, and I will continue to do all I can to assist. One thing that I think will help is a change to how Cabinet members are expected to operate at scrutiny. Currently, Cabinet members are invited to attend and not expected to speak until the end of an agenda item and then at the chair's request. It is of course, correct that the chair has precedence and runs the meeting, and what I will be proposing is that Cabinet members are expected to attend (if possible) and present reports, answer policy and political questions and refer to officers for technical detail and information that members may want. Currently, officers are stepping in and answering political questions which they have done for some time. That is helpful but akin to civil servants stepping in at PMQ's and is not good scrutiny.

Surrey LGR – members may be aware that the decision in Surrey was a two unitary proposal. There has been a great deal of speculation about what that may mean for LGR decisions yet to come, but in my view the finances in Surrey are so extraordinary, and the Ministerial caveats so strong, that not much can be assumed. Apart from one very significant factor. And that is the dividing of Surrey County Council into two. Like the previous Conservative Government which divided Cumbria County Council into two, this Government is prepared to divide county councils to make the best and most appropriate unitary arrangements for local residents. Of course that completely undermines the arguments of certain senior Norfolk county councillors who have shamefully weaponised the issues of SEND and adult social care for their own political ends. Hopefully we will hear rather less of that inappropriate and distasteful nonsense.

LGR statutory consultation – details have just landed and members will be fully updated by the date of full Council.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled
As I can neither master AI (Copilot) nor find the time, on this occasion, to manually list what is a crowded diary, I can only offer apologies for not listing my engagements. However this will be rectified in future and I will of course answer any diary questions from members.