



COUNCIL MEETING

Agenda

Thursday, 24th September, 2026
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

16th September 2026

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, 24th September, 2026** 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 5 - 16)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 29th July 2026.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Page 17)

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. REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY (Pages 18 - 23)

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES

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

To consider the following recommendations to Council:

1) Cabinet: 8th September 2026 (Pages 24 - 26)

CAB45: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

[Please click here to view a copy of the Cabinet Report relating to this item.](#)

CAB45: Future Swimming Provision for West Norfolk

[Please click here to view a copy of the Cabinet report relating to this item.](#)

10. QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL KING'S LYNN (Pages 27 - 29)

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

12. NOTICE OF MOTION 02/26 - REVIEW OF CONSULTANT EXPENDITURE RELATING TO LYNNSPORT PROPOSAL (Pages 30 - 32)

13. CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS (Pages 33 - 56)

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
Transport Strategy and Car Parking- Councillor J Ratcliffe
Deputy Leader and Business – Cllr S Ring
Leader - Councillor A Beales

14. 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 Wednesday, 29th July, 2026 at 5.00 pm in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor S Bearshaw (Chair)

Councillors A Beales, P Bland, F Bone, R Coates, S Collop, C J Crofts, A Dickinson, S Everett, J Fry, D Heneghan, P Hodson, H Humphrey, B Jones, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Kirk, P Kunes, S Lintern, B Long, A Moore, C Morley, J Ratcliffe, S Ring, C Rose, J Rust, A Ryves, S Sandell, D Sayers, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, M Storey and A Ware

C:25 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Father Adrian Ling.

The Mayor informed Council that this would be Father Adrian's last Council meeting and thanked him on behalf of the Council.

Father Adrian thanked the Council for the privilege and wished Councillors well.

C:26 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anot, Ayres, Bhondi, Blunt, Bubb, Bullen, Collingham, Colwell, Devulapalli, Lawrence, Lowe, Moriarty, Nash, Osborne, Parish, Pidcock, Tyler, de Whalley, de Winton and Chief Executive Kate Blakemore.

C:27 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meeting held on 2nd July 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to Councillor Devulapalli's apologies being added.

C:28 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Long referred to the Notice of Motion being discussed later in the meeting and declared that he was disabled.

C:29 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The Mayor informed Council that Father John would be taking over the position of Mayors Chaplain.

C:30 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

C:31 **PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no petitions or public questions.

C:32 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES**

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(i) Electoral Arrangements Committee – 29th June 2026

The Leader, seconded by Councillor Everett, proposed the recommendation from the Electoral Arrangements Committee on 29th June 2026.

The Leader, Councillor Beales presented the recommendations from the Committee which were to proceed to second round of public consultation. Councillor Beales noted that the Electoral Arrangements Committee had asked for information on the precept to be included in the second consultation round and as a result of the additional information that was required, Councillor Beales proposed an amendment to the recommendation, in that the final consultation document, including the precept information, be presented to the Electoral Arrangements Committee for final sign off.

Councillor Long agreed that the final consultation document should be considered by the Electoral Arrangements Committee and supported the amendment put forward by Councillor Beales.

Councillor Joyce agreed that information on precepts was important, but noted that it would be up to the Town Council to set the precept.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the recommendations and the importance of keeping residents informed on the detail.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the proposals and hoped that good local people would stand to represent the Town Council once formed.

Councillor Fry supported the proposals and stressed the importance of transparency throughout the process.

Councillor Ryves spoke in support of the proposals and noted that transfer of assets and ownership of assets would need to be considered.

Councillor Everett, as seconder, thanked the officers involved in analysing the first round consultation responses and supported the recommendations, as amended by Councillor Beales.

In summing up, Councillor Beales informed Members that they would be kept up to date on progress and could attend the Electoral Arrangements Committee meetings under Standing Order 34 as required. He also explained that the Section 151 officer would be engaged in the financial aspects.

RESOLVED: The recommendations from the Electoral Arrangements Committee meeting held on 29th June 2026 were approved by Full Council, as set out below:

1. Recommend to Full Council that Officers should proceed to the next stage of the review, including undertaking a second phase of public consultation, including potential precept for 2027/2028.
2. Delegate Authority to the Interim Corporate Governance Manager to make the required arrangements for the second consultation phase, including finalising the draft recommendations, communication and engagement activity, subject to final approval from the Electoral Arrangements Committee.

(ii) Cabinet – 23rd July 2026

Councillor Ring proposed the recommendations from Cabinet relating to the West Norfolk Racket and Community Sports Hub. He explained that funding had already been allocated through the Capital Programme and that the recommendation before Council was to increase the allocation in order to secure additional external funding and deliver a project that would provide significant benefits to the residents of King's Lynn.

Councillor Ring outlined the facilities that would be provided as part of the development and explained how the proposals responded to identified local demand. He also highlighted the wider community benefits of the scheme, including improved inclusivity, accessibility and social value. In addition, he reminded Members that a planning application for an Adapted Sports Hub on the adjacent site had been submitted, which would further enhance the benefits available to local communities once the developments were completed.

Councillor Ring spoke about the Council's ambition in bringing forward what he described as a unique and ambitious project, which had received support from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).

Referring to the financial modelling, Councillor Ring stated that it was prudent and robust. However, he emphasised that the project's value extended beyond financial returns, highlighting the significant social

benefits it would deliver, particularly for residents living in areas of deprivation.

Councillor Beales seconded the proposals and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Kunes requested that consideration be given to the installation of solar panels on the proposed canopies.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the proposals and expressed confidence in the financial management of the project. She also requested that consideration be given to future investment in Alive facilities at Downham Market.

Councillor Sayers supported the proposals but raised concerns regarding traffic and parking implications and light pollution. He also expressed concern about the potential for contamination of nearby rivers from pitch crumb materials.

Councillor Rust spoke in support of the proposals, highlighting their contribution towards improving health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation and encouraging participation in sport. She commended the ambition of the project and noted that it would provide opportunities for a wide range of sporting and recreational activities. Councillor Rust also commented that the proposals aligned with the objectives of the Marmot initiative.

Councillor Long advised that the Environment and Community Panel had been afforded the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals in detail and confirmed his support for the scheme. He noted that the development would remain subject to the granting of planning permission and expressed the hope that the project would be delivered on time and within budget.

Councillor Ryves thanked officers for taking the time to explain both the proposals and the financing arrangements and confirmed that he would support the recommendations.

Councillor Morley commented that the proposal represented more than just a commercial opportunity, highlighting its social value and the need for such a facility within the town.

Councillor Joyce stated that, having listened to the debate, he was supportive of the proposals.

In summing up, Councillor Ring advised that he did not believe solar panels would be a viable option for the canopies. He also responded to Councillor Sayers' concerns regarding contamination, explaining that the courts would be constructed as hard courts. Councillor Ring further advised that the canopies would help to reduce light pollution and reiterated that the proposals remained subject to the planning process.

He noted that an appropriate contingency had been built into the project budget.

Councillor Ring thanked the officers involved for their work in developing the proposals and reiterated the significant community benefits the project would deliver.

In response to comments made by Councillor Ratcliffe, Councillor Ring advised that a new court facility was expected to open in Downham Market in the near future.

RESOLVED: The recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd July 2026 were approved by Full Council, as set out below:

1. Approve an increase to the councils contribution from £866,000 to £1,200,000 to fund the scheme, an increase of £334,000.
2. Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, to determine the most appropriate financing mix for the councils £1,200,000 funding of the project.

C:33

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

Councillor Bone proposed the following Notice of Motion (06/26):

The Council notes equality, diversity, and inclusion as a core value in what it does and the services that it delivers. It respects the struggles and tribulations that has taken place in history to ensure that people from all backgrounds feel equal and included. Our borough is becoming increasingly more diverse and is better for it. In our very own council chamber, we have people of colour, different faiths, and orientations. We all have a mutual respect and admiration for our community spirit and proud to be our community representatives.

*To ensure that every member of our community feels valued, included, and equal. **This council resolves** in its communications to acknowledge the equality Calendar throughout the year by sending out a welcoming message of acknowledgement or support for every significant event in that calendar. How hard is it to say Happy Diwali, Hanukkah, or Ede. To acknowledge international woman or pride day, Armed Forces Day. Events such as disability or mental health week. Not every event may have value to everyone, but it will have value to someone. It costs nothing for a simple act of kindness but could mean so much to individual members of the community some who may or may not feel marginalised at times.*

Councillor Rust seconded the Notice of Motion and spoke in support of it. She stated that she was proud to support the motion, describing it as

a simple gesture that could help to raise awareness, understanding and respect within the community. Councillor Rust noted that the Borough's residents came from a wide range of backgrounds and faiths and that the motion would send a clear message that everyone belonged within the community. She further commented that Councillors represented all members of the community and that the Notice of Motion provided a straightforward means of promoting significant events and recognising important occasions.

Councillor Hodson spoke against the Notice of Motion. He stated that, whilst he respected the beliefs of others, he considered the United Kingdom to be a Christian country. He noted his support for Armed Forces Day and expressed concern that the proposals would require officer time, funded through public resources, without delivering any measurable outcomes or tangible benefits to the community.

Councillor Kemp spoke in support of the motion, emphasising the importance of equality and ensuring that all residents felt respected, valued and included. She commented that, although the motion was relatively simple, it would send a positive message to all communities across the Borough.

Councillor Sayers spoke in support of the motion and thanked Councillor Bone for bringing it forward. He disagreed with the comments made by Councillor Hodson and stated that the motion provided a straightforward means of recognising and celebrating the Borough's diverse communities and residents. Councillor Sayers also suggested that the Leader consider appointing Councillor Bone as the Council's Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Councillor Heneghan spoke in support of the Notice of Motion and stated that it was an important gesture that demonstrated the Council's recognition of diversity within the Borough. She commented that the motion would help convey the message that all residents were valued members of the community and should feel included.

Councillor Long commented that he did not understand why the Notice of Motion had been brought forward, as he believed the Council already embodied the values set out within it. He expressed the view that the proposals would incur additional costs and were unnecessary, as many of the actions referred to in the motion already formed part of the Council's day-to-day activities. Councillor Long therefore indicated that he would not be supporting the motion.

Councillor Ryves congratulated Councillor Bone on bringing forward the Notice of Motion and confirmed that he would be supporting it. He requested further information regarding the proposed Equalities Calendar, including the types of events that would be included, and also sought clarification on how messages and information would be communicated to residents.

Councillor Morley expressed concerns regarding the proposed methods of communication and the criteria that would be used to determine which events would be considered significant within the Equalities Calendar. He commented that further work was required to clarify the detail of the proposals.

Councillor Ratcliffe spoke in support of the Notice of Motion, explaining that it would help to recognise and support groups within the community who might otherwise feel marginalised or underrepresented.

Councillor Ring commented that the Notice of Motion extended beyond matters of religion and was fundamentally concerned with promoting acceptance, inclusion and community cohesion. He therefore indicated his support for the motion.

Councillor Sandell stated that she was unable to support the motion, as she considered it unnecessary. She commented that she already treated all residents with respect, dignity and kindness and expressed the hope that all Councillors did likewise.

Councillor Coates advised that he had reviewed the Equalities Calendar and considered that many of the events included were not relevant to the Council. He therefore expressed the view that the motion was not appropriate and confirmed that he would not be supporting it.

Councillor Squire expressed disappointment that some Members were not supportive of the motion. She stated that Councillors represented all residents of the Borough and that all communities should be recognised and celebrated. Councillor Squire also commented that Councillors themselves could be subject to abuse and disrespect and that the principles contained within the motion were therefore important.

Councillor Joyce commented that he had wanted to support the motion but felt that the nature of the debate was not conveying a positive message to the public. He stated that Councillors needed to address their own approach before seeking to promote such messages more widely.

Councillor Collop commented that all individuals had feelings and deserved consideration and respect.

Councillor Lintern stated that the motion would not be resource intensive. She noted that the Equalities Calendar already existed and that the proposal simply involved drawing attention to significant events contained within it. Councillor Lintern expressed surprise that the motion had generated such a contentious debate.

In summing up, Councillor Bone expressed the hope that Members would support the motion. He stated that he was surprised that some Members had spoken against it, as the intention was simply to recognise and acknowledge significant events affecting different communities. Councillor Bone commented that many people were fortunate not to have experienced prejudice and discrimination and urged Members to support the sharing of the Equalities Calendar as a simple act of recognition and kindness.

Councillor Bone then requested that a recorded vote be taken on the motion, which was supported by the requisite number of Members.

The results of the Recorded Vote are below:

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain
Beales	✓		
Bearshaw	✓		
Bland	✓		
Bone	✓		
Coates		✓	
Collop	✓		
Crofts		✓	
Dickinson		✓	
Everett	✓		
Fry		✓	
Heneghan	✓		
Hodson		✓	
Humphrey		✓	
Jones	✓		
Joyce		✓	
Kemp	✓		
Kirk		✓	
Kunes	✓		
Lintern	✓		
Long		✓	
Moore		✓	
Morley	✓		
Ratcliffe	✓		
Ring	✓		
Rose			✓
Rust	✓		
Ryves	✓		
Sandell		✓	
Sayers	✓		
Spikings		✓	
Squire	✓		
Storey		✓	
Ware	✓		
TOTAL	19	13	1

RESOLVED: That this Council resolves in its communications, to acknowledge the equality Calendar throughout the year by sending out a welcoming message of acknowledgement or support for every significant event in that calendar. How hard is it to say Happy Diwali, Hanukkah or Ede. To acknowledge international women or pride day, Armed Forces Day. Events such as disability or mental health week. Not every event may have value to everyone, but it will have value to someone. It costs nothing for a simple act of kindness but could mean so much to individual members of the community some of who may or may not feel marginalised at times.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED FOR A COMFORT BREAK FROM 6.35pm to 6.45pm.

C:34 **CABINET MEMBERS REPORTS**

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Councillor Beales moved the Cabinet Members Reports.

By way of an update, Councillor Beales informed Council that he would be working closely with councillors at Norfolk County Council to strengthen relationships ahead of Local Government Reorganisation. He emphasised the importance of maintaining positive working relationships and advised that he had already held discussions with some Norfolk County Council Cabinet Members, with further meetings due to be arranged. Councillor Beales also reported that he had met earlier that day with the Portfolio Holder for Transport to discuss the ferry service and considered the meeting to have been productive.

Councillor Long asked whether consideration would be given to leasing vehicles rather than purchasing them, given the lifespan of the Council in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Councillor Beales explained that decisions regarding vehicle acquisitions were assessed on their operational merits. He referred to the recommendation made by the Corporate Performance Panel to Cabinet on this matter and agreed that leasing arrangements could be considered where appropriate.

In response to a question from Councillor Heneghan, Councillor Squire agreed to investigate measures that could be taken to improve waste and recycling rates within flats, including any additional support that could be provided.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns regarding ongoing issues experienced by residents in her ward as a result of dust emissions associated with activity at the port. She advised that the issue had persisted for a number of years and that she had recently written to

both the Port and the Health and Safety Executive. Councillor Squire confirmed that officers were investigating the matter.

Councillor Ryves requested that Members be provided with an update on progress towards the new hospital. Councillor Beales advised that he had recently attended the groundbreaking event for the new multi-storey car park and was encouraged to see progress being made. In relation to the wider new hospital programme, he explained that he had recently met with the new Managing Director and agreed to seek an update for circulation to Members.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Squire confirmed that one new Enforcement Officer was now in post and that a second officer would be commencing employment shortly.

In response to a question from Councillor Kunes, Councillor Ring agreed to investigate the use of solar panels at the Active Travel Hub.

Councillor Heneghan referred to the underutilisation of the pop-up shops at the Purfleet. Councillor Ring agreed to provide Members with an update on planned activity for the site.

Councillor Kemp asked whether Norfolk County Council's funding contribution towards the ferry service was at risk under the new administration at County Hall. Councillor Beales advised that he had discussed the matter with the relevant Portfolio Holder and had highlighted the ferry's social, tourism and heritage value.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, Councillor Ring agreed to investigate the potential installation of solar panels at the King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC), Council car parks and the Active Travel Hub.

Councillor Ratcliffe referred to comments contained within Councillor Beales' Cabinet Member Report regarding the usefulness of Cabinet Member Reports to Council. While she considered the reports to be valuable, she expressed disappointment that none had included reference to Downham Market. Councillor Beales acknowledged the point and explained that the preparation of the reports was a time-consuming process and that he was uncertain how widely they were read by Members. He also noted that many councils did not present Cabinet Member Reports to Council. He advised that the matter would be explored further and could be referred to the Constitution Informal Working Group for consideration.

Councillor Spikings advised that the Endoscopy Ward at Wisbech had recently closed. Although the facility was located outside the Borough, she noted that it served a significant number of Borough residents who would now be required to travel elsewhere for treatment. Councillor Spikings confirmed that she had been in contact with the local Member of Parliament regarding the matter. Councillor Rust requested that the

correspondence be forwarded to her so that she could investigate further.

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Ring advised that one Football Foundation pitch project was currently progressing through the planning stage and that a planning application would be submitted in due course.

Councillor Kemp referred to the King's Lynn Masterplan and proposals to relocate car parking provision from Boal Quay to South Lynn. She expressed concern that this could reduce convenient parking for shoppers and workers and have an adverse impact on the biodiversity of Harding's Way. Councillor Ring explained that the proposals envisaged parking provision for visitors approaching from that side of the town, which could help reduce congestion within the town centre. He assured Members that any proposals taken forward would be subject to the appropriate planning processes and approvals.

In response to a question from Councillor Ryves, Councillor Morley referred to the positive outcome of the recent audit review of Contract Management. He advised that officers would address the areas identified for improvement and confirmed that social value considerations would continue to be embedded within contract management processes.

Councillor Moore advised that a number of his residents were interested in taking on allotments but faced lengthy waiting lists. He expressed concern that some existing allotments appeared underused or overgrown and asked whether provision could be considered for residents wishing to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Councillor Beales requested that Councillor Moore provide the specific details so that the matter could be investigated.

In response to a request from Councillor Ware, Councillor Ring agreed to circulate the Ground Conditions Survey for Gayton Road Cemetery to the Cemeteries Informal Working Group once it had been received.

Councillor Long supported the suggestion that the Constitution Informal Working Group should review the arrangements for Cabinet Member Reports and suggested that a maximum word count be considered.

In response to a question from Councillor Collop, Councillor Squire explained that invoices relating to brown bin subscriptions had inadvertently been issued incorrectly to a small number of properties. She confirmed that the matter had now been rectified.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns regarding response times to Member Enquiries. Councillor Morley advised that this was an operational matter.

In response to a question from Councillor Sayers, Councillor Rust confirmed that the Council had procedures in place for dealing with unauthorised encampments, including the undertaking of welfare checks. She advised that a more robust approach was being implemented and noted that there were also authorised locations for encampments within the Borough.

Councillor Crofts requested an update on the flats at Southend Road, Hunstanton, following the removal of the local connection restriction. Councillor Ring advised that sales had unfortunately remained slow and that some units were being transferred to the West Norfolk Housing Company for private rental.

In response to a question from Councillor Ware, Councillor Morley welcomed the launch of the Community Fund and advised that applications could now be submitted. He noted that eligibility criteria and application forms were available and encouraged organisations and groups to take advantage of the funding opportunity.

By way of an update from the previous meeting, Councillor Ring advised that the contractor for the Customs House project would be announced shortly and that it was anticipated works would commence at the end of August.

C:35 **MEMBER'S QUESTION TIME**

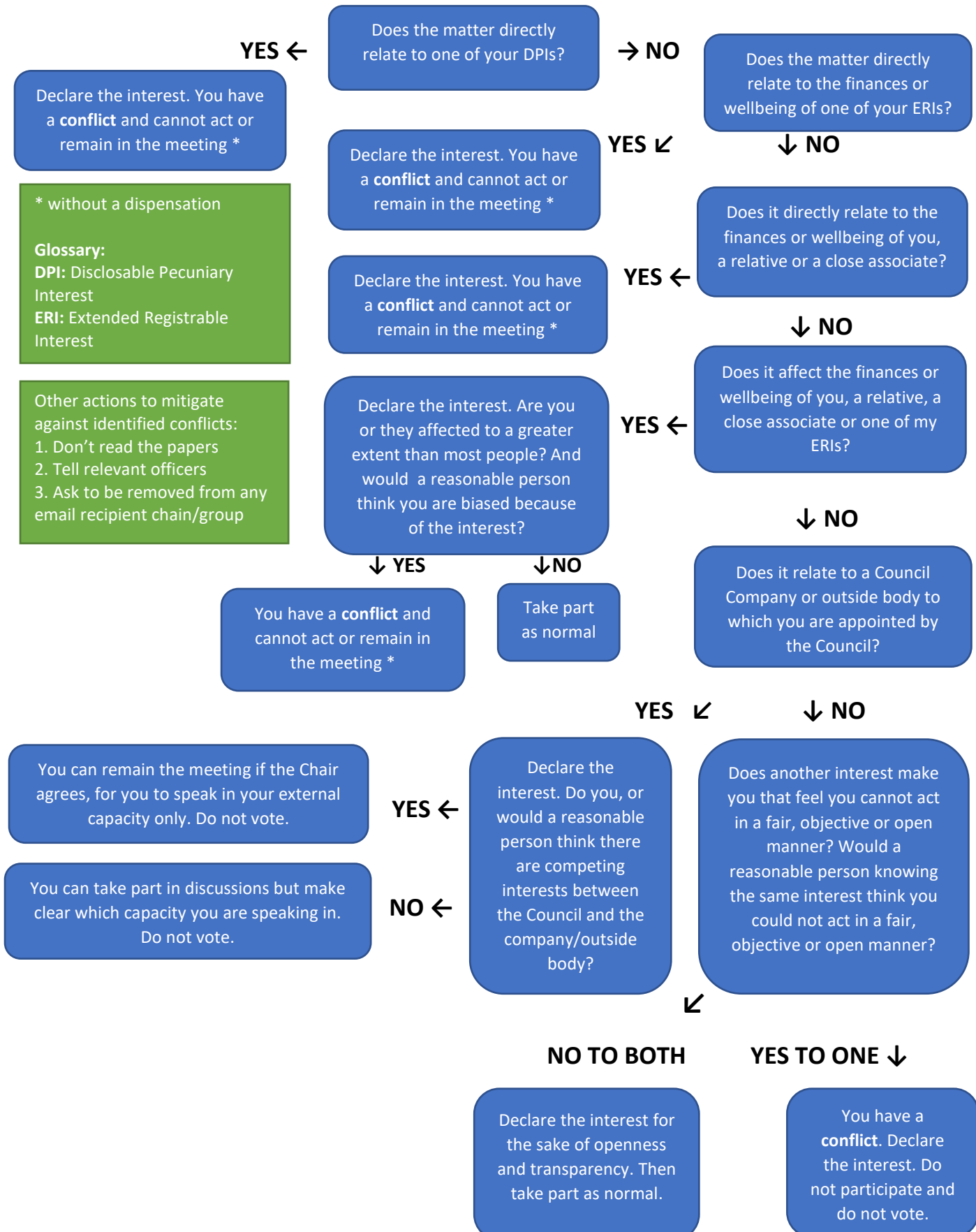
There were no questions.

The meeting closed at 7.36 pm

DECLARING AN INTEREST AND MANAGING ANY CONFLICTS FLOWCHART



START



Open				
Lead Officer: Emma Hodds, Chief of Staff and Monitoring Officer E-mail: emma.hodds@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Members consulted: Leader of the Council Group Leaders	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equality Impact Assessment req'd NO	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting : 25th September 2026

REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY

It is the duty of the Council to annually review the entitlement of political groups to seats on committees in line with the proportionality rules set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. When changes are made to Group Memberships a further review can be undertaken in request.

As a result of two Reform UK Councillors being elected at the by-election in August 2026 and other changes in Political Group Membership, proportionality is updated as per the attached table for Council to consider.

RECOMMENDED: 1. That the proportional allocation of seats be amended in accordance with the table set out within the report.

2. That the make up of Task Groups be amended in accordance with section 3 of the report and Democratic Services liaise with Group Leaders regarding revised appointments to Task Groups as required.

1 Background

1.1 The rules relating to proportionality are set out below:

- a) No political group can have all the places on a Committee (the exception is the Cabinet).
- b) The Group that has the overall majority on the Council is entitled to the majority of seats on each Committee.
- c) The aggregate number of seats across all Committees is allocated in accordance with each group's entitlement.
- d) The number of seats on each Committee is allocated in accordance with each group's entitlement.

2 Changes to Proportionality

2.1 Following the two Borough by-elections in August 2026, resulting in two Reform UK Councillors filling two vacancies, Councillor Ryves joining the West Norfolk Independent Group and Councillor Lowe leaving the Labour Group, proportionality has been reviewed.

2.2 Current Political make up of the Council is as follows:

- 20 – Independent Partnership
- 17 – Conservative
- 5 – Labour
- 7 – Reform UK
- 3 – West Norfolk Independent Group
- 2 – Progressive Group
- 1 – Non-aligned.

- 2.3 To consider the amended proportionality, Council is invited to approve the amended proportionality as set in the table below.

This will result in the following changes to Committee Membership which was previously agreed at Annual Council in May 2026.

Licensing Committee

Conservatives lose one seat and Reform gain one seat.

Licensing and Appeals Board

Conservatives and Independent Partnership each lose a seat and Reform and West Norfolk Independent Group each gain a seat.

Planning Committee

Progressive Group lose one seat and Reform gain one seat.

Regeneration and Development Panel

Labour and Independent Partnership each lose a seat and Reform and West Norfolk Independent Group each gain a seat.

Environment and Community Panel

Conservatives lose one seat and Reform gain one seat.

Corporate Performance Panel

Independent Partnership lose one seat and Progressive Group gain one seat.

Appointments Board

Reform lose one seat and Independent Partnership gain one seat

Audit Committee

Labour loses one seat and Reform gain one seat.

- 2.4 Council are requested to agree the proportionality set out below.

	Total Membership	Independent Partnership	Conservative	Labour	Reform UK	Progressive Group	West Norfolk Independent Group
Total number of Members	55	20	17	5	7	2	3
Standards Committee	7	3	2	1	1	0	0
Licensing Committee	13	5	4	1	2	0	1

Licensing and Appeals Board	13	4	4	2	1	1	1
Planning Committee	13	5	4	1	2	0	1
Regeneration and Development Panel	12	4	4	1	2	0	1
Environment and Community Panel	12	4	4	1	2	1	0
Corporate Performance Panel	12	4	4	1	1	1	1
Appointments Board	9	4	3	1	1	0	0
Audit Committee	5	2	2	0	1	0	0
Electoral Arrangements Committee	11	4	3	1	1	1	1
Total number of seats	107	39	34	10	14	4	6

2.5 Group Leaders have been consulted on the proposals and have submitted their nominations for seats. A revised copy of the Committee Membership is appended to this report.

3 Proportionality of Task Groups

3.1 Council is requested to approve the proportionality of Task Groups as set out below:

As agreed at Annual Council – May 2026	Revised – to be agreed
11 Member Task Group 4 Independent Partnership 3 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform 1 Progressive Group 1 West Norfolk Independent Group	11 Member Task Group – No change 4 Independent Partnership 3 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform 1 Progressive Group 1 West Norfolk Independent Group

9 Member Task Group 3 Independent Partnership 3 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform <i>1 Progressive Group <u>or</u> West Norfolk Independent Group</i>	9 Member Task Group 4 Independent Partnership 3 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform
7 Member Task Group 3 Independent Partnership 2 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform	7 Member Task Group – No change 3 Independent Partnership 2 Conservative 1 Labour 1 Reform
5 Member Task Group 2 Independent Partnership 2 Conservative 1 Labour	5 Member Task Group 2 Independent Partnership 2 Conservative 1 Reform

COUNCIL BODY MEMBERSHIP 2026/2027
TO BE AGREED AT FULL COUNCIL 24 SEPTEMBER 2026

Key to Groups:

(IP) – Independent Partnership (20), (C) – Conservative (17), (L) – Labour (5),
(PG) – Progressive Group (2), (R) – Reform UK (7),
(WNIG) - West Norfolk Independent Group (3), 1 x Independent Member non-aligned)

CABINET

(Leader + 8 Members)

Chair – Leader – A Beales (IP)
Deputy Leader– S Ring (IP)
S Lintern (IP)
J Moriarty (IP)
C Morley (IP)
J Ratcliffe (IP)
J Rust (IP)
S Squire (IP)
M de Whalley (IP)

APPOINTMENTS BOARD

(9 Members – 4 Ind, 3 Con, 1 Reform, 1 Labour)

Chair – A Beales (IP)
Vice Chair – A Ware (IP)

S Ring (IP)
F Bone (IP)
R Blunt (C)
S Sandell (C)
B Long (C)
Vacancy (L)
A Moore (R)

AUDIT COMMITTEE

(7 Members – 2 Ind, 2 Con, 1 Reform and 2 x Independent Members)

Chair - T de Winton (C)
Vice Chair –

S Bearshaw (IP)
Anota (IP)
P Powers (R)
T Barclay (C)
+ 2 x Independent Members

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(7 Members – 3 Ind, 2 Con, 1 Lab, 1 Ref)

(2 Parish, 1 Ind person)

Chair – A Ware (IP)
Vice Chair – A Moore (R)

S Ring (IP)
S Bearshaw (IP)
B Ayres (C)
S Sandell (C)
J Osborne (L)

LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Licensing Act 2003 & Gambling Act)
(13 Members – 5 Ind, 4 Con, 1 Lab, 2 Ref and 1 WNIG)

Chair – J Bhondi (IP)
Vice-Chair – S Sandell (C)

J Rust (IP)
B Anota (IP)
T Parish (IP)
vacant (IP)
B Ayres (C)
A Bubb (C)
C Crofts (C)
S Everett (L)
J Kirk (R)
P Powers (R)
S Nash (WNIG)

LICENSING AND APPEALS BOARD

(All other Licensing and Appeals matters)
(13 Members – 4 Ind, 4 Con, 2 Lab, 1 Prog, 1 Reform and 1 WNIG)

Chair – B Jones (L)
Vice Chair – C Rose (PG)

B Anota (IP)
J Bhondi (IP)
T Parish (IP)
vacancy (IP)
B Ayres (C)
A Bubb (C)
S Sandell (C)
C Crofts (C)
vacancy (L)
P Powers (R)
S Nash (WNIG)

PLANNING COMMITTEE

(13 members – 5 Ind, 4 Con, 1 Lab, 1 WNIG, 2 Ref)

Chair – V Spikings (C)
Vice Chair – F Bone (IP)

M de Whalley (IP)
S Lintern (IP)
B Anota (IP)
P Devulapalli (IP)
A Bubb (C)
M Storey (C)
T de Winton (C)
S Everett (L)
P Powers (R)
J Fry (R)
A Ryves (WNIG)

REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

(12 Members – 4 Ind, 4 Con, 1 Lab, 2 Ref, 1 WNIG)

Chair: T Parish (IP)
Vice Chair – J Osborne (L)

P Bland (IP)
F Bone (IP)
R Colwell (IP)
R Blunt (C)
J Collingham (C)
A Bubb (C)
C Crofts (C)
P Hodson (R)
A Moore (R)
A Ryves (WNIG)

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

(12 Members – 4 Ind, 4 Con, 1 Lab, 2 Reform, 1 PG)

Chair – S Collop (L)
Vice Chair – P Kunes (C)

A Bullen (IP)
R Colwell (IP)
P Devulapalli (IP)
A Ware (IP)
S Sandell (C)
B Long (C)
A Dickinson (C)
A Kemp (PG)
A Moore (R)
B Griffin (R)

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL

(12 Members – 4 Ind, 4 Con, 1 Lab, 1 Reform, 1 WNIG and 1 PG)

Chair – R Blunt (C)
Vice Chair – B Long (C)

S Bearshaw (IP)
J Bhondi (IP)
P Bland (IP)
D Sayer (IP)
V Spikings (C)
A Dickinson (C)
B Jones (L)
J Kirk (R)
C Rose (PG)
S Nash (WNIG)

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

(11 Members – 4 Ind, 3 Con, 1 Lab 1 Reform, 1 Prog and 1 WNIG)

Chair – A Beales (IP)
Vice Chair – S Everett (L)

S Lintern (IP)
S Ring (IP)
T Parish (IP)
R Blunt (C)
B Long (C)
A Dickinson (C)
J Kirk (R)
A Kemp (PG)
S Nash (WNIG)

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM THE
CABINET MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2026**

CAB45 APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

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

The Leader of the Council presented the report and expressed his support for the former councillors nominated for Honorary Alderman status. He highlighted the significant contributions they had made through their civic duties, Council responsibilities and ward representation, together with their dedicated service to the local community.

Members of the Cabinet spoke in support of the nominations and agreed that the individuals concerned were worthy recipients of the honour in recognition of their long-standing commitment and service to the Borough and its residents.

RECOMMENDED:

1. That the Council places on record its sincere appreciation and gratitude for the eminent services rendered to the Borough Council by former Councillors Carol Bower, Colin Manning, Lesley Bambridge and Lord Greville Howard.
2. That, pursuant to Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the title of Honorary Alderman be conferred upon former Councillors Carol Bower, Colin Manning, Lesley Bambridge and Lord Greville Howard in recognition of their eminent service to the Borough.
3. That an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council be convened on Thursday 29 October 2026, immediately following the ordinary meeting of the Council, for the formal conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman and the presentation of aldermanic badges to the recipients.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To formally recognise and record the Council's appreciation of the service of the former Borough Councillors listed above through the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman and the holding of an Extraordinary Council meeting for that purpose.

CAB46 FUTURE SWIMMING PROVISION FOR WEST NORFOLK

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

The Monitoring Officer advised Cabinet that the report was being considered in open session. However, she noted that a separate report contained exempt information and that, should Cabinet wish to discuss any of the exempt elements, it would be necessary to temporarily exclude the press and public from the meeting.

Councillor Beales proposed amendments to the recommendations, namely that the allocation of £845,609.17 should be approved as the maximum amount and that the Leader should be consulted in relation to the exercise of the delegated authority

proposed for the Chief Operating Officer and the Section 151 Officer. Cabinet agreed to the amended recommendations.

The Strategic Adviser to the Chief Executive and Leader presented the report and outlined the preferred option for replacing St James Swimming Pool with a standalone facility at Lynnsport. Cabinet was informed that approval was sought to progress the project to RIBA Stage 3, at which point a detailed business case would be available and a further decision would be required regarding whether the project should proceed.

The Strategic Adviser provided an overview of the current position at St James Swimming Pool, explaining that the facility was ageing, approaching the end of its operational life and becoming increasingly costly to maintain.

Cabinet noted that, following the pause in Local Government Reorganisation, any future decision on whether to proceed with the project would likely rest solely with the Borough Council.

Councillor Rust referred to the potential public perception of the costs involved, noting that the sum requested related solely to progressing the project to RIBA Stage 3. She also highlighted the importance of maintaining swimming provision to improve water literacy and ensure that residents and communities had opportunities to learn to swim and develop water safety skills.

In response, the Strategic Adviser acknowledged that the proposed expenditure was significant but explained that it covered design work, ground investigations, the preparation of a business case and other professional services required to progress the project. She advised that a detailed cost breakdown was contained within the exempt appendix to the report. It was further noted that costs of between 6% and 10% of an overall project value were typically required to reach this stage of development, whereas the amount requested represented 3.7% of the estimated total project cost.

The Leader explained that the costs had been benchmarked against industry standards and that the expenditure was a necessary requirement to enable the project to progress.

In response to a question from Councillor Rust, the Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture advised that a 2024 survey had indicated that levels of drowning had doubled and that more than one million pupils due to enter secondary education in 2026 were unable to swim or remain safe in the water. She also reported that over 200 water-related incidents had been recorded in the previous year and that 22 people had drowned in Norfolk during the preceding five-year period.

Councillor Lintern commented that beach awareness and sea swimming safety courses had been delivered during the summer period.

Councillor Squire referred to the statistics provided and emphasised the importance of ensuring that appropriate facilities were available to enable people to learn to swim and develop water safety skills.

In response to a question from Councillor Squire, it was confirmed that the Lynnsport site had been identified as the preferred location as it would enable continuity of

service. It was anticipated that St James Swimming Pool would remain operational until the new facility had been constructed and was ready for use.

Cabinet was advised that, subject to progress, a final decision on whether to proceed with the project was expected to be presented to Cabinet and Council in March 2027. If approved, completion of the new facility was anticipated by March 2029.

Councillor de Whalley spoke in support of measures to improve water literacy, particularly within deprived communities, and noted that the proposals aligned with the objectives of the Marmot approach.

In response to a question from Councillor Morley, it was confirmed that the £845,609.17 requested to progress the project to RIBA Stage 3 formed part of the overall estimated project cost of £22.93 million.

The Leader highlighted that the Corporate Performance Panel had considered the proposals and had supported the recommendations presented to Cabinet.

Councillor Morley commented on the importance of retaining swimming pool provision within King's Lynn and the positive contribution such facilities made to the health and wellbeing of residents. In response to a further question from Councillor Morley, the Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture provided details of the proposed movable pool floor, explaining that it had become an industry standard feature due to the flexibility it offered in programming activities and improving accessibility for users.

RECOMMENDED:

That Council:

1. Approve the allocation of a maximum of £845,609.17 from reserves to fund the new Lynnsport Project through to RIBA Stage 3.
2. Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, to determine the appropriate reserve to fund the work.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To progress the project to build a new standalone swimming pool at Lynnsport to RIBA Stage 3 to provide the Council with the final design, project cost-certainty and business case to provide members with the information required to determine whether to proceed to the construction of the new pool.

The timing of this decision reflects both the condition of the existing facility and the maturity of the work undertaken to date. St James Swimming Pool is continuing to deteriorate, with increasing maintenance requirements, rising operating costs and a growing risk to the long-term continuity of swimming provision. Progressing to the next steps now will maintain project momentum and preserve the value of the work already undertaken.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Open				
Lead Member: Leader of the Council, Councillor Alistair Beales Email: cllr.alistair.beales@west-norfolk.gov.uk				
Lead Officer: Kate Blakemore, Chief Executive E-mail: kate.blakemore@west-norfolk.gov.uk			Other Officers consulted:	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equality Impact Assessment req'd NO	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting : 24th September 2026

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL (QEH), KING'S LYNN**RECOMMENDED:**

That Council resolves to:

1. Support the retention at QEH of 24/7 A&E, acute medicine, emergency general surgery, critical care, anaesthesia and emergency theatres, consultant-led maternity and obstetrics, paediatrics and appropriate neonatal care, trauma and orthopaedics, core acute medical specialties, stroke assessment and inpatient care, and comprehensive diagnostic services.
2. Recognise that highly specialised services may appropriately be provided at regional or tertiary centres where there is a clear clinical case.
3. Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals Group seeking assurance that the new hospital and any future clinical strategy will maintain the complete package of services necessary for QEH to continue functioning as a full District General Hospital serving West Norfolk and its wider catchment.
4. That Council notes the significance of this matter and its relevance to the Council's scrutiny function, and requests the Chairs of the relevant Panels to convene a Joint Panel meeting to consider the future provision of services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
5. The Joint Panel should be informed by the Councillors' Briefing Session arranged with the Hospital, with Members encouraged to identify and raise key questions and lines of enquiry during that briefing to support the Panel's subsequent consideration of the issues.
6. That representatives of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital be invited to attend the Joint Panel meeting to provide information, respond to Members' questions, and

assist the Council in understanding the implications of future service delivery and hospital development plans for West Norfolk and its wider catchment area.

1. Introduction

This report sets out the Council's position on the future of QEH and reaffirms its commitment to retaining a comprehensive District General Hospital in King's Lynn. It outlines the key services that should remain available locally, recognises the appropriate role of regional specialist centres for highly specialised treatments, and seeks assurances that future clinical strategies will preserve the hospital's ability to provide the full package of services required to meet the healthcare needs of West Norfolk and its wider communities.

2. Background

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), King's Lynn, faces significant infrastructure and operational challenges linked to the age and condition of its buildings. Although efforts are underway to maintain services and improve patient care, concerns have been raised through regulatory inspections and media coverage. Plans for a new hospital are underway, with enabling works due to commence in 2026 and main construction expected from around 2028.

The hospital was originally constructed in 1980 with an anticipated operational lifespan of approximately 30 years. As a result, the main building is now operating well beyond its intended design life, creating ongoing maintenance and structural challenges.

A major issue emerged in 2021 when reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was identified within the hospital roof structure and subsequently deemed structurally unsafe. This has become one of the most significant estate-related risks facing the organisation.

Following inspections undertaken in March 2026, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published a report rating the hospital as "Requires Improvement" overall.

3. Future Plans

Recognising the long-term challenges associated with the existing facility, plans for a replacement hospital have been prioritised. The first phase of redevelopment includes construction of a new multi-storey car park to free up the existing surface car park, which forms the intended footprint for the new hospital building.

4. Council's position

The Council recognises the vital importance of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) to the residents of West Norfolk and its wider catchment and welcomes confirmation through the Government's New Hospital Programme that a new District General Hospital will be built in King's Lynn.

Council notes QEH's existing commitment that King's Lynn will continue to have a District General Hospital providing core services, with Accident & Emergency and maternity services remaining locally available.

Maintaining a genuine District General Hospital requires more than retaining A&E and maternity in name. These services depend upon the critical mass of supporting acute services necessary to operate a safe and effective emergency hospital.

5. Summary of recommendations

The recommendations seek to secure the long-term future of the QEH as a fully functioning District General Hospital serving West Norfolk and surrounding communities. They also propose robust Council scrutiny and engagement with hospital leaders to provide transparency and reassurance to residents about the hospital's future.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Open/Exempt				
Lead Member Councillor Simon Ring, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business Email: cllr.Simon.Ring@West-Norfolk.gov.uk				
Lead Officer: Emma Hodds E-mail: Emma.Hodds@West-Norfolk.gov.uk			Other Officers consulted: Executive Leadership Team and Honor Howell	
Financial Implications NO	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equality Impact Assessment req'd NO	Risk Management Implications NO

Date of Meeting: 24th September 2026

Notice of Motion 02/26 - Review of Consultant Expenditure Relating to Lynnsport Proposal

RECOMMENDED: Full Council:

1. Notes the findings of the Corporate Performance Panel in response to Notice of Motion 02/26.
2. Notes that the Panel found evidence that procurement, governance and financial oversight processes were applied during the development of the Lynnsport proposal.
3. Supports the continued incorporation of lessons learned from the project, particularly in relation to stakeholder engagement and ongoing affordability review during major capital projects.
4. Agrees that the requirements of Notice of Motion 02/26 have now been fulfilled

1 Corporate Performance Panel consideration of Notice of Motion 02/26

The Corporate Performance Panel considered Notice of Motion 02/26 at its meeting on 20 July 2026. The motion asked the Panel to review the decision-making and governance processes relating to the use of external consultants in the development of the Lynnsport and St James Pool proposal, to consider whether appropriate affordability checks and financial controls had been applied at an early stage, and to report its findings and any recommendations back to Full Council.

The Corporate Performance Panel considered a detailed officer report at its [meeting on 20 July 2026](#).

The Panel received information regarding:

- The procurement and appointment of external consultants.
- The governance arrangements for the project.
- The development of the business case and design proposals.
- Financial oversight arrangements.

- The affordability assessment undertaken during project development.
- Lessons learned from the process.

Officers advised that consultants were appointed through a compliant procurement process using an established framework and a mini-competition process. Evaluation included consideration of team composition, relevant expertise and quality criteria, with procurement undertaken in accordance with the Council's procedures and statutory requirements.

The Panel was advised that feasibility work commenced following consideration of a range of options for future leisure provision, including redevelopment of Lynnsport, future swimming provision and wider leisure estate considerations.

Officers reported that expenditure to progress the Lynnsport project to RIBA Stage 3 was approximately £1.4 million, including consultant fees for RIBA Stages 2 and 3 of approximately £168,000. The project was subsequently reviewed in light of affordability considerations and borrowing implications identified through the Council's financial assessment process.

The Panel examined the governance and decision-making arrangements that supported the project, the procurement of external consultants, and the financial oversight processes that were applied throughout the development of the scheme. The Panel also considered whether appropriate affordability assessments had been undertaken and reviewed lessons that could be applied to future major capital projects. Members are encouraged to read the [minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel](#) that considered the Notice of Motion on the 20th July 2026.

Governance and Decision-Making

The Panel found that the project progressed through the Council's established governance arrangements, with key decisions being considered through the appropriate decision-making processes and reported to Members at relevant stages. Cabinet and Council approvals were obtained where required.

Procurement of Consultants

The Panel noted that external consultants were procured through a compliant framework process and that there was evidence of formal evaluation and procurement controls being applied.

Financial Oversight and Affordability

The Panel recognised that affordability assessments formed part of the project development process and that a review by the Section 151 Officer resulted in concerns regarding affordability and borrowing constraints being identified prior to a final commitment to deliver the project. These concerns ultimately led to the project being paused and reconsidered.

Lessons Learned

The Panel noted comments made during scrutiny regarding the timing of stakeholder engagement and considered officer acknowledgement that earlier engagement with stakeholders may provide benefits in future major projects. The Panel welcomed the commitment to apply lessons learned to future schemes.

2 Conclusions

The Corporate Performance Panel concluded that:

- 1 The Corporate Performance Panel reviewed the decision making and governance process relating to the use of external consultants in the development of the Lynnsport and St James Pool proposal
- 2 The Corporate Performance Panel considered whether appropriate affordability check and financial controls had been applied at an early stage.

As the Corporate Performance Panel has concluded, Full Council are asked to:

1. Note the findings of the Corporate Performance Panel in response to Notice of Motion 02/26.
2. Note that the Panel found evidence that procurement, governance and financial oversight processes were applied during the development of the Lynnsport proposal.
3. Support the continued incorporation of lessons learned from the project, particularly in relation to stakeholder engagement and ongoing affordability review during major capital projects.
4. Agree that the requirements of Notice of Motion 02/26 have now been fulfilled

Cabinet Members Report to Council

24th September 2026

Councillor Sue Lintern – Cabinet Member for Culture and Events

Report to Council for the period 18 th July to 11 th September
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1 Progress on Portfolio Matters
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This report highlights the breadth of activity delivered during the summer, the continued development of cultural partnerships and infrastructure, and the contribution that these programmes make to residents, visitors and the local economy.

We have seen a substantial programme of cultural and community activity delivered across King's Lynn, Hunstanton and West Norfolk. The programme has included outdoor events, festivals, heritage activities, cinema, music, creative programmes and opportunities for young people.

A key strength has been the continued collaboration between Council services, venues, technical teams, marketing, events staff, volunteers, community organisations and external cultural partners. This has enabled a diverse programme to be delivered safely and effectively while making best use of the Borough's cultural and heritage assets.

The Council's support, through both funding and in-kind assistance, continues to play an important role in enabling these events to take place.

Summer Events Programme

The summer events programme in King's Lynn and Hunstanton has been particularly successful.

In Hunstanton, the hot weather contributed to strong attendance at outdoor and beach activities. The new **Peter Piper Picked Some Litter** activity proved popular while also delivering an important message about protecting wildlife, the environment and sustainability. Established events including **Open Air Cinema**, **Beats by the Beach** and **Battle of the Bands** continued to attract audiences, demonstrating the strong demand for events within the resort. The Princess Theatre variety show has also provided an important attraction for both residents and visitors. The programme has continued through August and September with further activities including **Swim Safe sessions**, the **Mad Tea Party** celebrating Afternoon Tea Week and **Family Fun Days**. New events have complemented the established programme, with some activities also supporting wider objectives, such as the **Beer & Gin** event supporting local producers. The success of the programme provides a strong basis for developing the offer further in future years.

King's Lynn has similarly benefited from a busy summer events programme, including **Soulful Sunday**, **Mods & Rockers**, **outdoor cinema** and **outdoor music events**, alongside many other activities. The Events Team has worked extensively

throughout the summer to ensure that the free events programme has been delivered safely and successfully.

The **Mayor's Charity Event**, held at Houghton Hall, was an enjoyable evening raising funds for **Bridge for Heroes and the Purfleet Trust**. Guests were able to enjoy the Lynn Chadwick exhibition while supporting these two very deserving and hard-working charities.

The Borough's programme demonstrates the wide variety of cultural activity available across King's Lynn and West Norfolk and the Council's commitment to supporting and celebrating its heritage and cultural assets.

The **King's Lynn Festival** has now concluded following a successful programme of performances across a number of venues, including the Corn Exchange, Town Hall, King's Lynn Cinema, The Minster, All Saints Church and St Nicholas' Chapel. The festival culminated in a sold-out performance by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

The Council is proud to support both the King's Lynn Festival and **Festival Too** through financial and in-kind support. The contribution of the festival committees, volunteers and staff is greatly valued in providing residents and visitors with a broad programme of musical and cultural events.

The King's Lynn Book Festival, an independent festival taking place in the town, has also continued to develop, including a special event featuring Simon Thurley's talk, *From Carrstone to Concrete: Norfolk and the Story of English Building*. Further festival activity is planned for 2nd – 4th October.

At The Lynn Museum, a new exhibition has provided an opportunity for home educated children to develop their understanding of museum collections and the work involved in preserving and presenting heritage. A new autumn-themed display case was unveiled by Deputy Lieutenant Mrs Kathryn Buscall JP. The exhibition was curated by home educated children over four days as part of the Norfolk Challenge Award. The children learnt about how items are preserved and catalogued and how to select and curate items for display.

This collaboration with the home education community will continue throughout the year, providing further opportunities for children to engage with the Borough's heritage collections and develop practical skills in research, curation and interpretation. The project is in association with the current 'Secrets from the Store' exhibition and demonstrates how the museum's collections can be used creatively to engage new audiences and encourage young people to take an active role in interpreting local heritage. I'd like to highlight that the Borough Council's Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Norfolk Museums Service has enabled us to offer free admission during term time for all school children and home-educated children. Free admission is also available to families of serving Armed Forces members, people receiving means-tested benefits and pensioners. There are other concessions available, so please check the museum's website for the full list. We also offer a Twilight Package, providing reduced admission rates during the final hour of opening.

The Borough's wider festival programme continues to strengthen its cultural profile, with the **King's Lynn Film Festival**, **Fear in the Fens Festival** and the developing **Wyrd Fest** contributing to the area's reputation as a cultural destination.

Wyrd Fest and Out-of-Season Tourism

Work is progressing on **Wyrd Fest**, a new festival celebrating the strange, unusual and curious elements of West Norfolk. The festival launches on the 4th October with a film screening and will then offer a programme of films, talks, workshops and events exploring the area's darker and more unusual heritage. A key objective is to support out-of-season tourism, creating additional reasons for residents and visitors to engage with the area during the autumn. A major part of the programme will be **'All of Us Witches'**, an exhibition at Stories of Lynn running from 8th October to 4th November. The exhibition explores the history of witch trials in East Anglia, including King's Lynn's role in this history, using documents and artefacts from the King's Lynn archives. The programme will also include a Crime & Punishment and Witch Trials School Day, practical magic and potion-making workshops and **'A Witch's Night in the Cells'** escape room on 30th and 31st October. The escape room uses the historic gaol cells at Stories of Lynn to create an immersive heritage experience based on King's Lynn's witch-trial history.

Together, the Wyrd Fest programme provides a combination of heritage, culture, education and entertainment while supporting the wider ambition to increase out-of-season tourism.

Cultural Steering Group

The Cultural Steering Group continues to develop and is supporting greater collaboration across the Borough's cultural organisations. A new website is nearing launch and will provide an opportunity to bring together different parts of the Borough's cultural sector and increase visibility for local galleries, artists and creative organisations.

Guildhall Outreach and Young People's Engagement

The Guildhall outreach programme has delivered a particularly active summer programme across West Norfolk. Dragon Arts activities have taken place at Stories of Lynn and Downham Market Library, with young people developing creative underwater dragon lairs and superheroes. Further sessions have been held at Gaywood Library, Hunstanton Library and The Beacon in North Lynn. The programme demonstrates the creative talent of young people across the Borough and supports the ambition for the Guildhall project to have a positive impact beyond King's Lynn itself. Upcoming activity includes Robert Armin Day on 17th September, aimed specifically at schools, followed by the Dragon Festival on 8th November.

The wider cultural programme also continues to provide opportunities for young people to engage with the arts. The forthcoming Into Film Festival will provide opportunities for young people to experience cinema, including for some who may be attending for the first time.

Accessibility and inclusion remain important elements of the cultural offer.

The introduction of extended toddler screenings and autism-friendly cinema screenings during the summer has enabled more families and neurodiverse

residents to access cultural experiences, with many children attending the cinema for the first time.

Further improvements are planned through audio-described and captioned performances, including *Come From Away* and the annual pantomime. These measures will improve access for blind, visually impaired, deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences.

The continued expansion of foreign-language cinema, including Lithuanian films, is also helping to broaden audiences. Some audiences have travelled from outside the Borough, including from London, demonstrating the potential for cultural activity to contribute to the visitor economy.

The History of the Borough Project continues to gather information and record the experiences of past and present Council employees. The project has begun recording memories from former Council workers, resulting in a number of fascinating conversations and personal stories. The resulting film will provide a lasting record of these experiences and preserve an important part of the Borough's institutional and social history.

Heritage Assets and Capital Projects

The Council continues to support the development and preservation of significant heritage assets across the Borough. Regular updates are being received on the Guildhall project, while work is also progressing on the Custom House project. These projects will expand the Borough's cultural offer while protecting and bringing heritage buildings back into meaningful use for future generations.

Investment has also continued at the Corn Exchange, where refurbishment of the green room has improved backstage facilities for visiting artists. This investment strengthens the venue's attractiveness to performers, producers and event organisers.

Safety arrangements have also continued to be reviewed and developed, including rescue arrangements for working-at-height activities, strengthening health and safety procedures and supporting safe service delivery.

Tourism and Visitor Economy

Cultural and heritage activity continues to make an important contribution to the visitor economy.

The forthcoming completion of the Pontoons Dryside Facilities will provide facilities for leisure sailors visiting the town and support King's Lynn's wider visitor offer. Work has also continued on visitor-facing activity associated with Sail the Wash.

A free astronomy event is planned at Hunstanton Observatory, while the Borough will also be represented at the award ceremony for Deepdale Camping following its recognition as Best Campsite in the UK.

The True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum Yard Project is also progressing, uncovering historic elements beneath the site and providing further opportunities to interpret and celebrate the Borough's heritage.

Planning is also commencing for next year's **King's Lynn Hanse Festival**, with stakeholders due to begin regular meetings in preparation for the May festival.

Partnership Working

The reporting period demonstrates the significant value of cross-service and partnership working. Teams across venues, technical services, front-of-house

operations, marketing and events have worked together to improve visitor experiences, support community engagement and strengthen the Borough's cultural infrastructure.

Partnership working has been particularly evident in the delivery of festivals and outdoor events, as well as through collaborations with organisations such as the Norfolk Museums Service and external cultural partners.

This approach allows the Council to maximise the impact of available resources while providing a diverse and high-quality programme for residents and visitors.

Conclusion

Once again we have seen the strength and diversity of the cultural, heritage and events offer across West Norfolk. From major festivals and free outdoor events to heritage exhibitions, charitable fundraising, young people's programmes, accessible cinema and new initiatives such as Wyrđ Fest, the Borough continues to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to engage with culture in a wide range of ways.

The programme delivers social, cultural and economic benefits, supporting community participation, encouraging visitors, strengthening the local visitor economy and raising the profile of the Borough as a cultural destination.

The continued investment in cultural infrastructure, heritage assets, accessibility and partnership working provides a strong foundation for future development.

The Council's staff, volunteers, committees and partner organisations should be recognised for their considerable contribution to the successful delivery of this programme.

Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate the Council's commitment to ensuring that West Norfolk's cultural and heritage assets are protected, celebrated and accessible to as many residents and visitors as possible.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

Heritage Open Day & Classic Car Day
Soapbox Derby
WyrđFest

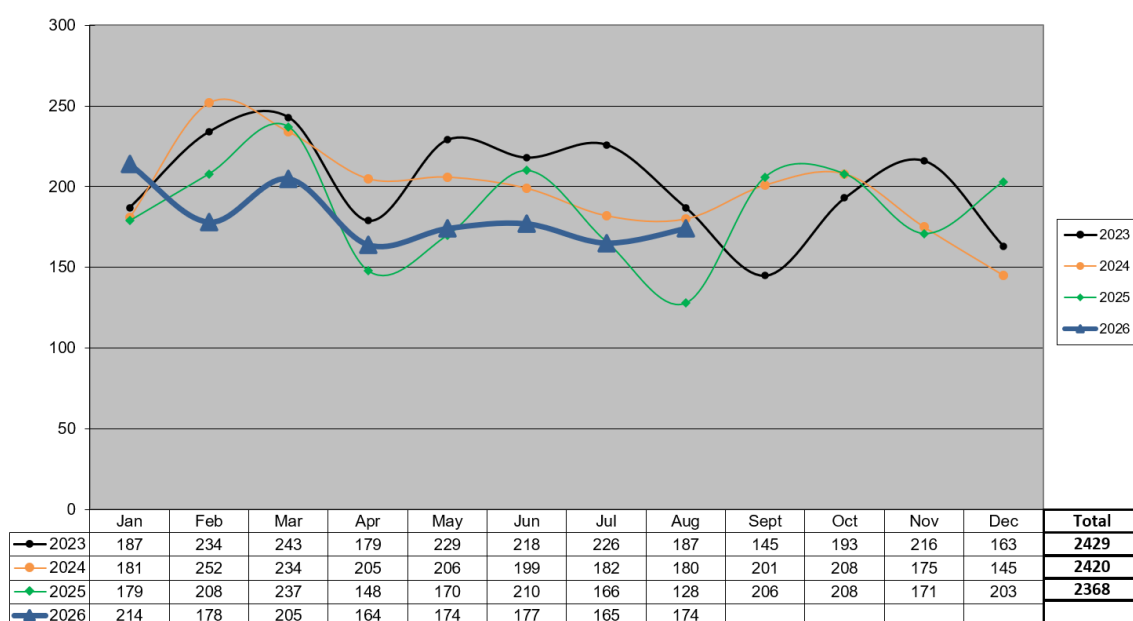
CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL
24 September 2026

COUNCILLOR JIM MORIARTY - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & LICENSING

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Application numbers at the end of August are almost identical to the same period last year, 1451 applications.

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Major and Minor dwelling applications and householder applications received comparison

	1/9/23 – 31/8/24	1/9/24 – 31/8/25	1/9/25 – 31/8/26
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	18	25	31
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	217	266	268
No. of Householder applications rec'd	576	577	537
Total	811	868	836

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

*Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2025/26 performance for determining planning applications 1/9/25 – 31/8/26

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	93%
Non – Major	70%	92%

Appeal Performance – appeal decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate between 1/9/25 – 31/8/26. This measure is different to the ‘quality of decision’ measure.

	Officer delegated		Committee overturns		Total	
Appeals	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning	31	6	3	5	34	11
	84%	16%	37.5%	62.5%	76%	24%
Enforcement	6	3				
	67%	33%				

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 August 2026 is calculated as follows:

Planning applications determined by the Local Planning Authority between 01/12/2023 to 30/11/2025 (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 = 31/8/2026.

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
115	1	0.87%

NON-MAJOR		
No. of Decisions Issued	No. Allowed on Appeal	% Overturned
2558	20	0.78%

Revenue income for financial year 2026/27 (Planning and Discharge income)

Figures are based on a full year projected income budget of £1,453,750.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 26 – August 2026	April 26 – August 2026	
£605,729	£814,369	+£208,640

Planning Enforcement Service Performance

KPI - 85% of new enforcement cases actioned within 12 weeks of receipt

2025		2026	
August	91.5%	January	91.2%

September	94.6%	February	87.0%
October	87.5%	March	100%
November	88.2%	April	97.9%
December	94.1%	May	91.8%
June	87.3%	June	87.3%
		July	86.7%
		August	80.5%

Set out below is a breakdown in relation to cases received and closed for the period 1/9/25 – 31/8/26 and the current 'live' cases.

- Number of cases received incl. high hedge 577
- Total number of cases closed 557
- Total number of current 'live' cases 319

Next Local Plan

At the start of September, the Borough Council launched the first consultation on its New Local Plan. This is known as the Scoping Consultation. It is a new type of consultation and is intended to be high level and light touch. The focus is on how people/organisations/bodies would like to be engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan as it moves forward and what they think should be considered within the Local Plan (this takes the form of a short survey). It also offers an opportunity to comment on the sites we have received through the earlier call for sites and in addition further sites can be submitted for consideration.

The Scoping Consultation can be viewed via the following link, and there is a link on the Borough Council website homepage: [People, Opportunities, Places](#).

The consultation runs until the end of September and there is a series of in-person and online engagement events. These include a further Member Briefing, an online session for parish/town councils, and drop-in sessions at King's Lynn, Downham Market, Hunstanton, the College of West Anglia, the Food Bank, and on-line. Further details are available [here](#).

Feedback will be used to inform the engagement strategy and content of the Local Plan as it is developed.



Housing Delivery Test Results 2024 & 2025

Government, on the 17 August 2026, published the Housing Delivery Test results for 2024 and 2025. The 2024 result for the Borough Council is 93% and the 2025 Result is 100%.

This measures the net homes delivered in a local authority area against the homes required. A result of 95% or above means that there are no actions required or penalties incurred. Failure of this test could result in the similar concerns to not being able to show a healthy 5-year housing land supply position. We are currently measured against the local housing need of our adopted local plan for Housing Delivery Test, and it was one of the reasons we adopted our current Local Plan in March 2025. The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) on page 119 provides further detail.

Whilst two years' worth of results have been published, it is important to note that the latest, the 2025 Housing Delivery Test results, should be used for the purposes of decision-making. The results and further technical information are available to view [here](#).

Neighbourhood Planning Update

As of September 2026, there are 25 “made” (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans in place, covering 28 parishes. This includes three Neighbourhood Plans (Marshland St James, Syderstone and The Walpoles) adopted during the 2025-26 financial year.

Two further Neighbourhood Plans will come forward to referendum during autumn 2026. Changes to the “basic conditions”, the legal tests that Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet, have entailed the preparation of revised basic conditions statements for the two plans which (in turn) has required the examinations of each to be extended. The referendum date for the Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan Review 2022-2038 is set for 24 September 2026. The Docking Neighbourhood Plan examination concluded on 24 August 2026, with receipt of the Examiner's Report. The Docking referendum is expected to take place in October or November 2026. Further details are set out below:

Neighbourhood plans that have reached submission stage (Regulation 15) and are expected to proceed to referendum during 2026-2027 financial year.

	Current position
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 autumn 2025 – August 2026; referendum/ adoption, October/ November 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 – June 2026; Decision Statement issued 6 July 2026; referendum, 24 September 2026

Other Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

	Current position
Dersingham	Neighbourhood Area first designated October 2017. During 2025-2026 moves to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan have been revived (since autumn 2025). Possible Regulation 14 consultation by spring/ summer 2027.
Great Massingham	Neighbourhood Area first designated June 2021. During 2025-2026 moves to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan have been revived (since summer 2025). Possible Regulation 14 consultation by spring/ summer 2027.
Ingoldisthorpe	Various draft evidence documents under preparation (e.g. Design Codes, Housing Needs Assessment) prepared, 2024-2025; possible Regulation 14 consultation by summer/ autumn 2027
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). Preliminary 1 st draft Plan and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report signed off February 2026, allowing plan to proceed to Regulation 14. New Regulation 14 consultation anticipated autumn 2026; submission early-2027.
Shouldham	Preliminary 1 st draft Plan and draft Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report signed off October 2025, allowing plan to proceed to Regulation 14. Regulation 14 consultation, 20 April – 1 June 2026; submission autumn/ winter 2026.
In addition, several other Parishes are designated Neighbourhood Areas, but progress with plan-making is unknown, or at an early stage	New Neighbourhood Plans: Burnham Overy; Outwell; Tilney St Lawrence; West Dereham Neighbourhood Plan reviews: Hunstanton; North Runcton & West Winch

Overall, the Docking Neighbourhood Plan and Walpole Cross Keys Neighbourhood Plan review will go to referendum during the 2026-2027 financial year. Other active emerging Neighbourhood Plans (Dersingham; Great Massingham; Ingoldisthorpe; Pentney; Shouldham) may come forward to referendum during the 2027-2028 financial year.

Despite financial support for developing Neighbourhood Plans, previously provided by Locality, having been withdrawn (reported to the Council on 31 July 2025), Neighbourhood

Plans continue to come forward. Withdrawal of Locality funding may impact the ability of some communities to progress their planning work, and alternative support mechanisms may need to be considered, going forward. However, in the short-term Neighbourhood Planning remains popular.

The revised NPPF was published on 17 August 2026 ([National Planning Policy Framework.pdf](#)). This reiterates the Government's commitment to neighbourhood planning. Policies PM17 (Examining neighbourhood plans) and decision-making policy S6 (Neighbourhood plans and the presumption [in favour of sustainable development]) explain how it is expected that neighbourhood plans will continue to be examined and used in decision-making, respectively.

LICENSING

- 1st Sept - The Government has signalled reforms to give councils greater powers to control the number and location of gambling premises, vape shops and adult gaming centres, with stronger local oversight intended to support high street regeneration and address community concerns. No further details. Would need to amend legislation to change 'Aim to permit'.
- London launches the UK's first self-driving licensed vehicles.
- The Government has announced a 20% business rates reduction for pubs, social clubs and live music venues from April 2027.
- Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026. Whilst there is no news on the introduction date for the Local Authority licensing regime (premises and people), some measures are being introduced as follows -
 1. From 29 October 2026 –The age of sale for all vaping and nicotine products will be 18, with offences covering under-age sales, proxy purchasing, free distribution and substantial discounting. Ban on vending machines.
 2. From 1 January 2027 - Tobacco retailers will have to display a notice reading: 'It is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009'.
 3. FPN's for non-compliance – Trading Standards
- 3 New Combined Driver licence applications were considered by Members of The Licensing & Appeals Board on 27th August. One was granted and two were refused. No further information can be disclosed.
- Licensing Officers conducted a joint enforcement operation with Norfolk Police on 12 August in King's Lynn town centre and Gaywood, during which 11 licensed vehicles were stopped and inspected. Advice was provided to three drivers regarding the requirement to wear identification badges, and one vehicle was issued with a deferred unfit notice due to an inoperative offside rear tail light and an engine oil leak.

Cabinet Members Report to Council

24th September 2026

Councillor Morley – Cabinet Member for Finance

Report to Council for the period 30 th July to 14 th September 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters
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ICT

I thought I would start my report with a review of my thoughts on the current state of progress on ICT as this part of my current Portfolio is being passed to Cllr. Josie Ratcliffe. This will form part of her new transport and parking responsibilities and is quite apt as ICT is concerned with transportation of pulses of bytes around a network before parking in secure storage for later retrieval.

I am, accordingly, handing over the chair of the ICT Development Group which has changed direction over the last year. It used to be a forum which authorised the introduction of new software, whether an upgrade to Microsoft Windows or a specific application such as tree or project management.

The decision on new products is now taken by a peer review of new products by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the Development Group is now focussed on transformation.

Members may recall that I emphasised our strategic priorities (June Report) of:

- Cyber security
- Effective disaster recovery and backup (essential for business continuity)
- Infrastructure renewal
- Enhanced software to improve efficiencies, and
- Tracking financial savings and social value.

I drafted the schematic below as an illustration of the inter-relationships of work streams and processes to deliver these priorities (the ICT manager kindly put my scribbles into a readable format) and is a template of our role in transformation. Although LGR has been paused, the work with our colleagues at the County and elsewhere has helped us ensure we are not progressing down any blind alleys and our plans will not be nugatory

As a “stop press”, business continuity processes are now operating on the latest technology and cloud based back up is now operational.

An Officer group has been set up to bring together a cohesive framework for assessing and calculating social value.

More **VALUE**. Stronger **PROTECTION**.

How ICT helps transform and improve our Borough for residents, businesses and visitors.

ICT provides the technology, systems and support that help the Council work **smarter**, make **better decisions** and deliver **better services** to you.

- 1. Clear goals, better outcomes**
 Technology helps us focus on what matters most and track our progress.
 Example: Dashboards and data help us understand local needs and measure what's working.
- 2. Reliable and secure foundations**
 We invest in modern, reliable infrastructure that keeps our services running.
 Example: Upgraded network and backup systems mean less downtime and more reliable services for you.
- 3. Modern tools, modern Council**
 We use modern ICT and cloud tools to work smarter and collaborate better.
 Example: Cloud working allows staff to respond faster and share information safely across teams.
- 4. Insight for better decisions**
 Better data and applications help us make informed decisions and plan for the future.
 Example: Improved data quality and apps give us better insight into demand, performance and trends.
- 5. Efficient services, better for you**
 ICT helps us simplify processes, reduce delays and deliver great service.
 Example: Digital services let you report, apply and pay online—saving you time and effort.

Day to day (improved) business as usual

- Supporting service teams every day: IT helpdesk, device support and system maintenance.
- Countering security threats: Monitoring, protecting and responding to keep us safe.
- Supporting service desks and service divisions: Helping teams solve issues and keep services running.
- Upgrades and fixes: Keeping systems up to date, secure and fit for purpose.
- Manage contracts and suppliers: Getting best value and ensuring services meet our needs.
- Manage contributions to websites: Keeping content accurate, accessible and up to date.

Protecting your data and our Council

- Keep data safe: We use strong security controls to protect your personal data.
- Secure by design: We build security into our systems and processes.
- Right access only: People only see what they need to do their job.
- Backed up and ready: We back up data and plan for any disruption.
- Stay alert: We monitor threats 24/7 and act quickly to keep you safe.
- Follow the rules: We follow data protection laws and best practice.

ICT is here to help our people, improve our Borough and protect what matters. Working together for a better Borough.

PROCUREMENT

This month the Procurement and Contracts Management Team is pleased to welcome a new interim member.

Previously we had reported that a consultant from Local Government East had analysed our spending and identified a considerable amount of non-compliant spend. Ben Sawyer has joined the team as Interim Senior Procurement Partner and will be getting to grips with this non-compliant spend by working with the client departments to ensure our future spend in these areas is compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and our Contract Standing Orders.

Suppliers have been advised that payment will not be released until they have received a Purchase Order.

Other major news this month, and which you may have seen in the public domain, is that the Contract for refurbishment of the Custom House was awarded to King & Co (Norfolk) Ltd, a company based in Norwich.

This award was the result of an open tender which was advertised in the usual way through Delta E-Sourcing portal, onto the Government's national website (Find A Tender) and our own website. It attracted nine bids. The evaluation process included assessment

of bidders' responses to questions on their technical ability and experience, along with planned programme and construction methodology. Evaluation of all bids showed that King & Co's bid was the most advantageous overall.

Current procurements being advertised are:

- Design Support and Advice for Local Plan Preparation
- Sewage Treatment Plants Maintenance and Replacement of Telemetry Units

Installation, Maintenance & Fault Rectification of Electronic Security Systems (CCTV).

FINANCE 26/27

The Q1 Report has been presented to Cabinet and is posted on Mod Gov under Budget Monitoring.

We are currently on a steady course to meet our balanced revenue budget forecast this year but there are significant pressures on our service costs which, again, we trust will be offset by our savings and efficiencies programme to provide a positive outturn. A savings programme of £3.05m has been planned to not only act as a safety net but also to deliver our value for money and sustainability obligation.

However, with the headroom we have achieved we decided to increase our Grants Programme by £650K for this year, taking our community benefits package to over £1m. £450K is being allocated to those causes that we consider to be essential to support year on year, such as the Kings Lynn Festival, Festival Too, Citizens Advice and Community Transport, Ferry Service; these and similar causes all have a Service Level Agreement with the Borough such that we can regularly measure their service and benefit.

£55K has been allocated for the Councillor Community Grant Scheme.

£15K revenue and £50K capital for our Small Grants Scheme which is managed for us by The Norfolk Community Foundation, and for this year only, an additional opportunity for Rural and Coastal Communities to secure revenue or capital grants of up to £10K from a supplementary community fund of £50K.

A new scheme for 26-28 has also been introduced. A Councillor endorsed grant scheme offering grants of up to £25K revenue or capital from a pot of £500k.

And, following a request from the Leader, we are in the process of re-instating the reserve arrangement enjoyed by the Leader of the previous Conservative administration, to repurpose a Grant fund for emergency priorities that emerge and cannot wait for the usual structured approach but with Governance through sign off by the Leader (or Deputy), Finance Portfolio holder and 2 Statutory officers. The Fund total is £250K, capital or revenue, but by the very nature of being an emergency fund, no matching contribution is required.

Any Cabinet Member can sponsor a request as can any Ward Member via a Cabinet Member.

Full transparency will be available.

Separate advice highlighting this is very much an emergency fund is being issued

CAPITAL FINANCE PROGRAMME

Notwithstanding our ability to introduce further Grant programmes, there is, a cloud hovering over our capital investment programme and that is house deliveries to our residents. We are managing the build of over 1000 modern homes in the Borough, predominantly in Kings Lynn where developers are reluctant to commit due to the issues connected with the town's low lying situation. Many houses have been built or nearing completion but await sales in a flat market. We are reallocating as many houses as

appropriate to affordable rentals and social housing but this takes a little time to arrange. Meanwhile our builders are being paid and our net debt has risen to a little over £30m. The debt on this borrowing is catered for within our revenue budget and it is well within our “credit card limit” or more precisely the regulated financial boundary under local government financial rules. (Set in 25/26 at £84m).

This debt but more importantly the need to get affordable housing to families or single people, is under constant scrutiny and the signs are hopeful that progress will be made in good time for investment in further developments and our eagerly awaited town centre improvements including a world renown Guildhall. As an aside, it is often overlooked that the Guildhall complex also includes a refurbished building for new business or start ups (similar to KLIC) which will bring further investment and value into the town.

It is important to note that none of our loans exceed a repayment period of 12 months.

SOCIAL VALUE

All of our investments have an intrinsic benefit for the purpose intended, such as housing, leisure, tourism, however, their very construction and existence provides “hidden” value through aspects such as employment, training, citizen wellbeing. As I report above, we have recently set up a cross functional team to bring these various aspects together for reporting purposes.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

August was a relatively quiet month but the wheels of finance bringing money in and spending for our communities and visitors roll on.

We are now ramping up with the calculations of our Medium Term Plan which will offer a balanced budget to Council next February.

I have a week’s break in France shortly and cannot attend the Full Council meeting, however I trust there is sufficient data in this report to keep Members abreast of developments.

October has some key reviews including the across Council Budget Task Group meeting, various Grant adjudications, our Major Project Capital review as well as the usual round of Scrutiny Panels.

Perhaps of most importance is being briefed and offering opinion on the QEH new build. I don’t mind disclosing that I was rushed to A&E twice in short order last year, so keeping a full facility for West Norfolk and its surrounding communities, is, in my experience and opinion, of paramount importance.

Cabinet Members Report to Council

September 2026

Councillor – Jo Rust Cabinet Member for – People and Communities

For the period - 20th July – 14th September

Progress on Portfolio Matters. – Creating Communities

I attended a Love West Norfolk jobs/careers fayre on the ground floor of the office on Wednesday 22nd July. It was an amazing event which had visitors talking to potential employers as well as each other and our team. It was heartening to see so many job opportunities open to those in attendance.

The crisis resilience fund is being piloted in Downham Market to work with local stakeholders and partners to develop an Asset Based Community Development approach which builds on what's strong and not what's wrong.. It's felt that this approach will enable those in need to develop the skills and opportunities to move away from a position of crisis and need. It's very much in the early stages but this approach has delivered results for our residents in other areas.

Along with Cllr Kemp, I visited South Lynn Community Centre and had a tour of the facility and was introduced to the ambition, under the management of the Purfleet Trust, as to how it will be used going forward. They have ambitious plans as to how the community will benefit from their stewardship of the venue and I look forward to seeing this come to fruition.

I was one of several councillors who were lucky enough to attend the unveiling of a new display at the King's Lynn Museum.

Food for Thought is starting again on Wednesday September 23rd in Upwell. Well worth publicising it with your residents.

Town heritage day was on Sunday September 13th and as ever it was amazing. I love to take my grandchildren and show them how great King's Lynn is, and so do lots of others in our community. Our friends and neighbours absolutely love it. Thank you to all the volunteers who make it happen. Despite the rain, it was an amazing day with over 1000 visitors to both the Minster and the town hall.

Partnerships with Health

Like many of us I am extremely concerned to hear that some significant services provided at the QEH are under review. Maternity, ICU and A&E are being considered by the Norfolk and Waveney University Hospitals board. It's

important that we know this is a board decision, made by people that simply do not have a full and deep understanding of the area that the QEH covers. Like many of you, I will be doing all I can to ensure that this threat does not come to fruition and instead our services are retained and strengthened.

I met with a senior member of staff from the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS trust to talk about the proposed new neighbourhood mental health hub. I expressed my concern about the original proposed location in the former Samphire ward on the Chatterton House Estate. The ward is a considerable walk from the main road which makes a nonsense of the fact it's meant to be a neighbourhood MH hub. It's not on any bus routes either. It absolutely does not replace the former in-patient unit and it's a huge concern that residents who need support for their MH have to either be looked after out of county, or in Norwich. While the hub, should an appropriate venue be found, will definitely have some benefits to those in need, without funding to resource it, I remain concerned about its viability. The most recent news is that the original proposal is no longer being considered, which is good news and shows that at a borough level, our representations can make a difference. Much like the QEH, it often feels like resources are concentrated in Norwich and in the west of the county we are the poor relations.

Skills

I attended the launch of the Future Talent Tech event at the library. It was amazing to see so many young people engaged at the event, although I did observe there were far fewer girls in attendance. While our authority has no statutory responsibility for learning and skills, we recognise how important it is to provide young people with opportunities and aspirations and supporting events like this enable us to support not just the people involved, but the businesses who need these tech skills. On Wednesday 16th I'll be attending the Open Roads aware evening, where the achievements of young people are recognised. Open Road is another local organisations that provides opportunities for our young people to gain skills and qualifications which otherwise they might not get. The following week – 24th September, is National Manufacturing Day and many of our local manufacturing firms have opened their doors to the public, schools and local communities. 140 places have been provided which will given young people a behind-the-scenes look at modern manufacturing careers, apprenticeships and high skilled job. The industry will celebrate the diversity of what's on offer.

Housing and Homelessness

Our housing needs assessment, which identifies what type of housing we need and where we need it to be has been drafted. Importantly it also looks at the tenure type that we need. Our Housing Delivery strategy, which has yet to be finalised, will set out how we will deliver what is needed, making sure we provide the right type of housing, of the right tenure, in the right locations. This is a vital piece of work and could be the answer to helping unlock our economic growth and development and attract businesses to invest in our area.

Housing Standards

Nothing to report

Beat Your Bills**Community Transport**

Community transport continue to play an important part in our economic growth and I'm so pleased that we now have a new cabinet member with all the skills needed to push transport forward. I look forward to working with Cllr Ratcliffe to improve the community transport our residents value so much

Assets of Community Value and Bus Shelters

UKPN have now disconnected the power from all the bus shelters in the unparished area of King's Lynn and Westcotec will be starting the replacement imminently.

Healthier Lives strategy

There have been two health and wellbeing Partnership meetings where ourselves and our key partners in health and the VCES sector come together and share our future, funding opportunities and progress on health prevention. The most recent meeting included a presentation from Carolyn Patterson of the College of West Anglia informing us of the work experience project she was involved with providing work experience opportunities in health and social care. This is an often-overlooked area as many don't perceive health and social care to be a career that's worth pursuing as it's often minimum wage. However, Carolyn presented some great opportunities and made the case for care.

Youth

As briefly mentioned earlier in the report, I attended the unveiling of a new display at the King's Lynn museum. It was curated by a group of children who are home educated. They had the opportunity to be museum curators for 4 days and they then presented their display and gave those present a tour of the museum, explaining each section. They were an amazing group who demonstrated all the attributes needed to succeed in life – they were articulate, they spoke clearly and knowledgeably about their subject areas in front of an audience of mainly strangers.

Safeguarding

We are awaiting the commencement of a new officer who will progress the work on our safeguarding policy. The team have completed a Section 11 self-assessment, which is a statutory audit tool that organisations like ours use to evaluate and improve how we safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It places a statutory duty on our organisation to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging our functions we have regard to the need safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Customer relations and CIC

The CIC took 31955 calls in quarter one and have an 80% customer satisfaction rate. They deal with our customers in such a way as to negate the need for a follow on call. They are now in the process of introducing voice

recognition for customers, rather than the lengthy Press 1 for, Press 2 for.
This will improve customer experience further.

Cabinet Members Report to Council

24th September 2026

Councillor Josie Ratcliffe – Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy and Car Parking

Report to Council for the period to 14 th September
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Progress on Portfolio Matters

I am honoured to be appointed to this new key position of Cabinet member for Transport Strategy and Car Parking.

I have a background in road haulage and rail, after an early career as a software engineer. More recently on the council, I joined the Transport Strategy Informal Working Group, as a member of the Regeneration & Development Panel.

I'm looking forward to representing the council, and supporting our residents and businesses around car parking and transport matters. I intend to ensure joined-up strategic thinking and proactive working with Norfolk County Council and other partners, pushing for positive investment decisions that boost our local economy and improve the lives of our residents in West Norfolk.

In addition to Transport Strategy and Policies, and Car Parking, I will be picking up responsibilities for Cemeteries, ICT, CCTV, Customer Complaints, and Data Protection, Freedom of Information & GDPR.

I would like to thank my Cabinet colleagues and officers who have welcomed me in my first three weeks (at the time of writing) in this role. I have been meeting key contacts and receiving briefings, but I know there is a lot more to learn so I can be effective in this role, and I will provide detailed reports in future.

Cabinet Members Report to Council

24th September 2026

Councillor Alistair Beales – Leader of the Council

Report to Council for the period 30th July to 23rd September 2026.

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters

I had two things in mind when sitting down to write this report. Firstly, does anyone actually read them and do they offer value to members. (I have canvassed views among Cabinet colleagues, and they are very keen to continue with reports in what has become the normal fashion. So be it). Secondly, does AI have a role in easing the burden of writing them. To that end **this report has minor tweaks but is essentially a creation of Co-Pilot** set to work mode, so it crawls over all my work data. I am quite impressed (I use ChatGPT in my personal life) and welcome views and feedback.

Introduction

This report provides Members with an update on significant activity undertaken since the last meeting of the Council and highlights the major issues currently facing the Borough Council and our communities.

The period has been dominated by three principal matters:

- The Government's decision to pause Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Norfolk.
- Continuing concerns regarding the future of services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- Progress on the Council's major investment, regeneration and transformation programmes.

Alongside these matters, the Council has continued to deliver day-to-day services, support residents and businesses, and progress key strategic projects across West Norfolk.

Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

The most significant strategic development has been the Government's announcement on 7 September that implementation of Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk has been paused whilst a wider review is undertaken. The Government has been clear this is a period of review and reflection rather than a cancellation of reorganisation, and Ministers have reaffirmed their commitment to both devolution and local government reform.

Council officers and Members have contributed substantial time and expertise to the Norfolk-wide programme over the last year. Whilst this review creates uncertainty, the work undertaken has not been wasted and much of the organisational readiness and transformation activity will continue to benefit this authority.

I continue to advocate strongly for the three-unitary model proposed jointly by this council and five other district councils, which I believe remains the arrangement best suited to serving communities across Norfolk.

The pause also allows us to focus renewed attention on the priorities of West Norfolk and the delivery of key local projects while we await further Government direction.

Next Steps

- Continue engagement with Ministers and sector partners.
- Ensure the Council is well placed to respond when Government announces revised arrangements.
- Maintain focus on transformation and efficiency programmes that support residents irrespective of the LGR outcome.
- Continue discussions regarding devolution opportunities for Norfolk.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Members will be aware of concerns arising from recent national media coverage regarding future NHS service configurations across Norfolk and the position of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Recent reporting has generated significant public concern regarding the future of key services, including emergency, maternity and intensive care provision.

I have held discussions with hospital representatives, council officers and Members to understand the implications of current proposals and ensure that the interests of West Norfolk residents are fully represented.

Whilst the NHS has indicated that no decisions have been taken regarding the closure of key services, it is essential that any future changes are subject to robust scrutiny and full public engagement.

The Council's longstanding position remains that West Norfolk residents require safe, accessible and high-quality acute hospital services locally.

Next Steps

- Continue engagement with QEH leadership.
- Explore enhanced scrutiny arrangements with partner authorities where appropriate.
- Advocate strongly for the retention and strengthening of critical services serving West Norfolk residents.

Guildhall and Creative Hub

The Guildhall project continues to advance well. Members recently received a detailed update confirming substantial progress in demolition, structural repairs and restoration works. Planning applications relating to external works have been submitted and major heritage restoration works are progressing on schedule. The project remains one of the most significant cultural investments in the borough's history.

Town Centre and Pride in Place

Work continues on town centre regeneration initiatives aimed at tackling vacancy rates, supporting economic activity and improving the attractiveness of King's Lynn. Various projects linked to the King's Lynn Vision and Pride in Place programme continue to move forward.

Southgates

Members will be aware of ongoing works and planning activity associated with the Southgates area and arch repairs. These works are important to preserving key heritage assets and supporting wider town centre improvements.

Next Steps

- Progress Guildhall construction programme.
- Advance town centre regeneration initiatives.
- Continue stakeholder engagement on King's Lynn investment projects.
- Maintain oversight through Member Major Projects Board and Cabinet processes.

Community Leadership and Partnership Working

I have continued to represent the Council at a wide range of partnership and leadership forums.

These have included:

- King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board.
- Health and wellbeing partnerships.
- LGR and devolution discussions.
- Major project and regeneration boards.
- Regular briefings with the Chief Executive and Deputy Leader.
- Engagement with MPs, NHS representatives and business leaders.

The King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board continues to develop opportunities around investment, health inequality reduction and community empowerment. Discussions have increasingly focused on ensuring that future investment leaves a meaningful long-term legacy for residents.

Organisational Leadership

Alongside external priorities, significant attention has been focused on supporting staff and maintaining organisational stability during a period of national uncertainty around local government reform.

Recent staff briefings have sought to provide clarity regarding LGR, organisational transformation and future workforce planning. Together with the Chief Executive, I remain committed to keeping staff informed and engaged as circumstances develop.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

Looking Forward

The coming months will be particularly important for the Borough Council.

Key priorities include:

- Responding to Government decisions on Local Government Reorganisation.
- Protecting the interests of residents regarding QEH services.
- Delivering major regeneration projects.
- Preparing for future devolution arrangements.
- Continuing organisational transformation and service improvement.
- Maintaining financial resilience amid ongoing pressures affecting local government.