

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

26 November 2015

COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LAWRENCE - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY

For the period October to November 2015

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Home Choice

The total on the register prior to the change of policy on 1st October 2014 was 2,494 and at the end of October 2015 was 1,619 a drop of 875.

81 applicants were housed during October into Housing Association accommodation.

26 new applicants were not admitted to the register during October as they did not meet the local connection criteria. 2 were denied access because they were over the income bar.

153 new applicants were accepted onto the register during October.

Long Term Empty Homes (LTEH)

Total number of Long Term Empty* Homes for Oct/2015 :	796	
Total number of Long Term Empty Homes for Sep/2015 :	792	
**Monthly Change:	4	
LTEH % of Council Tax Stock for Oct/2015 :	1.11	%
LTEH % of Council Tax Stock for Sep/2015 :	1.10	%
**Monthly Change:	0.01	%
Total number of ALL Empty Homes for Oct/2015 :	2479	
Total number of ALL Empty Homes for Sep/2015 :	2417	
**Monthly Change:	62	

Warm and Well

The Borough Council will be supporting the county wide Warm and Well initiative again this year. This is a local partnership project to keep residents in Norfolk healthy this winter.

The partnership includes local authorities, health authorities and the voluntary/community sector. It is targeted at our most vulnerable communities.

The aim of the initiative is to reduce excess winter deaths in Norfolk by way of a range of training and support. There is an online e-learning course for those who come into contact with vulnerable people over the winter.

http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/Safety_emergencies_and_accidents/Norfolk_Winter/Warm_and_well/Helping_others_to_stay_warm_and_well/elearning/index.htm

We aim to raise public awareness about the danger/risk of cold weather for those most vulnerable and also to enable communities to support themselves in the winter.

Community Action Norfolk

Community Action Norfolk, supported by the Borough Council, in conjunction with the Warm & Well Initiative have successfully bid for £377,750 of Healthy Homes funding from the British Gas Energy Trust. This funding will cover a range of activities including the training of front line staff but it will also include funding for grants for small and large scale heating repairs/upgrades.

West Norfolk will receive £6,000 for handy person 'tune up' visits. £10,000 for small scale support/interventions and £20,000 for large scale support/interventions. There is also £10,000 available across the county for technology pilot projects.

The delivery of the grant funding in West Norfolk will be through Care and Repair West Norfolk including the handy person service.

The Purfleet Trust

Since October the Purfleet Trust has managed to raise approximately £40k by way of individual donors and groups.

This is in addition to the Councils contribution of £20k towards the running of the Purfleet Trusts pathways centre. The Council has always worked closely in partnership with the Trust and continues to do so by maximising the income from the training houses and supporting / assisting with bids and funding opportunities to support their areas of work. (training houses, pathways centre, intensive support service).

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The Council has commissioned the Purfleet Trusts intensive support service for the past 3 years through separate funding streams and at present this service is funded through a countywide single homelessness fund which is led on behalf of the Norfolk local authorities and Waveney District Council by Kings Lynn and west Norfolk.

Currently the Council is working with the Purfleet Trust, Police and Vancouver Centre to raise awareness of homelessness and to request people to support local homelessness charities by giving to charities instead of giving to people on the street by way of an anti-begging campaign which will be promoted through the Vancouver Centre and High Street.

New Housing Delivery

We are anticipating some more of the detail on national Government policy changes. This will then help us locally to start work on a policy response to some these changes. The resources that the Government make available for housing capital investment are channelled through the Homes and Communities Agency. It is likely that we will see a shift in the focus of these resources to products that offer opportunities for home ownership.

- The Government has already made funding available to local authorities for Starter Homes (market units sold at 80% of open market value to first time buyers under age of 40).
- The Custom and Self-Build Bill was enacted and further information will come forward in relation to planning to meet any identified demand for custom build lots
- Possible removal of sub-market rental units being secured on S.106 sites – to perhaps include low cost home

Food Hygiene

The food team are joining forces with the Norfolk Public Health - Reducing Early Mortality Team on the Fish Well Project which is due to start March/April next year. This project ran nearly 5 years ago and was a big success. It will involve delivering outreach NHS Health checks and access to Health Trainers on the quayside, improving access to health care and engaging hard to reach fishermen. The sites are going to be located at Cromer, Wells and King's Lynn and will be in partnership with the Fishermen's Mission to engage these men in this project.

2 Meetings Attended

Cabinet Cabinet Sifting Joint panel RD&E,EC 'NO MORE' at Downham Market
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