

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

14<sup>th</sup> July 2022

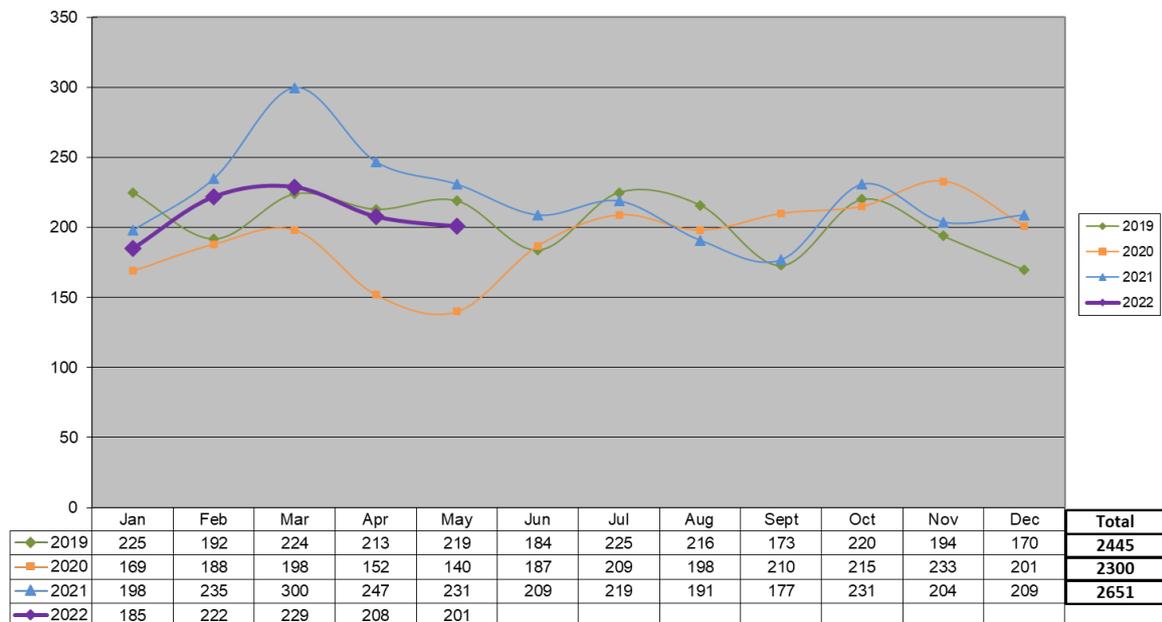
### COUNCILLOR RICHARD BLUNT - CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION

For the period from 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022

#### 1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

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

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Applications received continues to be high and we still have vacant posts to fill. I am pleased to confirm that a review of resources within the Planning Service has been completed and approved by Cabinet. Staff are now working as quickly as they can on recruiting to the existing and new posts. Recruiting to some of the post is likely to be challenging as we are aware there is a shortage of qualified planners nationally. I will provide an update on the recruitment process in future reports.

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

Householder applications have dropped slightly compared to the same period last year, but still significantly higher than the same period in 2019/20.

	1/6/19 – 31/5/20	1/6/20 – 31/5/21	1/6/21 – 31/5/22
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No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	26	28	20
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	378	342	300
No. of Householder applications rec'd	620	893	824

\*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

### 2021/22 rolling performance for determining planning applications 1/6/21 – 31/5/22

	National target	Performance
<b>Major</b>	60%	90.1%
<b>Non – Major</b>	70%	88.1%

### Appeal Performance – decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate 1/6/21 – 31/5/22

	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning appeals	31	8
	79%	21%
Enforcement appeals	5	1
	83%	17%

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

### Revenue income 2022/23

Although only 2 months into the financial year, income has already exceeded projected by over £274, 000.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 22 – May 22	April 22 – May 22	
£195,000	£469,334	<b>+£274,334</b>

## Housing Completions

Housing completions are 21 higher than the previous year and slightly above projected, 62 in April and 33 in May 2022.



## Local Plan

The examination of the Local Plan continues following its submission to the Secretary of State at the end of March 2022.

This early stage of the examination process involves the Inspectors reviewing the plan and the other submitted documents to make an initial assessment. The Inspectors have sent through two sets of initial questions seeking clarification on a number of issues which officers are responding to. These letters and other information about the examination are available on the web site at [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20079/planning\\_policy\\_and\\_local\\_plan/951/local\\_plan\\_review\\_2016-2036\\_examination](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20079/planning_policy_and_local_plan/951/local_plan_review_2016-2036_examination)

Our response to these questions and any other initial questions that may arise at this stage of the examination will help inform the matters, issues and questions for discussion at the hearing sessions expected in October/November this year. Details of the examination hearings will be published on the web site as soon as these are available.

## Neighbourhood Plans

The referendums for Hunstanton and Heacham Neighbourhood Plans took place on the 16 June 2022 and both plans are now 'made' and form part of the development plan for the area.

We have been working with representatives of the following Town and Parish Councils/Neighbourhood Planning Groups

- Pentney Neighbourhood Plan - we are reviewing the latest version sent for review as well as a Statement regarding Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA).
- South Wootton – officers met with the Parish Council on 23rd June to discuss proposed revisions to the NP
- Watlington – we are reviewing the draft NP sent through for review and SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening report
- Old Hunstanton – we are reviewing the revised Basic Condition Statement and Consultation Statement

## Major Projects

- Nora 4 (Nar Valley Park)
  - First units completed Mar 2022. 94 homes to be completed this financial year (2022 /23) and 11 homes completed in 2023/24. Two sales completed June 2022. 24 no. sales homes reserved, with 7 no early bird interest. 10 PRS homes Let by WNPL. 5 affordable homes due July 2022.
- Parkway
  - Discharging pre-commencement conditions. Expected SoS September 2022.
- Salters Road
  - Groundworks complete. Contract negotiations with Freebridge near ongoing, delayed due to legal due diligence issues. Main works ready to commence.
- Lynnsport1
  - Planning consent obtained May 2022. SoS expected January 2023.
- Hunstanton Southend Road
  - Works commenced on site May 2022. Completion due November 2023
- Hunstanton Bus Station
  - Review ongoing
- Waveney Road
  - Pre-app submitted April 2022 – decision due July 2023.
- NORA 5
  - Initial Design, Open Market Housing & Specialist Extra Care housing being considered.
  - Initial site investigations and due diligence ongoing.
  - Local Housing Market analysis to inform design ongoing
- Heacham Toilets
  - Completed prior to Jubilee weekend

## **Regeneration**

### **Southgate, King's Lynn Update**

The Masterplan work continues to progress well. I was delighted to attend a key stakeholder workshop session last month. After reviewing the project objective and the opportunities that exist a number of scenarios were considered that include radically changing the layout and addressing some of the challenges that include a vehicle -dominated poor entry to the town, and a poor pedestrian and cycle environment. The workshop attendees made some very constructive contributions and generally welcomed a bold approach to improve the area for visitors and residents alike.

In June the Norfolk County Council confirmed their intention to select the Southgate project along with the gyratory element (from the Towns Fund Active and Clean Connectivity) as their preferred project for a bid to the transport element of the Levelling Up Fund round 2. This is a welcome opportunity that could bring closer the delivery of some truly transformational changes to our town.

The next steps include supporting Norfolk County Council in the preparation of the bid which has a deadline of 6<sup>th</sup> July. Over the summer work will continue on finalising the masterplan. In September we aim to start an extensive round of public consultation running through the autumn.

### **Towns Fund update**

In the context of reviewing more information relating to the more detailed nature of proposals and assessing revised costs and advice on inflation and contingency arrangements it was necessary to undertake a prioritisation exercise to address a funding gap. Projects were prioritised against a number of criteria including risk and deliverability and ranked accordingly. Following this some projects were descoped (with components being removed) and some re-scoped with additional outputs being identified. One project Town Centre Re-purposing was removed. Following this process and the agreement of Cabinet and the Town Deal Board project adjustment forms have been submitted to government. The remaining business cases to be submitted to government assume that government will approve the proposed changes – we expect to hear in early July.

A detailed update on progress (last updated 7 June) is shown in the table below.

## Project Updates

BUSINESS CASE	BUSINESS CASE SUBMISSION DATE (including full independent assurance and approval)	PROGRESS UPDATE
<b>PROJECT 1 Youth &amp; Retraining Pledge</b>	14/01/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for delivery phase underway.</li> <li>• Recruitment complete</li> <li>• Staff premises secured</li> <li>• Project Partners SLAs</li> <li>• Procurement of providers underway</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT 2 Public Realm</b>	14/01/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement underway</li> <li>• Arts Council application for art trail submitted</li> <li>• Finger post installation underway</li> <li>• Rail Station Street Furniture procurement complete</li> <li>• Revised design &amp; build procurement approach agreed for Pop up kiosks</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT 3 Multi User Community Hub</b>	30/09/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusivity agreement completed for preferred site acquisition process underway</li> <li>• Detailed initial feasibility completed inc updated costs</li> <li>• Consultation complete</li> <li>• Project Board established</li> <li>• RIBA Stage 1 design commissioned</li> <li>• Extension to business case submission date agreed</li> <li>• Approval of project adjustment required by government for project to proceed.</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT 4 Town Centre Repurposing</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site visits, building options, valuations and assessment of potential uses ongoing</li> <li>• TDB approved project cancellation and reallocation of funds subject to government approval</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT 5 Riverfront Regeneration</b>	31/10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions and due diligence continue with interested parties for Sommerfeld &amp; Thomas site</li> <li>• Landscape architect commissioned following stakeholder workshop</li> </ul>

## Meetings Attended (including Teams Zoom and YouTube)

Portfolio Meetings, Development and Regeneration  
 Planning Committee  
 Planning Committee Sifting  
 Regeneration and Development Panel  
 Corporate Performance Panel  
 Various HAZ project meetings  
 Cabinet  
 Cabinet Siting  
 Cabinet Briefings  
 Full Council  
 Various Meetings with Officers  
 Town Fund Project Board  
 Riverfront Project workshop  
 Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum  
 CNC Board meeting  
 QEH Briefing  
 Joint Panel Meeting

West Norfolk Transport and Infrastructure Steering Group  
South Gates Project Stakeholders meeting  
West Winch Project Stakeholders Group