

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

29th January 2026

COUNCILLOR ALISTAIR BEALES – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

For the period to 21st January 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

This will be a shorter than usual report as I have been struggling for three weeks with a heavy cough and cold which I suspect was COVID.

At the time of writing we still don't know if County Council elections will proceed and if the leader of Norfolk County Council has actually requested a delay. Her initial response to the request for clarification from Steve Reed MP, the Secretary of State, was to say the least unsatisfactory, and to be more direct, simply rude. It is also a matter of considerable regret that unlike Suffolk County Council and Norwich City Council, no formal meetings were held by Norfolk County Council to discuss debate and consider their response to the possibility of requesting postponement to local elections. That meant that yet again, the elected membership of Norfolk County Council were denied an opinion on one of the most important matters facing this county. Eighty three members suffered in enforced silence whilst one took it upon themselves to make a response that appeared to request a postponement without requesting a postponement. Too clever by half and called out by the Secretary of State.

I fervently hope elections proceed.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Turning to the future of this council, we have just under two and a half years left perhaps, and we have some important projects to consider and future policy to shape. All with a view to preparing the best and least disruptive transition to the new unitary authorities whilst seeking to embed the best of what we do in the hope that those new unitaries will continue, or at least have a weighty decision to make about such things as the Major Housing Scheme, Care and Repair and many other things we can be proud of and would like to see continue.