

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

29th July 2026

COUNCILLOR SUE LINTERN - CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND EVENTS

For the period 13th June to 17th July 2026

King's Lynn Hanse Festival

Following this year's Hanse Festival, we have taken time to review what worked well and identify opportunities for improvement. Planning for next year's festival is already beginning, with the Festival Committee keen to build on this year's success, enhance the programme and further promote King's Lynn's rich Hanseatic heritage.

Norfolk Arts Forum

The Forum received updates from a range of cultural organisations across the region.

Presentations highlighted the work of the Norwich Cultural Compact, an Arts Council England initiative supporting a place-based cultural strategy through community engagement, pilot projects, a Culture Pass, Fair Ticket Bank and a creative freelancers' database.

The Kick the Dust programme, delivered by Norfolk Museums Service, continues to engage young people aged 13–25 with heritage through exhibitions, events, environmental projects and archive placements, helping to develop skills and encourage participation in the cultural sector.

Norwich Theatre outlined its Creative Intent Strategy, focusing on skills development, long-term partnerships, social impact, inclusion and its commitment to achieving carbon neutrality.

The Norfolk & Suffolk Culture Board provided updates on post-16 education reforms, including the introduction of new vocational V Levels from September 2027. The Board also reported progress on the *Survive to Thrive* programme, work around Cultural Environmental Responsibility in partnership with the Nature Recovery Partnership, and welcomed significant Place Partnership funding for Creative Health.

Hanseatic Water Ski Weekend

The annual Hanseatic Water Ski Weekend once again proved to be an outstanding event. Alongside powerboat racing and waterskiing competitions for all ages, this year's event included qualifying rounds for World Championship ranking points, further raising King's Lynn's international profile.

The weekend also featured live music, fireworks and award presentations. It was particularly moving to welcome back the Belgian competitor who suffered a serious accident last year and returned to personally thank the paramedics and everyone involved in his care.

Guildhall Creative Programme

Work continues to progress on the Guildhall redevelopment, alongside an expanding creative outreach programme. Schools and libraries across the borough are

participating in *Play in a Day* workshops and other creative activities, giving children the opportunity to create and perform their own dragon-themed plays through storytelling, games, crafts and drama.

The Guildhall's Creative Director has also been promoting the vision for the project both nationally and internationally, delivering presentations in the UK, USA, Austria and Poland to strengthen its ambition of becoming an internationally recognised centre for culture, arts and heritage.

Over the summer, the Borough Council's Events Team is delivering the *Summer of Dragons* programme as part of the National Year of Reading. Taking place in libraries across West Norfolk and at Stories of Lynn, the programme offers a range of dragon-themed activities designed to inspire young readers and encourage families to engage with books, storytelling and creativity.

Hunstanton Events Programme

Hunstanton's summer events programme is now in full swing. The inaugural Beer & Gin Festival was a great success, and popular favourites including the Open Air Cinema and Family Fun Days have returned.

The programme continues throughout August and September with Peter Piper Picked Some Litter, Swim Safe sessions, the Mad Tea Party celebrating Afternoon Tea Week, Beats by the Beach, Battle of the Bands and the ever-popular Soap Box Derby.

I also attended a recent Hunstanton Town Council meeting and was pleased to see the positive support being provided to local residents and community groups.

Parish Council Engagement

Alongside three fellow Cabinet Members, I attended West Acre Parish Council to help support the community following the resignation of all parish councillors. It is hoped that local residents will recognise the importance of having an active parish council and come forward to serve.

I also observed the recent planning training sessions for parish councils, which covered forthcoming changes to the planning system due to take effect in October, together with updates on the emerging Local Plan. Parish councils were encouraged to engage fully in the consultation process.

Events Team

Our Events Team continues to deliver an extensive programme of free events throughout the summer. Alongside organising Borough Council events, the team provides significant in-kind support to community organisers through event planning, health and safety advice, stewarding, licensing support and post-event clean-up. Following another successful **Festival Too**, attention now turns to the King's Lynn Festival, which will showcase an exciting programme over the coming weeks.

GroundWork Gallery – 10th Anniversary

I was delighted to attend and officially open **GroundWork Gallery's 10th Anniversary Exhibition, *Women Artists and the Land***.

The evening celebrated not only a decade of GroundWork Gallery, but also its significant contribution to the cultural life of West Norfolk. Over the past ten years, the gallery has established itself as a nationally recognised centre for environmental art, bringing leading artists to King's Lynn while championing our unique local

landscapes, particularly the internationally important Wash Estuary. The anniversary exhibition showcases the work of Julie Brook, Harriet Hellman and Lotte Scott, whose practices explore the relationship between art, landscape and the environment. It also celebrates the important contribution women artists have made to GroundWork's success over the past decade.

GroundWork Gallery continues to demonstrate how culture can inspire conversation around environmental sustainability, support artists, attract visitors and strengthen our borough's cultural offer. I congratulate everyone involved on this remarkable milestone and wish the gallery every success for the future.

Borough History Film Project

Research continues for the Borough History Film Project, and we will shortly begin recording informal interviews to capture the memories and stories of those who have helped shape the Borough Council over the years.

Local Government Association Conference

I attended the Local Government Association Conference, which brought together local government leaders from across the country to discuss the key challenges and opportunities facing the sector. A programme of keynote speakers and workshops highlighted the importance of innovation, collaboration and ambitious leadership as councils continue to adapt to changing demands.

I also attended communications and media training, providing valuable insight into effective public engagement and helping to strengthen my communication skills in support of my portfolio responsibilities.

Summary

The past month has seen continued progress across culture, tourism and heritage, with a strong programme of events, new partnerships and ongoing investment in our cultural assets. It has also been encouraging to see the dedication of the many volunteers, community organisations and partner agencies whose commitment continues to enrich communities across West Norfolk. As we move through the summer season, I look forward to seeing these projects and events continue to strengthen the borough's reputation as a vibrant place to live, work and visit.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Norfolk Records committee
Dragon Arts event
Hunstanton Litter Pick and other events
Hansa Committee
King's Lynn events
King's Lynn Festival

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

15/6 – Cabinet away day
15/6 – Mayors charity committee meeting
16/6 - Local Plan task group
16/6 – Projector project update
16/6 – Planning training for PC's
17/6 – Hanse committee

17/6 - Portfolio meeting
17/6 – Norfolk Art Forum
17/6 – Cabinet briefing
17/6 – West Acre PC
18/6 – King’s Lynn Festival meeting
20-21/6 – Hanseatic waterski
22/6 - Planning training for PC’s
23/6 – History project meeting
23/6 – Museum records visit
23/6 – Cabinet sifting
24/6 – Culture catch up
24/6 – Hunstanton Town Council
26/6 – Hunstanton prom briefing
30/6 – Monthly member training
1/7 - History project meeting
1/7 – Guildhall filming
1/7 – Cabinet briefing
1/7 – Planning committee training
3/7 – Groundwork Gallery launch
6-9/7 – LGA conference
11/7 – Festival Too
13/7 – CGR workshop
15/7 – History project meeting
17/7 – LGA training course