

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

MEMBER MAJOR PROJECTS BOARD

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Member Major Projects Board held on
Friday, 9th October, 2026 at 11.30 am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

PRESENT: Councillors A Beales (Chair), R Blunt, B Long, J Moriarty,
C Morley and S Ring (Vice – Chair)

PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34:

Councillor D Heneghan – Standing Order 34b (remotely)
Councillor S Squire, Portfolio Holder for item Environment and Coastal –
Standing Order 34a (remotely)

OFFICERS:

Vanessa Dunmall, PMO Manager
Harry Bartram, PMO Officer
Jade Kite, Flood and Waste Management Officer
Stuart Ashworth, Assistant Director for Environment and Planning
Carl Holland, Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer

15 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

16 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

17 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There was no declarations of interest.

18 **URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There was no urgent business under Standing Order 7.

19 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Heneghan was present under Standing Order 34B and
Councillor Squire was present under Standing Order 34a (remotely).

20 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

21 **STANDING ITEM: ACTION LOG**

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The Board received an update from the Programme Management Office (PMO) Manager on the review of the Council's project management and prioritisation processes which was outstanding on the action log and expected to be brought to the meeting. It was explained that the pause in the Local Government Reorganisation programme had resulted in a decision to undertake a review of the Council's Transformation Programme and alongside this, a wider look at how projects and programmes are agreed and move through the operational governance processes. Members noted that the review would not affect the existing financial authorisation tiers for capital expenditure or the approval processes through Cabinet and Council.

The PMO Manager explained that the review was focused on the internal assessment and prioritisation of non-capital projects, smaller revenue projects, legislative requirements and competing project demands. Members acknowledged that the review related to internal governance arrangements rather than changes to capital programme approvals.

In discussing the remit of the Member Major Projects Board, Members distinguished between the approval of expenditure through the capital programme and the identification of projects requiring Board oversight. It was noted that the Board's role remained focused on project assurance, delivery, risk and wider community impact rather than review of the whole capital programme.

The PMO Manager advised that a detailed description of the project pathway and governance process would be reported to a future meeting following further work led by the Chief of Staff. Members agreed to defer further comment until the proposed arrangements had been presented.

Members recalled that the Board had been established in part following the KLIC project and considered that projects with significant delivery, strategic or community impacts should continue to be brought before the Board, irrespective of their financial value. It was agreed that the balance between maintaining effective oversight and avoiding an overly congested agenda would be considered further at a future meeting.

STANDING ITEM: PROJECT HIGHLIGHT REPORTS INCLUDING THE OVERVIEW REPORT

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Major Project Highlight Reports

The PMO Manager presented the Project Highlight Reports for the Major Projects programme. Members were advised that a report on NORA Enterprise Zone had not been included within the current update cycle as there had been no material changes or progress to report since the previous meeting.

P-21.09 West Winch

The Board reviewed the completed Borough Council elements of the West Winch Growth Area project.

The Board noted that the project remained rated green overall, with the financial position reported as amber due to cost verification and recovery arrangements rather than any concerns relating to project delivery. Members were advised that the Borough Council's Collaboration Agreement, Section 106 Agreement and Homes England funding arrangements had now been completed.

The PMO Manager advised that this was expected to be the final report presented in its current format, as the Borough Council had reached a natural transition point within the project. It was reported that the Strategic Housing Manager and a representative from Norfolk County Council would attend the next meeting to outline future reporting arrangements and how Members would continue to receive updates on project progress.

Councillor Long expressed concern regarding wider market conditions, including falling land values and challenges faced by developers in securing finance. He highlighted the significance of the scheme to housing delivery and the Council's five-year housing land supply position and requested that the project remain subject to ongoing monitoring.

Members acknowledged that the Borough Council elements of West Winch had been delivered and that delivery of the road now moved to Norfolk County Council. It was agreed that the most appropriate route for future reporting and oversight would be considered following the update by officers at the next meeting. Members also noted that any future Borough Council involvement, including matters relating to affordable housing funding, would need to be considered as the project progressed.

Major Housing Programme Highlight Report

The PMO Manager presented the report. It was explained that reporting had moved from individual site updates to a single programme-level report, reflecting work undertaken by the Housing Developments Steering Group. Members were advised that the revised format was intended to provide a clearer overview of collective outputs, strategic outcomes, benefits and programme priorities.

The Board noted that the programme remained rated green overall, with risks and finances assessed as amber due to slower sales rates and construction cost inflation. The PMO Manager advised that, although the report covered the position up to the end of June, the total number of homes delivered had subsequently increased to 539 units, compared with the 506 units reported within the agenda pack.

Members were reminded that the Housing Development Steering Group had been established to support the implementation of previously agreed decisions by bringing together senior councillors and senior officers. It was noted that the Group had met on three occasions since the last report to Member Major Projects Board and the Steering Group was intended to strengthen support for programme delivery.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented on the availability and accessibility of programme information and considered the potential for improved access through SharePoint and stronger links between reports and the underlying project data.

Councillor Morley referred to paragraph of 7.2 of the report which referred to social value and emphasised the importance of these aspects of the programme being highlighted to residents.

Particular reference was made by Councillor Morley to drainage and flood mitigation measures, biodiversity enhancements, public realm improvements and arrangements for the long-term maintenance of completed developments.

Councillor Beales requested that further future site visits be arranged and referred to the property sizes, the current housing market along with the role of the housing companies.

P-25.08 Hunstanton Coastal Defence

It was agreed this highlight report was to be covered in the Deep Dive Presentation on the Hunstanton Coastal Defence Project later on the agenda.

Town Deal Highlight Reports

P-21.11 Guildhall

The Board received an update on the Guildhall Project and noted that the programme remained rated amber overall. Members were advised that, notwithstanding the amber status, the project continued to achieve key milestones and make progress across a range of workstreams.

The Board noted that significant progress had been made with roof repair works, party-wall matters and the submission of the planning application for the King Street public realm works. Members were also advised that specialist heritage contractors had been appointed and that archaeological investigations were currently being undertaken within the Shakespeare Barn Courtyard ahead of the installation of the proposed goods lift.

The PMO Manager outlined the revised communications strategy for the project, which included monthly newsletters, regular video updates, a forward communications plan and engagement involving relevant Portfolio Holders and the King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board. It was explained that the project would continue to be promoted through a range of channels, including aerial photography, press briefings, school engagement activities and other public-facing communications.

Councillor Long, the Chair, Councillor Beales and Vice – Chair, Councillor Ring discussed the importance of ensuring that information about the project was accessible and easily understood by the public. The Chair, Councillor Beales suggested that future communications include clear and simple information on the scale and purpose of the development, including details such as ownership arrangements, the number of business units, café and restaurant provision, and the amount of public space being delivered as part of the scheme.

Councillor Morley emphasised the importance of maintaining a comprehensive risk register and recording project issues, resolutions and key decisions throughout the delivery of the scheme. He noted that this would provide a clear audit trail demonstrating how the project's scope, risks and final costs had evolved over time.

P-21.12 ACC

The PMO Manager presented an update on the Active and Clean Connectivity Programme and noted that the programme remained rated amber overall, with timescales reported as red due to planning-related delays. Members were advised that, despite these challenges, the majority of cycling, walking and active travel interventions had now been delivered.

The PMO Manager explained that the remaining elements of the programme were focused on the Baker Lane and Enterprise Zone Active Travel Hubs. It was highlighted that planning delays had impacted delivery timescales, costs and the anticipated realisation of benefits. It was reported that the planning application for the Baker Lane scheme would be resubmitted.

The Board was advised that, since publication of the report, planning permission had been granted for the Enterprise Zone Active Travel Hub and contracts had been signed with the appointed contractor to undertake the works.

The Chair, Councillor Beales commented that active travel elements associated with the former STARS project, including cycle route improvements along Railway Road and wider connectivity measures across the town, remained outstanding. He added Officers and Members continued to work with Norfolk County Council and local cycling stakeholders to progress these initiatives and improve active travel connections across the area.

P-21.14 Riverfront

The Board received an update on the Riverfront project and Members noted that the dry-side facilities were substantially complete, with only final connectivity works and arrangements for the formal opening remaining outstanding.

The PMO Manager reported that works at the Custom house were now underway.

The Chair, Councillor Beales informed Members that the remaining work at the dry-side facilities related to the installation of Wi-Fi and associated services within the historic buildings. Once these matters had been resolved, arrangements for the official opening of the facilities could be progressed.

P-21.15 Rail to River

The PMO Manager reported that the Rail to River project remained rated green, with the majority of outputs delivered and operational. The remaining outstanding element related to the Purfleet Street arch, the completion of which was dependent upon licensing and property matters.

Councillor Moriarty requested that future reports include updated occupancy information for the completed facilities, noting that previous promotion of the development had been affected by the presence of scaffolding. The Chair agreed that occupancy data should be incorporated into future updates and agreed this would be helpful.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer presented the financial summary for major projects. He advised that Officers continued to monitor housing valuations, project costs and wider market conditions affecting programme delivery.

The Board noted that valuations for completed housing developments would continue to be reviewed until the properties were occupied. Members were informed that market values and anticipated receipts would be updated in accordance with professional guidance. It was reported that Styleman Court and Florence Fields remained under review in relation to tenure mix, with properties continuing to be accounted for as either assets held for sale or investment properties until occupation or the realisation of capital receipts.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer advised that the Council had made provision for a potential £250,000 shortfall in the recovery of costs associated with the West Winch project. It was noted that the final amount would be dependent upon legal costs incurred and the extent to which those costs could ultimately be recovered.

He assured Members that Officers continued to closely monitor project expenditure, challenge inflationary cost increases and apply value engineering measures where appropriate. It was explained that contingencies were being either retained or utilised depending on the level of project risk and that greater certainty regarding financial forecasts was expected once second-quarter actual expenditure figures became available.

The Assistant Director for Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer highlighted an error within the financial monitoring table and advised that the year shown as 2025/26 in the final column should be corrected to 2026/27. Members also noted that the variance reported for the Active and Clean Connectivity Programme reflected delays caused by planning and permission requirements. Any potential contractor cost increases would be assessed as part of the second-quarter review process.

During discussion, Members recognised the continuing challenges presented by housing market conditions, including slower sales activity and higher interest rates. The Board noted that the Council's housing companies provided flexibility to retain completed properties as income-generating assets where appropriate, rather than crystallising losses through immediate disposal. Members agreed that the priority remained securing occupation of completed homes and maximising the value of the Council's investment.

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The Board received a presentation from the Assistant Director for Environment and Planning and the Flood and Water Management Officer on the interim and long-term capital coastal defence programme for Hunstanton. Members were provided with an update on the current condition of the coastal defences, ongoing monitoring work, proposed interim protection measures, funding arrangements and the development of a permanent capital scheme.

The Board was advised that the Wash East Coastal Management Strategy (WECAMS) review covered the coastline from Hunstanton Cliffs to Snettisham. It was noted that the Borough Council was responsible for Units A and B, with responsibility for areas further south resting with the Environment Agency (Unit C). The Board were informed that the review would continue until 2028 and would replace the existing coastal management plan, helping to inform future investment decisions, climate change adaptation measures and long-term standards of protection.

The Flood and Water Management Officer presented evidence from Environment Agency monitoring which indicated that sediment previously moving south from the North Norfolk coast was now accumulating offshore, reducing the replenishment of sand along the Hunstanton frontage and contributing to beach erosion. Members noted that survey information, LIDAR data, beach-level monitoring and structural inspections showed increasing exposure of defence foundations, although it was recognised that similar beach conditions had been recorded historically.

The Board noted that routine monitoring and maintenance activities continued, including weekly visual inspections, beach-level surveys, structural monitoring and ground-penetrating radar investigations. Members were advised that the annual maintenance budget of approximately £180,000 had been exceeded due to the deteriorating condition of the defences.

The Flood and Water Management Officer informed Members that sections of the seawall between the Rock Shop slipway and beyond the Pier Head building had experienced early structural movement following the exposure of over one metre of sheet piling. To address this, an interim scheme involving the placement of approximately 10,000 tonnes of granite rock armour over a 200-metre section of shoreline was proposed to provide temporary stabilisation while a permanent solution was developed.

In response to the Chair, Councillor Beales, the Assistant Director for Environment and Planning explained that South Bay Civil Engineering had been identified to undertake the works, with Fairhurst responsible for engineering design and securing the necessary permissions. In response to concerns raised by Members, it was noted that the rock

armour would be transported by road and that construction was expected to take place over approximately 10 to 12 weeks during low tide periods. The estimated cost of the interim scheme was reported as £2 million, including contingency provision, with part-funding secured through CIL and the remaining contribution to be provided by the Borough Council.

The Board received an update on the proposed permanent coastal defence capital works scheme, which is expected to include replacement of the promenade deck and strengthening and replacement of sections of the seawall. Members were advised that preliminary estimates indicated significant investment would be required, with design and construction costs continuing to be refined as the project progressed.

In response to Councillor Beales and Long, the Flood and Water Management Officer explained that the first tranche of eligible works could potentially be fully funded through Flood Defence Grant in Aid (costs up to £3 million), with further grant support of up to 90% available for costs above that £3 million threshold. The remainder of funding required would need to be covered by the Borough Council or other appropriate funds. Members noted that the interim rock armour scheme was being funded separately to avoid prejudicing future grant funding opportunities for the main capital scheme, as funding can only be sought once.

The Board noted that the initial phase of the project, including economic analysis, intrusive investigations and procurement activities, had been completed. The next phase would focus on outline design, option appraisal and development of the outline business case. Subject to funding approvals, detailed design, statutory consents and procurement activities would follow in advance of the proposed construction phase.

Members were advised that planning permission and a marine licence were being pursued through the normal regulatory process as part of the detailed design phase.

The Flood and Water Management Officer explained that relevant regulatory bodies had determined that emergency powers were not applicable at the present time for the interim works because the seawall had not experienced a structural failure. Enhanced monitoring arrangements were therefore in place, and any significant deterioration would prompt further discussions with the relevant agencies. In response to the Chair, Councillor Beales, the Flood and Waste Management Officer advised that the delivery of the interim works would not affect the Council's ability to pursue future grant funding for the permanent scheme.

The Board noted that vehicle access restrictions remained in place on sections of the promenade due to their condition. Members were informed that construction traffic associated with the interim works

would utilise suitable lighter vehicles and that any temporary impacts to access infrastructure would be addressed as part of the works.

During discussion, Councillor Long sought assurances regarding the design of the proposed rock armour and the potential impact of wave action. In response to Councillor Long, the Flood and Water Management Officer explained that the design had been amended to utilise larger rocks of up to three tonnes in weight to minimise movement and improve stability. It was noted that wider environmental and engineering impacts would be assessed through the planning and marine licensing processes.

The Assistant Director for Environment and Planning advised that arrangements were being finalised for additional project management support following the retirement of a key officer.

In discussing the proposed interim works, Members emphasised that the Council's approach was guided by the need to protect public safety. Whilst the works were not classified as emergency works for regulatory purposes, the Board noted the importance of taking preventative action to address the deteriorating condition of the coastal defences and safeguard the seafront infrastructure pending delivery of the permanent scheme.

Members noted that stakeholder engagement would continue throughout the project and would include elected Members, local businesses, residents, Hunstanton Town Council and other interested parties. Regular communications, stakeholder meetings and public updates would be used to support engagement as the project progressed.

25

UPDATE FROM HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS STEERING GROUP

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The Board received an update from the PMO Manager on the work of the Housing Development Steering Group. Members were advised that the Steering Group had met on three occasions since the last Member Major Projects Board and was continuing to fulfil the purpose for which it had been created.

The Board noted that the Housing Development Steering Group brought together senior Members and officers to support the implementation of agreed housing development projects, provide oversight of programme delivery and facilitate the resolution of emerging issues. Members were informed that the Group was operating as intended and contributing to the effective governance and monitoring of the Council's housing development programme.

26 **OFFICER MAJOR PROJECTS BOARD MINUTES (FOR INFORMATION)**

The Board noted the Officer Major Projects Board Minutes.

27 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board noted the Work Programme and the scheduled items included updates on the West Winch Growth Area, the Guildhall Project and other standing items within the Board's work programme.

The PMO Manager advised that the post-project evaluation for Styleman Court may not be available in time for the November meeting due to current capacity constraints and could be deferred until February 2027.

In response, the Chair, Councillor Beales requested an immediate update on the likelihood of the evaluation being completed for November and emphasised the importance of Members receiving an update at the next meeting.

28 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was 4th November 2026 at 9:30am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 1.20 pm