Cabinet Members Report to Council

29th October 2026

Councillor Sandra Squire – Cabinet Member for Environment & Coastal
Report to Council for the period 24th September to 29th October 2026

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters
Hunstanton Coastal Defence Work Routine repairs to the Hunstanton Coastal Defences commenced on the 5th October 2026 and are programmed to take place for the next two months with minimal disruption during the half term period. Borough Council officers continue supporting joint working with the Environment Agency on the Wash East Coastal Management Strategy Review, which is progressing. We had a very good turn out at our recent update meeting. **LGA Coastal SIG Field Trip:** I was unable to attend the last full council meeting as I was attending the 3 day LGA Coastal SIG field trip in Blackpool. As our host council, Blackpool put on an excellent trip that was extremely valuable for everyone who attended. We were joined by coastal portfolio colleagues from around the country and visited several sites in Blackpool including the illuminations, the tower and ballroom, Stanley Park and most relevant and the things I wanted to see the most – work on the Anchorsholme Sea Defence Scheme and Fylde sand dunes project. It's an opportunity for councillors to get together to share knowledge, experience and ideas. We all have similar issues affecting our coastal communities. Balfour Beatty, our contractor for the Hunstanton Capital Works is very experienced undertaking major sea defence works, having recently completed works in North Norfolk. They are currently working in Blackpool putting in new rock revetment (rock armour) where beach levels have dropped more quickly than anticipated. The situation in West Norfolk is very similar to that in Blackpool and it was interesting to be able to speak to their coastal officers and Balfour Beatty about previous works on the sea front in Blackpool, including the new stepped frontage and the rock armour. Our officers are also engaged with Blackpool officers to share knowledge, experience and advice. The design and reasons for the stepped frontage, with seeing the current ongoing works has given me a greater insight into our coastal processes and how we manage them for the future.

Stepped frontage in Blackpool

Works to prepare the beach for addition of rock armour

Rock armour on the beach

Sand being moved and rock delivered

Blackpool resident unhappy with lack of chips provided by visiting councillors.

The Fylde Sand Dunes project is run by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, the work to extend and restore the sand dunes is an extremely valuable part of their coastal defences. They have created 6 hectares of increased dune habitat since 2008, currently increasing the sand dunes by around 30m a year.

Every year they carefully place hundreds of old Christmas trees on the beach which then trap sand particles, helping the sand accumulate. Eventually marram grass and other coastal grasses grow and help hold the dunes together. This sand dune and salt marsh habitat is rich in wildlife and biodiversity. Sadly we didn’t see any of the sand lizards that have been reintroduced.

The expansion of natural dune features may be something that will form part of the WECMS review and the new shoreline management plan here. By working with nature, there is the opportunity to provide sea defences alongside habitat restoration and creation.

Front edge of the growing dunes.

Environmental Health – Food Safety

As part of routine food hygiene inspections, officers are reviewing gas safety arrangements to ensure that food businesses are obtaining and maintaining the appropriate gas safety certification for their gas installations and appliances.

As part of a national priority initiative, officers are asking food businesses to provide information on their gas safety inspections and certification. The initiative has a particular focus on the safe use of LPG in mobile catering units, trailers and food vans, helping to reduce the risk of gas leaks, fires and explosions, to protect employees, customers and members of the public.

The Food Team is also helping food businesses prepare for the challenges that the Christmas period and seasonal illness can bring. To support businesses, the latest quarterly food business newsletter includes articles on norovirus awareness, staff sickness and exclusion policies, and practical guidance on food ordering, preparation and storage during the busy festive season.

These topics are intended to help businesses maintain food safety standards, manage staffing issues effectively, and ensure they are well prepared to meet increased demand over the Christmas period while protecting the health of both customers and staff.

Please do have a look at the food newsletter as some of the information is relevant to anyone involved in food preparation including in the home.

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20096/environmental_health/1228/food_and_safety_newsletters

Bins, Waste & Enforcement

As you are already aware, our enforcement team has expanded from 1 to 3 with additional admin support.

So to introduce them: joining Sarah in enforcement, are Jo and Ian, with Georgie providing valuable admin support.

I'm hoping to arrange a morning where councillors can visit the depot and meet both the waste and public open space teams, especially those who work behind the scenes. Please do join us, I will send out details when I have them.

Since starting, the new enforcement team have gone from strength to strength. I'd like to give you a little flavour of the work of the team and how much effort goes in to investigating offences. They are also undertaking proactive work with businesses to ensure waste is disposed of properly and that those who transport waste have an appropriate waste carriers licence.

Jo:

Has introduced an already approved Council system to the CNEO department called Uniform which allows for speedy use of creating letters and other relevant documents including 2 SQl reports for use by Georgie for stats etc.

Jo has dealt with 56 S/Rr's since joining us in August, broken down as follows:

Cleared by the perpetrator following a letter – 15
Warning Letter not to reoffend - 11
Fixed Penalty Notice - 1
Not enough evidence - 16
Referred externally - 2
No action taken - 3
Currently ongoing - 8

Ian:

Since joining us in August, Ian has:

Issued 2 x FPN's for fly tipping
Issued formal warnings –
1x fly tipping
1x Duty of care
1x Offence of carrying controlled waste without registration

Sarah:

In the last few months, Sarah has been key in training up both Ian & Sarah. On top of this, she has:

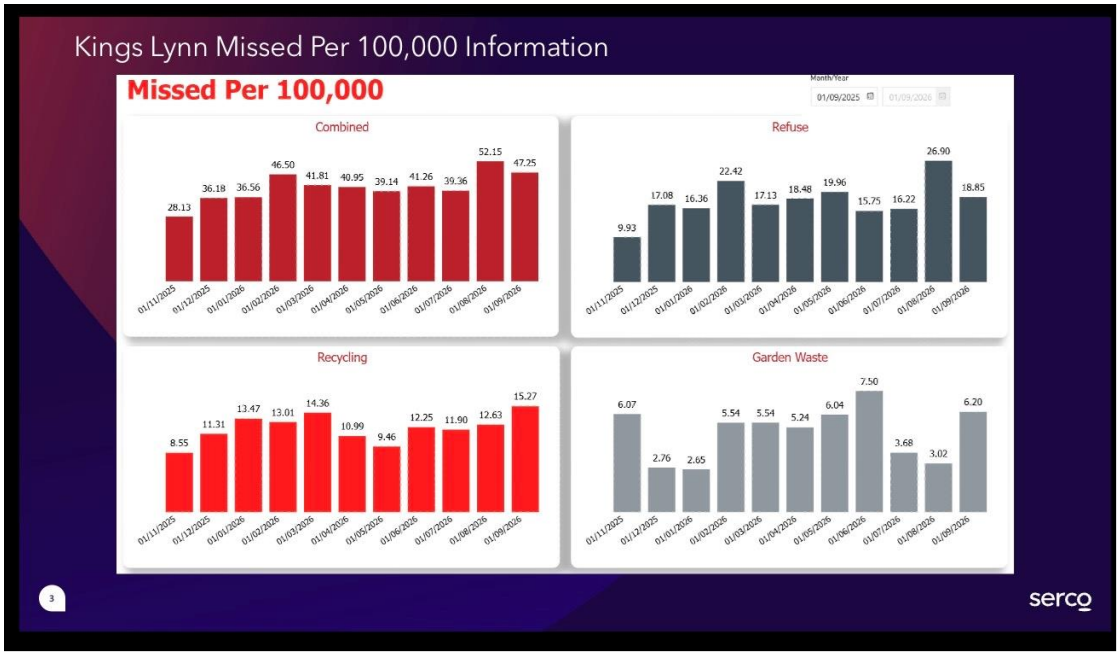
Sent 5 cases for consideration of prosecution for offences of Duty of care, Control of Pollution and Fly tipping, along with Non payment of Fixed Penalty Notice – Failure to produce waste duty of care documents.

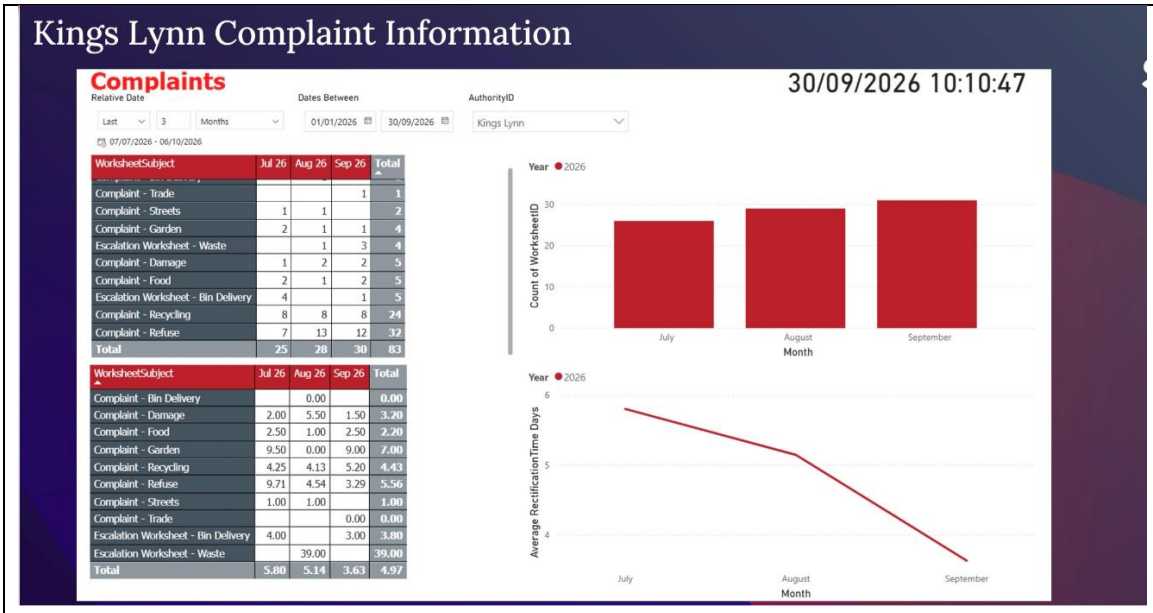
Sent one FPN out for Duty of Care.

As you can see there seems to be a never ending supply of people for them to investigate, their professionalism and dedication to keeping our Borough clean and tidy should serve as a warning to those who do not dispose of their waste appropriately.

Every month we hold a Joint Waste Contract meeting to monitor performance of bin collections and our waste contract. I don't normally share these, but I have asked Serco if I can share some of the figures to demonstrate the quality of service we provide with Serco.

Bearing in mind that we empty over 90,000 bins a week, this slide shows the number of missed bins per 100,000 which demonstrates that we are providing a very good service. We have seen a slight increase in the last few months due to staff sickness, this is understandable, new figures will be available next month. We have a very good relationship with Serco staff locally and this is reflected in our figures. Performance is routinely monitored and issues are dealt with as quickly as possible.





WorksheetSubject	Jul 26	Aug 26	Sep 26	Total
Complaint - Trade			1	1
Complaint - Streets	1	1		2
Complaint - Garden	2	1	1	4
Escalation Worksheet - Waste		1	3	4
Complaint - Damage	1	2	2	5
Complaint - Food	2	1	2	5
Escalation Worksheet - Bin Delivery	4		1	5
Complaint - Recycling	8	8	8	24
Complaint - Refuse	7	13	12	32
Total	25	28	30	83

WorksheetSubject	Jul 26	Aug 26	Sep 26	Total
Complaint - Bin Delivery		0.00		0.00
Complaint - Damage	2.00	5.50	1.50	3.20
Complaint - Food	2.50	1.00	2.50	2.20
Complaint - Garden	9.50	0.00	9.00	7.00
Complaint - Recycling	4.25	4.13	5.20	4.43
Complaint - Refuse	9.71	4.54	3.29	5.56
Complaint - Streets	1.00	1.00		1.00
Complaint - Trade			0.00	0.00
Escalation Worksheet - Bin Delivery	4.00		3.00	3.80
Escalation Worksheet - Waste		39.00		39.00
Total	5.80	5.14	3.63	4.97

We don't get a great number of complaints, most are resolved on the day they are received or within 3 days. Some can take longer depending on complexities or if other agencies are involved. Staff holidays or sickness do have an effect on this.

Our waste team respond to queries and complaints as quickly as they can when they are made aware. If councillors are ever concerned, please contact the waste team directly or drop me a line. Please do not criticise when you don't get the resolution you require instantly, be mindful that things are rarely as simple as you think they are. I am pleased to report that I hear far more positive feedback about our waste service than I do negative.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

Hunstanton Coastal Defence

Preparation of both a planning permission and marine licence application for the Hunstanton Interim Works (rock armour) is underway and progressing well. We expect to submit these applications in Q3 2026-27. Commencement of construction is dependant on when permissions are granted between Q4 2026-27 and Q1 2027-28. Enhanced monitoring is underway in the meantime to monitor the prom for any movement. Beach levels are routinely monitored.

Phase 2 of the Hunstanton Coastal Defence Capital Works project commenced in August 2026. This phase will involve detailed optioneering and completion of a high-level outline designs for the scheme. Phase 2 will cumulate with production and submission of an outline business case for flood defence grant in aid funding, required to enable the final detailed design phase and construction.

A further councillor and stakeholder briefing will be given, providing an update on the technical options being put forward, which will be a balance of what is feasible and affordable as part of the funding application.

If the outline bid is successful, later engagement will focus on the specifics such as the colour, decoration, lighting, bins etc

Small Electricals and Batteries Curbside Collections

I'd like to thank councillors and residents for their patience waiting for this service to resume. It is a national issue, officers from both our council and our waste contract sister councils in North Norfolk and Breckland have been working hard to look at new contractors and arrangements. We are waiting for battery storage bins to be delivered to the depots, once they are installed, the service will resume. Residents and councillors will be informed once we are able to "go live"…

In the mean time, please do not put anything containing batteries in either your green recycling bins or your black residual waste bins. Fires are an increasing occurrence and high risk for our crews, lorries and depots.

3 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled

LGA Coastal SIG Field Trip & AGM
Norfolk Coast Partnership CMG meeting
Various Portfolio Briefings
Mooncup meeting
Wash East Coast Management Strategy Stakeholder Forum (WECMS)
LGA Coastal SIG Water Quality Working Group
Cabinet Briefing
Member Major Projects Board
RFCC New Member Welcome Meeting
Cabinet
Wash North Norfolk Marine Partnership (WNNMP) CMG Meeting
Joint Waste Contract Review & Development Board
RFCC Committee meeting
Hunstanton Town Council Water Quality & Coastal meeting