



Corporate Performance Panel
Thursday, 1st February, 2024 at 3.00 pm
in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market
Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

Reports marked to follow on the Agenda and/or Supplementary Documents

- a) Background Papers to Agenda Item 8 (Pages 2 - 65)
- August 2023 Cabinet Report on the 2023 Pay Award.
 - The Employment Monitoring Report.
 - Peer Review Report.
 - Annual Risk Register.

Contact

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REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary /	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		NO	
	Operational	Need to be recommendations to Council		YES	
		Is it a Key Decision		NO	
Lead Member: Leader E-mail: <i>Cllr.Terry.Parish@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i>			Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
			Other Members consulted:		
Lead Officer: Debbie Gates E-mail: <i>Debbie.Gates@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i> Direct Dial: 01553 616605			Other Officers consulted: Management Team Trade Unions		
Financial Implications YES	Policy/ Personnel Implications YES	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre-screening	Risk Management Implications YES	Environmental Considerations NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)					

Date of meeting: 1st August 2023

PAY AWARD 2023/24

Summary

The Council's annual pay increase for all employees is locally determined, having regard to national pay and labour market information. This paper recommends the pay increase for 2023/24 and outlines the budget implications.

Recommendation

1. Members determine that:
 - a) An increase of £1925 or 5% (whichever is the greater) be applied to all salary points.
 - b) A flat rate non-consolidated cost-of-living payment of £750pa (pro rata for part time employees) to be paid to all permanent employees and temporary staff (with a contract specifying a duration of 12 months or more) who were in post on 1st April 2023. This payment to be paid in 12 monthly instalments with effect from April 2023.
 - c) The top points of all grades (not individual salaries) are increased by the maximum applicable percentage increase (10.38%) with effect from 1st October 2023. This will not have an immediate financial impact but will assist with future recruitment and retention.
2. Changes to annual leave and working hours are not implemented as part of the local Pay Award as any changes to terms and conditions that are negotiated nationally would continue to apply to our employees.

Reason for Decision

To implement an annual pay increase for employees that balances the requirement to make financial savings with the need to recruit and retain good quality employees.

1 Background

1.1 The Council's annual pay increase for all employees has been locally determined since 1991. The overall context for the 2023/24 Pay Award is inflation at levels described by the Bank of England as "too high". CPI levels reached 10% in July 2022 and remained at this figure or above until April 2023, when it fell to 8.7% and remained in May 2023. RPI peaked at 14.2% in October 2022 and reduced to 11.4% in April 2023 and 11.3% in May 2023. The Bank of England projects that CPI will fall to around 5% by the end of 2023 and meet the 2% target by late 2024.

1.2 Pay increases over the past 5 years are detailed below:

2018/19	2% and a minimum wage of £8.50 per hour
2019/20	2% and a minimum wage of £9.00 per hour
2020/21	2.5% and a minimum wage of £9.25 per hour
2021/22	2.5% and a minimum wage of £9.50 per hour
2022/23	£1925 or 4% and a minimum wage of £10.50 per hour

2 General Pay and Prices

2.1 The latest Retail Prices (RPI) figure for May 2023 reduced to 11.3% from 11.4% in April 2023. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) remained at 8.7% in May, having reduced to that figure in April from 10.1% in March 2023. Data for the previous 5 years is shown below:

	RPI (July)	CPI (July)
2022	12.3%	10.1%
2021	3.8%	2%
2020	1.6%	1%
2019	2.8%	2.1%
2018	3.2%	2.5%

2.2 The Office of National Statistics (June 2023) reports that average growth in pay (excluding bonuses) for the period February to April 2023 was 7.2%, which demonstrates the continuing gap between wage growth and price growth.

2.3 The National Living Wage increased to £10.42 per hour with effect from 1st April 2023. The Real Living Wage Foundation promotes a higher hourly rate to meet the everyday needs of workers. This is called the "Real Living Wage"

and is currently £10.90 per hour. The Council's lowest wage rate under these proposals would be £11.59.

3 National Negotiations

3.1 The National Pay Settlement for 2022/23 was an increase of £1925 or 3.88% on all pay points, which resulted in a minimum wage of £10.50 per hour from 1st April 2022, increased to £10.60 per hour from 1st April 2023.

3.2 The Trade Unions have submitted their pay claim for 2023/24, with the most significant elements outlined below:

- A pay increase of inflation (RPI) plus 2%
- Consideration of a flat rate increase to hourly rates of pay to bring the minimum rate up to £15.00 per hour within 2 years.
- An additional day of annual leave.
- A reduction in the working week to 35 hours.
- Introduction of a homeworking allowance.

The National Employers have responded to this claim by offering an increase of £1925 or 3.88% on all NJC pay points from the 1st April 2023, resulting in a minimum hourly rate of £11.59.

This offer has been rejected by the 3 main Local Government Unions and ballots for industrial action are currently taking place.

4 Other Public Sector Settlements

a. NHS Support Staff (settlement)

- A permanent 5% increase on all pay points
- A one off, non-consolidated cost-of-living payment starting at £1,655 and rising in value up the pay bands
- A lowest pay point of £11.45 per hour

b. Nurses (settlement)

- A permanent 5% increase on all pay points
- A one off, non-consolidated payment that starts at £1,891 and rising in value up the pay bands. This comprises an element equivalent to 2% of salaries and a backlog bonus.

c. Civil Service (offer)

- An average pay increase of 4.5%, with a further 0.5% at lower pay bands.
- A flat rate non-consolidated cost-of-living payment of £1,500.

d. Teaching Staff (offer)

- An average pay increase of 4.5%, with 7.1% for starting salaries.
- A flat rate non-consolidated cost-of-living payment of £1,000.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 The Authority has made budget provision for a 5% annual pay increase for all employees from the 1st April 2023, together with separate provision for increases in the minimum rate of pay. It is recognised that increases in both RPI and CPI over the past 18 months are resulting in significant cost of living pressures, which are being reflected in recent pay claims and awards across both the public and private sectors. Inflation over the 2 years from April 2021 to April 2023 totals 17.7% (CPI) and 22.5% (RPI), whereas the impact of last years' pay award combined with proposals for the current year range from 22% at the bottom of the pay scales falling to 9% for employees paid £48,000 or above, with 14.5 % for employees on the median salary. A non-consolidated lump sum payment made to all permanent and temporary staff in post on 1st April 2023, with a contract for at least 12 months would recognise the gap between wage and price growth experienced by employees over this period and, in particular, the differential impact of high food and energy inflation on the lowest paid employees. This would not result in permanent budgetary pressures for the duration of the current financial plan.
- 5.2 We continue to balance the requirement to make financial savings with the need to recruit and retain good quality employees and labour market pressures persist to make this more challenging across a range of professional, technical, specialist and managerial roles. The Council uses a range of approaches to respond to recruitment and retention challenges, including a proactive training and development programme, use of apprentices and progression schemes for professional roles. Hybrid and flexible working is also offered as appropriate to specific job roles, but the ability to offer competitive salaries is a critical response in a competitive labour market, particularly for roles where we recruit from outside the local area.
- 5.3 Experience from recent recruitment processes has highlighted an increasing need to both advertise and offer starting salaries which are significantly further through pay grades than was the case prior to the pandemic in order to secure applicants and to agree terms with successful candidates. This is particularly significant for specialist, professional and senior management roles, where increasing numbers of employees are now appointed within the top third of the grade. Benchmarking of technical, professional and managerial level roles advertised over the past year against comparable roles within other local authorities confirms that the lower third of our current pay grades at PG09 and above fall below the range offered by comparable employers.
- 5.4 The impact of flat rate pay awards erodes differentials between grades and action to increase the top of pay scales will offer the flexibility to review pay grade ranges to both facilitate retention of existing staff and ensure that salaries advertised during recruitment processes remain competitive.
- 5.5 It is therefore recommended that:
- An increase of £1925 or 5% (whichever is the greater) be applied to all salary points;

- A flat rate non-consolidated cost-of-living payment of £750pa (pro rata for part time employees) to be paid to all permanent employees and temporary staff (with a contract specifying a duration of 12 months or more) who were in post on 1st April 2023. This payment to be paid in 12 monthly instalments from April 2023.
- The top points of all grades (not individual salaries) are increased by the maximum applicable percentage increase (10.38%) with effect from 1st October 2023. This will not have an immediate financial impact but will assist with future recruitment and retention.

Please Note: These proposals will also be considered by the Alive West Norfolk Board on 20th July. Comments from the Board will be made available when the report is presented to Corporate Performance Panel (24th July) and Cabinet (1st August).

6 Trade Union Comments

Will be inserted after JEC Committee

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The proposal exceeds the current budget provision for 2023/24 (which allowed for 5% increase) with the estimated additional costs set out below:

Proposal	2023/24
£1925 or 5%	£360340
£750 flat rate payment	£454800
TOTAL	£815140

- 7.2 However, the council set aside £862k in earmarked reserves to allow for the pay award in 2022/23 which was able to be met from within turnover savings in year. Therefore, these reserves are available to support the proposal for 2023/24 with the financial impact from 2024/25 being incorporated into budgets through the upcoming budget setting process.

- 7.3 The current Medium Term Financial Plan estimates a budget gap in 2026/27. This is due to a number of uncertainties as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan approved by Council in February 2023. The financial impact of the pay award on future years will need to be addressed as part of the proposals on closing the gap going forward.

- 7.3 This proposal also impacts on Alive West Norfolk where the costs are estimated to be as follows:

Proposal	2023/24
£1925 or 5%	£144592
£750 flat rate payment	£145605
TOTAL	£290197

- 7.4 It is anticipated that Alive West Norfolk will meet the cost of the pay award from within their own resources. However, due to the current cost of living impact on the economy, this may not be possible and it is too early in the year to confirm this. Therefore, it is recommended that funding is set aside from the underspend in 2022/23 as a contingency to support any shortfall if necessary. This is included in the separate outturn report to Cabinet on 1 August 2023.

8 Statutory Considerations

There are no statutory considerations, other than the requirement to pay the National Living Wage.

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An Equality Impact Assessment pre-screening form has been completed and is attached to this report.

9 Risk Management Implications

- 8.1 As set out in Section 7 above, the recommendations can be met from within current reserves with a contingency proposed for Alive West Norfolk.
- 8.2 The recommendation incorporates a minimum hourly rate of £11.59, which exceeds the both the current National Living Wage and the “Real Living Wage”.
- 8.3 An alternative approach for the current year would be to delay implementation of our local pay award until the National Pay negotiations have concluded. This will significantly delay payments to staff, who are relying on the increased salary, with backdated payments to 1st April 2023) to help them cope with ongoing rises in the cost of living.

10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None.

11 Background Papers

None.

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	2023 Pay Award
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	Existing
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	The Council's annual pay increase for employees is locally determined, taking local, regional and national pay and labour market information in consideration. This report outlines the recommendations for a pay award for the 2023/24 year. The proposals reflect the Council's ongoing commitment to match the bottom point of local pay grades to the minimum national local government pay scales.

Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure	
	Age			√	
	Disability			√	
	Gender			√	
	Gender Re-assignment			√	
	Marriage/civil partnership			√	
	Pregnancy & maternity			√	
	Race			√	
	Religion or belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
Other (low income)	√				

Question	Answer	Comments
<p>2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?</p>	No	
<p>3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?</p>	No	
<p>4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?</p>	Yes	<p>The Council recognises the difficulties faced by its lowest paid employees and introduced an organisational minimum wage in 2014, which has been updated annually. The proposals for the 2023 pay award include consideration of a decision made as part of the 2022/23 national local government pay settlement to delete the lowest point on the national pay scale wef 1/4/23. The impact of matching this revised bottom of the national pay scales has been factored into the proposals put forward for the 23/24 pay award to maintain our commitment to our lowest paid staff.</p>
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?</p> <p>If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes	<p>Actions: Impact is positive so further action is not required.</p> <hr/> <p>Actions agreed by EWG member: ...Becky Box.....</p>
<p>Assessment completed by:</p> <p>Name</p>	<p>Debbie Gates</p>	
<p>Job title</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>	
<p>Date</p>	<p>22nd June 2023</p>	

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

Annual Employment Monitoring 2022/23

Background

The Council has undertaken monitoring of its recruitment and selection procedures since 1996 and of its workforce since 2000, with findings reported to Elected Members and Senior Managers over this period. Over time the reports have taken various formats, as systems for collecting information have been improved, and as guidance and legislation regarding the monitoring that should be undertaken has been revised.

The information is compiled into the annual 'Employment Monitoring' report, which has a particular emphasis on meeting the requirements of relevant equalities legislation which was consolidated in the Equalities Act 2010. Guidance supporting the Equalities Act has reinforced the importance of public authorities monitoring and reporting their staff profile, particularly in relation to recruitment, promotion, training, pay, grievances and disciplinary action.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations which came into force in September 2011 require public bodies to publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the general equality duty. This includes a requirement to monitor and publish information about their employees. The specific duties are not prescriptive about the information that needs to be published, but this must include information relating to people who share a relevant protected characteristic. The contents of this employment monitoring report therefore demonstrate the Council's compliance with this requirement.

The details of the monitoring exercise also provide evidence of the Council's progress against the employment related objectives it has set, which include ensuring opportunities for promotion and training are available to all employees.

Details of the monitoring undertaken can be found summarised in Appendix 1, which is organised into sections as follows:

- i. The Council's workforce profile (section 1)
- ii. Recruitment activity (section 2)
- iii. Applications for promotion (section 3)
- iv. Training and development activities (section 4)
- v. The number of employees refused training (section 5)
- vi. The impact of performance assessments (section 6)
- vii. Grievance procedures (section 7)
- viii. Disciplinary procedures (section 8)
- ix. Employees leaving the Council's employment (section 9)
- x. Employees experiencing at least one period of sickness absence in the year (section 10)

Where possible, information for the most recent year, plus the five previous years, has been included.

When reviewing the 2017/18 Monitoring Report, members of the Corporate Performance Panel requested that additional monitoring in relation to age be included in future reports. Therefore throughout the information provided in Appendix 1 age was added where the data had been collected and monitored for the first time in 2018/19. Unfortunately at that point we were unable to provide the age monitoring information for training or sickness. From 2019/20 we have been able to add this information for training and sickness and for future years it will therefore be possible to compare age related information for all categories.

Summary of Monitoring Results

i. The Council's Workforce Profile

The Council's workforce profile for the 2022/23 year has remained broadly the same as the past five years. When reviewing the Council's workforce profile a useful comparison is the relevant information on the population of West Norfolk, as compiled via the 2021 Census. This shows that the population within the Council is broadly comparable with the population of West Norfolk as a whole:

	Council Workforce 2022/23	Council Workforce 2021/22	2021 Census
White	95.44%	95.25%	95.62%
Other Ethnic Group	1.90%	2.18%	4.38%
Undefined	2.66%	2.57%	0%

	Council Workforce 2022/23	Council Workforce 2021/22	2021 Census
Female	55.51%	53.47%	51.17%
Male	44.49%	46.53%	48.83%

ii. Recruitment Activity

It is interesting to monitor the number of applications received per vacancy in each of these years as shown below.

Year	Number of adverts placed	Average number of applications per vacancy
2017/18	207	10.11
2018/19	147	16.64
2019/20	139	17.87
2020/21	95	13.28
2021/22	159	6.01
2022/23	151	8.00

However, it should be noted that these figures are an average – there are some specialist vacancies where we receive (as expected) very low number of applicants.

The figures shown in section 2 of Appendix 1 highlight that the number of job applications received within the 2022/23 year has started to increase from the previous year, but not back up to pre-pandemic levels. Following covid, there are national recruitment challenges in all sectors, and at all levels. Overall the number

of vacancies within the Council remains broadly the same as 2021/22 which remains a slight increase to previous years. This is a combination of usual levels of turnover, re-advertisements, and new posts both permanent and temporary positions. Unfortunately, average numbers of applications continue to be low compared to 2020/21 and previous years. The number of applicants per vacancy across the year range from 0 to 58. However, there is also the challenge of candidates accepting other roles whilst in the process of applying for our vacancies, due to the number of opportunities available to them, this is particular the case for candidates accepting permanent roles while apply for or being offered temporary or seasonal vacancies for this Council.

iii. Applications for Promotion

During 2022/23 the figures show an increase from recent years, but as with the external recruitment this remains slightly lower than earlier years. However the percentage of applications being shortlisted remains a broadly similar level as in previous years, with the successful applicants slightly lower. The Council continues to offer a range of vacancies to existing employees on an “internal only” basis, taking this approach to recruitment in circumstances where it is felt employees with suitable skills are already employed within the organisation. In addition, all employees can of course apply for those positions advertised on a wider basis, and if unsuccessful will receive full feedback to assist with any future vacancies they may be interested in.

iv. Training and Development Activities

The monitoring information shows that during 2022/23 the number of employees receiving training has increased from the previous couple of years, and is approaching pre-pandemic levels. Face to face training provision has increased during the year, and training was more concentrated on meeting urgent training needs such as safeguarding with more varied training planned for next year.

v. The Number of Employees Refused Training

During the 2022/23 year there have been two instances where training has been refused. The first instance was a request for an external training course which was very similar to a planned in-house course. The external training was therefore refused, and the employee has been added to the list of delegates for the in-house training which is being run during 2023/24. The second instance was refused due to the request received within the employees probation period. However, this training will be reconsidered once the employees probation has been completed. In all other previous years there have been no employees who were refused training.

vi. The Impact of Performance Assessments

The results from the 2022/23 appraisal year are reported in point 6 of appendix 1. This information is shown as the number of staff achieving each performance rating.

NB during 2020/21 performance assessments were not undertaken in the usual way, and rather than following the usual performance management gradings,

assessments were largely based on employees response to covid. Therefore, we are unable to measure and compare the data for 2020/21.

vii. Grievance Procedures

Although there is a very small increase in 2022/23, overall the number of cases remains very low with 2021/22, 2019/20, 2018/19 having no grievances.

viii. Disciplinary Procedures

The number of disciplinary cases investigated during the 2022/23 has slightly increased from the previous year, but remains broadly the same in comparison to the previous years.

ix. Employees Leaving the Council's Employment

The total number of employees leaving the Council's employment in 2022/23 is slightly lower than the previous year and remains broadly the same as the years prior to the pandemic. The years 2020/21 and 2019/20 were impacted by the pandemic and employees not wanting to leave their employment during this uncertain period.

x. Sickness Absence

The figures for 2022/23 are slightly lower than for the 2021/22 year, which showed a higher figure than 2020/21. It should be noted for several months during 2020/21 those considered critically vulnerable were isolating and many staff were working from home, and when in the office staff were socially distanced etc for covid, potentially impacting on the ability of other viruses/colds etc to spread. The 2022/23 and 2021/22 years data are broadly similar to the remaining previous years and have no areas of concern to report.

Employment Monitoring Information – 2022/23

1. The Number Of Employees In Post (Permanent, Fixed Term and Temporary Employees)

a. By Ethnic Origin

	% of Workforce*					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
White	95.44	95.25	95.54	95.48	96.17	96.40
Other Ethnic Group	1.90	2.18	1.62	1.38	1.01	1.00
Undefined#	2.66	2.57	2.84	3.14	2.82	2.60

Undefined relates to those employees for whom data has not been collected

b. By Disability

	% of Workforce*					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Employees with a Disability	5.89	5.15	4.67	4.72	5.04	4.60

c. By Gender

	% of Workforce*					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Female	55.51	53.47	53.55	53.64	53.63	53.60
Male	44.49	46.53	46.45	46.36	46.37	46.40

d. By Age

	% of Workforce*					
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
25 and under	6.27	4.95	4.67	6.29	4.64	
26-44	33.27	34.46	34.89	33.20	34.88	
45 +	60.46	60.59	60.45	60.51	60.48	

* NB. Figures based on permanent, fixed term and temporary employees at 1st April each year

2. The Number Of Applicants For Employment

2.1 Applicants for Employment

a. By Ethnic Origin

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants	White	1050 (86.92%)	897 (93.83%)	1206 (95.56%)	2406 (96.78%)	2389 (97.67%)	2027 (96.85%)
	Other ethnic groups	158 (13.08%)	59 (6.17%)	56 (4.44%)	79 (3.17%)	57 (2.33%)	66 (3.15%)

b. By Disability

Year	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
No of applicants with a disability	129 (10.68%)	80 (8.37%)	68 (5.39%)	182 (7.19%)	123 (5.03%)	131 (6.26%)

c. By Gender

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants	Female	593 (59.09%)	489 (51.15%)	718 (56.89%)	1388 (54.01%)	1183 (48.36%)	998 (47.68%)
	Male	615 (50.91%)	467 (48.85%)	544 (43.11%)	1182 (45.99%)	1263 (51.64%)	1095 (52.32%)

d. By Age

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants	25 and under	283 (23.43%)	230 (24.06%)	358 (28.37%)	701 (27.70%)	643 (26.29%)	
	26-44	516 (42.72%)	363 (37.97%)	507 (40.17%)	914 (36.11%)	985 (40.27%)	
	45 +	409 (33.86%)	363 (37.97%)	397 (31.46%)	916 (36.19%)	785 (32.09%)	

2.2. Applicants Shortlisted For Employment

a. By Ethnic Origin

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants shortlisted	White	588 (56.00%)	450 (50.17%)	302 (25.04%)	1035 (43.02%)	1029 (43.07%)	762 (37.59%)
	Other ethnic groups	61 (38.61%)	20 (33.90%)	13 (23.21%)	27 (34.18%)	30 (52.63%)	14 (21.21%)

b. By Disability

Year	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
No of applicants with a disability shortlisted	69 (53.75%)	40 (50%)	17 (25%)	65 (35.71%)	51 41.46%)	51 (38.93%)

c. By Gender

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants shortlisted	Female	315 (53.12%)	236 (48.26%)	136 (18.94%)	535 (38.54%)	361 (30.52%)	316 (31.66%)
	Male	334 (54.31%)	234 (50.10%)	179 (32.90%)	547 (46.28%)	698 (55.26%)	460 (42.01%)

d. By Age

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/2018
Number of Applicants	25 and under	145 (51.24%)	106 (46.09%)	74 (20.67%)	237 (33.81%)	225 (34.99%)	
	26-44	257 (49.81%)	167 (46.01%)	115 (22.68%)	388 (42.45%)	450 (45.69%)	
	45 +	247 (60.39%)	197 (54.27%)	126 (31.74%)	445 (48.58%)	370 (47.14%)	

2.3 Shortlisted Applicants Appointed

a. By Ethnic Origin

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/2019	2017/2018
Number of shortlisted Applicants appointed	White	145 (24.66%)	110 (24.44%)	82 (27.15%)	204 (19.71%)	227 (22.06%)	102 (13.39%)
	Other ethnic groups	5 (8.20%)	4 (20%)	1 (7.69%)	3 (11.11%)	1 (3.33%)	2 (14.29%)

b. By Disability

Year	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/2019	2017/2018
No of shortlisted applicants with a disability appointed	12 (17.39%)	6 (15%)	5 (29.41%)	8 (12.31%)	7 (13.73%)	5 (9.80%)

c. By Gender

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/2019	2017/2018
Number of shortlisted Applicants appointed	Female	60 (19.05%)	56 (23.73%)	25 (18.38%)	76 (14.21%)	57 (15.79%)	44 (13.92%)
	Male	90 (26.95%)	57 (24.36%)	58 (32.40%)	133 (24.31%)	171 (24.49%)	60 (13.04%)

d. By Age

Year		2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/2019	2017/2018
Number of Applicants	25 and under	31 (21.38%)	26 (24.53%)	16 (21.62%)	53 (22.36%)	30 (13.33%)	
	26-44	53 (20.62%)	41 (24.55%)	30 (26.09%)	59 (15.21%)	84 (18.66%)	
	45 +	66 (26.72%)	47 (23.86%)	37 (29.36%)	96 (21.57%)	111 (30%)	

The Number Of Applicants For Promotion

a. By Ethnic Origin

Year	Ethnic Group	Applied For Promotion	Shortlisted For Promotion	Achieved Promotion
2022/23	White	47	46 (97.87%)	16 (34.78%)
	Other Ethnic Group	1	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Undefined	0	0	0
2021/22	White	41	41 (100%)	18 (43.90%)
	Other Ethnic Group	2	2 (100%)	1 (50%)
	Undefined	0	0	0
2020/21	White	34	26 (76.47%)	13 (50%)
	Other Ethnic Group	1	1 (100%)	1 (100%)
	Undefined	0	0	0
2019/20	White	62	46 (74.19%)	22 (47.83%)
	Other Ethnic Group	1	0	0
	Undefined	0	0	0
2018/19	White	59	52 (88%)	28 (54%)
	Other Ethnic Group	0	0	0
	Undefined	0	0	0
2017/18	White	85	68 (80%)	30 (44%)
	Other Ethnic Group	2	2 (100%)	1 (50%)
	Undefined	0	0	0

b. By Disability

Year	Applied For Promotion	Shortlisted For Promotion	Achieved Promotion
2022/23	1	1	0
2021/22	1	1	0
2020/21	1	1	1
2019/20	4	3	0
2018/19	1	1	1
2017/18	3	2	1

c. By Gender

Year	Gender	Applied For Promotion	Shortlisted For Promotion	Achieved Promotion
2022/23	Female	35	34 (97.14%)	12 (35.29%)
	Male	13	12 (92.31%)	4 (33.33%)
2021/22	Female	26	26 (100%)	13 (50%)
	Male	17	17 (100%)	6 (35.29%)
2020/21	Female	17	15 (88.23%)	7 (46.67%)
	Male	18	12 (66.67%)	7 (58.33%)
2019/20	Female	28	21 (75%)	10 (47.62%)
	Male	34	25 (73.53%)	12 (48%)
2018/19	Female	30	27 (90%)	13 (48.15%)
	Male	29	25 (86.21%)	15 (60%)
2017/18	Female	48	39 (81.25%)	15 (38.46%)
	Male	39	31 (79.49%)	16 (51.61%)

d. By Age

Year	Age Range	Applied For Promotion	Shortlisted For Promotion	Achieved Promotion
2022/23	25 and under	4	4 (100%)	2 (50%)
	26-44	27	26 (96.30%)	10 (38.46%)
	45 +	17	16 (94.12%)	4 (25%)
2021/22	25 and under	5	5 (100%)	2 (40%)
	26-44	26	26 (100%)	12 (46.15%)
	45 +	12	12 (100%)	5 (41.67%)
2020/21	25 and under	4	4 (100%)	2 (50%)
	26-44	20	15 (75%)	10 (66.67%)
	45 +	11	8 (72.73%)	2 (25%)
2019/20	25 and under	8	7 (87.5%)	2 (28.57%)
	26-44	28	18 (64.29%)	11 (61.11%)
	45 +	26	21 (80.77%)	9 (42.86%)
2018/19	25 and under	12	9	4

			(75%)	(44.44%)
	26-44	30	19 (63.33%)	14 (73.68%)
	45 +	17	14 (82.35%)	9 (64.29%)

4. The Number Of Applicants For Training

a. By Ethnic Origin

	% of Staff per Group Receiving Training					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
White	76.29%	65.90%	59.24%	89.91%	92.54 %	93.15%
Other Ethnic Group	90%	54.55%	75%	100%	100%	100%
Undefined	85.71%	69.23%	50%	100%	100%	100%

b. By Disability

	% of Staff per Group Receiving Training					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Employees with a disability receiving training	80.65%	76.92%	56.52%	95.8%	88%	82.61%

c. By Gender

	% of Staff per Group Receiving Training					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Female	77.74%	73.70%	68.56%	91.58%	89.47%	97.76%
Male	75.64%	56.59%	48.47%	88.98%	96.18%	89.22%

d. By Age

	% of Staff per Group Receiving Training					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
25 and under	78.79%	84%	78.26%	96.88%		
26-44	77.14%	65.51%	65.12%	95.86%		
45 +	76.42%	64.38%	54.36%	86.69%		

5. The Number Of Employees Receiving Training

There have been two instances of training refused in 2022/23, however there are no concerns with these. For all previous years there have been no instances where requests for developmental training have been refused.

6. The Number Of Employees Who Benefit Or Suffer Detriment As A Result Of Performance Assessment Procedures

Please note the figures are not shown for 2020/21 due to the appraisal process being administered differently that year and being linked to covid response/recovery, with specific covid ratings, therefore unable to compare to other years.

a. By Ethnic Origin

2022/23	Performance Rating			
Ethnic Group	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
White	27	114	288	7
Other Ethnic Group	1	1	6	1
Undefined	1	3	8	0

2021/22	Performance Rating			
Ethnic Group	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
White	24	82	304	5
Other Ethnic Group	0	1	5	0
Undefined	2	1	8	0

2019/20	Performance Rating			
Ethnic Group	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
White	25	72	327	8
Other Ethnic Group	0	1	5	0
Undefined	1	2	11	0

2018/19	Performance Rating			
Ethnic Group	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
White	19	90	346	3
Other Ethnic Group	0	1	4	0
Undefined	0	0	0	1

2017/18	Performance Rating			
Ethnic Group	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
White	14	56	359	4
Other Ethnic Group	0	0	4	0
Undefined	0	4	7	0

b. By Disability

Employees with a disability	Performance Rating			
	Exceeded	Achieved with merit	Achieved/Met	Partially Met
2022/23	1	9	15	1
2021/22	2	5	16	0
2019/20	2	3	18	0
2018/19	2	4	15	1
2017/18	1	1	19	1

c. By Gender

Year	Gender	Performance Rating			
		Exceeded	Achieved with merit	Achieved/Met	Partial Met
2022/23	Female	20	77	156	3
	Male	9	41	146	5
2021/22	Female	18	42	168	3
	Male	8	42	149	2
2019/20	Female	19	44	178	2
	Male	7	31	165	6
2018/19	Female	10	47	182	1
	Male	9	43	163	2
2017/18	Female	7	29	210	0
	Male	7	31	160	4

d. By Age

2022/23	Performance Rating			
	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
25 and under	2	8	7	0
26-44	14	50	86	0
45+	13	60	209	8
2021/22	Performance Rating			
	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
25 and under	1	2	6	0
26-44	12	29	109	1
45+	13	53	202	4
2019/20	Performance Rating			
	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
25 and under	0	4	15	1
26-44	12	29	112	1
45+	14	42	216	6
2018/19	Performance Rating			
	Exceeded	Achieved with Merit	Achieved	Partially Met
25 and under	0	3	12	1
26-44	11	35	110	1
45+	8	52	224	1

7. The Number Of Staff Involved In Grievance Procedures

a. By Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Group	Number of Grievances					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
White	2	0	1	0	0	1
Other Ethnic Group	0	0	0	0	0	0
Undefined	0	0	0	0	0	0

b. By Disability

	Number of Grievances					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Cases involving employees with a disability	0	0	0	0	0	0

c. By Gender

	Number of Grievances					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Females	0	0	0	0	0	1
Males	2	0	1	0	0	0

d. By Age

	Number of Grievances					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
25 and under	0	0	0	0	0	
26-44	1	0	0	0	0	
45+	1	0	1	0	0	

8. The Number Of Staff Involved In Disciplinary Procedures

a. By Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Group	Number of Disciplinary Procedures					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
White	14	9	14	18	10	8
Other Ethnic Group	0	0	0	1	0	0
Undefined	0	0	0	0	0	0

b. By Disability

	Number of Disciplinary Procedures					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Cases of employees with a disability	0	0	0	0	0	1

c. By Gender

	Number of Disciplinary Procedures					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Females	2	1	5	4	1	1
Males	12	8	9	15	9	7

d. By Age

	Number of Disciplinary Procedures					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
25 and under	0	0	0	0	1	
26-44	3	3	2	5	1	
45+	11	6	12	14	8	

9. The Number Of Employees Who Cease To Be Employed By The Authority

a. By Ethnic Origin

	Number of Leavers					
Ethnic Group	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
White	53	59	34	42	54	59
Other Ethnic Group	2	0	0	0	0	1
Undefined	0	1	2	2	2	0

b. By Disability

	Number of Leavers					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Leavers with a disability	5	3	2	1	2	3

c. By Gender

	Number of Leavers					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Female	19	23	16	21	26	29
Male	36	37	20	23	30	31

d. By Age

	Number of Leavers					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
25 and under	4	10	8	1	1	
26-44	19	16	6	14	22	
45+	32	34	22	29	33	

10. The Number Of Employees Absent Due to Sickness

a. By Ethnic Origin

	% of Staff per Group Taking At Least One Period of Sickness Absence					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
White	59.56%	62.16%	50.53%	66.05%	65.41%	69.50%
Other Ethnic Group	60%	54.55%	50%	42.86%	20%	40%
Undefined	78.57%	84.62%	78.57%	93.75%	71.43%	61.54%

b. By Disability

	% of Staff per Group Taking At Least One Period of Sickness Absence					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Employees absent due to sickness with a	58.06%	69.23%	65.22%	87.5%	68%	86.96%

disability						
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c. By Gender

	% of Staff per Group Taking At Least One Period of Sickness Absence					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Female	65.07%	70.37%	57.95%	68.13%	69.55%	73.51%
Male	53.85%	53.62%	43.67%	64.83%	60%	63.79%

d. By Age

	% of Staff per Group Taking At Least One Period of Sickness Absence					
	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
25 and under	42.42%	64.00%	60.87%	78.12%		
26-44	64.57%	67.82%	45.93%	70.41%		
45 +	59.43%	59.48%	53.69%	63.31%		

Corporate Peer Challenge

Borough Council of King's Lynn and
West Norfolk

16 – 19 October 2023

Feedback report





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1. Executive summary

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) comprises the urban area of King's Lynn, together with the market towns of Downham Market and Hunstanton surrounded by 102 parishes. A large, predominantly rural district of 550 square miles with a population of approximately 155,000. The borough council is the second largest district council in the country by area.

The borough has much to offer, being the recipient of government Towns Funding enabling regeneration of Kings Lynn, improvements to the cultural offer and a youth and retraining pledge. There is also untapped potential to exploit the boroughs' location by making connections beyond the council borders. The borough is the envy of district neighbours and these unique selling points need to be shouted about.

Following 20 years of Conservative control of the Borough Council, the Independent Partnership, made up of members of the Independent Group, Liberal Democrat and Green Party, formed a minority administration of the council in May 2023, working collaboratively with the Labour Group. The new administration has ambition to deliver value for money services across the borough, as well as having high aspirations for investment, growth, and regeneration. The new political leadership have hit the ground running, and their approach is welcomed by partners and staff, with positive member and officer relationships being demonstrated.

A new draft Corporate [Strategy 2023 - 2027](#) has been published and is making its way through committees to Council for adoption in November. Whilst there is clearly use of quantitative data to identify needs and future demands in the borough, there is an absence of engagement with residents to inform the priorities. Partners and stakeholders commented "*they are a bit fearful of asking what people think*". Staff also said, "*we only consult with residents if we really have to*". A shared understanding of the council's vision and priorities across the organisation, with partners and communities would ensure everyone knows how they can contribute to delivery and know what outcomes are expected. Peers recommend the council engages, consults, and co-produces with residents and communities' future iterations of the Corporate Strategy and develops a customer engagement strategy and/or charter to set out how the council will involve all stakeholders in future policy and strategy development, for example on the budget and a long-term vision for the

district.

A new Corporate Governance Team (CGT) and in-house legal and Monitoring Officer post (MO) has been created adding essential corporate resource for the council. With a new Corporate Strategy and set of priorities being developed, peers recommend the performance measures and data needs of the council are reviewed to focus on priorities and outcomes in order to provide the right information for members to make decisions and for officers to put in place interventions to drive improvement and alignment with the budget.

The new MO and CGT are already making improvements to governance processes with a review of the decision making and a review of the council's companies. Whilst on site, peers observed meetings and heard from members about some logistical issues such as the length of meetings, room acoustics, room layout and some more fundamental questions about the need for three Scrutiny Committees and their roles and responsibilities. Peers recommend following the corporate peer challenge that the council undertakes an independent governance review to- focus meetings on adding value to decision-making and scrutiny, resolve the logistical issues and reduce duplication of effort.

The methodology for strategic financial planning and modelling is robust, with the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) setting out the position until the end of 2026/27 and showing a funded budget until 2025/26. This does however rely on the use of reserves to balance the budget and leaves a £5.3m ongoing gap to be addressed at the beginning of 2026/27 when reserves will have been drawn down to minimum levels. Whilst the peer team recognise the positive work and understand this is an acceptable strategy in the short term, it is not a sustainable strategy for the medium term with the threat of business rates reset and fair funding being a risk to the forecast.

A plan needs to be developed to bring the council's finances back into alignment and peers saw evidence that this process is underway in the development of a Cost Management Plan (CMP). Peers recommend the council keeps refining the CMP, engaging cross party members in the process to develop political consensus and uses the General Fund Reserve to fund this work at pace, as it will lead to ongoing annual revenue savings in the future which will address the underlying £5.3m gap in


2026/27.

Partners and stakeholders have a lot of respect for the chief executive, particularly her leadership of the climate change agenda across Norfolk, support of the Town Deal board, personal involvement in a number of community-led projects and the openness to finding joint solutions to issues and challenges facing the council.

The peer team spoke to over 160 people (internally and externally), read policies and observed meetings during their four days on site at the BCKLWN and there was an overwhelming feeling that the council needed to modernise, peers heard, *"it feels old fashioned here"*, *"we need a change in culture, in leadership and a focus on the strategic direction"*, There is an officer and political awareness in the council that the majority of Management Team (MT) are reluctant to change, not adding value and that long service is not always a benefit to the organisation - peers heard, *"it's all very tribal"*. Out of date policies and traditional thinking around the protection of statutory versus non-statutory services are adding to this perception. This is not a helpful start point when looking for savings as the non-statutory services are often more closely linked to political priorities and those most valued by residents, for example, community development, parks and open spaces and regeneration. Staff from across the council told peers, they were embracing the corporate peer challenge to bring about change.

The majority of communication with staff is one way via all staff emails with the reintroduction of in person sessions since the pandemic taking time. Peers recommend MT and senior leadership team (SLT) take time to listen to staff and create new regular channels of ongoing staff engagement. Regular all staff face to face sessions on issues such as the budget, Corporate Strategy, new values and general Q and A would make the senior officer and political leadership more visible and enable bottom-up communication which is so critical in an organisation.

Peers observed senior managers immersed in resource-intensive detail with limited focus on strategy and outcomes *"SLT is prone to get into the weeds and detail of things and avoid strategic thinking"*. There were reports of fragmented *"silo and insular"* services with confusion around accountability for outcomes. Peers discovered there was little understanding of the different work and pressures horizontally across services. Peers believe the current structure is exacerbating this



and recommend it is reviewed. Peers recommend the focus of MT and SLT should be on strategic issues and managers should be allowed to manage.

There is an open door to transformational change, which is not common in many councils. The peer team found that staff across the organisation are excited by the potential of new senior managerial leadership, we heard comments such as “*we need a dynamic modern leadership team that wants to embrace risk and change*”, and “*we need a complete review of our resources*”. This is a big opportunity and peers recommend the council develops a transformation programme that designs everything around residents and communities and works towards becoming an adaptive council, to increase the flexibility to deploy skills and resources as needed depending on the operational situation.

Overall, the council is in a good position to deliver for its residents and work to regenerate the borough. There is now an opportunity for the political and managerial leadership to take stock and consider what type of the council it wants to be in the future and what it needs to achieve this. In the words of one of your partners “*be bold and lead*”.

2. Key recommendations

There are a number of observations and suggestions within the main section of the report. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the council:

2.1 Recommendation 1

Engage, consult and co-produce with residents and communities – Develop a customer engagement strategy/charter.

2.2 Recommendation 2

Talk and listen to staff, create new regular channels of ongoing staff engagement.

2.3 Recommendation 3

The political and managerial leadership needs to take stock and think about how to make the council fit for the future.

2.4 Recommendation 4

Re-focus SLT on strategic issues and empower managers to manage and deliver.

2.5 Recommendation 5

Use headroom to deliver ongoing annual revenue savings to address the underlying budget gap in 2026/27.

2.6 Recommendation 6

Put in place a transformation programme that designs everything around residents and communities.

2.7 Recommendation 7

Performance measures and data needs to focus on priorities and outcomes and provide the right information for members to make decisions.

2.8 Recommendation 8

Undertake a governance review to focus meetings on adding value to decision-making and scrutiny.

3. Summary of the peer challenge approach

3.1 The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the peer challenge and peers were selected on the basis of their relevant expertise. The peers were:

- Member Peer – Independent – Cllr Gillian Ford - London Borough of Havering
- Member Peer – Labour - Cllr Alyson Barnes - Rossendale Borough Council
- Member Peer – Conservative – Peter Fleming – Former leader Sevenoaks District Council
- Chief Executive Peer - Rose Rouse, CEX Pendle Borough Council
- Officer Peer - Ben Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive - Ashford Borough Council
- Officer Peer - Jo Yelland, Director - Exeter City Council
- Officer Peer - Will Pearson, Climate Change Strategy Manager - Cheshire West and Chester Council
- LGA Peer Challenge Manager - Kirsty Human
- LGA Project Support Officer – Onyekachi Abajingin

3.2 Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges. These areas are critical to councils' performance and improvement.

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities?
2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance

arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?

4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?
5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

3.3 The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement focused; it is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent four days onsite at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, during which they:

- Gathered information and views from more than 55 meetings, in addition to further research and reading.
- Spoke to more than 160 people including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders.

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and members.

4. Feedback

4.1 Local priorities and outcomes

The new Independent Partnership administration has worked with officers during their first five months of office to draft a new [Corporate Strategy](#). The council issued a [press release](#) announcing its journey to adoption. It was considered by the Corporate Performance Panel on 16th October before being considered by Cabinet on 31st October and then Council on 23rd November. The new Corporate Strategy provides an opportunity for the new administration to reset the focus of the organisation around the new priorities and develop an annual delivery plan which delivers tangible outcomes for residents and communities.

The timetable for adoption of the Corporate Strategy is tight and doesn't allow much time for wider engagement. Peers would have expected to see engagement with residents, staff and partners on the draft, to validate the priorities and create buy-in to the new vision. The council needs to consider how this vital engagement can be part of the implementation and delivery plans.

The council uses lots of quantitative data to identify needs and future demands in the district, and this is to be welcomed, but there is a lack of evidence of engagement with residents. Peers recommend the council engages, consults and co-produces with residents and communities on future iterations of the Corporate Strategy and develops a customer engagement strategy and/or charter to set out how the council will involve all stakeholders in future policy and strategy development, for example on the budget and a long-term vision for the district. The recent West Winch Growth Area public drop in event is one example of how to do this. People want to be engaged and would like to contribute to the vision for the district and its towns – this is a real opportunity for the council.

Once approved, the vision should inform the Corporate Strategy and outcomes which will inform the new priorities alongside the business as usual and drive delivery of the vision and outcomes. By aligning all the council plans, including, MTFS, transformation, workforce, digital, capital and regeneration programmes and others, the new Corporate Strategy needs to inform everything BCKLWN does.

Strong relationships exist with partners who are helping to deliver the council's

priorities. In relation to education (addressing lower than average attainment rates in the borough) peers heard the council referred to as “*voice of the west*” signifying the council’s commitment to raising educational standards. One of the Town Deal projects “[Boost](#)” brings together a unique partnership of local organisations – with leadership and support from Norfolk County Council and the BCKLWN to transform the prospects of young people in the town.

In addition, the council runs an impressive events programme with partners, which staff take pride in delivering. Events such as the annual fireworks display, Christmas light switch on, Soapbox Derby, music events, speedboats, classic cars and more – are all part of a wide and varied cultural offer for the benefit of residents and wider communities and are an important factor in making Kings Lynn and West Norfolk a good place to live.

BCKLWN has created capacity in key areas of the council with new roles and appointments. Through the succession planning of SLT in 2019/2020 with the change to the structure to include assistant directors. Two of the three directors and the chief executive are nearing retirement and reduced their working hours at the end of 2022 enabling an additional full time executive director to be recruited who is bringing new ideas and challenge to the organisation.

After a period of outsourcing legal services, a dedicated full-time Monitoring Officer (the Assistant Director of Legal, Governance and Licensing) was recruited in May 2022, and has built a core in-house legal provision, supplemented by external legal provision when required, to ensure the council operates a full legal function to support officers and members.

The Monitoring Officer (MO) oversaw the creation of a dedicated Corporate Governance Team which pulled in key officers and work already being undertaken within the council but with a renewed focus on corporate governance and accountability. The team has responsibility for managing the service around corporate complaints, Freedom of Information and Data Protection as well as producing and reporting on the progress of the Corporate Strategy, performance measures and associated Directorate Plans. The team collate performance and risk reports across the council and is providing a vital corporate role, taking on many additional projects and reviewing outdated policies.

The council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) is the mechanism by which priorities are linked to actions and assesses whether they are having the desired impact on service delivery and outcomes for communities. The council's [performance in relation to CIPFA near neighbours](#) is variable. Comparators show high levels of empty homes and high levels of Temporary Accommodation (TA) needs, yet low levels of affordable housing delivery and below average performance in all indicators relating to planning. All these areas directly impact each other, and it is positive to see them being raised by the Corporate Performance Panel (CPP) in their [June meeting](#). As priorities in the new Corporate Strategy, it will be important the annual delivery plan identifies how this performance is addressed to reflect better outcomes for residents.

The council has a shared service with Breckland District Council and North Norfolk District Council for waste and recycling. Compared to nearest neighbours the BCKLWN is paying above the average for this service, yet the recycling rate is below average (as is Breckland). CPP did not comment on this as part of their quarterly review of performance but a previous report to Cabinet on 15 November 2022 detailed the management of the contract and use of performance deductions for underperformance. Alive West Norfolk is the council's wholly owned leisure service. Annual spend compared to nearest neighbours is above average but the percentage of adults that are active, is the lowest in the comparator group. There are many reasons for inactivity which the council is not responsible for but investing time to understand the reasons for this, could help improve the health and wellbeing of communities and therefore reduce dependence on other services. The health partnership is keen to explore and embrace the opportunities available.

Performance reporting is thorough and [reported quarterly to CPP](#). The report is visual and easy to read but lengthy. The volume of measures produced in management reports is obscuring issues and making it difficult to track progress or underperformance. Peers suggest a smaller basket of performance measures (some action or milestone targets, some performance indicators), which are aligned to the new priorities and core services, be agreed. Peers recommend the performance measures and data needs of the council are reviewed and using the new software to focus on priorities and outcomes to provide the right information for members to make decisions and put in place interventions to drive improvement.

The PMF is the 'Golden Thread' which connects strategic plans and priorities to deliverable programmes and schemes and the performance targets for individual employees. However, when questioned, a number of staff at different levels in the organisation had varying levels of understanding, with comments including, *"I don't know how my job contributes to them"*, *"we weren't consulted"*, *"the service plan is how we keep our heads above water"*. The fact the new Corporate Strategy is still to be approved could be influencing these views but by considering how best to engage and work with staff to clarify the PMF will help to enable everyone to understand how they support delivery to residents and the impact this has. Making performance measures visible at all levels in the organisation and using them to drive improvement within services will also bring more visibility and understanding of the golden thread.

In 2021 the council declared a climate emergency and developed a [Climate Change Strategy](#) setting out the plan for tackling the council's own emissions as well as those from the district. The council has a net zero target by 2035 and has taken steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by:

- Installing solar panels on council offices and sports venues and EV chargers across the district
- Re:fit of buildings, expected to save approximately four hundred tonnes of CO2 a year
- Installation of air and ground source heat pumps in council buildings
- A new joint refuse collection contract with Breckland and North Norfolk District Councils, improving the efficiency of refuse collection in the district to reduce emissions

The chief executive is also the joint chair and active member of the [Norfolk Climate Change Partnership](#). Partners were very positive about the chief executive's leadership in this area. Internally, thematic groups have been established to take forward the climate ambitions. However, despite strong leadership, there now needs to be a focus on embedding climate actions across all policies and services and ensure these are consistently applied. It is everyone's issue and there needs to be corporate and political ownership.

4.2 Organisational and place leadership

King's Lynn acts as the economic driver for the borough and has a catchment population of over 200,000 taking in parts of Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, and neighbouring districts in Norfolk. The town has a retail offer in the town centre, a large college comprising of a university campus, a School of Nursing Studies, a General Hospital which is included in the government's new hospital programme and an active evening economy. The town has a good direct rail link to Cambridge and London, but road infrastructure is poor and needs further investment.

Strategically placed in Norfolk, being the gateway from the Midlands to North Norfolk and the A47 to Norwich and the A10 to Ely and Cambridge. It is host to several world class manufacturing businesses, a traditional seaside resort at Hunstanton and Downham Market is a successful and growing market town. The Royal Family's winter residence, Sandringham, is located to the north of King's Lynn and is a tourist attraction in its own right.

King's Lynn was identified as a priority area for [Levelling Up](#), across a range of government programmes, including [Towns Fund](#), [Rural England Prosperity Fund](#) and [UK Shared Prosperity Funding](#). BCKLWN were successful in securing £25m from the Towns Deal Fund and have a programme of six projects to benefit including a youth and retraining pledge, St George's Guildhall complex, multiuser community hub, , active and clean connectivity, riverfront regeneration. These are detailed in the [King's Lynn Town Investment Plan](#) which sets out the long-term vision for the town, developed with residents, partners, business and the Town Deal Board.

Peers were impressed with the way the Town Deal Board operates. A recent restructure, increased the number of Borough councillors from two to three, including one from the Labour Group (the main political group representing the urban area of King's Lynn). It is clear the board is well led, with good governance and has strong partnerships in place to help deliver the identified projects. Partners were complimentary of the council's involvement, "*the effort from officers producing reports and data is tremendous*". There is member representation on the board, but the majority of councillors are not fully aware of the good work being delivered. A process for councillors on the board to regularly report to all members would be of benefit to the council and help to avoid unnecessary questions.

Across the country the costs of Town Deal projects are increasing, and this is also an issue for King's Lynn. The council needs to consider options for meeting this shortfall, for example, through discussions with partners/stakeholders about match funding or by value engineering and reprofiling projects to make them more deliverable within the budget. Internal capacity was also raised as an issue. These are big projects that cannot be managed on the side of day jobs and peers recommend the council work with the board to urgently resource and effectively programme manage the delivery of these priorities to grasp these once-in-a-generation opportunities. The peer team heard reference that *"a good project manager saves the cost of their salary"*.

Whilst work is progressing on the [Hunstanton Masterplan](#), a Levelling up bid to fund the replacement of the Oasis Leisure Centre, situated on the southern seafront at Hunstanton was unsuccessful. Further work is now in progress to establish clear plans for the future operation of this facility. In addition to Hunstanton, peers heard from partners and stakeholders of the need to develop an economic development strategy for West Norfolk, comparable to that developed for King's Lynn, in order to silence the *"everything is focused on King's Lynn"* narrative. This provides a great opportunity to co-develop a vision for your communities and place through engagement with the people and businesses that reside there.

Peers were struck by the enormous potential the borough has to offer. The beautiful sandy beaches, thriving coastal tourism economy, new Queen Elizabeth hospital, Town Deal projects in King's Lynn and the [recent discovery](#) that Shakespeare walked the floorboards in St George's Guildhall are all envied by your Norfolk neighbours who encouraged BCKLWN to *"shout it [what you've got] from the rooftops"*. There are opportunities for the future in the untapped potential to expand beyond the council's borders. There were suggestions externally that *"King's Lynn is an Island"* and that there is a *"go it alone culture"*. The new administration has already started working on this perception and peers believe there are real opportunities to develop closer relationships with neighbours such as Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire which offer good transport links and different economies, skills and expertise. Don't let this potential and the opportunities pass you by.

There has been a positive reception to the new administration among partners and the leader is building relationships for example, agreeing to meet with Parish Councils every six months. The chief executive was instrumental in supporting the

opening of the social supermarket and the council works well with Norfolk County Council to deliver joint projects around climate, regeneration, West Winch Growth Area, the community hub/library. T The twinning of King's Lynn with the German town of Emmerich and King's Lynn's links with the Hanseatic Union created opportunities for cultural and business collaboration. The links provide future opportunities, particularly to tell the story of the town and attract visitors to new heritage attractions, including regeneration plans for St George's Guildhall and its medieval origins. T. Supporting business development and economic growth has been a priority. An example can be demonstrated in 2010 when endeavours by officers and members to welcome and encourage a potential investor Dr Wolfgang Palm led to the delivery of the Palm Paper factory. The council, working very closely with DIT provided detailed local information to help inform the investment decision as well as working to introduce local businesses as supply chain partners and helping to support recruitment and training of the new workforce. Dr Palm talked publicly at the opening about the choice being based on the 'warm welcome' he had received.

The chief executive and regeneration team are well respected among partners and are perceived as being open to finding joint solutions to issues and challenges, for example stepping in as developer to deliver housing and commercial property when low values and challenging ground conditions were deterring both local and national builders from house building in west Norfolk. In 2015 the BCKLWN entered into a [Major Housing Programme](#) with Lovell Partnerships Ltd to build up to 600 new homes across four sites in the Lynnsport and Marsh Lane areas. Further proposals now mean the council can deliver up to 1000 homes in the local area, which will help to increase the provision of affordable homes in the district. This model is widely respected by other partners who would also like to do business with the council.

The council's Local Plan was submitted in 2022. In January 2023, the Planning Inspectors announced the adjournment of the Local Plan Examination to allow the council the opportunity to undertake further work to justify the spatial strategy and distribution of housing in the Local Plan Review. Continuing to focus and develop the Plan to "*get it over the line*" will enable the council to build on its leadership of issues such as climate change.

4.3 Governance and culture

It was clear to peers that the new administration has hit the ground running. It hasn't been easy, and relationships are still forming between members of the partnership but on whole staff and partners were positive about the new political leadership *"the new administration are like a breath of fresh air"*.

Officer and member relationships were seen as positive, with comments such as *"It's been nothing like we expected, in a really good way"*. There has been constructive engagement by the leader with unison and members have been keen to understand the inner workings of the council. Peers heard an example of a portfolio holder sitting in one of the teams they are responsible for to understand the issues and challenges faced by staff on a daily basis - staff really appreciated this. Once new members have gained a good understanding of their service areas, a balance needs to be struck which enables members to set the direction and officers to deliver.

There are good relationships between the statutory officers (chief executive, MO and Section 151 officer) who meet formally on a monthly to discuss important strategic issues such as the delay on external audits.

Bringing the MO role in-house and investing in the corporate governance team has the potential to strengthen governance. It is already improving the quality of the Forward Plan by providing challenge around what reports are for information or decision and whether they are necessary. The governance review of the council's companies was widely recognised as an excellent piece of work which should be strengthened by the forthcoming review of their business cases and finance.

The BCKLWN risk register is a very long document with lots of detailed actions. However, these actions do not appear to mitigate the risks. It is not a user-friendly document for members to understand or to use effectively to develop effective risk mitigation strategies. Peers recommend the council changes the focus of the risk register to become a tool rather than a list and creates a dashboard for members of the Audit Committee to easily identify where they need to intervene – this should become easier with the new software. The Annual Governance Statement would also benefit from being shorter and more focused on governance rather than broad and unspecific Corporate Strategy items. Every council has to produce this, so there are many examples from elsewhere the council can learn from.

The council operates a Leader and Executive model and three scrutiny panels, the

Environment and Community Panel, the Regeneration and Development Panel, and the Corporate Performance Panel (CPP). The panels refer to Cabinet's Forward Plan and call items to panels for scrutiny and make recommendations for consideration at Cabinet. The council is following best practice by allocating opposition members to key committee positions.

Peers spoke with councillors and observed a CPP meeting to understand meeting structures and dynamics. Full Council meetings allow questions to be raised at the meeting and this is taking up a lot of time, leading to some business being deferred to the next meeting and in turn leading to around 10 Council meetings a year. Anything that doesn't go to the other scrutiny meetings has to go before CPP which is creating a bottleneck in the system and lengthy meetings. When observing the CPP meeting, there were so many people present it was hard for the audience to understand who was chairing, who were committee members or just observers and the acoustics made it very difficult to hear people, especially those joining virtually. The presence of Cabinet members at CPP makes it hard for the opposition to openly scrutinise and their attendance should be reviewed.

There is a lot to unpack in the council's governance which peers would need more time to observe and discuss with members. A quick review of "custom and practice" would help to better facilitate the operation of council meetings. Refocussing and streamlining the scrutiny panels to focus on outcomes would also be of benefit (many councils of similar size only have one scrutiny committee with task and finish groups reporting to it.) However, to fully address the issues, peers recommend following the corporate peer challenge that the council undertakes an independent governance review to focus meetings on adding value to decision-making and scrutiny – constitutional change would be required.

The Council has an Audit Committee, which regularly examines risk, internal audit progress and external audit issues. Unusually, the committee also receives reports on budget monitoring – this is a report that would under normal circumstances be presented to a decision-making committee, for example, Cabinet. It is important the executive committee takes the responsibility of receiving the budget monitoring reports, considering their content and recommended actions.

As part of the new member induction programme, training for all new members of

Audit Committee has been delivered. Members of this committee now need to turn their attention to the fact a relatively high number of low-level audit recommendations that have not been implemented by services. Consideration needs to be given by MT and SLT as to why these recommendations have not been implemented once agreed with the auditor. If they present a low risk to the organisation, consideration should be given by the Audit Committee as to whether the risk of not implementing these recommendations could be tolerated by the council. In the future managers need to consider whether it is appropriate to agree low level recommendations if there isn't the capacity to implement them. The current situation is creating a resourcing pressure to follow up and chase the implementation of recommendations.

From the meetings peers observed, the reports and policies they read and the people they spoke to, there was an overwhelming feeling the council needs to modernise. As one person put it "*I think we are a bit stuck*". There is a time critical opportunity under a new administration to bring about change – and staff are already onboard with this. Peers recommend the political and managerial leadership pause and take stock of these views and think about how to make the council fit for the future.

External communication has been improved with new digital channels of communication, regular press releases and videos. Staff spoken to, reported that internal communications is less advanced and is more one dimensional and top down. There is a weekly email to all staff advising on upcoming events "*ignored by most*", but more formal internal information is meant to feed down through MT to SLT, managers and so on. It doesn't appear to be happening, with many staff reporting that depending on who your manager or AD is, will depend on what you get to know.

The organisational culture is currently fragmented and inconsistent. Many staff don't feel engaged on the new values or the Corporate Strategy and cannot see the "golden thread". The council recognises once the Corporate Strategy is adopted, there is an opportunity to co-develop the new values and behaviours with staff to ensure they are integrated into the core business. Peers recommend MT and SLT take time to talk and listen to staff and create new regular channels of ongoing staff engagement. Regular all-staff face to face sessions on issues such as the budget, Corporate Strategy, values and a general Q and A would make the senior officer and political leadership more visible and enable bottom-up communication which is so

critical in an organisation.

The council is undertaking a staff survey in early 2024 at the request of the new administration – the last one was in 2007. Peers recommend this survey includes questions on staff satisfaction, stress levels (see HSE tool [kit](#)) the culture of the organisation and strength of management. This will then provide a baseline from which to compare and contrast in the future and assess progress.

There are many policies across the council that are out of date or not in existence. For example, Digital Strategy/Roadmap, Workforce Plan, Asset Management, Economic Development, Resident Engagement and HR. Peers recommend the council prioritises the creation and updating of these in accordance with its new Corporate Strategy and involves staff in their creation to ensure buy in and consistent compliance.

4.4 Financial planning and management

BCKLWN has a net revenue budget of £22.3m. Like many councils nationally, spending and income were subject to fluctuations during the Covid-19 pandemic, but the council maintained a strong financial position and managed to consistently bolster reserves during the last three years - reserves are high compared to CIPFA near neighbour benchmark. Budgets are still subject to fluctuation and variance, and a small overspend is currently predicted for the current year.

The methodology for strategic financial planning and modelling is robust, with the current MTFS setting out the position until the end of 2026/27 and showing a funded budget until 2025/26. This does however rely on the use of reserves to balance the budget and leaves a £5.3m ongoing gap to be addressed at the beginning of 2026/27 when reserves will have been drawn down to minimum levels. Whilst this is an acceptable strategy in the short term, it is not a sustainable strategy for the long term with the threat of business rates reset and fair funding being a risk to the forecast.

A plan needs to be developed to bring the councils finances back into alignment and peers saw evidence that this process is underway. There are good working relationships between officers and finance portfolio holder. Additional resources have bolstered the ability of the finance team to support this work and a Cost Management Plan (CMP) is being developed with a number of approaches to reducing the cost

base including:

- Reviewing budget outturn
- Zero Based budgeting
- Reviewing fees and charges

The council has opportunities to grow its revenues from further housing delivery and through business rates retention. Once the CMP has been agreed this will need to be implemented and the delivery of the savings and other measures will need to be carefully monitored by MT and Cabinet to ensure that they are delivering the desired outcome.

Identifying savings will be challenging and peers strongly advise the council to develop an organisational wide transformation plan to support the identification of efficiencies. Consider opportunities for partnership working, asset management planning and reviews of service delivery to make core (statutory) service delivery the most efficient it can be - to protect capacity to deliver the place making and community leading initiatives that support local residents. Peers recommend the council uses the headroom in the current budget- General Fund Reserve to fund this work at pace, as it will lead to ongoing annual revenue savings in the future which will address the underlying £5.3m gap in 2026/27.

Peers saw a growing understanding of the budgetary challenge, being led by the new administration and this is a positive start, however it is critical that everyone takes ownership of it. Transformation and the CMP will only be successful if there is broad cross party and an organisational wide understanding of the issues and support for the measures that are needed. The plan will need to achieve support from

- All group leaders and the wider membership
- All members of MT and SLT – and then filter down through the organisation

Peers observed that budget monitoring/ownership is seen as a finance issue and not a service issue. This needs to be reversed with individual managers owning their budget forecasts and taking responsibility for forecasting their outturns and managing variances. Current budget monitoring and final outturn reports show significant movements in final outturn figures. In a financial environment where resources are reduced budget monitoring needs to be accurate and produced in a timely manner.

To support this SLT should review the use of the finance system and make sure that budget managers are able to use the system to provide forecasts and that the finance team can use the system to collate the forecasts. As an organisation, trust needs to be built in the finance system.

The budget timetable is not formally published, but peers understand development of the budget and MTFs for consultation reflects a process that starts in the autumn, with the development of proposals ready for February. This process leaves little time for wider public engagement on the budget and for wider understanding. Formal scrutiny involvement in the process is also minimal. A presentation was made to the Joint Panel on 3 February, but by this time the papers for Cabinet on 7 February had already been published. There is no iterative process that allows Scrutiny to inform Cabinet decisions. The presentation to the joint panel was very technical, with no analysis of the impact of the budget on services or priorities.

To create a culture of budgetary responsibility and ownership all forecasts need to flow to the Cabinet through the MT and SLT and Scrutiny needs to play a more active role in reviewing the budget and holding the administration to account. Given, the changing financial position, peers suggest the council reviews its processes to enable timely (monthly) reporting to the appropriate committee and earlier public reporting in the budget build cycle.

The council has a number of years' accounts that have not been signed off by the auditor, it is acknowledged that this is a sector wide issue with most councils having issues over varying stages. In response to matters arising the council has invested in its finance team and worked to address the issues that have been highlighted in the auditor's reports. This is placing the council in a stronger position to progress the audit of accounts and support any reset of the system proposed by government.

The council has undertaken a governance review of the measures for the management of the council's three companies (West Norfolk Housing, West Norfolk Property and Alive West Norfolk); this is an excellent review and through the implementation of the measures within the review the council will address some significant weaknesses.

Building on the strong work to date, efforts now need to turn to review the business plans of the companies to ensure there is a strategic alignment of the objectives of

the companies and that they have a financial plan and robust system for assessing the risks of these enterprises to ensure that the council as shareholder is protected.

4.5 Capacity for improvement

The BCKWLN have many talented and committed staff who really care about each other, what they do and who want to make a difference, *“best thing about working here is my colleagues, we have a sense of being a team who works for the benefit of constituents.”* Staff are proud of the services they deliver for example the parking and CCTV service that will soon be running all over Norfolk. The grounds maintenance team are also proud of the awards they have won for keeping towns clean and “in bloom”.

There is an incredible amount of goodwill in the organisation *“staff have a can-do attitude”*, which many officers attribute to the training and development invested in them over the years. There is a great track record of “growing your own” with access to apprenticeships at all levels. The council has high staff retention rates - 2022/23 turnover was at 10 percent compared to the average of 15 percent and turnover since April 2023 is 4.8 percent. Sickness absence is also just below the average of 8.8 days at 8.7 days in 2022/23. It is positive to see the council investing in its staff and thinking about succession planning, but bringing new faces into the organisation has also been positive and can bring fresh perspectives, new ideas and learning. The council needs to find the right balance of this.

The goodwill is however being tested to its limit following the introduction of the Working Arrangements Framework which formalises hybrid working arrangements. At 35 pages, it is a long and complex document with very detailed information on what can and can't be done across different roles. Equalities implications were a concern for peers, with the policy stating “In circumstances where an employee requires specialist equipment (including rise and fall desks) to undertake their job this cannot be provided at home. This may limit the ability to work from home for some employees”.

Given its relatively recent implementation, the policy was a hot topic of conversation in many meetings peers had with staff during their visit. Peers heard *“people are absolutely hacked off about it”, “we weren't consulted”, “we feel done to rather than worked with”, “it feels like we are being punished for working from home”*. The peer

team understand the framework was developed and shared with SLT for wider dissemination and discussion with services, but there seems to be varying levels of engagement with staff through this process. Unison was consulted but with only 150 members, approx. 28 percent union members, this is a small selection of staff who were able to influence the draft versions.

Peers recommend urgent engagement with staff impacted by the policy to listen to their concerns and work with them to develop arrangements that give more power and discretion to managers based on business need, individual circumstances, equal opportunities and trust. Rectifying the elements of the policy which are seen as particularly punitive – a reduction in available flexi days for those that primarily work at home - would be a welcome first step. Peers did recognise that many staff are able to work from home approximately two to three days per week and that not all staff are dissatisfied with the new policy.

The council should also consider encouraging a staff forum with representation from officers across the organisation to provide a staff led forum for engagement and consultation on future staffing issues and policies. This will help address the inconsistent management of the policy and improve the low morale and powerful feeling that staff are not listened to or trusted by senior management.

Recruitment across the local government sector is a national problem and the BCKLWN is no different. It has proven particularly difficult to recruit and retain members of staff, in professional/managerial roles, especially in areas such as Finance, ICT and Planning. The council has taken steps to proactively retain staff, developed pay progression schemes linked to qualifications, continued support for training and management development activities and have initiated a review of the salary structure.

Peers heard from staff and managers that the recruitment process is lengthy and onerous and gave examples of applicants finding jobs elsewhere before the process at the council had completed. Some managers apologise to new starters for the lengthy digital induction programme they have to sit through and there is also an issue with seasonal staff having to reapply for their roles every year, even if they have worked for the council for a number of years. Recruitment is a very competitive market, and the council needs to be an attractive employer to existing and future

staff. Peers recommend the recruitment process and procedure is reviewed along with all staff benefits and the council thinks about what makes the BCKLWN unique – to create an appealing package to prospective candidates.

Covid-19 featured in almost every conversation the peers had with staff and members. The aftermath of the pandemic is still very evident, unlike in many other councils the team have experienced. This could in part be due to the overall health of West Norfolk being worse post covid than in other parts of the country and placing more demands on services. Whatever the reasons, it was clearly a very traumatic time, with many staff redistributed to frontline roles and delays in rolling out digital infrastructure to allow home working meaning many staff still came into the office. Staff describe a backlog of work as a result of the pandemic. However, when asked, senior managers were unable to specify what these were or any plans in place to reduce them. Peers recommend the council makes some time to reflect on its experience during this time, learn from it and move on. The new focus on staff health and well-being provides an opportunity to do this and peers suggest the council considers introducing an external employee assistance programme to further support staff.

The structure and responsibilities of assistant directors (ADs) is not easy to understand, for example, food safety, environmental management and refuse and recycling are under three separate ADs. Major projects sit under two separate ADs and democratic services are not within governance and legal. Whilst this may have made sense for the council at the time, it is rather unique and not easily understood by partners who work across other areas.

A clarification of roles and responsibilities particularly at the ED and AD level would strengthen the empowerment of middle managers. Peers considered the current membership of SLT to be too large, with too much operational discussion and less time for strategic leadership planning. Decision-making needs to be pushed down the organisation to empower tier two and three managers and to enable senior management to focus on the strategic issues. Completing an exercise using the RACI model (responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed) would support better understanding.

Consideration should also be given to creating a structure which enables managers

below SLT to meet as a collective to discuss operational and cross cutting issues, which can be reported into MT/SLT for strategic decision making. This would empower ADs and managers, create a solid peer to peer learning environment and break down a perception of “micromanagement”. Peers believe the current structure is exacerbating this and recommend it is reviewed. Peers recommend the focus of MT and SLT should be on strategic issues and managers should be allowed to manage.

There is an open door to transformational change, which is not common in many councils. People are excited about by the potential of a new leadership, “*we need a dynamic modern leadership team that wants to embrace risk and change*”, “*we need a complete review of our resources*”. This is a big opportunity for the council and peers recommend the council develops a transformation programme that designs everything around residents and communities and work towards becoming an adaptive council, to increase the flexibility to deploy skills and resources as needed depending on the operational situation. For example, consider:

- Reviewing strategic capacity to resource your priorities – regeneration and project management as examples.
- Make evidence-based decisions, using data and insight – review the performance management framework to support this.
- Implement an ‘agile’ approach with increased flexibility and ability to adapt to changing circumstances – are your governance process and constitution flexible enough to move and make decisions at pace?
- Be a learning organisation - led by reflection, action inquiry and look beyond Norfolk for best practice.
- Focus on the needs, preferences and experience of residents in service improvements and transformation,
- Instigate digital transformation and channel shift - develop a digital strategy that increases efficiencies, provides the hardware and software you need to get business done, enable agile working and provide a good customer experience for residents and other service users.
- Focus on staff, your greatest asset – develop a new all-encompassing

workforce plan.

5. Next steps

It is recognised that senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss and reflect on these findings.

Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the peer challenge. The CPC process includes a progress review within twelve months of the CPC, which provides space for the council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the recommendations from this report.

In the meantime, Rachel Litherland, Principal Adviser for the East of England, is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. Rachel is available to discuss any further support the council requires.

rachel.litherland@local.gov.uk, 07795 076834.

6. Additional information

1. Governance

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) is a social purpose consultancy and national centre of expertise. Their purpose is to help organisations achieve their outcomes through improved governance and scrutiny. They can support the council with a [governance review](#).

2. ICT

The LGA has an [an Cyber, Digital and Technology](#) offer for councils. This includes access to a [free cyber 360 service](#) and advice and guidance from experts. For more information or to discuss bespoke requests contact: jamie.cross@local.gov.uk

3. Transformation

The LGA's [Transformation Experts programme](#) offers bespoke advice and support to local authorities to help them deliver transformation activities. We have a cohort of transformation experts who have delivered transformation programmes in their own councils. The experts also cover a wide range of service specific expertise including but not limited to:

- service transformation

- data and digital
- adult social care
- children's services
- council culture
- organisational change
- partnership-working
- economic growth and business intelligence
- behavioural insights
- governance
- commissioning

Our Transformation Experts will be linked up with councils who request ad hoc support to provide expert advice. This could range from reviewing their council plans and projects, to offering constructive challenge based on their own experience and knowledge. The type of support will be led and determined by the needs of the recipient council. The support will be available for a maximum of 10 days until March 2024.

Contact: Olivia.Lancaster@local.gov.uk or Michael.Balls@local.gov.uk

Ref	Risk title	The risk is that:	Existing Mitigation and Controls	Target risk			Previous risk score (May 2023)			Planned mitigating actions	Progress at Aug 2023	Within risk appetite?	Current risk score (Aug 2023)			Trend (compared with last review)
				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR1	Financial sustainability	Ineffective management of finances leading to a lack of financial resilience as government funding reduces and demand increases.	<p>Cost management and income generation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively involve staff and Members in designing the cost management and income generation programme. 2. Maintain open channels of communication on plans/ proposed changes. 3. Keep staff and members informed of how the budget reductions are being managed. 4. Budget monitoring reports. 5. Finance is a standing item on Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet Briefings to align with the annual financial estimates cycle. <p>Financial Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A review of the costs and provision of all services will continue with the aim of mitigating costs where possible and other opportunities to improve the financial position. 2. Attendance at consultation updates from LGA / DLUHC / CIPFA. 3. Budgets will be monitored/reported against estimates on a regular basis. 4. Balanced and funded budget to 2024/25. 5. Capital and property investment strategy and related monitoring process. 6. At year end, planned and unplanned savings transferred to General Fund balance to adapt to reduction in central government funding. 7. Cabinet and SLT away days to focus on financial management. 8. Budget presentations to council panels. 9. Approach to budget setting and workshop themes (reviewing fees and charges, income generation, salaries, community benefit and staff engagement) including wider engagement with elected members. 10. Reviewing earmarked reserves to ensure we have sufficient funds to deliver corporate objectives. <p>Pension Fund</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 year valuation and 30 year plan. Next review 2025/26. 2. We have taken advantage of the one of lump sum in 2022/23. <p>Business rates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Memorandum of Understanding determines allocation of funding from Norfolk Business Rates Pool. Local funding allocation will support priorities. 2. Continue to monitor potential areas of risk and work with LGA and business rates specialists where possible. 3. Continue working with major businesses to reduce the possibility of closure. 4. Ongoing monitoring of appeals and provision made to respond. Business Rates revaluation being undertaken in 2023, grant anticipated to cover losses to the council. 5. S31 grant provided to offset shortfall in income. <p>Rapidly rising costs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost management, fees and charges reflect full cost recovery and income generation activities. 2. Descoping elements of projects. 3. Phasing and reprioritisation of projects. 4. Use of external funding for projects. 5. Installation of efficient heating and lighting systems. 6. Generation of electricity through solar PV. 7. Lobbying through LGA/DCN for funding settlement. 8. Revisit financial plan to account for cost increases. 9. Use of some earmarked reserves. 10. Ongoing monitoring of issues and advice from Treasury experts. 11. Robust contracts. 12. Provision of inflation within cost plan estimates for projects e.g. major housing projects. Towns Fund projects. 13. Hybrid working policy enables some employees and members to minimise travel costs. 14. Advantageous funding agreements with third parties e.g. New Anglia LEP. 15. Lobbying in respect of IDB levies burden to the Council. 16. Consideration and monitoring of energy cost reductions and link to MTFS. 17. Review earmarked reserves. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Almost certain	20	<p>Cost management and income generation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost management plan in development. Will be taken back to SLT once estimated costs and timescales agreed with ADs. To agree plan for taking forward and implementing. <i>Initial discussion between Cabinet and SLT, Oct 2023.</i> <p>Financial Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Approach to budget setting and workshop themes being developed including wider engagement with SLT and elected members. Outline timetable for this work. 3. Dates to be agreed for Non-domestic rate payer consultation, IDB meetings, member briefings and presentations, staff presentations ahead of Council Feb 2024. <p>Pension Fund</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend relevant briefings and workshops as required to understand announcements on Government funding and policy. Ongoing. <p>Business rates</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor Government position with business rates retention. Ongoing 2. Provisional local government finance settlement announced Dec 2023 -ongoing monitoring of impact. <i>Autumn Statement may give an indication on 22 Nov 2023.</i> 3. Monitoring of new legislative programme and announcements. Ongoing. 4. Attendance at relevant seminars and briefings. Ongoing. 5. Consideration of entering Business Rates Pool in 24/25. Ongoing. <p>Rapidly rising costs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and monitoring of costs and programmes/projects. Ongoing. 2. Seeking external funding for projects e.g. decarbonisation of buildings and vehicle fleet, Funding for Guildhall project. Ongoing. 3. Post project monitoring and reporting of ReFIT framework and PSDS projects. Ongoing. 4. Financial Plan to reflect any inflationary increases going forward to be agreed by Council Feb 24. 5. Allow for some earmarked reserves as part of closedown to cover additional costs that have materialised and direct to General Fund reserve. Ongoing. 6. Ongoing development of staff regarding future supply chain resilience e.g procurement and corporate projects ("grow our own" approach). 7. Reviewing resources to ensure sufficient capacity to deliver corporate objectives. Ongoing. 8. Further review of earmarked reserves to support funded budget position of year 3 of the financial plan to be completed August 2023. <i>One third identified so far. Ongoing.</i> 9. <i>Additional resource to support Cost Management and Income Generation plan. Ongoing.</i> 	<p>Cost management and income generation. Budget approved in Feb 2023, focus for the next 6 months is on the income generation and cost management plan.</p> <p>Financial Plan Budget approved in Feb 2023, funded budget for years 1, 2 and 3 of the financial plan with a gap in year 4. Volatility with economy due to inflation and interest rates and is closely monitored to understand the impact on the financial plan in later years. Further uncertainty with Government funding and policy related to forthcoming general election. Pay award for 23/24 implemented.</p> <p>Pension Fund Council agreed to one off lump sum payment to secure savings in the financial plan. Annual contributions remain the same in percentage terms and reflected in the financial plan. Position fully documented in the annual Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>Business rates Continue to be part of the Business Rates pool in 2024/25. Re-valuation implemented from 1 Apr 2023 and Government has thresholds and transitional reliefs to protect small businesses from significant increases. Situation will continue to be closely monitored. Recognise that one small change could have a significant upon the financial plan. Continue to take prudent approach in the financial plan.</p> <p>Rapidly rising costs Impact across many risks and projects. Interest rate rises have increased investment returns but the opportunity costs of investing in projects has also increased. Ongoing monitoring of prices and labour costs as demand/prices may begin to be more competitive. Providing longer term HR measures regarding training and development within internal workforce and supply chain. Ongoing monitoring of interest rates and inflation rate upon projects and budgets.</p>	No	Major	Almost certain	20	Same

Ref	Risk title	The risk is that:	Existing Mitigation and Controls	Target risk			Previous risk score (May 2023)			Planned mitigating actions	Progress at Aug 2023	Within risk appetite?	Current risk score (Aug 2023)			Trend (compared with last review)
				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR2	Significant programmes/projects	Impact on the delivery of council services due to the failure of major programmes/projects. A major programme/project being any project that can cause significant financial, legal, reputational or compliance issues or prevent the council from delivering a strategic priority or key objective.	<p>Major housing developments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to consult with local groups. 2. Investment in additional sports facilities included in the project. 3. Ongoing monitoring of macro-economic issues such as Covid-19, EU Transition impact, inflation, etc. 4. Sales updates reported to Officer Major Projects Board. 5. Option for private rented market via West Norfolk Property Ltd. <p>Accelerated Construction Programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual grant per site with staged drawdown of funds to compartmentalise risk. 2. Utilising Modern Methods of Construction. 3. Performance framework agreed with Homes England with quarterly returns. 4. Delivery via Major Development Contract. <p>Major projects programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project management principles applied with use of briefs, PIDs, risk, etc. 2. Officer Major Projects Board for approval of projects and oversight of delivery and involving senior officers representing key disciplines. 3. Member Major Projects Board oversight with updates to Audit Committee. 4. Use of external professional advisers on technical and professional matters e.g. architects, engineers, etc. 5. Broad programme agreed by Cabinet with updates via Cabinet briefings and to portfolio holders. 6. Due diligence undertaken on investments, partnerships, third parties, etc and recorded in contracts, reports, etc. 7. Skills development for project delivery teams. 8. Use of external funds to de-risk developments. 9. Change control logs, risk registers on Major Housing Projects. 10. Descoping, reprioritising and seeking alternative funding streams to address cost inflation. 11. New Executive Director post. 12. Independent business case assessments and subsidy control checks for Town Deal projects. 13. Trainee Project Officer and Clerk of Works recruited. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Major housing developments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support to supply chain regarding training and skills. Ongoing. 2. Continual liaison with supply chain in area regarding future schemes and sites. Ongoing <p>Accelerated Construction Programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deed of variations agreed with Homes England as timescales slip. Ongoing. <p>Major projects programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider succession planning, apprenticeships, etc as a future approach to minimising risks, Dec 2022. Trainee Project Officer and Clerk of Works recruited. 2. Inhouse development of client side project managers. Ongoing. 3. <i>New programme and project management resources under consideration by Senior Leadership Team.</i> 4. <i>Consider capitalisation of project costs and project scopes. Ongoing.</i> 	<p>Major housing developments</p> <p>Sales completed on NORA 4. Remaining site 1 month behind programme due to historic supply issues. Cost price inflation mitigated by house price inflation. Sales completed on key sites. Supply side issues affecting the construction industry, rental values increasing due to shortage of properties. Increased inflation may affect viability and sites. This could impact the flow of affordable housing that is linked to these developments. <i>Onsite on Parkway in July 2023.</i></p> <p>Accelerated Construction Programme</p> <p>Due diligence on individual sites in progress. Hunstanton site removed from ACP and negotiations ongoing with Home England regarding financial matters. Parkway - used up ACP allocation - monitoring requirements ongoing. South End Rd, <i>Hunstanton (behind programme)</i> and <i>Salterns Rd</i> are progressing.</p> <p>Major projects programme</p> <p>Due diligence process established. Wide range of external funds to de-risk development financing such as Town Fund, Levelling Up, Business Rates Pool, Accelerated Construction Programme, Coastal Revival Fund, etc. Change in focus of funding appears directed to 'shovel-ready' projects. Labour market challenges leading to potential risks around availability of required skills/competency/experience when recruiting e.g. project management. Exploring options related to private rental housing and build to rent with consequent revenue stream. Jobs market has potential impact on availability of consultants and advisers to support bids for competitive Government funding further compounded by tight timescales.</p> <p><i>Additional capacity has been established within the corporate procurement team plus additional project management capacity for Town Deal projects. Recruitment is a continuing challenge. Key staff are employed on fixed term contracts. Consistency and continuity is an issue. New resources under consideration by Senior Leadership Team.</i></p> <p><i>There is a highly competitive labour market for project and programme management skills, capabilities, etc. Given financial constraints upon the council's revenue budget capitalisation of costs and project scopes will be reviewed.</i></p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same

Ref	Risk title	The risk is that:	Existing Mitigation and Controls	Target risk			Previous risk score (May 2023)			Planned mitigating actions	Progress at Aug 2023	Within risk appetite?	Current risk score (Aug 2023)			Trend (compared with last review)
				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR3	Facilitating and enabling growth	The inability of the council to facilitate and enable the market to deliver the council's growth agenda. This failure may reduce investment in infrastructure, inward investment, job opportunities, new housing and commercial development therefore impacting on communities and businesses.	<p>Local employment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. KLIC and related skills & training initiatives with partners and business sectors. 2. The release of Council owned employment land at Hardwick and Campbell's Meadows in KL and at St John's Business Estate in Downham Market. 3. Information packs on the local area and to aid recruitment are provided on request. 4. Maintain regular contact with Department for International Trade and market investment opportunities with them. 5. Effectively handle enquires received direct, whether from inside or outside the Borough. 6. Active involvement with New Anglia LEP. 7. Nar Ouse Business Park Enterprise Zone development. 8. Use of external funds to de-risk developments. 9. Gas main diversion completed at Nar Ouse. 10. Towns Fund Youth and Retraining Pledge project. 11. Norfolk Devolution Deal. 12. UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund. 13. <i>Marketing plan for Nar Ouse and Downham Market.</i> <p>Empty retail properties/town centre decline</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued support to businesses through hardship relief. 2. Active management of lettings and promotion of a positive image of the town to potential businesses. 3. Initiatives to promote the town to visitors, shoppers and businesses. 4. Town Centre Partnership/BID. 5. Transport and town centre studies. 6. Bids for external funding such as Town Fund, Levelling Up, etc. 7. Improvements to key access roads and junctions. 8. Management capacity. 9. Covid 19 response to reopening high street. 10. Payment plans for commercial tenants. 11. Change in use class Order E. 12. Town Investment Plan. 13. Brownfield land within town centres released for housing. 14. Towns Fund approved business case for Active and Clean Connectivity, Public Realm improvements, Guildhall, MUCH and Riverfront. <p>5 year land supply, housing delivery and housing delivery test.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5 year plan (subject to delivery of Parkway and Lynnsport 1 developments). 2. Work on the LDF to ensure the Council can evidence that sufficient land is available. 3. Also approve applications to boost the supply in the short-medium term. <p>Housing market</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. West Norfolk Property Limited able to take over any surplus housing stock to rent out until the market picks up, if needed. 2. NORA Phase 4 - 50% of development will be rented properties. 3. A viability review of the market will be carried out before the decision to commence each phase is taken. <p>Strategic land and property acquisition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to identify, and acquire, property/land for future development/investment. Failure to do so leads to the risk of missed opportunities and associated loss of potential income. 2. Officer Major Projects Board in place to assist in coordination and oversight of developments. 3. Member Major Projects Board. 4. Land and property due diligence checks. <p>West Winch/North Runcton Strategic Growth Area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project and programme management approach. 2. Stakeholder engagement. 3. Commissioning technical expertise. 4. Communications and engagement support. 5. Norfolk County Council undertaking the design and planning permission for the road. 6. Successful bid approved by Norfolk Business Rate Pool. 7. Link with Officer Major Projects Board. 8. Project board established. 9. External legal and professional advice. 10. Periodic review of potential state aid issues. 11. SOBC bid in for DfT funding for the road. <p>Improvements to heritage buildings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and apply for relevant 3rd party funding. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Almost certain	20	<p>Local employment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Plan review - employment land (current allocated land is unviable due to need to raise levels). Ongoing. 2. Ongoing monitoring of Levelling Up proposals and support to increase the numbers of people to fulfill roles at all skill levels post-Covid/EU Transition. Ongoing. 3. Apprenticeships/ training programmes encouraged within major housing contracts and sub-contractors, Mar 22. BCKLWN appointed 1 trainee. Ongoing. 4. Explore options for innovation centres, advanced manufacturing centres of excellence, etc through Government funding. Ongoing. 5. Shared Prosperity Fund and development of West Norfolk Investment Plan to improve workbased skills programme. Implementation ongoing. 6. Consideration of Youth and Re-Training Pledge Project and broader role going forward. Ongoing. <p>Empty retail properties/town centre decline</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actively identifying opportunities to repurpose vacant retail units including conversion to residential and creating flexible pop up retail opportunities for micro-businesses/niche retailers plus community based organisations. Ongoing. 2. Implementing approved business cases for MUCH, Guildhall and Riverfront. Ongoing 3. Explore alternative purposes for King's Lynn Town Centre - Town Investment Plan viewing the town centre as a multi-purpose destination rather than just retail. Ongoing. 4. Development of the car parking strategy. Ongoing. 5. Levelling Up Fund (LUF) submission for replacement of Oasis, Hunstanton. Unsuccessful bid, options under review. 6. Round 3 LUF submission in development focused on infrastructure development at Enterprise Zone. Ongoing. <p>5 year land supply, housing delivery and housing delivery test</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting the Local Plan review process. Ongoing. <p>Housing market</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor for potential signs that the increase in prices/labour force issues impacts upon the development sector and contingencies within contract sums. Ongoing. 2. The percentage of PRS delivered on major housing sites will be reviewed in the light of current market conditions. Ongoing. 3. Monitor Help to Buy policy developments. Ongoing. <p>Strategic land and property acquisition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the council's development role and related pipeline of land for future housing development. Ongoing. 2. To ensure that we maximise our own opportunities for example Boal Quay, and Puny Drain and deliver sites that we already have e.g. Enterprise Zone and development opportunities along the promenade if the Oasis sites releases land. Ongoing. 3. Review the delegated decision (Capital and Local Property Investment Fund Strategy 2017 – 2021, Cabinet 21st January 2017) for property acquisition. <p>West Winch/North Runcton Strategic Growth Area</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholder engagement. Ongoing. 2. Clarification of resources via Homes England. <p>Improvements to heritage buildings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery of Guildhall Towns Fund business case. Ongoing. 2. Delivery of Riverfront Towns Fund business case. Ongoing. 	Local employment The KLIC has a stable but high occupancy. Nar Ouse site infrastructure & Phase 1 premises construction progressing. Early interest shown by several local companies seeking to expand. Ongoing uncertainty arising from macro-economic events may delay company investment decisions and employment levels. External funding being progressed via sources such as Towns Fund, Levelling Up and UKSPF. New businesses enquiries being received and a role to open up new allocated employment land in Borough. Pressures upon resilient supply chains continue. Local evidence of high vacancies within some employers. National data indicates more vacancies than labour supply in many sectors. Inflation leading to rising business costs coupled with interest rate increases. West Norfolk Investment Plan proposes a package of investments to help drive the economy and related outcomes. Employment rates remain high and the town's strong manufacturing base underpins its status as a centre for sub-regional employment. Annual Visitor Economy Report indicates sustained increase in GVA. Signs of decline of large national multiples and growth in independent businesses. Performance indicators highlight commercial property arrears and challenges faced by some tenants. UKSPF West Norfolk Grant Scheme ongoing. Also link to Risk SR9 - Organisational change.	No	Major	Almost certain	20	Same

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				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
			<p>2. Most large investment projects for historic buildings have already been completed in the past.</p> <p>3. Ensure provision is made in the Capital and Property Investment Strategy and Financial Plan to enable the Council to meet any fund matching required by 3rd party funding.</p> <p>4. HAZ Programme Manager in place (programme ends July 2022).</p> <p>5. Towns Fund projects; Guildhall, Riverfront and Public Realm</p> <p>6. Southgates masterplan.</p>													
SR4	Community issues	The risk of various communities within the borough feeling excluded, disengaged or being unable to access available services and opportunities including, rural, deprived, minority and vulnerable communities and local businesses etc. Services and opportunities to include health and wellbeing, early intervention and prevention. Immediate and longer term economic and societal impact of Covid-19 global pandemic on BCKLWN communities.	<p><u>Community relations</u></p> <p>1. The Council works closely with partner agencies in the area to make sure that any issues are identified and effectively tackled as soon as possible.</p> <p>2. External funding bids with partners.</p> <p>3. Agreement with Shelter.</p> <p>4. PREVENT task group and workstreams.</p> <p>5. Prevent awareness training provided to employees.</p> <p><u>Preventing homelessness</u></p> <p>1. Staff capacity.</p> <p>2. ICT development to support case management.</p> <p>3. Support commissioned from voluntary and community sectors.</p> <p>4. Partnership and network arrangements.</p> <p>5. Communications support.</p> <p>6. Accommodation options improved by Broad Street.</p> <p>7. Reduction in working age population.</p> <p>8. Housing Market Assessment to be undertaken, Dec 2023. Ongoing.</p> <p><u>Conflicting aims (with partners)</u></p> <p>1. Clarify and agree with partners what the common targets are and how achievement of them will be recognised.</p> <p>2. Terms of Reference or SLA's are agreed for each group to define the aims and respective roles and focus on core services plus specific projects.</p> <p>3. Ensure active participation on relevant Boards/ Groups.</p> <p>4. Norfolk Resilience Forum response and recovery work.</p> <p>5. King's Lynn Town Deal Board and Local Assurance Framework.</p> <p>6. Hunstanton Advisory Group established.</p> <p>7. King's Lynn Town Deal Skills Forum.</p> <p>8. Shared Prosperity Fund stakeholder groups established.</p> <p>9. Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.</p> <p>10. Health and Wellbeing Partnership established and terms of reference agreed.</p> <p><u>Covid-19</u></p> <p>1. Business continuity arrangements including critical services and "Loss of staff" threat analysis and interventions such as enhanced cleaning regimes, staff rotas, building air-flow, etc.</p> <p>2. Emergency planning liaison with Norfolk Resilience Forum and structures.</p> <p>3. Insurance</p> <p>4. ICT network and capability to support working arrangements.</p> <p>5. Digital and telephony access to services to minimise face to face interactions.</p> <p>6. Lobbying for government support.</p> <p>7. Prioritisation of services and response.</p>	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Almost certain	20	<p><u>Community relations</u></p> <p>1. Housing availability for vulnerable residents. Ongoing.</p> <p><u>Preventing homelessness</u></p> <p>1. Asylum seekers - potential placings under review, Mar 2022</p> <p>2. Consider impact of proposed legislation on second homes (Review impact of second homes measures and exemptions within the Levelling Up Bill).</p> <p>3. Consideration to be given to re-examining social housing provision and exploration of measures to mitigate the reduction in private rented sector capacity. Refocus efforts on providing additional social and private rented housing. Now considering acquiring housing from third parties for both affordable and PRS given the acute need for both tenures. Ongoing.</p> <p>4. Refresh housing needs assessment, Spring 23</p> <p>5. Identification of additional temporary accommodation with Freebridge.</p> <p>6. Measures with Freebridge to support quick void turn around.</p> <p>7. Reid Way - 7 new units to be developed.</p> <p>8. Financial help to access private rented sector.</p> <p>9. Winter preparedness plans.</p> <p><u>Conflicting aims (with partners)</u></p> <p>1. Ensure comms focusing on neutral and factual stance and related to implementation of Govt policy. Ongoing</p> <p>2. Work with Hanseatic Union to implement and provide measures to support refugees and support in a neutral way. Ongoing</p> <p>3. Internal comms to be mindful of potential for tensions should the Council be perceived to be biased. Ongoing.</p> <p>4. Consider contingency plan for potential loss of Fenland care and repair contract. Dec 2022.</p> <p><u>Covid-19</u></p> <p>1. Ongoing Covid-19 safe measures in workplace. Ongoing.</p> <p>2. Revised working arrangements framework agreed in May 2023 with implementation from July 2023. Ongoing.</p>	<p><u>Community relations</u></p> <p>Council works closely with the police and Freebridge in Safer Neighbourhood action panels and the neighbourhood officers are now a formal part of the joint Operational Partnership Team. Our agreement with Shelter has allowed for a more effective response to issues of harassment and illegal eviction. Multi-agency responses to Ukraine and cost of living with support for vulnerable households. ASB represented on PREVENT task group and workstream. Engagement with Integrated Care System to encourage prevention and wider involvement of health. Continued support for asylum seekers. Potential impact upon homelessness response and perceptions of support. Potential challenges for refugee support related to host/sponsor relationships, desire to move on, etc. Work ongoing at county level.</p> <p><u>Equality Impact Assessments on housing funds.</u></p> <p><i>Cabinet report 31 Oct 2023 - support for care leavers.</i></p> <p><u>Preventing homelessness</u></p> <p>Discussion with council owned housing companies; aware of nature and scale of issues. Exploring related crisis intervention and funding with partners. <i>New Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy in development and will include a deep analysis of problem, consideration of interventions and trial new accommodation services. More Govt resources dedicated towards challenge - ringfenced Homelessness Prevention Grant. Lack of social housing stock continues resulting in a high level of bed and breakfast usage. Further national challenges arising from stock condition surveys, damp and mould surveys, a new Decent Homes Standard, EPC ratings and rental cap. Changes in taxation and interest rates leading to a widening gap between Local Housing Allowance and private sector rents. Housing Market Assessment to be procured and undertaken, Dec 2023. Anecdotal data suggests changes in family living arrangements becoming more prevalent.</i></p> <p><u>Conflicting aims (with partners)</u></p> <p>Engagement with Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System / Integrated Care Partnership. Collaborative work with members of Norfolk Climate Change Partnership and working on a Norfolk-wide project. Ongoing dialogue with Norfolk County Council regarding devolution and Government funding streams e.g. Towns Fund, Levelling Up, Shared Prosperity Fund. Further examples include Ukraine response with neighbouring councils despite differences in funding, liaison between organisations represented on the Town Deal Board, Business Rates Pooling and Hunstanton Advisory Group. Development work with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.</p> <p><u>Covid-19</u></p> <p>Working arrangements framework implemented July 2023 and will be reviewed in 12 months. Ventilation practices continue. Relevant structures and responses would remain in place or be stood up.</p>	No	Major	Almost certain	20	Same

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				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR5	Continuity of service	The council's ability to effectively respond to a major emergency and maintain that response without affecting essential day to day service delivery. The risk is to both the council as a business continuity issue and to our vulnerable communities.	<p>Business continuity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Business Continuity Corporate Officer Group. Incorporate Business Continuity into Risk Management systems. Develop and test service specific plans across the Council. Disaster Recovery Plan for ICT. Business Continuity Policy and Strategy, Incident Response Plan, Invocation Process and Checklist in place and regularly reviewed. Out of Hours Contact Card. Office 365 deployment. Tests of business continuity plans each year via Metis exercise. ICT network and back up improvements to enhance resilience. Use of Citrix for remote access to ICT network. Staff training Well established Business Continuity plans for critical services and reviewed annually. Covid 19 response capability developed in wave 1 and utilised throughout 2020/2021. Utilisation of remote meeting software. Business continuity plans in place for outsourced services (e.g. Payroll processing). Annual update to Audit Committee (Sept 2022). Back up generator load testing at King's Court (Jan 2023). Internal Audit review of business continuity. <p>Emergency response (external)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Borough Council is a member of the Norfolk Local Resilience Forum (NRF). The NRF work together to develop emergency plans based upon the Norfolk Community Risk Register. Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance. Internal Audit review of emergency planning function. Ongoing consideration of weather warnings and alerts. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Business continuity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit conducting a review of the emergency planning function, Mar 2022. Completed. Planning for a new METIS business continuity plan test. Completed. Consideration of hybrid working arrangements, Mar 2022. Completed. Development of revised flexible working arrangements in progress and due for completion April 2023. Completed. Planning for METIS 22 completed. Exercise to be held Nov 2022. Ongoing. Back up generator load test plan in Jan 2023. Exercise held 25 Jan 2023. Completed. Rolling out update training to business continuity bronze plan officers. Ongoing. <p>Emergency response (external)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit review. Completed. Updated training provided for staff and staff updates. Completed. Annual update to Borough Emergency Response and Recovery Plan. Ongoing. Review and dissemination of weather warnings and other threats. Ongoing. Weekly NRF risk meeting to update on local, regional and national threats. Ongoing. Participation in NRF meetings and regular updates on plans and reviews. Ongoing. 	<p>Business continuity</p> <p>Annual business continuity update provided to Audit Committee. Corporate Business Continuity Group completed the high level assessment and bronze plans reviewed. <i>Cyber security METIS exercise planned for 8 Nov 2023. Work is ongoing with response to national and local power outage scenario.</i></p> <p>Emergency response (external)</p> <p>Active participation in Norfolk Resilience Forum (NRF) planning and exercising. Covid-19 response ongoing but demonstrated organisation's response (officer and members) to a significant incident with learning identified. Internal Audit review ongoing on emergency planning function. Borough Emergency Plan reviewed and plans updated and reviewed as required. Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance workshop in Oct 21 considered response and recovery.</p> <p>Reviewing the resources allocated for BC events being reviewed, report to MT end of Jan 2023 with proposals under consideration.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same
SR6	Data management and security	Deliberate or unintentional loss/disclosure of personal, sensitive, confidential or business critical information or breach of information governance legislation.	<p>Loss of ICT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investment to protect remote sites. Business Continuity Plan - document procedure for loss of ICT server in place. Security policy to ensure data integrity. Replication and manageability of live data storage off-site. UPS installed with backup generator to feed an uninterruptible power supply with conditioning to include surge protection to the computer room. Network improvements. Increasing number of applications using cloud technology supported by agile working. <p>ICT failure of back up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The testing programme of backups. Business resumption plan in place. An off-site storage facility in place. Stand-by facilities to be provided. <p>Cyber security attack</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice in regards to the Public Sector Network and Payment Card Industry standards are followed. Necessary firewalls and filtering is in place. Patching is kept up to date. Staff and Members are regularly reminded to be vigilant and not click on links within emails from unknown sources. National Cyber Security Centre advice issued Norfolk cyber security cell Extended support for Windows 7 Access controls for virtual meetings Internal Audit review - rated "substantial" Routine checks and scans by external party E-learning software relating to cyber security. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Loss of ICT</p> <p>ICT failure of back up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement UPS installed and tested. Completed. Testing of Corporate King's Court Generator – working with property services. Completed. Work as part of a Internal Business Continuity Task and Finish Group looking at possible National Power Outages. Ongoing. Refresh/review back up tape library 23/24. Ongoing. <p>Cyber security attack</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing Cyber Insurance – <i>Cyber Risk Management assessment with our provider Gallagher is now complete. The next step is to engage with providers.</i> NCSC Cyber Essentials being explored, Dec 23. Ongoing. Implementation of network access controller, May 23. Ongoing. 	<p>Loss of ICT</p> <p>A second site is established at Fakenham and key data is replicated there. With hybrid working staff with laptops now have the ability to access data/systems from home, via Citrix, cloud based systems with a VPN and Office 365. The number of Citrix licences was increased from 60 to 200 to enable more homeworking. Internal Audit and the Business Continuity Corporate Officer Group are aware of this position and are satisfied that in the event of a disruption or emergency, this is manageable. A Business Continuity task and finish group has recently completed which looked at improving ICT infrastructure arrangements using several more resilient connections in light of the potential loss of King's Court, our main site. Additional infrastructure works have been undertaken too as a consequence of COVID and service rotas are in place to support our current hybrid working arrangements.</p> <p>ICT failure of back up</p> <p>There has been significant investment previously in the back-up system and process of off-site storage. There is a programme in place for backups and the testing of backups. The system has been reviewed and a new tape library has been deployed. Additionally, a new Uninterruptible Power Supply has been installed to continue to protect our ICT data centre from power surges and loss of power.</p> <p>Cyber security attack</p> <p>We are constantly reviewing the security of our ICT systems and are in contact with the Local Government Association, National Cyber Security Centre (including NCSC Early Warning Service) and other relevant public sector organisations to act upon security intel where appropriate. We obtain other situational awareness through intelligence email alerts via being members of both CiSP (Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership) and East of England NLA WARP (Warning, Advice and Reporting Point).</p> <p>With the heightened threat, our organisation has a range of ways in which to counter cyber security threats. We have the necessary cyber security deterrents in place such as malware antivirus, web proxy, and mail filter, multi-vendor AV protection and multi-factor authentication as well as other appropriate measures and have a strict software patch management regime.</p> <p>We undertake corporate business continuity planning scenarios annually and we undertook a cyber security exercise in 2022 as part of a business continuity 'metis' exercise. We have annual audits of our ICT security and penetration tests and a recent Cyber Security internal audit a few months ago gave 'substantial assurance' in our cyber security. <i>We are reviewing our Cyber Insurance – a Cyber Risk Management assessment and scan with our provider Gallagher is now complete.</i> Furthermore, a new Security Network Access Controller has been installed and is currently being configured to increase our levels of protection.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same

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				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR7	Corporate Governance	The risk of failures in systems of governance within the council, within council owned/influenced organisations and partnerships and other collaboration arrangements, leading to governance issues, fraud and corruption, failures in management systems, poor policy and decision making.	<p><u>Due diligence</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Capital and Investment Strategy approved annually. Sharing of ideas at <i>Senior Leadership Team</i> level to allow full consideration of all issues. Use of the pool of knowledge contained in <i>Senior Leadership Team</i> to act as 'critical friend'. Assistant Director - Resources discusses proposals with external auditor on a regular basis. Key statutory officers meet; Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer. Use of project initiation documents, briefs and business cases. Use of external consultants for specialist advice and capacity e.g. VAT, Treasury management, specific property and valuation development expertise, independent appraisal Use of pre-application planning service. Officer Major Projects Board and Member Major Projects Board in place to provide more rigorous governance around major capital projects. Additions to governance framework including Cabinet briefings, a new member led body to enhance oversight of major projects and developing approach for council owned companies. Use of lessons learnt reports and external inquiry to improve practice. Town Deal Local Assurance Framework; business cases, support from consultants, independent appraisal, subsidy control assessment, S151 approval Internal Audit providing consultancy audit and identify recommendations. Project Accountant - specific resource recruited to support major projects including Towns Fund. Full time Monitoring Officer commenced, May 2022. <p><u>Fraud and corruption</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Audit and Fraud Team dealing with the prevention, detection and deterrence of fraud and corruption. Strong guidance arrangements and internal controls are in place and regularly tested. Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and an Anti-Fraud & Anti-Corruption Investigation Procedure Manual are in place. Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally Checklist Assessment undertaken to identify any gaps / areas for improvement. National NFI Exercise and the annual Flexible Matching Service Exercise (including Premium Matching activities). Norfolk FraudHub membership for the sharing of good practices and more frequent matching for the purposes of fraud detection. Membership of the National Anti-Fraud Network for the purposes of obtaining information under relevant authorised powers to assist in the investigation of fraud and corruption. Access to the Government Counter Fraud Function Spotlight Tool Debtor/Absconder Tracing. Joint working with the DWP regarding Council Tax Reduction Scheme frauds and other benefit fraud. Participation of the Cabinet Office FraudHub User Group. A Fraud Risk Register is in place. Participation of the Norfolk FraudHub Operational Group to share best practices and to provide knowledge, expertise in complex case investigation. Participation of the Regional Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally Operational Group to share best practices and to provide knowledge, expertise in complex case investigation. Fraud Awareness e-learning has been introduced to staff, managers and members Information and updates communicated corporately raising awareness of anti-fraud & anti-corruption culture across the organisation. <p><u>GDPR</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Following the end of the contract with Eastlaw to provide Legal Services, the council has established an internal Corporate Governance Team, appointed a Corporate Governance Manager and a Corporate Governance Officer. FOIA and Data Protection policies updated. Audit review of FOIA and Complaints and action plan in place to implement recommendations. Training for staff on FOIA and DPA. Higher level training for corporate governance staff. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Due diligence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of statutory officers meetings scheduled on a monthly basis. Ongoing. Council companies review implementation plan ongoing. Embedding new arrangements for PMO, Officer Major Projects Board and Officer Project Development Group. Reviewing cost management and income generation programme (links to Risk SR1 - Financial sustainability). Implementation of Internal Audit position statement on project management framework recommendations in accordance with agreed timescales. <p>Fraud and corruption</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Full year update to Audit Committee, mid 2023. Half year update to Audit Committee, November 2023. Anti-Fraud & Anti-Corruption Policy and Anti-Money Laundering Policy reviews in progress Collaboration with the Regional Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally Operational Group in respect of legislative changes due in 2024 "failure to prevent fraud offences" and reasonable fraud prevention procedures within the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill. <p>GDPR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Following the end of the contract with Eastlaw to provide Legal Services, the council establish an internal Corporate Governance Team. Ongoing. FOIA and Data Protection policies updated. Completed. Audit review of FOIA and Complaints gave assessment of reasonable assurance and action plan in place to implement recommendations from Audit. Ongoing. Training for staff on FOIA and DPA being reviewed and refreshed. Ongoing. Diploma level training for Corporate Governance Manager and Corporate Governance Officer. Ongoing. 	<p>Due diligence</p> <p>Innovative approaches to opportunities which arise are being developed where the potential to generate income is identified. There may be a need to engage external specialists if riskier investments are considered where the Council does not have the expertise in-house. Changes to the Prudential Code may impact upon the Council's future investment plans with an emphasis on robust business cases and plans. The Council has a contract in place to provide external expert VAT advice. Treasury Management advice regarding borrowing in light of uncertainties such as EU Transition. Emphasis is on robust plans. Project team meetings for key work streams; leisure, major projects, housing companies. Governance improvements being developed in relation to the council's wholly owned companies. Project due diligence checklist being developed for major projects. Focus is on delivering a balanced budget, initiatives that yield a return or a community benefit. Independent advice is sought where internal skills are unavailable.</p> <p><u>Fraud and corruption</u></p> <p>Audit and Fraud Team work programmes are in place and progressing. Any instances of potential fraud are dealt with quickly. Audit work plans cover vulnerable areas of risk. A Senior Internal Auditor is in place covering the responsibility of Internal Audit and Fraud & Corruption, with assistance from the Head of Internal Audit of Eastern Internal Audit Services with no impact on the delivery of the Council's audit plan. The Norfolk FraudHub is now fully implemented with regional/sub-regional partners where data matching exercises are undertaken frequently to assist in the detection of fraud and corruption within systems. Furthermore participation in steering group meetings to share best practices and emerging threats and new methods of preventing, detecting and deterring fraud. The FraudHub includes additional benefits such as Premium Data matching activities and software for identifying potential fraudulent applications. Data matching activities also now include matches against HMRC data. A Fighting Fraud & Corruption Locally Checklist assessment has been undertaken in as part of the recent Internal Audit of the Fraud & Corruption arrangements of the Council with no areas of concern arising. Participation in national NFI exercises and the annual Flexible Matching Service exercise (including Premium Matching Service). Membership of the National Anti-Fraud Network for the purposes of undertaking debtor/absconder tracing activities and furthermore intelligence checks and obtaining evidence for the purposes of fraud and corruption investigations. Joint working partnership agreements are in place with the DWP regarding Council Tax Reduction Scheme frauds and other benefit fraud. Internal Audit have devised a Fraud Risk Register to assist in determining the fraud risks faced across each service area of the authority and to help identify any mitigation that is in place or additional controls to be considered. A review is being explored for the undertaking of Financial Investigation provisions including an initial assessment of potential affected areas of the Council and awareness training options. Discussions are taking place through the Norfolk FraudHub over the potential for a retained Financial Investigation Service provision which can be bought into as and when required.</p> <p><u>GDPR</u></p> <p>Internal Governance Team now in place and an audit of FOIA and Complaints has been carried out giving an outcome of reasonable assurance with an associated action plan. Code of Corporate Governance is being refreshed and the Data Protection Policy has also been updated and will be presented to Cabinet in due course. Data Breaches are being reported to the internal team who carry out an assessment of the severity of the breach and report to the ICO if required. Corporate Governance Officer has been appointed Deputy SIRO (1 of 2) and provides information and guidance on a range of services such as FOIA, DPA, Data Sharing Agreements, Privacy Policies and Subject Access Requests. A Corporate Compliance Officer is due to be appointed to finalise the new Governance structure.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same

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SR8	Reputation management	The risk that the council's reputation is damaged by major service failure, failure to respond to a significant incident(s), governance issues, dispute with a key partner, failure to deliver corporate business plan.	<p><u>Reputation management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Media spokespeople are trained. Protocols implemented. Staff trained to spot opportunities and potential threats. Social Media Guidelines and training in place. Additional comms resources. Communications plan to support implementation of corporate business plan. Comms plans linked to key workstreams, e.g. Towns Fund, climate change. Comms weekly slot with Management Team on emerging issues. Comms weekly slot with Council Leader. <p><u>Council reputation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive inspection and enforcement programmes. Appropriately qualified and experienced staff employed. Training programmes for relevant staff. Incident Response Plan. Liaison with external audit. Use of independent inquiry and publication of lessons learnt reports - leading to enhanced policy and practices to reduce future risks and errors. Communications support and additional resources. Contract monitoring and management. Identification of contract risks. Redeployment of existing staff. Use of external, independent experts e.g. subsidy control assessments, business case development. Full time monitoring officer in post - improved capacity and support. Cyber security arrangements (see risk SR6 - Data management and security) 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Moderate	Likely	12	<p><u>Reputation management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review ongoing comms requirements. Ongoing. Member induction plan developed (including media training for new and continuing members) and being deployed. Ongoing Communications plan to support implementation of corporate business plan. Ongoing. <p><u>Council reputation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of METIS exercise feedback report and consideration of recommendations. Where resources allow, consider enhancing presence on national stage e.g. Speaking at conferences, awards, etc. Ongoing. Continue to consider opportunities for use of apprenticeships to develop scarce resources. Ongoing use of progression schemes and development opportunities to assist with staff retention. 	<p><u>Reputation management</u></p> <p>Communications team continues to promote positive news, to respond effectively to media enquiries and to rebut inaccurate reporting. Social media and the use of cameras on smart devices have changed the landscape of communications, leading to the need for increasingly quick responses required by agreed spokespeople. Protocols updated and shared with Group Leaders. Spikes in media attention arising from specific events. Training for Members is to be scheduled as part of new member induction programme in 2023. Anticipating an increase in enquiries and challenges as borough election approaches.</p> <p><u>Council reputation</u></p> <p>Key activities have been identified as part of service planning. Staff skills and qualifications and any resulting training requirements are reviewed as part of the PRP process. Use of apprenticeships to develop resources in difficult to recruit areas. Introduction of progression schemes to assist with staff development and retention. Management development programmes to development managerial skills. Inspection and enforcement regimes are in place and monitored for performance and records kept.</p> <p>Risk assessments undertaken where appropriate. Ongoing comms relating to key issues and events. Consultation and engagement support e.g. Towns Fund. Recruitment challenge. Review of staffing resources in priority areas. Potential comms issues arising from pursuing commercial rent arrears (parameters limited by Covid related legislation).</p>	No	Moderate	Likely	12	Same
SR9	Organisational change	Ensuring that the council, its members and its workforce have the skills, resources, ability and capacity to adequately respond to current and future organisational change meaning the council is able to deliver its services in the most efficient and effective manner.	<p><u>Capacity</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use of agency and interim staff. Improve staff resilience/ cross training. Service and management restructures and related recruitment and development. Absence management. Use of apprentices. Use of external support for Towns Fund business case development, subsidy control and independent appraisal. Review of Planning resource and additional posts. New Executive Director post. Restarted management development programme. Progression scheme for a range of specialist roles. Apprenticeship opportunities to develop resources. <p><u>Channel shift/Digital services</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the operational staff and systems admin, who understand the back office system. Involvement in Norfolk County Council digital inclusion strategy. <p><u>Pay pressures</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Government's public sector pay restraint has had an impact on recruitment and retention for some Council services. Government policy for 2021 was a pay freeze in the public sector. Signs of some relaxation of national public sector pay policy in certain areas which could have a further impact on our ability to recruit and retain suitably qualified and experienced staff in certain areas. This in turn could prompt the need to review local pay arrangements, with associated financial implications. Ongoing monitoring of Government public sector pay policies. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Almost certain	20	<p><u>Capacity</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review recruitment issues. Ongoing and responsive to requirements and market conditions. Considering progression schemes across service areas. Ongoing. <p><u>Channel shift</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Migration to Office 365, Mar 23 Developing Microsoft Sharepoint InSite linked to the cloud, Mar 23 Engaging with staff re: developments to Insite to improve internal comms and document sharing, Mar 23. Learning workshops for ICT staff on Sharepoint, Mar 23 Review of different methods of interaction with customers with different services. Ongoing. Undertaking a review of internal communications. Ongoing. <p><u>Pay pressures</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of national pay award. Ongoing. Some roles requiring particular qualifications are being considered in advance of future recruitment, Mar 24 Appropriate allowances for pay to be made within the budget and financial plan. Ongoing. Monitoring of recruitment challenges and introduction of progression related award. Ongoing. S151 Officer to review the financial implications and identify funding of the proposals. Ongoing. Consider implications for erosion of pay differentials in respect of improving recruitment and retention. Ongoing. 	<p><u>Capacity</u></p> <p>Established training regime to enable colleagues to cover for each other's absences. Management restructure agreed April 2022 with additional Exec Director being recruited. UEA intern to support climate change footprint and policy development. Following end of national Covid-19 measures most services/operational delivery returning to normal levels however some services (frontline and back office) have backlogs and new Government initiatives may require additional capacity e.g. Ukraine response. Additional resources to focus on communications and enforcement of flytipping.</p> <p><u>New procedures developed with Senior Leadership Team for engagement of external workers.</u></p> <p><u>Channel shift</u></p> <p>Work is concentrating on customer facing aspects to engage fully with the public and reduce the need for more staff intensive means of communication, such as telephone enquiries. Customer contact migrated to telephones/online which are more cost effective methods. Work is ongoing with Environmental Health to achieve full integration with IDOX. Represented on a pilot project being undertaken in west Norfolk relating to digital access skills and attainment, which is part of the county council's strategy programme.</p> <p><u>Pay pressures</u></p> <p>Continue to closely monitor the Government's public sector pay policy and pay settlements agreed in the wider public sector/private sector. Provision for some movement in pay costs has been included in the financial plan. There is a timing risk related to determination of local pay award arrangements and national pay agreement.</p>	No	Major	Almost certain	20	Same

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SR10	Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Inability to mitigate and adapt to climate change - increased coastal erosion and flooding and failure to meet net zero target with consequent reputational issues.	<p>Flood management and coastal erosion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), Wash East Coast Management Strategy, Hunstanton Coastal Management Plan, East Wash Community Interest Company. Repairs & maintenance programme. Procurement practices. Health & Safety checking and monitoring. Coastal monitoring - Anglia Coastal Monitoring Group. Asset condition survey of sea defences (Dec 2022). Beach recycling undertaken annually. Capital programme and emergency repairs reserve. Corporate/service planning. Joint work with EA and local businesses to fund repairs. Local Plan Policy. Inter-agency flood group. Flood Water Management Officer. Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance. Drains along promenade jetted and cleansed. 6 monthly stakeholder group for Wash East Coast Management Strategy. Norfolk Resilience Forum future severe and flood risk group. <p>Carbon emissions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change emergency declared, policy approved and strategy/action plan. Thematic working groups e.g. EV charging, Housing, Vehicle fleet review, Procurement Norfolk Climate Change Partnership <i>and projects</i>. Local Plan policy. Cabinet report template. Permanent Senior Climate Change Officer post. Tree strategy and funding. Annual carbon audit. Borough wide report based on <i>Dept for Energy Security and Net Zero</i> data. Use of net zero electricity. Re:fit programme to improve efficiency of council buildings. Solar power generation equipment on several council properties. Lease car scheme mandates hybrid or better. Electric charging points at BCKLWN car parks. Engagement with interested parties. Reducing business miles via home and working arrangements framework. Application and deployment of Government grant funding for projects. Corporate funding to support climate change strategy. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Flood management and coastal erosion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake emergency repairs to prom completed as required. Ongoing repairs completed as required. Participation in LGA Coastal special interest group. Wash East Coast Stakeholder Group meets six monthly. Next meeting Sept 2023. Wash Trends report, Groyne field study and 4D radar survey prepared and considered by Management Team and Cabinet. Ongoing monitoring. Tender issued for preventative maintenance on flood gates and identified works undertaken. Completed. Participation in Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance. Ongoing. Chairing multi-agency flood group considering Station Road, Heacham. Ongoing. Promenade Condition Survey to be completed 22/23 to update 2018 survey. Completed. Further investigation works to be undertaken in 2023/24. Ongoing. Wash East Coast Management Strategy funding group. Ongoing. Monitoring completed, awaiting data to update report. Hunstanton Cliffs annual erosion report. BGS writing report, due early 2023. Preparing and mitigation of flood risk via Norfolk Resilience Forum. Ongoing. Scenario planning for sea level rise forecasts and surface water management. Ongoing. <p>Carbon emissions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> High level assessment of council estate, Ongoing. March 2023. Completed. District wide BEIS data analysis to be published for 2020/21, Dec 2023. <i>Ongoing</i>. Fleet review to be commissioned, Autumn 2023. <i>Ongoing</i>. Promoted Solar Together project. Installations for those signed up, 2023/24. <i>Works completed, evaluation underway</i>. BCKLWN carbon audit 21/22. <i>Published</i>. Support Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Community Renewal Fund project. Completed. ReFIT street lighting. Ongoing. Business Expo, June 2022. Completed. OZEV grant funding for 26 charging stations at 7 sites. Installed at 5 sites, 1 site ongoing. Autumn 2023. Management Team report Dec 2022 - Development of EV strategy. Ongoing. Schools project commissioned Dec 2022. Participation with schools planned for Autumn 2023. <i>Project underway with 20 schools signed up</i>. Participation in Mayor's Awards 2023. <i>Ongoing</i>. Implementation of NCCP's Net Zero Norfolk Communities project. <i>Community selected and project ongoing with end March 2025</i>. 	<p>Flood management and coastal erosion</p> <p>Capacity issues in short term due to Covid-19 response and staff resourcing. Planning policy being reviewed as part of Local Plan review. New post - Flood Water Mgt Officer started in Dec 2021. Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance started in April 2021. Cliff monitoring and report completed and published June 2021. Wash Trends report published. 4D radar survey for Hunstanton area. Ongoing work with Lead Local Flood Authority and other agencies re: flooded properties.</p> <p>Carbon emissions</p> <p>2019/20 council carbon audit completed. Borough wide data analysed for 2017/18 and 2018/19. Policy approved in October 2020 and detailed strategy/action plan to follow in 2021 informed by policy, budget considerations and national policies on green elements to recovery. Council electricity contracts switched to renewable power. King's Reach tree planting project in 2019/20. King's Lynn Transport Study recommendations in progress. Successful bids for energy efficiency grant funding schemes and delivery of retrofit solutions to housing stock ongoing. Employment of Energy Efficiency Officer in Housing Standards to deliver energy advice, successful Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards compliance campaign run in 2022. Continue to support Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund schemes. Supporting local bid to Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator scheme. Build standards for latest major housing project to include EV charging and solar PV on identified properties within the scheme. Two successful bids to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for £3.8m of improvements to heating systems in council buildings. £1m budget allocated over 4 years to support strategy implementation. UEA intern for 12 months. Audit of council emissions published. Third submission to PSDS. High level assessment of properties underway. Two CRF bids approved and being progressed via Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP). Ongoing leadership and support to NCCP, including website creation and maintenance. Ongoing updates to BCKLWN website and climate change content. Planning for and commissioning of Norfolk Chambers of Commerce for Expo 22. Solar Together 2022 promoted. Engagement plan drafted with Comms. Eight council sites under consideration for solar PV. Tree and green habitat strategy in development. Discussions with National Farmers Union regarding lowland peat and awaiting national strategy to be published. Fleet review with Energy Saving Trust being progressed in 2023.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same
SR11	Statutory compliance	Implementation and maintenance of statutory compliance management systems. E.g. health and safety, service related legal obligations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Health, Safety & Welfare General Policy in place. Corporate H&S Action Plan reviewed by Management Team and Joint Safety & Welfare Committee on a regular basis. A training programme is ongoing to raise awareness and update knowledge/skills. Independent assessments are carried out to identify any risks. Corporate Officer Group- Health and Safety. Departmental health and safety policies. Departmental risk assessments. Preventative maintenance contracts in place. Assessment of contractor risk assessments. Procurement assessment of tenders. Personnel Officer support and related external support provided to employees. Personnel policies and practices. Stress at work checker with resilience workshops for individuals/teams. Reminders on local requirements for self-isolation. Covid-19 secure risk assessments. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of Corporate Health & Safety Officer to lead on delivery of council's statutory obligations as an employer. Completed. 	Annual play area inspection by ROSPA, July 2020. Covid 19 guidance considered by Norfolk Resilience Forum delivery groups, internal Gold group and Management Team and through corporate health and safety in response to national and industry guidance. Comms campaigns to support changes to services and practices. As a company, Alive Leisure has its own health and safety policy. Bespoke refresher training for SMT in November 2021 on H&S responsibilities. Health and safety training available as e-learning and within annual training plan. <i>New Health and Safety policy implemented. Equalities procedures externally reviewed and deemed to be compliant although additional enhancements to be implemented. Relaunching internal procedures for recording and safeguarding matters. Work ongoing regarding Domestic Abuse - training to be rolled out.</i>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same

Ref	Risk title	The risk is that:	Existing Mitigation and Controls	Target risk			Previous risk score (May 2023)			Planned mitigating actions	Progress at Aug 2023	Within risk appetite?	Current risk score (Aug 2023)			Trend (compared with last review)
				Impact	Likelihood	Score	Impact	Likelihood	Score				Impact	Likelihood	Score	
SR12	Council owned companies	Managing performance, finances, liabilities and the relationship between the Council and its wholly owned companies in accordance with the governance agreements.	<p>Corporate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review of arrangements commissioned from Anthony Collins Solicitors (ACS). Shareholder Committee being established to enhance control mechanism for the Council as the shareholder. <p>Alive West Norfolk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Due diligence, financial and legal arrangements. Legal advice and technical expertise bought in where required. Project board established. Strategy, business case, business plan development and management of project risk register. Stakeholder engagement. Communications support. Revised business plan 2021 and monitoring to assess progress. AWN Strategy agreed by Awn Board April 21 AWN Operational plan aligned to Strategy April 21 Reviewing the management agreement to reflect financial implications. Regular financial monitoring and updates reported to Awn Board. Board being reconfigured in line with advice from ACS. Skills analysis presented to Board to 21 Dec 2022. <p><u>West Norfolk Housing Company</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Draft business plan updated December 2022. Board director recruitment and appointment process. Company financial statements and reports in place via Ensors. Quarterly Board meetings scheduled. Risk register in place and reviewed by the Board 6 monthly. <p><u>West Norfolk Property</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Management company in place, providing regular reports to West Norfolk Property Board meetings. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p>Corporate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Shareholder Committee established with appropriate officer support. Action plan following Anthony Collins review of Governance has been implemented. <p><u>Alive West Norfolk</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> New Board Members appointed, and a skills analysis completed. Business plan development ongoing. Regular monitoring meetings between management and Client Officer. Review of Management Agreement to reflect current operations. Shareholder Agreement drafted. <p><u>West Norfolk Housing Company</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Software for financial projections. Commission asset mgt strategy and renewal of property components and sinking fund. Consideration of a net zero strategy for properties. Ongoing. Capacity to support company activities (SLA), Ongoing. Advice on revision of loan agreement between BCKLWN and company. Ongoing. Update - new Board Members appointed following local elections, May 2023. <p><u>West Norfolk Property Limited</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of a property acquisition strategy, Dec 2023. Ongoing. New Directors appointed. Shareholder Agreement to be presented to Shareholder Committee. SLA to Shareholder Committee. Client Officer in place. 	<p>Corporate</p> <p>Recommendations to Cabinet in December 2022. Shareholder Committee set up.</p> <p><u>Alive West Norfolk</u></p> <p>Work ongoing to review operating model and governance arrangements. Expected to report early 2024. Pay award will impact on budgeted income. SLA and Management Agreement updates on hold pending outcome of review. Managing Director on long-term absence may impact business planning. Interim cover to be explored. Membership numbers are down on projections. Cost increases may have had an impact. Capital projects for resurfacing of 3G and new 3G in early phases.</p> <p><u>West Norfolk Housing Company</u></p> <p>New draft business plan developed (subject to Shareholder Committee consideration) looking at investment into homes developed by third parties. Marked change in company ambition linked to new challenges and demand pressures see risk 4. Mar 2023. Risk issues - funding agreement pegged to base rates. External specialist advice obtained to look at funding opportunities/structure and other related issues. Report being prepared for funding agreement. See risk register and minutes. Post May 2023 elections, new company directors appointed, new regulatory requirements and Social Housing Act 2023 and Building Safety Act 2022. New Building Safety regulator.</p> <p><u>West Norfolk Property</u></p> <p>Board to develop new business plan and seek to support BCKLWN ambitions. Consideration of funding mechanisms to purchase properties from BCKLWN following specialist financial advice. Independent review of projections to be undertaken as part of due diligence. Report to Cabinet Dec 2023 regarding funding arrangements and for the company to acquire the properties from the council. Report to Cabinet Jan 2024 regarding housing tenure mix on Parkway development.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same
SR13	Contract/ Supply failure	Managing contracts with key suppliers to ensure the continued delivery of an effective service and ensure delivery of the council's priorities and objectives.	<p>Corporate</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contract and Procurement Officer in place for corporate type contracts/services. Contracts to be reviewed based on frequent Spend Analysis reports. Training on procurement and contract management for service managers. Review of contract standing orders. <p><u>Waste collection</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Effective contract monitoring and management. Substantial dialogue with the waste collection contractor and three clients over the long term aspirations. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Possible	12	<p><u>Waste collection</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit of the contract with report to Audit Committee. October 2022. Completed. Updates to Corporate Performance Panel. October 2022. Completed. Further update to CPP, Jan 2023. Dec 2022 - in response to a request for additional funding from the contractor, the supervising officer (Breckland DC officer) has allocated financial resources from within her team to engage with the contractor on an open book basis to better understand the financial issues currently being presented. Once this is complete any findings will be presented to the Contract Review and Development Board of which we are part. 	<p><u>Waste collection</u></p> <p>New contract and Serco commenced April 2021 with operations following the Serco collection model; reorganised collection rounds in liaison with KLWN, North Norfolk and Breckland. All of the vehicles delivered. Active contract management being used to ensure high level outcomes are achieved. High level discussions continue with Serco across the 3 authorities to ensure the delivery and success of the contract. High level of turnover in senior contract managers. Discussions with Serco chief officers to outline concerns and issues. Engagement by the three councils at a strategic level to meet the long term aspirations of all parties to the contract. County Waste disposal arrangements are favourable. New working arrangements with County Waste Disposal will see enlarged transfer station and de-risk access to the transfer station in the future. Annualised uplift mechanism in contract to respond to inflation. Internal Audit of the contract completed.</p> <p>The initial response to the ongoing work is that the aspirations of Serco to gain further financial benefit from the contract appear likely to be poorly founded. Serco had indicated that they would have to name the contract as being onerous within their annual report. The last Serco annual report does not identify the contract as being onerous. Serco continue to lay claims before the Contract Management Board limiting their exposure to performance deductions and these are resisted. The likelihood of contract failure is diminished.</p>	No	Major	Possible	12	Same
SR14	Cost of living	The cost of living crisis caused by rapidly rising inflation (energy, food, household items, etc) and interest rates may result in more families and households experiencing poverty and unemployment, which may lead to increased levels of service demand on the Council and place additional pressure on front-line services, staff and councillors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Standing item on Management Team. LGA cost of living hub https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/cost-living-hub/cost-living-external-resources Corporate officer team established. Promotion of fuel oil group buying scheme. Promotion of Solar Together group buying scheme. Promotion of national grants e.g. boiler upgrade scheme. Externally funded projects to fully fund insulation in targeted properties. "Beat your bills" events across the borough. 	Moderate	Unlikely	6	Major	Almost certain	20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Solar Together Scheme. Applications for 22/23 closed on 27 Sept 2022, implementation for those signed up ongoing. "Beat your Bills events". Initial events completed. Further programme of events taking place June-Aug 2023. Ongoing. Officer Working Group. First working group held on 18 Oct 2022. Ongoing. 	<p>Corporate officer established lead by Assistant to Chief Exec. Promotion of schemes to reduce energy costs e.g. fuel oil buying and installation of solar PV and battery storage. "Beat your bills" events held across borough in Sept 2022 and extended programme scheduled until Aug 2023. Collaboration with Norfolk Warm Homes to encourage targeted take up of insulation and heating systems. Information included employees and residents, customers.</p> <p>Help for businesses web-content under consideration. Look for the link on website. FAQs analysis undertaken, content developed and posted to the website. Regularly updated. Reviewing promotion of info to foodbank, web content, town centre events. Ongoing work and preparations for information and support for winter 2023/24. Ongoing.</p>	No	Major	Almost certain	20	Same