

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

2nd December 2021

COUNCILLOR RICHARD BLUNT - CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION

For the period from 4th October to 19th November

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Planning and Discharge of Conditions applications received

Planning and discharge of condition applications received



Applications received in August and September dropped slightly but increased again in October. The planning officers continue to deal with high caseloads and recruitment to vacant posts is ongoing. From January – October 2021 2,238 applications have been received compared to 1,866 the previous year, an increase of 372 applications.

Agents meeting

On 5th November an agents meeting was held at the Town Hall, this was the first meeting with the agents since the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic there would be two formal agents meetings per year. 19 agents attended and the following topics were discussed:

- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Planning Policy update - Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans, Habitat Mitigation
- Planning Control update - timescales for determining applications, Section 106 Agreements and Design Criteria

The meeting was very positive and a further meeting is scheduled for April 2022.

Major and Minor dwelling applications received comparison

The number of minor dwelling applications have decreased from 3 years ago, but there has been a significant increase in householder applications in the last 12 months.

	1/11/18 – 31/10/19	1/11/19 – 31/10/20	1/11/20 – 31/10/21
No. of Major dwelling applications rec'd	36	19	29
No. of Minor dwelling applications rec'd	451	327	337
No. of Householder applications rec'd	656	700	913

*Minor dwelling applications = up to 10 units

Major dwelling applications = over 10 units

2021 performance for determining planning applications (Jan – October 2021)

	National target	Performance
Major	60%	95%
Non – Major	70%	91%

Appeal Performance – decisions made by The Planning Inspectorate 1/11/20 – 31/10/21

	Dismissed	Allowed
Planning appeals	36	11
	77%	23%
Enforcement appeals	4	0
	100%	0%

The national average for planning appeals allowed is around 34%.

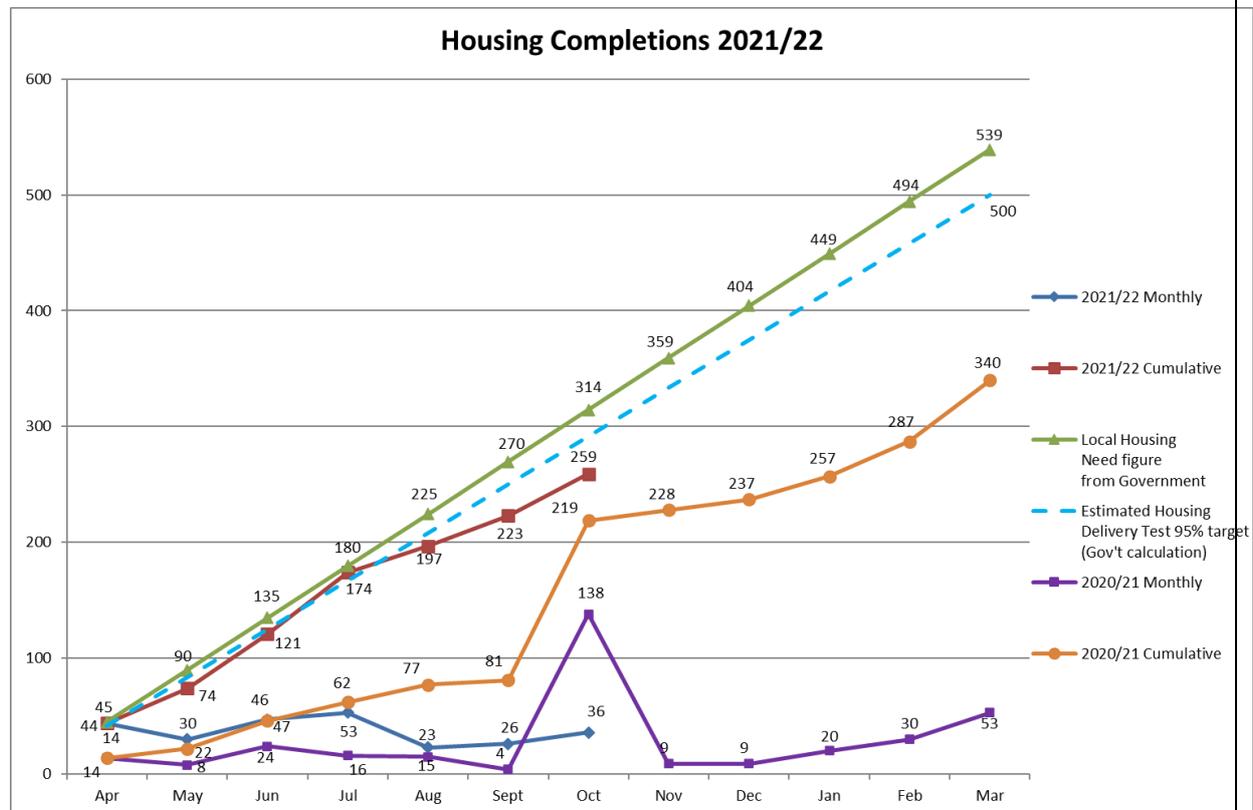
Revenue income 2021/22

Income is still holding up well with August income matching monthly projected.

Projected	Actual	Variance with projected
April 21 – October 21	April 21 – October 21	
£740,833	£1,088,306	+£347,473

Housing Completions

36 completions in October. Housing completions continue to be significantly higher than the previous year but still below projected requirement.



Neighbourhood Plans

Since October 2021, the following Neighbourhood Plans have reached significant milestones:

- **Burnham Market** – Neighbourhood Area approved by the Borough Council, 26th October 2021
- **Castle Acre** – Referendum documentation being finalised (statutory Information Statement and Notice of referendum), with a view to setting a referendum date for early 2022
- **Downham Market** – draft Neighbourhood Plan published on 1st October 2021 for Regulation 14 consultation (closing date, 12th November 2021) – Borough Council has submitted detailed comments in response to this consultation, which should help the Town Council to refine/ further develop the Plan prior to submission
- **Heacham** – Parish Council agreed to the majority of Examiner’s modifications, with the exception of a small number of departures from the Examiner’s recommendations (“Proposed Modifications to Examiner’s Recommendations, October 2021”); now subject to 6 weeks consultation (closing date, 10th December 2021):
 - Policy 11: Holiday accommodation – reinstate alternative policy wording, put forward for consideration during examination
 - Policy 15: Dark skies – include reference to LED lighting, in view of the Parish Council’s responsibilities for maintaining street lighting

- Policy 17: Settlement breaks – detailed policy wording amendments; e.g. use of bullet points
- **Hunstanton** – Examiner’s Report published 17th September 2021 (https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/885/heacham_neighbourhood_plan); agreement of Parish Council (Qualifying Body) to Examiner’s modifications still outstanding, but representatives of the Town Council and Neighbourhood Planning Group have expressed concerns about certain Examiner’s modifications; e.g. deletion of “second homes” policy
- **Terrington St John** – passed at referendum, Thursday, 30th September 2021; plan “made” by the Borough Council on 12th October 2021

Other Neighbourhood Plans are at various stages of progression. The Gayton and Gayton Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan, which was subject to Regulation 14 consultation during August/ September 2021, is moving towards submission (spring/ summer 2022).

Other Neighbourhood Plans are progressing towards Regulation 14 stage; e.g. officers have had recent engagement with representatives of the Great Massingham; Grimston, Congham, Potts Row and Roydon; Pentney, and Stoke Ferry Neighbourhood Planning groups re preliminary draft texts, Strategic Environmental Assessment screening etc. Watlington Parish Council is imminently looking to run a “Call for Sites” consultation, scheduled to finish in January 2022.

The Parish Councils for Thornham, South Wootton and Walpole Cross Keys are all currently considering undertaking potential reviews for these “made” Neighbourhood Plans.

Local Plan Review

The 8-weeks Regulation 19 consultation finished on 27th September. Following the close of the consultation, officers processed and reviewed all representations received (around 120 separate responses, making approximately 500 separate comments/ representations):

- Summary Regulation 19 Consultation Feedback report presented to the Local Plan Task Group, 28th October 2021 (<https://democracy.west-norfolk.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=409&MId=4780&Ver=4>);
- Programme officer appointed (late November 2021), to support the Local Plan through submission and Examination.

It is anticipated that the Local Plan can be submitted to the Secretary of State in late-2021/ early-2022. Examination of the Plan, including hearings, is anticipated to take place during summer 2022, with a view to adoption in the first quarter of 2023

Street Naming and Numbering Process.

Following concerns expressed by Fritcham Parish Council re the council’s process for house renumbering, there will be review of this process over the next few weeks.

Major Housing Project:

- First completions on Nora 4 - December 2021
- Parkway - Revised scheme submitted mid-September for 226 dwellings on former COWA land. Currently in consultation. Expected start on site July 2022
- Salters Road - on site – contract being drafted for sale to Freebridge
- Lynnsport1 – in planning, awaiting committee date.
- Hunstanton Southend Road – enabling works to coach park commenced. Main works due to start on site January 2022
- Hunstanton Bus Station delayed due to fire safety design issues. Due to start on site by March 2022. Bus stops will be relocated onto St Edmunds Terrace

Town Fund Update

- The first business case has been prepared for the Youth & Retraining Pledge. The business case will go to CPP on 8th Dec for consultation. In line with the Local Assurance Framework this will be appraised by an external party. The final version will be subject to Town Deal Board final approval on 15th December. One of the key objectives is to Level-Up skill levels in and across the town – establishing a legacy of higher resident skills, a system of local collaboration and increased opportunities for young people to reach their potentials. The project will start April 2022
- The Public Realm project progresses well with the business case on track for completion before Christmas. A preferred option has been agreed by the Public Realm working group (from a range of opportunities set out in the Public Realm Strategy completed last year) which focussed on the route from the Rail station to the River via Baxter's Plain and Purfleet Street. The investment will include measures like new finger posts, enhanced outdoor seating and planting (including trees), artwork trail and pop-ups.
- Guildhall and Creative Hub – Detailed work is being undertaken by our consultants FEI on planning the types of activity that will operate within the complex. A number of workstream meetings are underway/ planned to inform the development of the business case.
- Multi-user community hub – plans for consultation and engagement on the project (including future use of the existing library site) due to start before Christmas – details to be confirmed by the end of the month.
- Active & clean connectivity – lead design team have been appointed for proposed active travel hub at the Enterprise Zone
- Riverfront – marketing of Sommerfeld & Thomas & Grain Silo site went live from 11th November in conjunction with agents Gerald Eve . There has been a very positive response in respect of initial enquires.

Meetings Attended (and via Teams Zoom and YouTube)

Portfolio Meetings, Development and Regeneration

Planning Committee

Planning Committee Sifting

Regeneration and Development Panel

Cabinet

Cabinet Siting

Cabinet Briefings

Full Council

Various Meetings with Officers

Local Plan Task Group

Joint Employment Committee

Town Fund Project Board

Town Fund Board

West Winch Joint Members Briefing

Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum

Community Grant Scheme Training

Parish Council Planning Update

Members Major Project Board

Corporate Performance Panel