

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Review of Cabinet Agenda

Agenda

Date

Tuesday 5 January 2021

Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Cllr S Riley (Chairman) Cllr A D Adams (Vice Chairman)

Cllr N J Brennan Cllr D King
Cllr P E Bulman Cllr M L Murrell
Cllr S J Catchpole Cllr G K Nurden
Cllr N J Harpley Cllr S M Prutton
Cllr S I Holland Cllr C E Ryman-Tubb
Cllr C Karimi-Ghovanlou Cllr N C Shaw
Cllr K S Kelly

Time

10.00 am

Place

Virtual meeting

Substitutes

Conservative

Cllr A D Crotch
Cllr J F Fisher
Cllr R R Foulger
Cllr R M Grattan
Cllr K G Leggett
Cllr I J Mackie
Cllr G F Peck
Cllr J L Thomas
Cllr K A Vincent
Cllr J M Ward

Substitutes

Liberal Democrat

Cllr S C Beadle
Cllr D G Harrison
Cllr K E Lawrence
Cllr D Roper

Substitute

Labour

Cllr B Cook

Contact

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@BDCDemServices

If any Member wishes to clarify details relating to any matter on the agenda they are requested to contact the relevant Director / Assistant Director

Public Attendance

This meeting will be live streamed for public viewing via the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZciRqwo84-iPyRlmsTCInq>.

If a member of the public would like to attend to ask a question, or make a statement on an agenda item, please email your request to committee.services@broadland.gov.uk no later than 5.00pm on 31 December 2020.

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| 4 | Matters arising therefrom (if any) | |
| 5 | Chairman's Announcements | |
| 6 | Public Speaking | |
| | <p>To consider representation from the members of the public who have expressed the wish to convey their views on items on this agenda.</p> <p>In accordance with the Constitution a period of 3 minutes is allowed per member of the public.</p> | |
| 7 | Budget Questions | 12 |
| | <p>Supplementary Agenda item to receive Cabinet's responses to the Committee's budget questions.</p> | |
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Trevor Holden
Managing Director

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.

Does the interest directly:

1. Affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?
2. Relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?
3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council
4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own
5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in

If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.

Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?

If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

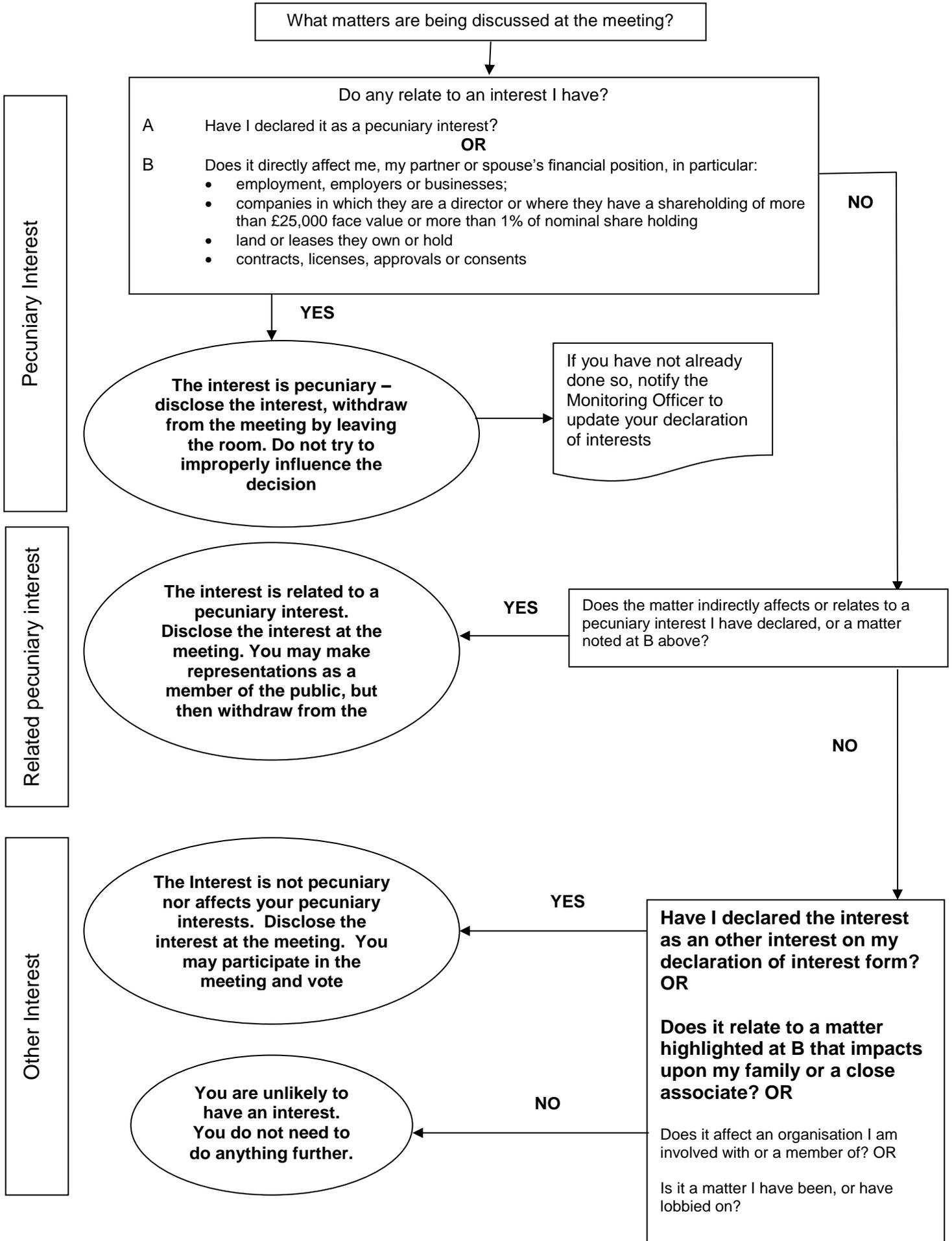
Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be another interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.

Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

**PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER
IN THE FIRST INSTANCE**

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Review of Cabinet Agenda** held by video link on **1 December 2020** at **10.00am** when there were present:

Cllr S Riley – Chairman

Cllr A D Adams
Cllr N J Brennan
Cllr P E Bulman
Cllr S J Catchpole

Cllr C Karimi-Ghovanlou
Cllr K S Kelly
Cllr K E Lawrence (substitute)
Cllr G K Nurden

Cllr S M Prutton
Cllr N C Shaw

Cllr J Emsell, Cllr J Leggett and Cllr T Mancini-Boyle also attended the meeting.

Also in attendance were the Director Resources, Director People & Communities, Chief of Staff, Assistant Director Finance, Senior Finance Business Partner, Governance Manager, Senior Governance Officer (SW) and the Democratic Services Officers (LA and JH).

204 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Member	Nature of Interest
Cllr G K Nurden	'Other' interest, received a wider economy grant from the local enterprise partnership.

205 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Harpley and Cllr Holland with Cllr Lawrence substituting.

206 MINUTES

Subject to minor typographical errors, the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

CABINET REPORTS

207 BUDGET UPDATE – 2ND WAVE COVID FUNDING

The Assistant Director Finance outlined this report, which requested that additional funding be released to support the Council's response to Covid-19.

In response to a query on Broadland and South Norfolk Council costs, the Assistant Director Finance confirmed to Members that a similar report was

being put to South Norfolk's Cabinet requesting a £350,000 increase in the South Norfolk 21/22 budget for Covid response.

Members raised a concern at the necessity to re-prioritise current ICT projects if it was felt that the technology in the council chamber needed to be improved and asked which projects would likely be postponed to accommodate this. The Director Resources outlined the ICT projects currently in place and advised Members that as plans were at an early stage, no decisions had been made but she reassured Members that the integration of the new Office 365 would not be affected.

Members discussed the future of Council meetings, in terms of holding hybrid meetings (should Government legislation allow for this after May 2021) and recording physical meetings once they were permitted. Emphasis was placed on the importance of having the technology in place to a) be able to record physical meetings which could be uploaded to YouTube in order to continue to ensure transparency and public engagement; and b) to ensure that once legislation allowed for the Council to return to office-based meetings, vulnerable, shielding or self-isolating Members would still be able to attend by video link.

In response to queries regarding the increase in FTE staffing needed (outlined in 1.4 of the report) the Assistant Director Finance advised members that the costs outlined were based on a six-month period, unless stated otherwise on the report, to cover short term requirements. He also confirmed that funding for the posts required on an 18-month basis was included in the additional £350,000 requested for the next financial year.

Members queried the cost effectiveness of allocating £50,000 to the upgrade of technology in the Thorpe Lodge council chamber when work was being undertaken to look at the longer-term accommodation for the Council. The Director Resources advised members that although the Council was looking at the longer-term accommodation requirements, it was unlikely that any changes would be made within the next 2 years, whereas the new technology requirements for during and post Covid were required in the short-term. She also advised members that officers would look to ensure that any new technology placed in the Council Chamber would be portable.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Options (1-3, and 4, as amended)

Cabinet to recommend to Council the following:

- (1) To increase the general 20/21 Covid 19 emergency budgets by £250,000 to provide additional resource to support the Council's response to Covid 19. To be funded by the Government's Covid grant.

- (2) To increase the housing 20/21 Covid 19 emergency budget by £50,000 to meet the ongoing need for homelessness support. To be funded by the Government's Covid grant.
- (3) To agree that £350,000 should be included in the 21/22 budgets to help cover the cost of responding to the Covid 19 pandemic, to be funded from the Council's general reserve.
- (4) To increase the BDC 20/21 Information Technology Capital Budget by £50,000, to improve the technology in the council chamber:
 - a. *Subject to a review, and a review of governance.*
 - b. *Subject to other ICT projects not being delayed by this work.*

The Committee adjourned at 11:27am and reconvened at 11:35am, when all Committee Members listed above were present.

208 BUSINESS RATES POOLING

The Assistant Director Finance gave an overview of the report and outlined the recommendations to cabinet.

He also advised Members on how the Business Rates Pool worked and explained that if one of the Norfolk Councils was to withdraw from the Pool, then the Pool would have to be disbanded.

In response to a query on why Broadland District Council was no longer involved in the Business Rates Pilot, the Assistant Director Finance advised Members that the Pilot was only available to the Council for one year, and that for the upcoming year the Council was required to choose whether to remain within the Business Rates Pool.

Members asked whether the Business Rates Pool was still beneficial to the Council, given the levels of businesses closing and in light of companies such as Arcadia going into administration. The Assistant Director Finance confirmed to Members that, based on the data currently available, the Norfolk Section 151 Officers still believed that there was a significant financial benefit from pooling. He also reminded Members that landlords remained liable for business rates on empty properties, therefore the risk was in relation to companies going into liquidation owing business rates.

In response to a query whether the Council could withdraw from the Pool at any time, the Assistant Director Finance advised Members that the Council had until 28 days after the provisional finance settlement to decide whether they wanted to be part of the Pool, after that date their decision would be fixed for 2021/22.

Members asked whether there would be any recrimination from other Councils if one authority withdrew from the Pool. In response, the Assistant Director Finance confirmed that there would not be any contractual implications and also advised that officers from all of the Norfolk authorities were working closely together and would be likely to make a collaborative decision to disband the Pool if it no longer demonstrated a financial benefit.

In response to a question regarding the worst case scenario, he advised Members that if the Council was not in the Pool then the safety net would restrict the maximum loss to 7.5% of the Councils Business rates baseline. If the Council was to be in the Pool then that 7.5% safety net would be for the Pool as a whole, giving the potential for higher losses. He referred Members to the table at 2.1 of the report which provided further indications of how close each partner was to their safety net level. He also confirmed that the Council has a business rates reserve to cover potential losses.

In response to a Member's query regarding Norfolk County Council's absence from the table of pooling authorities, the Assistant Director Finance advised that the collection of business rates was not a County Council function and that Norfolk County Council shared a proportion of the rates collected by all the District Councils.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option 1 and 2

Cabinet to agree:

- (1) In principle to continue with Business Rates Pooling for 2021/22.
- (2) That the Assistant Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Finance, is authorised to withdraw BDC from the Norfolk pool, if latest modelling undertaken by the Norfolk authorities no longer demonstrates a financial benefit from pooling.

209 REVIEW OF EARMARKED RESERVES

The Senior Finance Business Partner introduced the report and outlined the recommendations.

In response to Members' queries regarding the refuse services reserve and whether it was in the Council's best interest to purchase vehicles, the Assistant Director Finance advised that a procurement exercise was being undertaken which would help to determine whether it would be more cost-effective for the Council to either purchase its own vehicles or lease them as part of the contract

Members questioned why a reserve was required for Broadland Growth as this had been funded as a loan rather than a capital expenditure. In response, the Assistant Director Finance advised Members that as part of Local Government accounting, the loan was required to be shown as capital expenditure and that upon repayment, the Council would consider a further loan, depending on there being a pipeline of projects for future developments.

In response to a question regarding the ICT Reserve and whether it was more cost-effective to purchase software or lease it on subscription, the Assistant Director Finance informed Members that subscription-based software packages which met the requirements of the Council were not always available, and that Officers would consider the most cost-effective solution for the Council.

Members queried the need for an additional £1.3m for ICT when there was already £305,000 held in the reserve and £50,000 had been requested for ICT work in the council chamber. The Assistant Director Finance advised Members that the funds held in the ICT reserve had been earmarked to fund the infrastructure work that had been agreed, and that additional funds were required to fund future projects which would be detailed in the Capital Programme.

In response to a query regarding the bridge reserve budget and how much was spent each year on bridge repairs and upgrades, the Assistant Director Finance advised that he did not have the figure available but was aware that significant funding was required. Members were concerned that the reserves for bridge maintenance was not sufficient and the Assistant Director Finance confirmed that £20,000 was set aside, for this purpose, each year.

The Committee agreed that work needed to be undertaken to ensure that the Council allocated sufficient funds to cover future liabilities for bridge maintenance, and it was:

AGREED

That officers bring a report to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee providing further information on the Bridge Maintenance Reserves.

In response to Members' queries regarding the Economic Success Fund, the Senior Finance Business Partner advised Members that the balance remaining in the Fund was £284,000. The Assistant Director clarified the types of projects which had been funded which included; business support grants, youth employment support, the Tour of Britain and the Humphrey Repton Celebration.

Members were advised that there were a number of projects that had been agreed on but not yet completed and that the recommendation sought to

allow the Assistant Director Economic Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development to agree additional economic growth projects using the funding not yet allocated to projects.

Members agreed that the Economic Success Panel should be kept informed of any projects supported by the Economic Success Fund.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Options 1-3

Cabinet to recommend to Council:

- (1) To separate the Bridge Maintenance Reserve into two reserves.
 - a. One to be named Marriot's Way with an allocation of £60,000
 - b. One to be named Bure Valley Railway with an allocation of £270,000
- (2) The addition to the following Reserves:
 - a. IT Reserve - £1.3m
 - b. Broadland Growth Reserve - £5m
- (3) The creation of the following Reserves:
 - a. Refuse Services - £3m
 - b. Food Innovation Centre Reserve - £1.86m

Cabinet to confirm that:

The Assistant Director Economic Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, has the authority to agree additional economic growth projects to be funded from the Economic Success Fund. *The Economic Success Panel should be informed of any upcoming projects funded.*

210 BUDGET QUESTIONS FOR CABINET

The Chairman of the Committee drew Members' attention to the draft questions to Cabinet which had been compiled during the Budget Scrutiny Workshop on 24 November 2020. Members were asked to formally endorse the questions so that Cabinet could prepare a written response. The Chairman advised that, once the written response had been received, an informal meeting would be arranged for the Committee consider the

responses and agree on a format for the 5 January 2020 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee where Cabinet would be invited to give their formal responses.

Members then unanimously voted to endorse the draft questions for Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 1.01pm.

DRAFT

BDC O&S Scrutiny of Budget
24 Nov 20 - O&S Workshop to compile questions
5 Jan 21 – Responses from Cabinet

Group 1

Caroline Karimi-Ghovanlou
Sue Prutton

Group 2

Grant Nurden
Sue Catchpole

Group 3

Steve Riley
Nigel Brennan
Peter Bulman

Questions for Cabinet

- 1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is showing a funding gap over the medium term. What plans do Cabinet have to address this? And are sufficient resources available to deliver the services, notwithstanding the Covid resource that is currently needed?**

The Council has a number of strategies to address the funding gap. These include:

- The continuation of the joint working with South Norfolk Council, to deliver the £8.6m of savings as set out in the feasibility study.
- The implementation of our commercialisation strategy in order to increase income and profit margins, improve customer experience, or reduce costs.
- A willingness to increase Council Tax and fees and charges if necessary, to raise additional funds.
- Investment in Broadland Growth to deliver housing and a return to the Council.
- Delivery of the SPARK transformation programme to support ongoing change and efficiencies.

Service performance continues to improve. Annually we agree an ambitious delivery plan for the year ahead and where appropriate we provide additional resources to ensure we resource our ambitions. For instance, Cabinet on 3 November 20 agreed to increase the Budget by £44,000 to fund an additional resource to help implement the actions set out in the recently agreed Environmental Strategy.

- 2. The Government has announced a pay freeze for public sector staff. How will this affect the Cabinet's plans for setting the 21/22 budgets? What are the Cabinet's assumptions regarding future staffing costs?**

It is essential that we appropriately reward officers to ensure we attract and retain a highly skilled workforce that is committed to deliver our ambitions.

At BDC we have local pay arrangements which means that we have flexibility to reward staff appropriately. We are currently developing our new performance scheme for 2021/22 which will support us to continue to motivate and reward staff.

The latest version of the Medium Term Financial Strategy was based on a pay assumption of 3% in 21/22, then 2% in future years. However, this will be refined as we finalise our budget for 21/22, reflecting the new national position, and our performance scheme proposals

**3. How have Cabinet evaluated the risks around investing in Broadland Growth?
And does Broadland Growth pay the Council for the services it receives from BDC?**

Broadland Growth prepares full business cases for all investment proposals, and these are agreed and signed off by their Board.

These proposals are then submitted to BDC, and BDC officers carefully evaluate these. BDC officers then prepare appropriate reports for Cabinet. These Cabinet reports include details about the risks and opportunities arising from investing in Broadland Growth and how risks may be mitigated.

The investment in Broadland Growth delivers not only a financial return in the form of investment income, planning fees, building control fees, council tax and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) but also economic development and social returns. All of these aspects need to be considered in the decision to invest.

Both shareholders currently charge for the resource used to project manage the developments, but Broadland Growth is currently reviewing the services that both NPS and Broadland Council provide with a view to formalising them and paying for these. In relation to Broadland that would be for the provision of Company Secretary and comms services, while NPS currently provide Bookkeeping and administration services.

**4. Next year there are due to be elections.
Will Covid make the carrying out of these more difficult?
And will there be a need to provide additional resource in this area?**

The need to ensure elections are carried out in a Covid secure way, will make these elections more difficult to organise and deliver. We have already started working on this for instance through contacting all the polling stations to confirm their Covid secure arrangements and to check if we will still be able to use the venue, writing to all previous staff to understand if they would be willing to work in 2021, liaising with other Norfolk authorities and carrying out risk assessments of the whole election process, particularly in Covid times. The project team are also already meeting regularly to ensure we plan well for this difficult task.

In response to this, within the 'Budget Update – 2nd Wave Covid Funding' report considered by Cabinet on 8th December 20 we included provision for an additional 1FTE Electoral Services Officer to support the recruitment & training of external staff and to open postal votes. The report also requested a senior role to lead on project management and Covid implications

**5. Money is being set aside to deliver member and officer training.
How will Cabinet ensure that this is delivered effectively and is ongoing?**

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation has HR and training within their remit.

It is essential that we train and support both officers and members to ensure we can deliver the best services possible and to retain existing and attract new staff as an employer of choice.

We have an experienced and appropriately resourced HR and OD team under the leadership of our Assistant Director for Governance & Business Support.

The HR and OD team report back on progress with the OD strategy and training to CMLT on a regular basis and updates will also be provided as part of SPARK updates to SIEC.

6. Please provide more detail about the planned investment in IT to ensure we have sufficient resource to deliver a first class service, given the need to not just standstill but to invest in IT for the future?

The draft capital programme is proposing the following budgets for IT investment

Broadland Capital Programme	Estimate 2021/22 £	Estimate 2022/23 £	Estimate 2023/24 £	Estimate 2024/25 £	Estimate 2025/26 £	Notes
IT - Annual Replacement Programme	100,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	Ongoing annual replacement programme for servers and PCs
IT - Website / Digital	45,000					New software / enhancements to website to meet mandatory accessibility standards
IT - System Replacement Programme	392,250	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000	Estimates will be firmed up following the Business Systems Transformation Strategy work being carried out by Methods.

Members are aware that Officers are currently working with a company called Methods to deliver a report by the middle of February with a suggested timeline for the replacement of systems relating to services. This piece of work is considering a number of factors in forming the suggested timeline such as current contract end dates, licence fees, likely benefits to be achieved including the impact or opportunity for engagement with customers, capacity of specific services at particular times in relation to implementation etc. Individual business cases will then be required before progressing any work on individual service systems.

7. Is the £350k provision for Covid response in 21/22 sufficient?

And what assumptions was this figure based on?

And there are a number of areas within the Council that are facing specific Covid pressures eg economic growth, housing benefits, homelessness. How is the Cabinet ensuring the organisation flexes to meet this demand?

The 'Budget Update – 2nd Wave Covid Funding' report considered by Cabinet on 8th December 20 set out officers' best estimates of the staffing and financial resources needed to support the Covid response. This was based on the assumption that Covid would remain a prevalent issue for at least another 6 months, and that the economic impacts would remain throughout 21/22.

Cabinet agreed the recommendations for additional resources for 2020/21 of which an element will be used in the following financial year, to ensure that appropriate resources are provided to meet the current anticipated challenges. This additional resource is being funded by the additional Government funding received by the Council within the current financial year. Officers will continue to monitor the impact of Covid and react accordingly. While it is obviously not possible to fully anticipate all possible future scenarios, the Cabinet remains committed to providing whatever resources are needed to cope with the current pandemic and to lobby Government if further funding is required.

On 17 December Government announced a COVID-19 Support Package for 2021/22. BDC will receive £545,137 in unringfenced general Covid grant, and £117,302 Covid Local Council Tax Support Allocation. This should be sufficient to cover our additional Covid costs in 2021/22 without having to draw additional funding from reserves.

**8. What commercialisation / investment opportunities are there?
And how are we pursuing these?**

The current Food Hub project is a prime example of the type of investment opportunity that we are keen to deliver. With an investment of £1.8m this scheme is attracting significant investment from both the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and European Funding to deliver economic development within Broadland and assist in stimulating the Food Enterprise Zone but also generating a return for the Council.

We are also looking at further investment in Broadland Growth. A report on this is due in the next couple of months.

In addition, Cabinet have asked Officers to investigate how to expand our commercial waste collection service and did agree in this financial year to begin charging for planning pre-application advice from 21/22.

9. Covid will have a longer term effect on the economy.

a) How is the Cabinet addressing this?

Are we going to be investing more in economic support?

b) Are we looking to invest in order to meet our aspirations to grow the economy?

c) Will our economic support be focused on specific sectors / business segments?

ie will there be a focus on supporting large businesses, or small, or micro businesses?

d) What resource are we directing to ensure that Norfolk is able to capitalise on any national funding opportunities for economic growth?

The Council was awarded up to £116,155 in European grant money (ERDF) to invest in our high streets during the first lockdown period.

The Council has also been allocated £428,572 from the Norfolk Strategic Fighting Fund to help the economic recovery.

The Assistant Director for Economic Growth is currently preparing a paper on how to bolster the Council's core Economic Development Team.

In addition, Cabinet on 8th December, as part of the 'Budget Updated – 2nd wave Covid funding' report supported a proposal to expand our economic develop team to support the economic recovery work, and BDC set aside an additional £45,000 for this in 20/21, with further funding in 21/22.

10. Are Cabinet exploring opportunities to increase income streams?

If so what income streams are we exploring?

For instance, car parking charges to cover maintenance costs and investment in electronic charging points.

And if so, how are Cabinet going to ensure charges do not have a negative impact on communities or economic development and ensure the original service provision eg for car parking is paramount.

Officers are investigating:

- How to expand our commercial waste collection service
- Car parking charges.

Cabinet reports will come forward in due course explaining the proposals and the opportunities they provide together with any risks and mitigations that may be applicable. It is an essential element of balancing the Council's medium term financial plan that income streams are increased as an alternative to reductions in service levels.

11. The waste service is currently being retendered and there are potentially changes to the national waste regulations. Do Cabinet expect costs to rise / fall as a result? And if they rise how will the additional cost be funded?

The Council is undertaking a full EU compliant competitive procurement process in order to award the new waste contract. This will ensure that BDC obtains a value for money service, that also delivers the quality of service our residents require.

Until we have initial bids back from tenders (estimated April 2021) it is not possible to accurately quantify the likely cost.

The evaluation criteria for the contract is price 40%, quality 60%. This ensures that the bidders give appropriate consideration to price when submitting their bids.

The procurement process we are following is CPN (Competitive Procurement with Negotiation) which provides us with scope to negotiate and, if necessary amend the specification between initial bids and final bids. This therefore gives us the ability to ensure we are content with the financial cost before proceeding to award a contract.

If the contract does result in a price increase then this will be considered as part of the overall discussions regarding how to address the funding gap over the medium term.

If the national waste regulations change, then the Government have indicated, as part of the previous consultations, that they will provide additional grants to cover the cost pressures created - as has been the case in the past.

12. The Covid pandemic has demonstrated the value of local community support. Will Cabinet continue to invest in supporting the community going forward and if so how will they fund this?

As part of the Council's Covid Response a number of Covid Support Advisors have been recruited to support the community over the next 6 to 12 months. These posts are being funded from the Covid Outbreak Management Fund.

In respect of the future, Officers are looking at developing a model where we work with other public sector bodies to collaborate in funding. By investing ourselves, we can offer an incentive to other organisations to join us in jointly funding, achieving joint outcomes and reducing financial pressure on us. Officers will be looking to bring forward a Cabinet paper in due course on this.

13. Government funding for the rough sleeping initiatives may come to an end. If this funding ends will the council continue to fund this service?

The current rough sleeping funding ends after 2021. However due to delays in getting the programme started we will be able to continue the service at least up to Aug 21.

BDC / SNC have also recently been awarded £777,857 capital plus £266,095 revenue for Homelessness via the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP).

We will continue to lobby Government to continue to support this important area of our work and indications from the Comprehensive Spending Review on 25 November are that funding will continue.

We have been successful with the programme and the next steps programme are already talking about providing additional funding.

The longer term aim of the best in class housing model is to reduce the budget needed for temporary housing by investing upstream into prevention services which will mean we can continue to fund initiatives like this through existing budgets.

**14. How has the planning white paper impacted on the service?
and how has this been reflected in the budgets?**

O&S Members will be aware that the changes in the White Paper are potentially very significant, as the new direction of travel is for a completely new way of producing a local plan.

The White Paper proposes introducing a nationally set Infrastructure Levy in place of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and is proposing a more imminent change to the affordable housing threshold (in its consultation to introduce changes to the current planning system) which could see the affordable housing threshold increased to 40-50 dwellings for a limited period. These changes would significantly impact on this Council.

However, at present the White Paper just set out proposals. Until firm details about what changes are actually going to be implemented, it is too early to make changes to the 21/22 budgets.

O&S Comments on Information Provided

- Would be useful to have the current year costs for comparison purposes.
- Would be useful to have staff numbers / FTEs
- We show Revenue Expenditure and Income. But only Capital Expenditure.
- Would be useful to know statutory / discretionary service split.