

Cabinet Agenda

Members of Cabinet:

Cllr S A Vincent Chairman (Leader)	Policy
Cllr T M Mancini-Boyle (Deputy Leader)	Finance
Cllr J K Copplestone	Economic Development
Cllr J J Emsell	Transformation and Organisational Development
Cllr S Lawn	Planning
Cllr J Leggett	Environmental Excellence
Cllr F Whymark	Housing and Wellbeing

Date & Time:

Tuesday 15 June 2021 6.00pm

Place:

Council Chamber, Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, NR7 0DU

Contact:

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PUBLIC ATTENDANCE: If a member of the public would like to attend to speak on an agenda item, please email your request to committee.services@broadland.gov.uk, no later than 5.00pm Thursday 10 June 2021. Please see further guidance on the options for public speaking at page 2 of this agenda. Places will be limited.

This meeting will be live streamed for public viewing via the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZciRgwo84-iPyRImsTCIng>

Rules on Public Speaking

All public speakers are required to register a request to speak at public meetings by the date / time stipulated on the relevant agenda. Requests should be sent to:

committee.services@broadland.gov.uk

Public speaking can take place:

- Through a written representation (which will be read out at the meeting)
- In person at the Council offices

Please note that due to the current rules on social distancing, the Council cannot guarantee that you will be permitted to attend the meeting in person. No more than 20 people are permitted in the Council Chamber at any one time and the numbers of public speakers permitted in the room will vary for each meeting. Democratic Services will endeavour to ensure that public attendance is allocated as fairly as possible within the constraints of the places available.

All those attending the meeting in person must, sign in on the QR code for the building and promptly arrive at, and leave the venue. The hand sanitiser provided should be used and social distancing must be observed at all times. Further guidance on what to do on arrival will follow once your public speaking registration has been accepted.

AGENDA

1. **To receive declarations of interest under Procedural Rule no 8** **5**
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Minutes of meeting held on 20 April 2021** **7**
4. **Matters arising therefrom (if any)**
5. **Public Speaking**

To consider representation from the members of the public who have expressed the wish to convey their views on items on this Agenda.

In accordance with the Constitution a period of 3 minutes is allowed per member of the public.
6. **Representations from Non-Cabinet Members**

To receive the views from non-Cabinet Members on items on this agenda. Members are reminded to advise the Leader if they wish to attend and speak at the meeting.

In accordance with the Constitution a period of 3 minutes is allowed per non-Cabinet Member.
7. **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Cabinet will be advised of views expressed by the Committee at its meeting on 8 June 2021 in relation to items on this Agenda.
8. **Wellbeing Policy Development Panel** **21**

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2021.
9. **Covid-19 Recovery Plan 2021/22** **25**
10. **Sprowston Town Council Community Infrastructure Fund Loan** **34**

11.	Quarter 4 Strategic Performance and Finance	40
12.	Empty Homes Policy	99
13.	Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy	126

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.

<p>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.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>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 you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>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.</p>

**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



CABINET

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Cabinet of Broadland District Council, held on Tuesday 20 April 2021 at 6.00pm.

Cabinet Member Present:	Councillors: S Vincent (Leader), T Mancini-Boyle, J Copplestone, J Emsell, L Hemsall, J Leggett and F Whymark.
Other Members in Attendance:	Councillors: T Adams, N Brennan, M Murrell and S Riley.
Officers in Attendance:	The Managing Director, Director of Resources, Director of Place, Director of People and Communities, Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director of Finance, Assistant Director of Individuals and Families, Assistant Director of Planning, Assistant Director Regulatory, Assistant Director Economic Growth, Senior Enforcement Officer, Senior Economic Development Officer: Funding and Strategy, Project Co-ordinator Broadland Country Park, Senior Governance Officer (SW) and Democratic Services Officers (LA, JO)
Public in Attendance	Ms Eleanor Laming

218 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 16 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

219 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Ms Eleanor Laming, a resident of the District, addressed Cabinet in respect of item 13 on the Agenda - Endorsement of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF) Update.

Ms Laming advised the meeting that although the NSPF had produced some sound guidance to address climate change the Norfolk Planning Authorities were delaying considering the approaches put forward in its Climate Change

Research Paper until the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) was updated, which was at least five years away (Agreement 19 in the NSPF).

She informed the meeting that respondents to the latest GNLP consultation had raised concerns about the lack of policies in respect of low carbon construction, low energy homes, renewable energy and the quantum and spatial distribution of the proposed housing.

Ms Laming reminded members that there was a legal duty for Local Plans to include climate change mitigation policies and failure to do so could undermine the soundness of the Plan and leave it open to legal challenge. She also asked Cabinet to note that if the approaches put forward in the NSPF were implemented now millions of tons of CO₂ could be saved during the lifetime of the Plan.

In summing up Ms Laming asked Cabinet if they would request the Greater Norwich Development Partnership to review the GNLP against the new NSPF strategic guidance to address climate change issues now.

The Chairman thanks Ms Laming for her contribution to the meeting and it was confirmed that this matter would be discussed during consideration of the Endorsement of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework Update later in the meeting.

220 REPRESENTATIONS FROM NON CABINET MEMBERS

The Chairman agreed that, at his discretion, all non-Cabinet Members in attendance be allowed to join the debate at the relevant point of the proceedings on request.

221 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 March 2021.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Members on the views expressed by the Committee when it reviewed the Cabinet Agenda on 13 April 2021, as each item was considered.

222 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 March 2021.

223 ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 25 March 2021.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence advised the meeting that an Environmental Co-ordinator had been appointment and should commence in post in mid-May.

224 COVID RECOVERY REPORT

The Director of People and Communities introduced the report, which provided an update on the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the District and the Council's ongoing response, as well as the funding streams that had been provided to tackle the pandemic. This funding included an additional £399,000 from the Containing Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and the report set out how this could be allocated over the coming months.

The Assistant Director Finance advised the meeting that a key element of the report centred on the General Covid-19 funding of £891,000 that the Council had available to support the implementation of the Recovery Plan and further reports would be brought forward with proposals for how this should be spent over the coming months. However, in the interim it was requested that £50,400 be released to provide additional resource for the Council Tax and Recovery Team, who were under significant pressure due to an increase in workloads generated by the pandemic.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised the meeting that since the report was drafted more funding had been received from Government and that a further report would be coming to Cabinet in June with a wider allocation of funding to support residents and businesses in the District. She also noted the increased volume of work and complexity of cases being faced by the Council Tax Team and supported the increase of resources being proposed.

The Chairman noted that it was beneficial for members to see all the schemes being proposed and the allocation of £466,000 that would be used if all the projects progressed.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To note the local impact of Covid-19, together with the activities the Council is taking to mitigate those impacts.

2. To note the progress made towards delivering the actions set out in 'Our Plan for Recovery from the Covid-19 Crisis', and to recommend the update of the Recovery Plan to be considered by Cabinet in June.
3. To release the following sums to further support the Covid recovery (from the Un-Ringfenced Covid money)
 - Council Tax and Recovery Team Resource £50,400.
4. To agree a delegation to the relevant director, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder and the portfolio holder for finance, to release COMF funds to support activities consistent with the projects listed in this report.

Reasons for Decision

To provide additional resource to enhance the Council's Covid-19 recovery response.

225 SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

The Communities Senior Manager introduced the report, which highlighted the impact and opportunities that a Social Prescribing approach could have in the District.

Members were advised that Social Prescribing was a nationwide approach that was being utilised to relieve pressure on the NHS through a Community Connector model that provided support and assistance for non-medical issues through local GP surgeries and NHS partners. There was a Social Prescribing model in Broadland already that was delivered by a voluntary sector consortium, but this was far less effective than that delivered by Community Connector models elsewhere.

Cabinet were informed that the recruitment of Community Connectors in Broadland would enhance community working, whilst placing the Council in a stronger position to support vulnerable residents through the Covid-19 recovery and prevent increased demand on the Council's statutory services.

The report proposed that the Council employ two Community Connectors to cover the whole of the District for 12 months at a cost of £62,530 per annum, which would be funded through external Covid-19 recovery funds. The long-term aim was to bid to run Social Prescribing in Broadland and to draw in full salary costs from NHS sources, which would be a nil cost to the Council.

Cabinet was advised that in South Norfolk Community Connectors had been in operation for six years, with funding secured through the NHS for a further three years. However, due to the NHS funding cycle it would not be possible to bid for funding in Broadland until 2022, therefore, if the scheme was to be

launched sooner than this the Council would need to fund the posts for the first year through the Covid-19 Recovery Fund.

In response to a query from the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing, it was explained that staff who were operating the Community Connector scheme in South Norfolk had been selected as Lead Provider in the NHS Eastern Region for the National Academy of Social Prescribing. As these staff were part of the One Team across both Districts Broadland now had that same status.

It was also explained that a comprehensive communications plan would be used to make best use of staff and target those most in need. The Community Connectors would also use existing volunteers and mutual aid groups who were very knowledgeable about their communities to provide care and support for those who might otherwise slip through the net, such as people using food banks.

Members were also reassured that Community Connectors were monitored and measured against national benchmarks for best practice.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing proposed that recommendation 2 should be amended to include a review after six months of the Community Connectors being in post to evaluate the benefits to residents being provided by the service.

The proposal was duly seconded and voting was then carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To use COVID money (specifically the “containing outbreak management fund”) to implement a Community Connector service in Broadland district, to work as part of the Council’s early help offer and alongside the existing social prescribing service;
2. To agree to recruit 2 FTEs on a 12-month contract with the intention to review in six months from when they commence in post to evaluate the benefits to residents of the Community Connectors, as part of setting the 2022/23 budget.

Reasons for Decision

To further enhance community working in the District, through the Covid-19 recovery and beyond.

226 THE DEBT RESPITE SCHEME (BREATHING SPACE AND MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS MORATORIUM) REGULATIONS 2020 & STATUTORY DEBT REPAYMENT PLAN (FINANCIAL SERVICES BILL) – REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

The Senior Enforcement Officer introduced the report, which explained the additional level of demand that was anticipated to result from the introduction of Breathing Space Regulations and the Statutory Debt Repayment Plan, and requested a temporary additional resource in the Recovery Team to deal with the resulting workload.

The Debt Respite (Breathing Space) Regulations would come into force on the 4 May 2021 and would provide eligible debtors with legal protections from their creditors, including the halting of additional charges and enforcement action. The Statutory Debt Repayment Plan legislation would come into force shortly after this.

As a creditor, when the Council was told that a debt owed was in Breathing Space, all action related to that debt had to be stopped and the mandatory protections provided within the regulations applied. It was considered that the existing resource would not be sufficient to cope with the demands of these regulations without significant detriment to the Team's primary function of debt recovery.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance noted that the Council had a statutory duty to comply with the regulations and help give residents the support that they needed.

In response to a query from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Assistant Director for Finance confirmed that although the new regulations were not being introduced as a direct result of the pandemic, as the pandemic has increased demand and made it impractical to fund the additional work from within existing resources the post could be funded from the un-ringfenced Covid-19 monies that the Council had available to support services.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised the meeting that to ensure this service was being delivered effectively she proposed a second recommendation to review the Recovery Team capacity after 12 months, to assess if the increased resource was meeting the anticipated increase in workload.

The proposal was duly seconded and voting was then carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To increase the Recovery Team capacity by 1 x FTE for a period of 18 months to deal with work arising from the impact of the new Breathing

Space and Statutory Debt Repayment Plan regulations in Broadland and South Norfolk. The cost to be shared 45/55 between BDC / SNC in line with the One Team agreement; and

2. To review the Recovery Team capacity after 12 months, to assess if the increased resource is meeting the anticipated increase in workload.

Reasons for Decision

To put in place temporary additional resource in order to meet increased demand on the Council Tax Recovery Team.

227 ENDORSEMENT OF THE NORFOLK STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK UPDATE

The Assistant Director Planning introduced the report, which sought members' agreement to endorse the third update to the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF).

Members were advised that the Council, as a local planning authority, had a legal duty to engage constructively with other public bodies on strategic cross boundary planning matters (known as the Duty to Cooperate) and to document the cross boundary issues being addressed (the Statement of Common Ground). The NSPF provided the structure for doing so.

The NSPF included 31 formal agreements and was prepared by officers from the constituent Norfolk authorities, under the oversight of the Norfolk Strategic Planning Member Forum, on which the Portfolio Holder for Planning sat.

A number of changes were proposed in the revised document to ensure that the NSPF remained up-to-date and included changes to reflect the National Planning Policy Framework, the Covid-19 Recovery Plan, the Health Agreement as well as a new section on climate change. These changes were already included in the latest version of the Greater Norwich Local Plan.

In respect of the issues raised by Ms Laming during public speaking earlier in the meeting; it was confirmed that the Local Plan consultation had now closed. However, the Plan included a section that considered if the Duty to Cooperate had been met and if the Plan was compliant on soundness in relation to climate change, so these issues would be tested by the Planning Inspector at the Independent Examination later in the year.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

To endorse the update to the Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework and to agree to remain a signatory to the document.

Reasons for Decision

In order to meet legislative requirements.

228 MEMBER IT

The Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) introduced the report, which summarised the conclusions drawn from the Members IT Survey and set out the deliberations of the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee and their recommendation to Cabinet for the provision of Member IT.

The report confirmed that the majority of the issues raised through the IT Survey were in relation to the software and that these would be addressed through the implementation of O365 and the provision of training for the new software.

The following three options had been considered by the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee: to continue with iPads or replace them with laptops or for members to use their own equipment. By a majority vote the Committee recommended retaining iPads, as the devices had two years of life remaining and the O365 rollout should solve many of the issues that had frustrated members with the Blackberry software.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning commended the recommendation in the report and reminded members that they had a duty to protect the public purse and to ensure money was spent as effectively as possible.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised the meeting that many of the survey respondents were dissatisfied with the iPad device, not just the software on it.

He advised the meeting that the Committee had recommended retaining the iPads for the next two years and to hold a full review of member IT provision by October 2022; and that the final decision on member IT provision should be made by Council.

In response, the Chairman advised the meeting that he considered that the issue was not with the iPads, but with the software and that he would not wish to wait 18 months before a review of member IT was conducted. Instead a review should be held within a few months to ensure that members had the right equipment to meet their needs.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance expressed disappointment that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had spent so much time on the member IT provision, when there were so many items on the agenda that were providing support to the Council's residents during this difficult time. She added that the budget for member IT had only been set in case it was needed and that this was not the time use it, as the focus should be on residents.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development noted that member IT should be regularly reviewed to ensure that it was allowing members to serve their residents effectively and he proposed an amendment to the recommendation in the report, to include a review in July of the O365 rollout and training and another member survey and workshop to allow officers to report back on the software improvements to the October Cabinet.

The proposal was duly seconded and voting was then carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the recommendation from the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee to retain the current provision of iPads; with a review in July covering the O365 rollout and training undertaken by members with another member survey and workshop to enable officers to have information on software improvements to report back to the October Cabinet.

Reasons for Decision

To retain the current provision of member iPads for the next two years and to review the new rollout of software.

229 REVIEW OF POLICIES

The Assistant Director Finance introduced the report, which presented updated versions of the Counter Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Whistleblowing Policy. These policies had been reviewed to ensure they were in line with best practice and had been approved by the Audit Committee at its 11 March 2021 meeting. The reports were presented to Cabinet for review and approval, prior to being presented to Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance commended the work of the Audit Committee in reviewing the policies.

In response to a query, the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support advised that training on the policies would be made available to members and officers in due course.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

The adoption of the:

- Counter Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Council's policies remain up-to-date and in line with best practice.

230 PLUMSTEAD ROAD: PROPOSED COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER (CPO) TO ENABLE A NEW ROUNDABOUT

The Director for Place introduced the report, which sought Council approval for a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for land adjacent to Plumstead Road to enable a new roundabout to be constructed. The junction was a key piece of infrastructure in facilitating the proper planning of the area, but to date the landowners to the south of the junction would not sign the agreement required to enable highway works to be carried out on their land.

The report and the proposed CPO demonstrated the Council's intention to deliver this scheme whilst, in parallel, also seeking to reach an amicable way forward with the respective landowners.

In response to a query it was confirmed that there was the potential to lose £1.3m in external funding for the delivery of the roundabout, if it was not carried out expediently.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning confirmed that the Council would rather deliver the roundabout without resorting to a CPO, but as this was such an important piece of infrastructure it had no choice in the matter.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- i. That officers continue to engage with the respective landowners with the intention that they sign the s.278 agreement to enable the construction of the proposed roundabout at Plumstead Road; and
- ii. That, in parallel with the ongoing engagement with the landowners, all appropriate steps as set out in this report are taken to secure the necessary land via a compulsory purchase order to enable the roundabout at Plumstead Road to be delivered. In the event that the s.278 agreement is signed to the satisfaction of Broadland District

Council and Norfolk County Council as Highway Authority the action being taken to secure a compulsory purchase order will cease.

Reasons for Decision

To demonstrate the Council's determination to deliver a key piece of infrastructure for the facilitation of proper planning in the District.

231 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY ANNUAL REPORT

The Senior Governance Officer presented the report, which summarised the progress made by Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council during 2020 in complying with their duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty, as required by the Equality Act 2010.

This was the second year that the report had been published jointly and during 2020 the responsibility for equalities had passed from the Policy Team to the Governance Team, who now produced the report.

The Equality Act 2010 required the Councils to have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.*
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

The duty covered nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership.

The Senior Governance Officer then took Cabinet through the Annual Report, pointing out and highlighting examples under each of the areas that the Councils must have due regard to, as well as looking at activities planned to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty for the coming year.

Members were advised that South Norfolk Council had considered the Annual Report yesterday and had requested that some additional figures be added to underpin the examples set out in the Report. It was, therefore, requested, that if Cabinet were minded to approve the report that final approval being delegated to the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the joint Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report for publication, subject to minor amendment, with final approval being delegated to the Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development.

Reasons for Decision

To meet legislative requirements.

**232 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
RESOLVED**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business because otherwise, information which is exempt information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, would be disclosed to them.

233 ST FAITHS COMMON – LEASE

The Project Co-ordinator Broadland Country Park introduced the report, which asked Cabinet to agree, in principle, the signing of a new lease for land at St. Faith's Common to facilitate the ongoing delivery of Broadland Country Park, as set out in the exempt report.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development thanked the Project Co-ordinator for her hard work on the project and commended to proposal to Cabinet.

Voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To agree to sign the lease, subject to final terms being agreed by the Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

Reasons for Decision

To facilitate the ongoing delivery of Broadland Country Park.

234 MANAGED SERVICE – PAYROLL

The Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) introduced the report, which sought Cabinet approval to continue with the agreement for the provision of the managed service for payroll for a period of five years from September 2021, as set out in the exempt report.

Following consideration of all the options, the Portfolio Holder for Finance proposed the recommended option, which was duly seconded. Voting was then carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To

1. Agree to enter into a five-year agreement for the provision of a managed service for payroll and recruitment; and
2. Agree to delegate the detail of the agreement to the Director Resources and the Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance.

Reasons for Decision

To maintain the provision of a managed payroll service.

235 FOOD INNOVATION CENTRE

The Assistant Director for Economic Growth introduced the report, which provide an exempt update on the Food Innovation Centre Project.

Cabinet gave thorough consideration to the proposed changes to the financial model of the Project.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development thanked officers for their work on the Project and emphasised the importance that this would have for the agri-food sector across the whole of Norfolk. It was also confirmed that the Project continued to meet its objectives, as set out in the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Industrial Strategy.

The Chairman proposed a minor amendment to recommendation 2, which was duly seconded. Following this voting was carried out by way of a roll call and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To

1. Agree to changes to the FIC financial model and funding bid to increase the Project operating costs to offset any potential operating surplus/profit; and
2. Agree to defer any repayment of BDC's initial investment in the FIC for a period of 15 years.

Reasons for Decision

To progress the delivery of the Food Innovation Centre.

(The meeting concluded at 8.03 pm)

Chairman

WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Wellbeing Policy Development Panel of Broadland District Council, held on Wednesday 12 May 2021 at 6pm at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: M Murrell (Chairman), A Crotch, J Neesam, S Prutton, L Starling

Other Members present: Councillor F Whymark (ex officio)

Officers in Attendance: The Assistant Director of Individuals and Families (M Pursehouse), the Policy and Partnerships Officer (V Parsons), the Housing Standards Senior Manager (K Philcox) and the Committee Officers (DM and LA)

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

No declarations of interest were made.

40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Foulger and N Shaw.

41 MINUTES

The minutes of the Wellbeing Panel meeting held on 3 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

42 EMPTY HOMES ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Members considered the report of the Policy and Partnerships Officer setting out options for the Council's position and prioritisation in relation to discretionary enforcement activity for empty homes within the housing standards team. This included a proposed direction for members to consider and recommend to Cabinet which would inform a draft Empty Homes and Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity and Enforcement Policy to be presented to Cabinet for approval.

The Assistant Director of Individuals and Families reminded members that the proposals had been considered by the Panel at its informal meeting on 14 April 2021 and the comments made at that meeting were now reflected in the updated report now being considered. The issue of the enforcement approach relating to empty homes was a challenging one and there was a need to ensure the approach adopted had regard to public expectations/member expectations and the complexities of enforcement activity. Going forward with a Policy would require a clear set of criteria to enable expectations to be managed.

The Policy and Partnerships Officer drew attention to the key areas for members' consideration: the proposed model to tackle empty homes, the changes to best practice guidance, the criteria for action assessment and the approval process to commence Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) or Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO). With regard to the number of empty homes, Broadland currently had one of the lowest number of empty homes in the County and was well below the England average with 0.6% of all properties empty putting it in the top 15% in the Country. Most empty properties in the district tended to be detached, rural 3 / 4 bed properties. The Policy and Partnerships Officer outlined the main reasons properties became empty including financial difficulties associated with the upkeep of a property, poor market price, difficulties identifying owners, planning restrictions and an unwillingness to sell/let or inhabit a property. She then went on to outline the options for tackling empty homes which included engagement with owners, utilising other legislation, EDMOs and CPOs. With regard to the use of CPOs, she drew attention to the changes in best practice guidance which recommended that Council's should make at least one voluntary offer of purchase before resorting to a CPO.

The Housing Standards Senior Manager gave examples of two empty home case studies involving a successful outcome and an unsuccessful outcome to demonstrate the complexities of the process. There was no "typical" empty house and each property had a unique set of complex circumstances. It was noted that even in the unsuccessful case study referred to, the property had eventually been brought back into use and this was the case with most properties; intervention by the Council sought to speed up this process and avoid a property being empty and causing a nuisance for a number of years pending it being dealt with privately.

The Policy and Partnerships Officer then outlined the proposed approach to responding to reports of empty homes and to the proposal to adopt an enforcement approach based on exploring approximately 2 cases per year with a 0.65 fte staff resource (24 hours per week across both districts) dedicated to the work. These included offering an online facility to report empty properties and carry out a high level assessment, offering advice, guidance and support to owners, provision of financial assistance and council tax banding checks, followed by use of a comprehensive criteria for action assessment to prioritise properties for enforcement, a financial assessment for those properties with a score in excess of 700 points and delegated

authority to approve the commencement of enforcement work and costs up to a set value. There was also a proposal to provide ward members with quarterly data on properties empty for longer than 2 years.

The Housing Standards Senior Manager then took members through the propose criteria for action assessment form which used a number of factors to “score” a property. A score of over 700 points would culminate in the initiation of action to seek delegated authority to move forward with a financial assessment of enforcement action. The whole process was accountable, complied with Policy and could be used in response to any appeals to demonstrate a considered approach to enforcement action. Two levels of delegated authority were being proposed, one for properties valued up to £350k with costs up to £25k to bring the property back into use and one for those valued over £350k and with costs likely to be over £25k.

In summary, officers were seeking to ensure there was a robust process in place for tackling empty properties in the district which was clear and transparent and embedded within was a supportive approach for owners. It also needed to provide for a muscular approach to enforcement when required and provide clear approval mechanisms and consistency when exploring CPO and EDMO processes including costs. It needed to form an evidence base for formal enforcement and needed to link to the wider strategic ambitions of the Council.

Officers then answered questions from members. With regard to the EDMOs, it was noted that properties were often not in a fit state for rent. The option was available to owners to apply for a £4k interest free loan to improve the property which would remain as a charge on the property until its sale. It was noted that the best practice example introduced by Breckland Council in 2019 had seen approximately 4/5 restore grants of £10k taken up and the scheme was due for review. Members noted that, typically, approximately 2/3 enforcement cases were progressed each year with each case taking on average 12 months from start to conclusion. It was noted that, where possible, support was given to owners, including signposting to other services if needed.

There was general support for the proposals and an acknowledgement that, whilst there were risks associated with the enforcement process and the costs involved, ultimately these risks were mitigated by the acquisition of an asset. Members felt there was sufficient justification to proceed with an enforcement policy as proposed but they were of the view that the property values referred to in the delegated authority sought would better reflect current average property values if they were reduced from £350k to £250k. Members also sought confirmation that the sums referred to were in accordance with the constitution and officers undertook to ensure this was the case.

It was then agreed to support the recommendations contained in the report subject to the property values referred to being reduced from £350k to £250K.

RESOLVED that

1. The Panel notes the options contained within the report;
2. The Panel endorses and **recommends to Cabinet** adoption of the suggested resource and activity model for the Council's approach to discretionary enforcement activity in relation to empty homes to inform a draft Empty Homes and Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity and Enforcement Policy;
3. The Panel endorses and **recommends to Cabinet** the proposal that delegated authority is approved for the Assistant Director for Individuals and Families in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing to authorise costs for Compulsory Purchase Order(CPO) and Empty Dwelling Management Orders(EDMO) where assessment indicates, for:
 - Commencement of a CPO process, including a voluntary offer of purchase for properties valued up to £250,000
 - A total capital budget of up to £25,000 per property to bring back into use (a maximum of £50,000 per year for the Council).
4. The Panel endorses and **recommends to Cabinet** the proposal that where assessment indicates that:
 - Evaluation of property price exceeds £250,000 and/or
 - Capital budget to bring a property back into use exceeds £25,000,delegated authority is approved for the Assistant Director for Individuals and Families in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing and the Portfolio Holder for Finance to assess and authorise a Compulsory Purchase Order or Empty Dwelling Management Order process.

(The meeting concluded at 7:05pm)

Chairman

COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN 2021 - 2022

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Portfolio: Leader

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of the Report:

To:

- Provide an update on the proposed actions contained within the new Covid-19 Recovery Plan 2021-2022.
- Provide the details of the source and amount of funding required to support an effective recovery for our communities, our businesses and the Council.

Recommendations:

1. To consider and approve the proposed actions as set out in the attached Covid-19 Recovery Plan 2021-2022.
2. To approve the indicative sums set out in Appendix A and the table at 4.4 to provide further support to the Covid-19 recovery, and to delegate to the relevant Director, in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder in order to utilise the funding flexibly and to ensure the greatest impact.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Building upon *Our Plan for Recovery from the Covid-19 Crisis* as received by Cabinet in July 2020, this report sets out how the Council will allocate Covid funding for 2021-2022.
- 1.2 The Covid-19 Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 as attached at Appendix A, sets out how the Council will address key factors of the Pandemic, the ongoing work to protect and enable recovery for individuals and businesses, and seeks approval for the balance of the funding that is required to deliver against the Councils priorities for recovery.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Covid-19 Pandemic is the biggest challenge the UK has faced in generations. Its impact on people's health, wellbeing and the economy continues to be substantial both locally and globally, and it is likely that the ramifications will be felt for many years to come.
- 2.2 To date there have been a number of reports to Cabinet and Full Council detailing the impacts of Covid-19 on Communities, Businesses and the Council itself. Each of those reports has provided in great detail the Councils significant response to Covid-19.
- 2.3 In July 2020 Cabinet approved adoption of *Our Plan for Recovery from the Covid-19 Crisis*. At that time the Country was slowly coming out of the first national lockdown and there was a strong sense that the worst had passed. However that initial optimism proved to be misplaced and in fact there have been two further national lockdowns.
- 2.4 In April 2021 Cabinet received a report that encompassed
 - An update on the impacts of Covid on the district and the Councils ongoing response
 - An update on progress made against *Our Plan for Recovery from the Covid-19 Crisis* (as agreed by Council in July 2020), and
 - A summary of Covid funding sources, allocation and spend to support the Councils response and enable the recovery, including indicative allocations of the Containing Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) received by the Council
- 2.5 The report demonstrated that significant progress had been made against the priorities for recovery set by the Council in 2020 and recognised the need to renew the Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 on the basis of the ongoing impacts of the two subsequent national lockdowns.

- 2.6 As the nation moves through the Governments Roadmap for lifting the third lockdown it is appropriate to re-focus on the priority areas the Council will seek to address in moving forward in our second phase of recovery. For this reason a new Recovery Plan has been developed which sets out the direction for the Council over the coming year.

3. Plan for Recovery 2021-2022

- 3.1 This report and the attached Appendix A draws together the themes and key priorities on which the Council has based its Recovery Plan for 2021-2022.
- 3.2 The Plan has been developed utilising the learning from the 2020 Recovery Plan combined with an analysis of the known impacts of the pandemic. Those impacts were reported to Cabinet in April 2021 as was an analysis of the Council performance against the 2020 Recovery Plan. It was also noted that outstanding actions from the 2020 Recovery Plan have been subsumed into the Councils Delivery Plan 2021-2022 that was agreed by Council in February 2021.
- 3.3 The key themes from the 2020 Recovery Plan have been carried forward into the new Recovery Plan and refined priority areas identified. The themes and priority areas are:

COMMUNITIES

- Housing and Hardship
- Improved Community Cohesion

ECONOMY

- Helping People into Jobs
- Grow our Economy by Supporting Businesses

ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

- Secure our Finances through Transformation and Commercialisation
- Reimagine our Service Delivery and Ways of Working

- 3.4 The Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 draws together all of the activities that will deliver the recovery, some of which are already in train and for which there is funding in place and approval for how that funding will be expended.
- 3.5 The attached Recovery Plan identifies the actions for which there is as yet no approved funding, however the Council has significant resource available to allocate to those actions should it choose to do so.
- 3.6 It is proposed that monitoring delivery against the Covid-19 Recovery Plan 2021-2022 will be aligned with, and form part of the pre-existing Delivery Plan reporting process.

4. Overview of Covid Funding

4.1 Since the start of the pandemic there have been various funding streams to support the Council's response. The main funding streams are:

- General Un-ringfenced Covid monies to support our services
- Funding to support our towns and villages
- Track and Trace (Isolation Support Payment) funding
- Enforcement/Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF)
- Support for Homelessness
- Hardship support
- Funding to support our Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents
- Business Grants

4.2 The report to Cabinet in April 2021 identified the income received during 2020/21 and for 2021/22 and how some of it had been allocated. The report also summarised the remaining Covid budget available for recovery work.

The table below replicates what has been previously reported, plus additional COMF funding received subsequent to the publication of the April Cabinet report.

	BDC £'000	BDC £'000	SNC £'000	SNC £'000
General Covid Monies				
2020/21 Covid Monies				
- Grant Allocation	1,625		1,852	
- Less Spend	-779		-1,177	
- Less Committed	-585	261	-754	-79
2021/22 Covid Monies				
- Grant Allocation	662		794	
- Less Spend	-		-	
- Less Committed	-32	630	-25	769
Available		891		690
Additional COMF Monies				
Direct 2021/22 Allocation to BDC / SNC (April 2021)		141		163
Additional Surge Funding 2021/22 from NCC		86		86

- 4.3 A proportion of the additional COMF funding made available to the councils has been allocated, under discretion made available to officers in consultation with portfolio holders, as annotated on Appendix A and in accordance with the indicative spends at Cabinet in April 2021. This has seen an increased investment in mental health support for younger people and increased licensing team capacity.
- 4.4 The new Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 sets out all of the actions the Council will undertake to enable a speedy and effective recovery. The Plan at Appendix A makes it clear where activities have financial approval and those that seek funding to proceed. The Actions requiring funding approval are summarised in the Table below:-

Action	Allocation Un-ringfenced	
	BDC £'000	SNC £'000
Communities		
Set aside funds to cover the loss of DHP	71	92
Augment additional capacity in Housing and Benefits Team	72	72
Invest in and enhanced Debt and Welfare Rights Service	17	17
Additional 0.5FTE to assist with HMO Licensing	25	25
KickStart Programme, Choices and Work4All	35	35
Skills and Training Programme – Project management capacity for 18 months	75	75
Graduate, Apprenticeships and Summer Placements Scheme	15	15
Support to business to engage with the public sector in bidding for work	25	25
Develop and deliver a comprehensive Economic Growth Strategy	25	25
DFG Recovery Project	35	35
Augment Leisure recovery through provision of a development pot	-	50
New Ways of Working Phase 2 – Future Office Accommodation Programme	100	100
Development of Hybrid meetings to mitigate need for large public meetings	12	12
Customer Experience and Insight Lead to assist in transformation	45	45
Implementation and training of Business Intelligence software	25	25
Additional HR capacity	28	28
Total Additional Allocation Requested	605	676

- 4.5 Subject to the approval of the allocation requested at 4.3 above this will result in the following contingency un-ringfenced grant and COMF. Officers will continue to work with portfolio holders to look at how COMF money can be best utilised, under discretion offered in the April 2021 cabinet report.

	Un-ringfenced £'000	COMF £'000
BDC	286	95
SNC	14	117

5. Issues and risks

- 5.1 The primary risk associated with this report is that of a further outbreak of Covid-19 and the discovery of new and more transmissible variants that could drive a third wave of infections. The success of the ongoing vaccination programme is clearly mitigating the likelihood of a further outbreak, however an increase in infections has been identified as a significant risk by the government's scientific advisors.
- 5.2 The Council response to the Pandemic has been partially stepped down to reflect the current low levels of infection, however measures are in place to ensure a rapid response should that situation change. In addition the Council continues to have a statutory responsibility to support those who have been asked to isolate. This work is ongoing as are other measures contained within Appendix A.
- 5.3 **Resource Implications** – A detailed summary of the Covid budget position was presented to Cabinet in April 2021. That report identified significant resources are available to the Council to continue its programme of actions for recovery should it choose to do so.
- 5.4 **Legal Implications** – There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.5 **Equality Implications** – The impact of Covid varies across different groups in the community and has clearly impacted disproportionately upon the most vulnerable. Older people and those from BAME groups are more likely to suffer serious health impacts, whilst in general, younger people are more likely to suffer serious economic impacts. The Council's Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 recognises those differences and seeks to address them in order to support those most in need.
- 5.6 **Environmental Impact** – There are no direct detrimental environmental impacts arising from this report.
- 5.7 **Crime and Disorder** – There has been an attributable increase in anti-social behaviour during the last year. The Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 acknowledges the impact on officer caseloads and makes provision to address this.
- 5.8 **Risks** – Measures identified in the Council's Recovery Plan mitigate and actively address the risks identified. The proposed approach therefore serves a dual role of both protecting our communities whilst also facilitating the recovery.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Covid-19 Recovery Plan for 2021-2022 articulates the Council's ambition for protecting our communities whilst also facilitating the delivery of an effective recovery from the impacts of the Pandemic.

7. Recommendations

1. To consider and approve the proposed actions as set out in the attached Covid-19 Recovery Plan 2021-2022.
2. To approve the indicative sums set out in Appendix A and the table at 4.4 to provide further support to the Covid-19 recovery, and to delegate to the relevant Director, in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder in order to utilise the funding flexibly and to ensure the greatest impact.

Background papers

Covid Recovery Report - Cabinet April 2021

Covid-19 Update Report – Cabinet February 2021

Covid-19 Update Report – Cabinet and Full Council December 2020

Our Plan for Recovery from the Covid-19 Crisis – Cabinet July 2020

APPENDIX A

BROADLAND AND SOUTH NORFOLK COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN 2021-2022

THEME	PRIORITY AREA	IMPACTS	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?	ACTIONS	RESOURCE (per authority)			COMMENT
					COMF £'000	UNR £'000	OTH £'000	
COMMUNITIES	Housing and Hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased numbers of homelessness cases caused by economic downturn and the end of furlough, and pent up demand from the embargo on court evictions Rising debt including rent and mortgage arrears Increased numbers of working age population claiming benefits Long term health impacts of Covid/Long Covid 	<p>Create resilience in the Council's ability to continue managing the ongoing and anticipated additional demand for housing and benefits teams</p> <p>Helping to prevent homelessness through increased preventative services</p>	Improve access to appropriate funding to support clients and prevent homelessness, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Hardship Grant for essentials for residents in crisis (established - £25K) Develop a 'Whatever it Takes' Grant – to be used for wider homelessness avoidance – (£25K – COMF) Set aside funds to cover loss of DHP (£92K SNC/£71K BDC) 	25	25		Hardship Fund approved by Cabinet in 03/21 Whatever it Takes Grant approved by Cabinet in 04/21 New Funding Request
				Augment the additional capacity in the Housing Team & Benefits Team (6 additional roles in place, extend by up to 12 months)		72		New Funding Request
				Invest in an enhanced Debt and Welfare Rights Service (1FTE) additional capacity, building on the existing service offer.		17		New Funding Request
				Continue to administer and deploy the Isolation Support Payment payments to those required to isolate and are eligible. Admin costs			53	Pre-approved
	Improved Community Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced Covid compliance and an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour Increased Mental and Physical Health issues, particularly amongst the young Increased and unequal vulnerability in our communities Ongoing enhanced demand on the Help Hub & Community Volunteers 	<p>An ongoing physical presence in the community that helps to maintain the low level infection rate. Combining where needed, robust challenge with support for those self-isolating or demonstrating vaccine hesitancy</p> <p>Help to manage community support and cohesion and the increase in low level nuisance/ASB demand</p> <p>Ensure the long term sustainability of Community Groups</p>	Re-focus the Community based regulatory and support offer, ensuring Covid compliance is maintained where possible, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the Covid Support Advisors contracts to March 2022 and improve analytics capacity to identify how best to deploy this resource Invest in enhanced regulatory capacity to help manage increased ASB and nuisance demand manifesting from social restrictions 	144			Approved by Cabinet in 04/21
					60			Approved by Cabinet in 04/21
				Build on existing partnerships to commission Young Person Mental Health Support, in order to support up to an additional 120 young people per authority per year for two years	94			Allocated as per agreement at Cabinet in 04/21 with increased funding
				Increase our exercise referral scheme by 1 FTE per district for 24 months, creating additional throughput of approximately 250 per year, per authority	50			Allocated as per agreement at Cabinet in 04/21
				Employ Engagement Officers to help build bridges and community resilience with hard to Reach Groups identified through Covid	30			Approved by Cabinet in 04/21
				Employ Community Connectors to help develop- and navigate community capacity in Broadland	BDC 60			Approved by BDC Cabinet in 04/21
				Improved the infrastructure and support to Mutual Aid Groups	10			Approved by Cabinet in 04/21
				Implement additional 24 month 0.5 FTE to assist with investigation and licensing of new HMOs found through Covid		25		New Funding Request
	Helping People Into Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher levels of unemployment and higher claimants of benefits amongst the working age population Lack of opportunity for those new to the jobs market Skills and training opportunities have reduced Young & low skilled workers from specific sectors have been disproportionately impacted, creating greater inequality 	<p>Develop and redesign pathways into employment to better support those most greatly affected by Covid</p> <p>Maintain a lower unemployment rate and help to reduce the numbers of the working age population in receipt of benefits</p>	Increased capacity to support more young people into the workplace, and older working age people to retrain and redeploy into the economy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out and facilitate our KickStart Programme Cover the costs of an expanded and better directed Choices programme, trainer costs, administration and venue hire Increase the capacity of the DWP partnership project Work4All 			13	Pre-approved New Funding Request
				Create and deliver a BDC & SNC Skills and Training Programme – Project Management capacity 18 months		75		New Funding Request
				Design and implement a graduate, apprenticeships and summer placements scheme. Cost of an additional HR Business Partner		15		New Funding Request

	PRIORITY AREA	IMPACTS	WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	ACTIONS	RESOURCE (per authority)			
					COMF £'000	UNR £'000	OTH £'000	
	Grow our Economy by Supporting Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The UK and local Economy has shrunk during the Pandemic, however both BDC and SNC have been identified as in the top 5% areas most likely to bounce back.Potential drop in high-street footfall.Loss of income for businesses mandated and not mandated to close.Significant impact on Tourism and Hospitality sectors.Potential reduction in demand on the land development/construction sector	<p>The Economy grows</p> <p>Businesses remain viable and able, in time, to grow</p> <p>Number of new start-ups increases</p> <p>More local businesses successfully bidding for public sector contracts</p>	Development of a comprehensive Economic Growth Strategy		25		New Funding Request
				Undertake a comprehensive, commercially focused investigation of key stalled sites			29	Consultant appointed
				Re-opening the High Street awareness campaign – <i>Pleased to See You!</i> and Clickit Local	25		BDC 232 SNC 252	COMF approved by Cabinet in 04/21. RHSS Welcome Back Fund
				Harleston Public Realm Improvements			SNC 428	Norfolk Strategic Fund. Also a further £65K match funding
				Business Support and Enterprise Development Grants			BDC 428	BDC allocation of Norfolk Strategic Fund
				Increased Licensing Team capacity and backfill to manage additional Covid related demand and to facilitate service Policy Review	55			Allocated as per agreement at Cabinet in 04/21 with increased funding
				BDC & SNC Covid-19 Safe Business Certification	10			Approved by Cabinet in 04/21
				Ongoing distribution of Government funded Business Grants Includes:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">Hospitality Restart Adaptations GrantsSupporting businesses to enhance their online offer – Go Digital (£22K – funded from ARG Phase 1)			BDC 49.89M SNC 57.65M	When as yet unclaimed ARG Phase 3 is included BDC - 50.72M SNC - 58.66M
				Support local businesses to engage with the public sector in bidding for work through promoting a common set of Contract Standing Orders and procurement processes in Norfolk and offering training and support to businesses on how to complete these		25		New Funding Request
				Enhanced Business Support. Employ a specialist consultant to support businesses through the Pandemic.			BDC - 45 SNC - 55	Approved By Cabinet in 12/20 but not yet committed
ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE	Secure our Finances through Transformation and Commercialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Significant backlog in some service areas such as Disabled Facility Grants (DFG)	Ensure critical services have dealt with their backlog caused by Covid and social restrictions	DFG Recovery Project – additional case management capacity to help speed up recovery against the 2021-2122 budget which has been carried forward		35		New Funding Request
				Increased Council Tax and Recovery Team Resource		61.6		Approved by Cabinet on 04/21
		Council Tax Collection rate has reduced	Debt collection rate increases	Development and Call Down from COVID Staff Bank	28			£28K approved by Cabinet in 04/21
	Reimagining our Service Delivery and Ways of Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Loss of incomeSignificant changes to the way we work, accelerated by COVID can be embedded to provide a more productive environment and improved customer experienceStaff have been impacted by Covid	<p>Income maximised</p> <p>Reduction in office accommodation to reduce overheads and an enhanced offering to our customers</p> <p>Increased transparency of decision making as residents can observe committee meetings online as well as attend in person</p> <p>Improved customer engagement and transformation of service</p> <p>Use of business intelligence to shape our services and delivery</p> <p>Staff are positively supported and resilience improved</p>	Augment Leisure recovery through provision of a development pot, allowing the New Business Development Manager to invest in new services and products.		SNC 50		New Funding Request
				New Ways of Working – Phase 2 Accommodation – Develop and implement proposals for the use of our office accommodation, considering a ‘hub and spoke’ model (subject to Business Case and Project Management)		100		New Funding Request Subject to Business Case, further resources may be needed
				Development of hybrid meetings to mitigate the need for larger public facing democratic meetings and external venue hire		12		New Funding Request
				Initial appointment of Customer Experience and Insight Lead to develop customer insight to assist in transformation of services and prove the benefits of the role		45		New Funding Request
				Implementation and training of Business Intelligence Software		25		New Funding Request
				Additional HR capacity to deal directly with employee relations		28		New Funding Request
						BDC 605 SNC 676		
ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION REQUESTED								

COMF = Contain Outbreak Management Fund UNR = Un-ringfenced Funding OTH = Other Sources of Covid Related Funding

BID TO THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE FUND FROM SPROWSTON TOWN COUNCIL

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Portfolio: Economic Development

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of the Report:

- 1.1 This report presents a bid to Cabinet from Sprowston Town Council (STC) to the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF).

Recommendations:

1. To utilise the CIF to enable STC to bring about the timely purchase of the former Viking Public House, Tills Road, Sprowston to enable conversion into a new multi-use community hub.
2. To agree a £250,000 loan from the Community Infrastructure Fund to Sprowston Town Council.
3. To authorise the Director of Place to draft a legal agreement in accordance with the heads of terms referred to in paragraph 4.5.

1. Summary

- 1.1 The CIF enables parishes to bring forward community infrastructure projects ahead of receipt of their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Sprowston has a Neighbourhood Plan thereby enabling them to receive 25% of the CIL due within their parish.
- 1.2 In March 2021 this Council received a formal request from Sprowston Town Council to borrow £250,000 from the CIF.

2. Background

- 2.1 In September 2015 Cabinet agreed to establish the Community Infrastructure Fund from the Broadland Growth Reserve. The fund provides a £500,000 borrowing facility for Parish and Town Councils to draw down the cost of delivering local infrastructure projects with the knowledge that it will be underwritten by future CIL receipts.
- 2.2 The Town Council's letter is attached as Appendix 1. It explains that the money would be used to facilitate the purchase of the former Viking Public House, Tills Road, Sprowston. The loan would therefore enable STC to proceed towards commissioning further works to the premises: to extend, convert and refurbish into a new multi-use community hub.
- 2.3 STC has previously identified that residents in the west of Sprowston are without access to a 'village hall' or other local community venue. No other buildings suitable for purchase and conversion exist in the west of Sprowston. A recent survey found that community-focused groups lack a suitable venue in the area to deliver services or hold out-reach activities.
- 2.4 The purchase of the building represents a one-off opportunity to secure a much-needed community facility, whilst also preserving a heritage building that is otherwise likely to be demolished and re-developed. Timely access to the CIF will enable this.

3. Current position/findings

- 3.1 Three previous bids have been submitted to the Fund; all approved by Cabinet. In January 2017 Cabinet approved the first bid to the CIF which was from Old Catton Parish Council for £59,000. This loan has been fully repaid. In May 2017 Cabinet approved a bid from Rackheath Community Council (RCC) for £250,000 to extend and refurbish the Sports Pavilion at Stracey Playing Field; work which was completed in September 2019. In January 2019 Cabinet approved a bid to Drayton Parish Council for £70,000 to enhance the play equipment on the Florence Carter Memorial Playing Field in the village centre, including fencing and to replace council noticeboards in the village.
- 3.2 Following the April 2021 CIL payments to parishes, Drayton will have fully repaid their loan. Rackheath will have an outstanding loan of £203,000 from the Fund.

However, this will be repaid soon as RCC will receive scheduled CIL payments in excess of £230,000 over the next 2 years.

- 3.3 If this STC bid to the CIF is approved it will leave £43,000 in the Fund. However, the CIF is constantly being replenished as CIL is paid off against the existing CIF loans.
- 3.4 Relating to this bid Sprowston is scheduled to receive in excess of £2m over the next 2 years. This sum includes a scheduled CIL payment of £540,000 in October 2021. This would repay the amount borrowed in a very short time span.

4. Proposed action

- 4.1 The bid by Sprowston Town Council complies with the Community Infrastructure Regulations (having regard to the fact that the loan will be paid back by their CIL receipts).
- 4.2 With regard to point (4.1) above the Regulations allow Parish and Town Councils to use CIL receipts to fund:
 - (a) The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or
 - (b) Anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.
- 4.3 It is considered that the project outlined in the bid complies with these criteria.
- 4.4 It is considered that the bid submitted by Sprowston Town Council is reasonable and there is no foreseeable risk that the loan will not be repaid.
- 4.5 It is therefore recommended that the loan be approved and that work starts to draft a legal agreement which (a) sets the interest rate at a percentage equivalent to base rate, (b) requires all CIL receipts received by the Town Council to be repaid to Broadland District Council until the loan and any interest is paid in full and (c) in the event that the anticipated CIL receipts are not forthcoming the agreement will set a backstop date of five years for the loan and interest to be repaid in full, unless an extension of time is agreed by this Council acting reasonably.

5. Other options

The Cabinet has the following other options:

- i. Should the Loan be approved to authorise the Director of Place to draft a legal agreement in accordance with the heads of terms referred to in paragraph 4.5;
- ii. Refuse the bid;

- iii. Any other decision that Cabinet considers to be appropriate.

6. Issues and risks

- 6.1 **Resource Implications** There are no additional, overarching resource implications over and above the resource implications considered by Cabinet in its decision to establish the Community Infrastructure Fund in September 2015. Members are advised that, no other parish or town council has approached officers to discuss a potential bid to the CIF within the repayment timescales mentioned at 3.2 & 3.4.
- 6.2 **Legal Implications** There are no legal implications other than the need for the legal agreement referred to in paragraph 4.5.
- 6.3 **Equality Implications** There are no equalities implications arising from this report.
- 6.4 **Environmental Impact** There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
- 6.5 **Crime and Disorder** The resulting community-hub should have a positive impact on crime and disorder.
- 6.6 **Risks** Any risk associated with a lack of CIL receipts (however unlikely) will rest with the Town Council.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Approving this bid will enable a community within the growth area of the Broadland district to further support its communities; it will enhance their local area by delivering improved infrastructure and facilities alongside proposed and approved growth.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1
 - i. To utilise the CIF to enable STC to bring about the timely purchase of the former Viking Public House, Tills Road, Sprowston to enable conversion into a new multi-use community hub.
 - ii. To agree a £250,000 loan from the Community Infrastructure Fund to Sprowston Town Council.
 - iii. To authorise the Director of Place to draft a legal agreement in accordance with the heads of terms referred to in paragraph 4.5.

Background papers

None



Sprowston Town Council
Council Office
Recreation Ground Road
Sprowston
Norwich
NR7 8EW

23 March 2021

Dear Mr Courtier

Re: Request to Access BDC's Community Infrastructure Fund

Sprowston Town Council (STC) wishes to apply for a £250,000 loan from Broadland District Council's Community Infrastructure Fund.

Monies from the fund would be used to contribute toward delivery of a new multi-use community hub building in the west of Sprowston (Tills Road) where STC has identified a lack of social and community facilities. In addition, no polling station currently exists in this part of Sprowston.

Council has previously successfully delivered a multi-million pound renovation and extension project at the Sprowston Diamond Centre and so is confident of its ability to do the same with this new project.

Project Description

STC has previously identified that residents in the west of Sprowston are without access to a 'village hall' or other local community venue. Similarly, community-focused groups lack a suitable venue in the area to deliver services or hold out-reach activities.

This project's objective, therefore, is to purchase, renovate, convert and extend the former-Viking Pub/Royal Bengal Restaurant¹, Tills Road, Sprowston. No other buildings suitable for purchase and conversion exist in the west of Sprowston. STC believes the former-Viking Pub/Royal Bengal Restaurant is ideally placed for the area. The property represents a one-off opportunity to secure a much-needed community facility whilst also preserving a heritage building that is otherwise likely to be demolished and redeveloped.

A professional survey has been conducted and indicates the building could be converted and extended to act as a community hub capable of facilitating the activities of a variety of different types of community groups.

Breakdown of Estimated Costs

The project will be delivered over a number of phases as set out below. The quoted estimated costs are taken from our surveyor's building report.

¹ [Google map: Former-Viking pub, Tills Road, Sprowston](#)

Appendix 1

At time of writing purchase of the property (phase 1) is underway. Timescales for subsequent phases are uncertain but it is anticipated that any funds secured through the Community Infrastructure Fund will be combined with a PWLB loan or STC's reserves to bring forward phases 2 and/or 3.

Use of the Community Infrastructure Fund will enable this project to be delivered much more quickly than would be the case if each phase was contingent on receipt of adequate CIL over the course of 2021 and 2022.

Phase 1 - Property Purchase Cost:	£410,000
Phase 2 - Renovations and Conversion Cost (ex VAT):	£410,000
Phase 3 - Rear Hall Extension (ex VAT):	£205,000
Contingency, Fees, Surveys, etc (ex VAT):	£150,000
Total cost (estimated):	£1,175,000

Anticipated CIL Receipts

Over the coming 3 years STC expect to receive in the region of £2,127,310 in CIL from three developments on land to the South of Salhouse Road, Sprowston.

CIL schedule				
Expected date of STC's CIL receipt	BDW Homes (535 dwellings)*	Kier Living (251 dwellings)**	Halsbury Homes (365 dwellings)**	Total
Apr-21	£171,624.18	£92,388.00		£264,012.18
Oct-21	£171,624.18	£92,388.00	£55,084.37	£319,096.55
Apr-22				£0.00
Oct-22	£228,832.24	£123,184.19	£55,084.37	£407,100.79
Apr-23	£572,080.60	£307,960.47	£73,445.82	£953,486.89
Oct-23			£183,614.56	£183,614.56
Apr-24				£0.00
	£1,144,161.20	£615,920.65	£367,229.12	£2,127,310.97

* Barrett David Wilson Homes (BDWH) CIL amounts and dates confirmed

** Kier and Halsbury CIL amounts and dates are estimates and subject to change

In light of the above, STC believes it will within three years receive CIL receipts sufficient to repay a loan of £250,000 from the Community Infrastructure Fund.



Guy Ranaweera

Town Clerk

Sprowston Town Council

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER 4

Report Authors:

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Portfolio:

Transformation and Organisational Development / Finance

Wards Affected:

All

Purpose of the Report:

The purpose of the Strategic Performance and Finance Report is to provide an overview of the performance of the Council against the key outcomes set out in the Delivery Plan for 2020/21. This Quarterly Report covers Quarter 4.

Recommendations:

1. To agree the revenue and capital position for Quarter 4 (variance details in Appendix 1)
2. To agree the 2020/21 performance measure update for Quarter 4 (detail in Appendix 2).
3. To agree to change the reporting schedule for performance measures, with the next updates coming to Cabinet in Quarters 2 and Quarters 4 2021/22.
4. To agree to recommend to Full Council the slippage requests for both revenue (detailed in para 3.21) and capital (detailed in para 3.23).
5. Recommend to Council the creation of the following new earmarked reserve:
 - Environmental Projects Reserve (see 3.16).

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of the performance of the Council and is aligned to the key outcomes set out in the Council's Delivery Plan for 2020/21. This Quarterly Report covers Quarter 4.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's vision and ambitions for the coming 3 years and is complimented by an in-year Delivery Plan for 2020/21 which outlined the work the Council would undertake in that year.
- 2.2. At the heart of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024, is the vision for our place:
'Working together to create the best place for everyone, now and for future generations'
- 2.3. This vision is underpinned by the Council's strategic priorities:
- Growing the economy
 - Supporting individuals and empowering communities
 - Protecting and improving the natural and built environment, whilst maximising quality of life
 - Moving with the times, working smartly and collaboratively
- 2.4. The Delivery Plan sets out the key activities to be delivered within the first year of the Strategic Plan, broken down into service delivery and major projects/programmes of work. There is clear link between the Council's vision and aspirations, detailed in the Strategic Plan, the Council's priorities and projects, and the Strategic Performance and Finance Reports. To enable the activities to be monitored, the Delivery Plan provides several delivery measures which have been reported into Cabinet in Quarter 2, Quarter 3, and Quarter 4 in 2020/21.
- 2.5. From Quarter 2 2021/22, it is proposed that in order to streamline the reporting process, performance reporting will take place at the end of Quarter 2 and at the end of Quarter 4, with a report brought to Cabinet.
- 2.6. This report summaries the Council's performance and finance position for Quarter 4, with additional detail set out in the appendices as follows:
- Appendix 1 – Finance
 - Appendix 2 – Delivery Measure Performance.

3. Current Position / Findings

- 3.1. The sections below provide a summary for Q4 finance and performance data.

Finance Revenue Dashboard Overview

3.2. The 20/21 financial year has been extraordinary due to the pandemic. Not only did the Council continue to successfully provide its substantive services. But it also responded to the pandemic by diverting resources to support the response, and by paying out over £40m in direct financial support to individuals and businesses.

3.3. The detail of the financial outturn is broken down into three sections below:

- the response to the Covid pandemic;
- the impact of Covid on substantive services; and
- the usual outturn with regard to substantive services.

A) Response to the Covid Pandemic

3.4. There are two main financial strands to the pandemic response, as shown in the table below:

- Direct financial support to individuals and businesses.
- Financial support to the Council to allow us to respond to the pandemic.

	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Carry Forward £'000
Financial Support to Individuals and Businesses			
Business Grants – Government Funding	39,840	39,840	
Business Grants – Other Funding	115	96	19
Hardship Payments	779	724	55
Track & Trace (Isolation support payment)	266	207	59
	41,000	40,867	133
Financial Support to BDC to Respond to Covid			
COVID-19 Emergency Funding for Local Gov	1,525	642	883
Enforcement / Contain Outbreak Management	104	104	-
Grants to cover cost pressures	282	65	217
	1,911	811	1,100
Total	42,911	41,678	1,233

3.5. As can be seen the vast majority of the funding has been spent in 20/21, but approximately 3% of this (£1.233m) funding remains to allow us to continue to deliver an appropriate response in 21/22. It is proposed that the remaining funds are transferred to a new earmarked reserve in 20/21 to be drawn on in 21/22.

3.6. The Covid Recovery Plan, which is elsewhere on this agenda, provides further details on our plans for 21/22.

B) Impact of Covid on Substantive Services

3.7. With regard to our normal substantive services, these have also been impacted by Covid. For instance:

- Some income streams were impacted negatively, such as regulatory services, Carrowbreck, and development management.

- Some income streams were impacted positively such as recycling credits, waste fees & charges, and land charges.
- Some projects were slipped to 21/22, because they could not be delivered in year due to Covid, or to allow more resource to be directed to the Covid response.

3.8. A summary of these Covid impacts is below:

Directorate	Reason	Underspend/ Surplus Income £'000
Managing Director	An underspend on promotional expenses due to fewer events taking place during Covid.	29
	Broadland News underspend due to costs being covered from Covid grants	9
Resources	Underspend in Facilities across vending services, postage, and utilities due to home working	129
	Underspend in Organisation Development due to the limited ability to provide training during the pandemic and changes within the team. Links with carry forward request.	36
Place	Additional land charges fees income due to the national stamp duty exemption.	28
	Carrowbreck House - room hire charges down.	-39
	Economic Development – Covid savings	28
People & Communities	Additional recycling credits received due to increased tonnages as a result of residents being at home more during the pandemic.	163
	Community programs not going ahead during the pandemic, partially offset by a reduction in income.	93
	Increase in income as a result of an increase in Waste collection services of £61k and a higher than budgeted rebate of £17k from the MRF.	78
All	Slippage – see requests in section 3.20	266
	Total	820

Income Figures

3.9. The following table demonstrates the effect of Covid on the Council's income.

	£'000
Original Annual Budget for income from sales, fees, and charges, eg development management fees, trade waste, land charges, court summons.	1,843
Latest Annual Budget for income from sales, fees and charges – This was revised down in year to reflect the impact of Covid	1,412
Actual Income for year	1,341
Additional Reimbursement from Government to help cover loss	247

Project Slippage

3.10. In total projects totalling £266k are being slipped to 21/22 (as detailed in section 3.21). In some instances slipping projects allowed more resource to be directed to the Covid response, while in some cases the projects could not be delivered due to Covid.

3.11. This slippage manifests as an underspend in 20/21. However, the budget will need to be slipped to 21/22 in order to allow this work to be carried out.

C) Outturn Substantive Services, excluding Covid

3.12. There is an underspend on substantive services which is not related to Covid, the main reasons are summarised below:

Directorate	Reason	Underspend/ Surplus Income £'000
Managing Director	Salary underspends of £12k in the Communications and Marketing team and other minor variances	9
Resources	Corporate Contingency underspend	100
	Underspend in IT & Digital on data infrastructure, printing, and consultancy services.	49
	Other variances	6
Place	CIL Admin Levy received.	391
	Salary underspends across teams due to vacant positions	102
	Additional Planning Application Income (compared to amended budget)	101
	Old central Environmental Services departmental budget of £32k unspent. This budget has been reallocated to services in 21/22.	32
	Street lighting maintenance underspend.	25
	Overspend due to Broadland's share of CNC previous years losses being recognised.	-85
	Other variances	14

Directorate	Reason	Underspend/ Surplus Income £'000
People & Communities	A number of historic housing grants received in previous years, are now being recognised as income within the service.	527
	Vacancies within the Housing Standards team	74
	An underspend on Warm Homes Fund Improvement Grants	60
	A net underspend on Waste projects. £93k underspend from the Waste LATC budget offset by costs of £35k on the Waste Procurement project. It was agreed that any costs incurred on the Waste Procurement project would be offset against unspent budget from the LATC project.	58
	An underspend following the transfer of responsibility for the Norfolk Waste Partnership Communications Fund to Great Yarmouth Borough Council	48
	A £77k saving on Clinical Waste costs due to the costs of the budgeted clinical waste service not materialising. This offsets an overspend of £33k in other services due to payments to Veolia, disposal costs at the MRF and Norfolk County Council due to increased tonnages.	44
	A net underspend in Homelessness due to additional income of £123k received from Government Grants and fees which have offset increased expenditure on self-contained units of £50k and consultants fees of £45k.	28
	Other variances	16
All	Slippage – included in Covid impact	-266
	Total	1,333

Investment Income and Interest Payable

3.13. **Investment Income** is up £117,000 compared to budget primarily due to increased interest from external funds.

3.14. **Interest payable** has underspent by £75,000 as there has been no need to borrow.

Overall Position

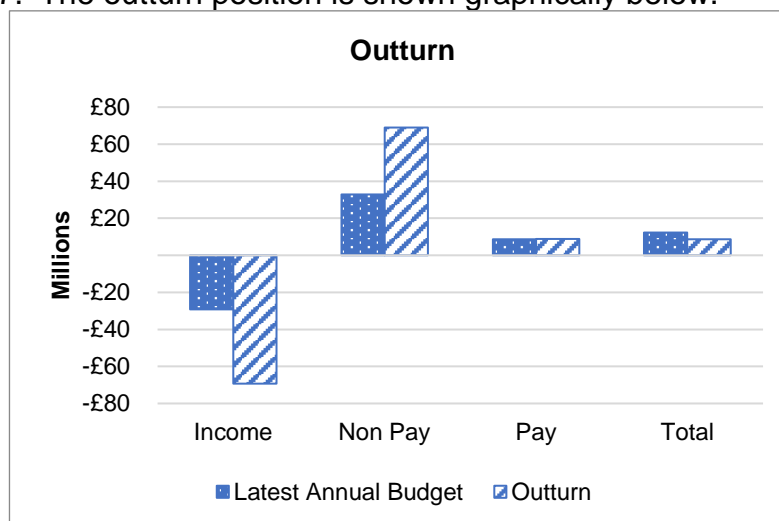
3.15. The following table provides a summary of the revenue budget position. It shows the actual spend for the 20/21 financial year.

	Original Annual Budget £'000	Latest Annual Budget (LAB) £'000	2020/21 Outturn £'000	Variance (LAB-O) £'000	
Managing Director	951	952	905	47	
Resources	5,080	5,124	4,804	320	
Place	2,064	2,283	1,686	597	
People & Communities	4,166	4,460	3,271	1,189	
Investment Income	-282	-282	-399	117	
Interest payable	75	75		75	
Internal Drainage Board Levy	252	252	252		
Revenue Contributions to Capital (Covid)		115	104	11	
Exceptional Covid Funding – net surplus		-115	-1,337	1,222	
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves					
- Covid Funding			1,233	-1,233	
- As budgeted (Note 1)	30	-184	-70	-114	
- New Environmental Projects Reserve			750	-750	
Total costs before transfer to General Reserves	12,336	12,680	11,199	1,481	
Transfers to / (from) General Reserves					
- As budgeted		-344	871		
- To fund slippage requests			266		
Total Amount to be Funded by Taxpayers and Government Grant	12,336	12,336	12,336		

Note 1: The Budgeted Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves line represents use of reserves such as the s106 reserves, as well a transfer to the Street Lighting Reserve.

3.16. Looking ahead, there are potential changes required arising from the recent Waste Government white paper, along with other potential environmental needs. The outturn figures therefore set aside £750,000 in a new proposed earmarked Environmental Projects Reserve.

3.17. The outturn position is shown graphically below.



3.18. Income is £2.5m down compared to budget.

This is largely explained by:

- A compensating reduction in Housing Benefit Grant from Government of £4.2m (see non pay variance below)
Which is offset by:
- An increase in tonnages has led to increased income from Recycling credits.
- Additional homelessness grant.

3.19. Non-Pay budgets is £4.6m down compared to budget.

This is largely explained by:

- Housing Benefit expenditure being down by £4.1m, as more claimants migrate over to Universal Credit. This is however offset by a compensating reduction in the Housing Benefit Grant from Government
- Anticipated need for a doorstep clinical waste collection to some 4500 properties did not materialise but has been replaced by a pharmacy collection service which comes in at a greatly reduced cost of which 50% was picked up by Norfolk CC. This is now being borne by BDC as of the 21/22 financial year.
- An underspend from the feasibility funding from the waste project budget following the decision to go out and procure a new waste services contract.

3.20. Pay is £42,000 down compared to budget.

This is largely explained by:

- Several vacancies particularly in the Economic Growth teams – a number of positions have now been filled and recruitment is ongoing.
- Staff being deployed on Covid-19 work and having their costs met from Covid-19 budgets.
- These savings are partially offset by using additional agency staff.
- Revenue Budget Carry Forward Requests

Revenue Budget Carry Forward Requests

3.21. There are a number of Revenue Budget Carry Forward requests as follows.

1) Resources - Democratic Services Chairman's Hospitality

Requested by Linda Mockford

Budget	Actual	Variance	Slippage request
£15,500	£774	£14,726	£14,726

- Civic and other fundraising events were postponed due to Covid-19 and this money will be needed for these, as it is intended that these will run in 21/22, these will be in addition to the events already budgeted in 21/22.

2) Resources - Internal Audit / Contracted Services

Requested by Faye Haywood

Budget	Actual	Variance	Slippage request

£48,000	£47,101	£899	£899
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- This was requested by cabinet instead of raising the base budget for 21/22 by £9k.

3) Resources - Organisation Development Corp. Training

Requested by Helen Molloy / Jo Stiff

Budget	Actual	Variance	Slippage request
£112,500	£77,622	£34,878	£34,878

- The exceptional circumstances and reason for the carry over request is to fund a bespoke management training programme designed specifically for all One Team managers. The programme delivery timescales have been significantly impacted by Covid-19 both in terms of the impact of recovery work on the HR/OD team and also the availability and workload of all managers across One Team, it would not have been feasible to have run the programme during national lockdowns 1, 2 or 3, whilst the majority of the teams have been engaged in response or recovery work. As it was anticipated that the programme would run during 2020/21, budget has been set aside and is available to cover the full cost of this programme. We have a full programme of works to deliver on the OD Strategy and as such the budget carry forward for this is business critical in order for us to run this programme as well as a number of other strategic projects that are due to be delivered in 2021/22.

4) People and Communities - Local Authority Trading Company

Requested by Simon Phelan

Budget	Actual	Variance	Slippage request
£125,000	£31,788	£93,212	£65,000

- The current budget provision in 21/22 would not be enough to cover the total potential costs for the remaining work including concluding the procurement exercise, preparation work for the pending Government's white paper on waste and any feasibility work required for the depot. Therefore the carry forward from 20/21 year is requested.

5) Various – Pay underspends

Requested by Debbie Lorimer

Budget	Actual	Variance	Slippage request
			£150,750

- As a result of Covid, like many other organisations, the Council had difficulty in recruiting to vacancies and while it was able to deliver services as well as its Covid response there is inevitably some work that could not be progressed as quickly as planned. Therefore, to accelerate this and to ensure the Council continues its transformation journey at pace a request is made to slip a proportion of the pay underspend to enable additional temporary resource to be brought in. This is in addition to the resource required to deliver the Covid

Recovery Plan elsewhere on this agenda. The total value of this resource has been estimated in total at £335K of which Broadland District Council would contribute 45% so the request is for £150,750.

Finance Capital Dashboard Overview

3.22. The following table provides a summary of the capital budget position. BDC has spent £2.37m on capital schemes.



Scheme	Full Year Budget including slippage £000	Full Year Actual £000	Full Year Variance £000	Comment
Approved Schemes				
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,006	471	535	Expenditure on DFGs was affected by Covid-19 during the year. We have received confirmation that the remainder of the original allocation from the Better Care Fund can be carried forward into 2021-22.
Minor Improvement Grants	30	23	7	
Warm Homes Fund	600	829	-229	Although expenditure exceeded the budget set, external funding has been claimed to cover all expenditure.
Local Authority Delivery - Green Homes Grants	1,240	177	1,063	This is a new budget which was added to the Capital Programme following the award of funding from Central Government. The project is still in a fairly early phase, but the team has now started to allocate grant funding and the project will continue into 21-22, hence the proposal to slip the underspend into 21-22.
Wheeled Bin Purchases	92	105	-13	Bins were purchased as required during the year
IT Projects	861	241	620	The vast majority of this budget relates to the new infrastructure project. The contract for this has now been signed, purchase orders have been raised and we are expecting the delivery of some hardware in Q1 of 2021-22. It is proposed that the underspend is slipped into 21-22 to cover commitments on the new infrastructure. The underspend also includes £35k for the provision of Member equipment, which could then be delivered in future as required.
Thorpe Lodge Refurbishment	295	-	295	Project is on hold whilst options are considered, therefore this budget was included in 21-22 as part of the budget setting process.
Street Lighting	37	-	37	No major columns replacements were planned to take place during the financial year. A new budget has been included in the 21-22 Capital Programme to facilitate a larger replacement programme going forwards.
Historic Buildings Grants/Buildings at Risk	33	3	30	It is proposed that £20k of the underspend is slipped into 21-22 to cover grants that have been offered to applicants but have not yet been drawn down.
Capital Grants to Community Organisations	5	5	-	



Scheme	Full Year Budget including slippage £000	Full Year Actual £000	Full Year Variance £000	Comment
Car Park Improvements	50	-	50	This budget was included in 21-22 as part of the budget setting process.
Reedham Quay	20	-	20	It is likely that any work required here will be maintenance and therefore revenue in nature, so this budget was not required and has not been included in 21-22.
Public Conveniences	50	-	50	Toilets are to be reviewed before any work takes place, so this budget was included in 21-22 as part of the budget setting process.
Woodlands	-	35	-35	Expenditure on works to fences, paths and car park. All to be funded by S106 monies and a contribution from pooled business rates.
Bure Valley Railway	220	17	203	There is an identified need to carry out a comprehensive programme of fence replacement for the Bure Valley Railway. Due to the unique requirements of carrying out works on a railway (under the Railway Regulations) a specialist consultant has been appointed in order to draft a bespoke scope for the works. In addition, due to the scale of the work, the procurement process is subject to a more protracted course of action which has also caused further delay. Where emergency work has been required to stretches of fencing to prevent egress of livestock, etc then this work has been carried out as required during the year
Total Approved Schemes	4,539	1,906	2,633	
Provisional Schemes				
Investment Borrowing	5,000	-	5,000	Broadland Growth Limited required no new loans during the year. It is proposed that this budget is slipped into 21-22 to fund any new developments that the company brings forward to Members for consideration.
Contribution to Food Hub Project	870	463	407	As external funding for this project has not yet been confirmed, only pre-construction costs have been incurred to date and these have exceeded the £400k approved by Cabinet, however BDC will be receiving a contribution of £157k from the LEP in Q1 of the new year to offset some of these costs. It is proposed that the variance is slipped into 21-22 to retain the full budget for the project.
Total Provisional Schemes	5,870	463	5,407	
TOTAL	10,409	2,369	8,040	

3.23. The following slippage requests have been made:

	£
Disabled Facilities Grants	535,069
Green Homes	1,063,185
IT Projects	619,871
Investment Borrowing	5,000,000
Historic Building Grants	20,000
Contribution to Food Hub Project	406,979
Total Slippage requested	7,645,104

Performance Dashboard Overview

RAG Rating	Totals
 Green Indicator	<p>12 measures have met the year end success criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Progress towards delivery of the predicted £8.6m savings through the South Norfolk/Broadland collaboration (Measure reference 1)</i> • <i>Staff absence levels - working days lost to short term sickness (Measure reference 4)</i> • <i>Staff retention (Measure reference 5)</i> • <i>Numbers of vulnerable residents supported by our discretionary prevention services (Measure reference 15)</i> • <i>Delivery of housing standards enforcement (Measure reference 18)</i> • <i>Number of working days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit/Council Tax benefit (Measure reference 20)</i> • <i>Number of affordable homes delivered (including help to buy) (Measure reference 21)</i> • <i>Number of new homes delivered (Measure reference 22)</i> • <i>Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales – minors/others (Measure reference 23)</i> • <i>Household food waste recycled (Measure reference 25)</i> • <i>Tonnage by household of garden waste being recycled (Measure reference 27)</i> • <i>KGs of residual waste collected per household (Measure reference 28)</i>
 Amber Indicator	<p>8 Measures are currently not meeting the year end target or have missed the target by a narrow margin. Light touch monitoring in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collection rate of Council Tax (Measure reference 7)</i> • <i>Business survival rates (Measure reference 13)</i> • <i>Number of residents supported to live independently (Measure reference 17)</i> • <i>Percentage successful intervention to prevent or relieve homelessness for customers who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (Measure reference 19)</i> • <i>Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales – majors (Measure reference 23)</i> • <i>Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales – householders (Measure reference 23)</i> • <i>Percentage of household waste recycled (Measure reference 26)</i> • <i>Number of verified missed bins for all waste per 100,000 collections (Measure reference 29)</i>
	<p>3 Measure have not met the year end target by a significant amount. Close monitoring in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collection of Business Rates (Measure reference 8)</i> • <i>Employment rate (Measure reference 10)</i>

 Red Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those in employment claiming benefits (Measure reference 11)
 Baseline	<p>9 Measures are currently being baselined to determine the target. A target will be included in the next Cabinet report update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer satisfaction survey (Percentage) (Measure reference 2) Staff Satisfaction (Measure reference 3) Percentage of the organisations workforce who are apprentices and graduate entry roles (Measure reference 6) Number of new jobs created (Measure reference 9) Percentage of vacant retail space in market towns (Measure reference 12) External funding to support growth (Measure reference 14) Percentage of food businesses with food hygiene ratings of rated as 4 (Good) and 5 (Very Good) (Measure reference 24) Number of litter picks / clean up initiatives supported (Measure reference 30) Number of confirmed incidents of fly tipping (Measure reference 31)

3.24. As part of the new Delivery Measure design, not all measures were given a specific 'target' to meet over each quarter. Where 'targets' have been provided, a Red, Amber or Green (RAG) status has been used. A RAG status signifies whether or not progress is on track. In deciding RAG ratings, data on year end performance and an assessment of progress is considered

- Green RAG rating – the delivery measure has met the year end success criteria and no action is needed.
- Amber RAG rating – the delivery measure is currently not meeting the year end target or has missed the target by a narrow margin. Light touch monitoring in place.
- Red RAG rating – the delivery measure has not met the year end target by a significant amount. Close monitoring in place

Performance Highlights and Areas for Improvement

3.25. The following section of the report provides an overview of the key performance highlights and areas for improvement for the Council.

3.26. Covid-19 has had a significant impact on our residents, communities, businesses and Council, with increased demands and changing priorities. The impact of Covid-19 is clearly demonstrated in the performance against the measures over the last year, particularly in those service areas where demands have increased, or resources utilised to support the Covid-19 response.

- 3.27. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of the pandemic on performance and recommend appropriate action. The Council's updated recovery plan will support the Council to continue to deliver key services and transformation projects alongside an effective local response and recovery plan to the pandemic.

Growing the Economy



Percentage of vacant retail space in market towns (Measure reference 12)

Vacancy rates in market town retail space has increased in the last Quarter, making the average vacant space at year end 5%. This trend could continue as the full effect of the impact of the pandemic becomes known in 21/22 and there could be a further delayed effect with business grants still in place for hospitality and non-essential retail premises and retail business rate discounts continuing in 21/22.



Employment rate (Measure reference 10)

This is an annual measure which is recorded by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The employment rate for Broadland from January – December 2020 fell to 79% from 84% in 2019, which on average, is higher than the current average rate in Norfolk. These figures reflect the first national lockdown and early job losses as a result. It is likely that as the impact of furlough becomes more apparent, the employment rate may show a further decline in the future, however the latest data from Government is predicting a lower unemployment rate than first predicted as a result of Covid-19. A recent report from Grant Thornton states that Broadland is amongst the local economies expected to bounce back the best. To support this, officers are undertaking a number of measures including taking part in the Kickstart scheme, supporting businesses with grant schemes and supporting the retail sector with a Click It Local online sales and delivery platform.



Collection of Business Rates (Measure reference 8)

In Q4, 96.7% of business rates have been collected. This is below the performance in 19/20 and below our year end target of 99%. Collection performance has been significantly impacted throughout the pandemic and there is the risk that collection rates will continue to be adversely affected into 2021/22 by the effect of the pandemic and the downturn in the economy. While some particularly affected sectors (such as the food industry) have benefited from additional help through emergency Business Rate relief and grants, other sectors have not had assistance. The team continue to work with businesses to offer extended and deferred payments where appropriate and signpost them to Economic Development for further support where needed. Additional agency resources are also being used to support the workload as the Business Rates team are also supporting the payment of business grants.

Supporting Individuals and Empowering Communities



Numbers of vulnerable residents supported by our discretionary prevention services (Measure reference 15)

The Help hub, community functions and discretionary services have been invaluable over the last 12 months in identifying and supporting residents and communities in need. In the last year, we have distributed 8 tonnes of food to residents, supported 45 community support groups with over 4,000 volunteers and collected 2,750 prescriptions, taken over 20,000 calls asking for help and 4,373 individuals have been visited from enhanced contract training to support self-isolation. In the last quarter, and most recent lockdown, we have not seen as high a demand for Covid-19 welfare support, but there has been a continued increase in the number of people accessing our business as usual services.



Percentage of successful intervention to prevent or relieve homelessness for customers who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (Measure reference 19)

The impacts on homelessness services have been felt throughout the year. The team has experienced many more people asking for help, who were unknown to the Council, tending to be caused by household breakdowns who previously did not need support. Due to the short-term nature of these presentations, and the strict criteria regarding household mixing at times of strict lockdown, our normal approach regarding repatriation or family mediation had to change leading to more people being housed in temporary accommodation. Despite prevention of being at risk of homelessness has not been as high as the Council would like, no family or individual has gone unsupported or been without a roof over their head. The team have received 50%+ more contact this year and have struggled to meet demand, with annual call rates reaching 51,764 as one team, averaging monthly housing advice cases sitting at 1,693 a month, as well as delivering key projects such as the new housing system and allocations policy, and development of the rough sleeper initiative and housing first services. The team has coped well with the additional pressure and with additional resources added are well placed to support families in 2021/22.

Protecting and improving the natural and built environment, whilst maximising quality of life



Number of affordable homes delivered (including help to buy) (Measure reference 21)

Improved affordable housing delivery has been seen during Q4 with a total of 64 new build homes for rent and affordable home ownership being delivered, alongside a further 35 homes through the Help to Buy Equity Loan. After the low delivery seen for Q1 and Q2, the district has seen good continued recovery in affordable housing delivery. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Central Norfolk (2017) indicates a yearly target of 96 new affordable homes for Broadland. With a cumulative year end total of 165 new

build affordable homes (and not including Help to Buy Equity Loan figures) Broadland has exceeded the yearly target requirement for new affordable homes.



Percentage of food businesses with food hygiene ratings of rated 4 (Good) and 5 (Very Good) (Measure reference 24)

Broadland currently has the highest % of businesses who are rated 4 or 5 in Norfolk. At year end, an average of 98% of businesses within the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme are rated 4 or 5. There is potential to see a percentage reduction of those businesses receiving the highest ratings based upon early indications, as the food inspection programme resumes following lockdown, initial inspection findings are encountering a slippage in food safety and hygiene compliance in some food business establishments. The reasons behind this are complex and are a combination of trading circumstances for food businesses arising due to Covid-19 pandemic throughout the past year.



Percentage of all household waste recycled (Measure reference 26)

At the end of Q3, the recycling rate is 50%. The rate has decreased by 4% compared to the Q2, which is due mainly to the expected seasonal variations in garden waste over the winter period. The overall decrease in the dry recycling may be due to coming out of lockdown with less production of recycling materials, which is mirrored by a corresponding increase in the volume of residual waste. While Broadland still has the highest recycling rate in Norfolk, on the current trajectory, it is unlikely that the Council will meet its target to increase recycling rate to 60% by 2025. To support Broadland to achieve its target, consideration will be given to how further changes could support increasing recycling rates.

Moving with the times, working smartly and collaboratively



Progress towards delivery of the predicted £8.6m savings through the South Norfolk and Broadland collaboration (Measure reference 1)

The Feasibility Study for the collaboration set out an indicative savings forecast of £8.6m over a five-year period. Officers have reviewed the deliverability and timeframe for some of the One Joint Officer Team savings, as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed back the timeframe for delivering some of the efficiency improvements and savings anticipated. The current five-year savings forecast for the collaboration is £8.656m. The cumulative savings delivered by the end of 20/21 is £2.046m.



Customer satisfaction

At present, a project is underway to establish an embedded way of measuring customer satisfaction, and this will include developing a customer satisfaction baseline which will allow the organisation to impact the results of our transformation programme on customer experiences. In April 2021, we launched a 'pilot' Customer Survey on the Broadland District Council website and will start to move the survey onto other customer

channels over coming months. We will provide an update in the next Cabinet performance report.



Collection rate of Council Tax (measure reference 7)

In Quarter 3, this measure was showing as red due to the risk of not meeting the year end target of 98.9% collection rate. At year end, while not reaching the challenging target, collection rates have exceeded expectations and are now just below the target, sitting at 98.8% which is extremely positive following the unprecedented challenges over the last year. The team will work continue to take proactive action, to recover unpaid council tax from 2020/21 in the year ahead as well as to mitigate impacts on 2021/22 collection.

4. Proposed action

- 4.1 Cabinet is asked to note the contents of this report and agree the recommendations.

5 Other options

- 5.1 None applicable to this report.

6 Issues and risks

- 6.1 **Resource Implications** – the finance section of this report provided an overview of the finance resource implications for this quarter.
- 6.2 **Legal Implications** – no implications.
- 6.3 **Equality Implications** – no implications.
- 6.4 **Environmental Impact** – no implications.
- 6.5 **Crime and Disorder** – no implications.
- 6.6 **Risks** – Operational risks to the delivery of our Delivery Plan are managed within directorates. The organisation is currently developing a strategic risk register where strategic risks will be managed.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The report has provided an overview of the position of the Council for performance and finance for Quarter 4 2020/21. Despite the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19

pandemic, performance for the Council remains relatively stable in most areas and positive trends are now being seen.

8. Recommendations

Cabinet to:

1. To agree the revenue and capital position for Quarter 4 (variance details in Appendix 1)
2. To agree the 2020/21 performance measure update for Quarter 4 (detail in Appendix 2).
3. To agree to change the reporting schedule for performance measures, with the next updates coming to Cabinet in Quarters 2 and Quarters 4 2021/22.
4. To agree to recommend to Full Council the slippage requests for both revenue (detailed in para 3.21) and capital (detailed in para 3.23).
5. Recommend to Council the creation of the following new earmarked reserve:
 - Environmental Projects Reserve (see 3.16).

Appendix 1 Explanation of Variances

Managing Director

Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
EA Support	99	100	102	-2	☹️	
Assistant Director - Chief Of Staff	41	38	37	1	😊	
Collaboration	18	18	23	-5	☹️	Methods costs for 20/21 have been slightly higher than the budget.
Communications & Marketing	305	302	248	54	😊	Several promotional events had to be cancelled in 20/21 due to Covid contributing to an underspend on promotional expenses of £29k. Marketing & Comms salaries are £8k under budget due to vacancies and maternity leave. Broadland News costs are under budget by £9k as some costs were met from Covid grants.
Strategy & Programmes	151	68	85	-17	☹️	Covering maternity leave from Transformation, Innovation and Consultancy Team which reflects variance in that team.
Transformation Innovation & Consultancy Team	79	166	152	14	😊	
Chief of Staff Total	693	692	647	45	😊	
Managing Director	260	260	258	2	😊	
Managing Director Total	260	260	258	2	😊	
Total	953	952	905	47	😊	

Resources						
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Corporate Management	115	80	73	7	😊	
Pensions	779	779	783	-4	😞	
Corporate Contingency and Levy	71	120	20	100	😊	Underspend on corporate contingency budget offset by apprenticeship levy overspend.
Revenues Team	527	527	562	-35	😞	Overspend due to vacancies in the team being covered by an agency resource which has been more expensive. All establishment roles have now been filled.
CTAX	-25	-16	-10	-6	😞	
NNDR	-135	-135	-139	4	😊	
AD - Finance	41	41	41		😊	
Housing Advances	-4	-4		-4	😞	
Finance Team	448	427	471	-44	😞	Overspend due to vacancies in the team that have been covered by an agency resource which has been more expensive. Role has now been filled.
Procurement	55	51	41	10	😊	
Finance Total	1,872	1,870	1,842	28	😊	

Resources continued					
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)	Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Elections	1	1	24	-23	☹️ This is due to a timing issue after being billed for prior year costs to do with the EU election.
Electoral Canvas & Registration	62	62	6	56	😊 Income is up compared to budget due to funding received from Electoral Commission. Underspend on postage & stationery.
Facilities	620	621	492	129	😊 Underspend on staffing costs and other underspends due to the increase in home working. This has reduced the demand for vending services, printing and postage, utilities and furniture.
AD - Governance & Business Support	38	38	38		😊
Democratic Services	348	352	345	7	😊
Internal Audit	48	48	47	1	😊
Governance	507	504	477	27	😊 Underspend on legal fees due to receiving a refund on the contract variance with NPLAW and receiving a small profit share under the new contract arrangement.
Organisation Development	196	174	138	36	😊 Underspend due to lower spend on corporate training than anticipated due to changes in the team and the ability to provide training during the pandemic.
Human Resources	274	271	261	10	😊
IT & Digital	1,185	1,183	1,134	49	😊 Underspends on pay, consultants' fees, data infrastructure and printing charges.
Governance & Business Support Total	3,279	3,254	2,962	292	😊
Resources Total	5,151	5,124	4,804	320	😊

Place						
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Business Support - Customer Service	57	52	49	3	😊	
Business Support - Land Charges	-80	-52	-80	28	😊	Additional income due to the stamp duty exemption being extended.
Business Support - Planning	149	150	157	-7	😞	
Business Support - Regulatory	88	84	50	34	😊	Underspend on salaries due to staff members on secondment and no back fill - will be recruiting for 21/22.
Business Support And Admin			52	-52	😞	Correction of 19/20 SNC salaries recharge not accounted for in 19/20 in error.
Director of Place Total	214	234	228	6	😊	
Car Parking and Public Conveniences	84	85	101	-16	😞	
Community Assets	240	485	459	26	😊	£20k of ash die back budget not required during the year.
Miscellaneous Land & Properties	25	26		26	😊	£20k unspent budget for property condition surveys and £5k unbudgeted rental and legal fees income.
Assistant Director - Economic Growth	38	38	39	-1	😊	
Business Support	392	264	239	25	😊	£11k salary underspends due to vacancies and £17k underspend on business grant budgets as demand has been impacted by Covid-19.
Carrowbreck House			39	-39	😞	Income from the hire of rooms is down by £35k as the facility has been closed due to Covid-19 and, therefore, rooms could not be rented out. Also, existing tenants were given a rent holiday until September 2020 (costing £5k).
Economic Development	47	47	-12	59	😊	£15k grant received for tourism spend incurred in 19/20, net training costs underspent by £28k due to the pandemic and old central Business Support & Leisure department travel expenses budget of £9k unspent (this has been reallocated to services in 21/22)

Growth Delivery Team	35	148	102	46	😊	£54k salary underspends due to vacancies and a £23k underspend on consultant's fees. These are offset by a £30k unbudgeted spend on the contribution to the Greater Norwich Growth Board.
Enabling	47	47	28	19	😊	
Economic Growth Total	908	1,140	995	145	😊	

Place continued						
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
CNC	140	39	124	-85	😞	Overspend recorded due to Broadland's share of losses incurred in 18/19 and 19/20 being reflected
Assistant Director - Planning	38	38	38		😊	
CIL/Street Name and Numbering	34	35	34	1	😊	
Applications	-948	-824	-879	55	😞	Increased income due to a number of large applications being received in the year despite Covid restrictions
Development Management	308	936	516	420	😊	Savings on employment costs due to vacancies and staff travel cost.
Local Plans	886	229	222	7	😊	
Planning Total	458	453	55	398	😊	
Assistant Director - Regulatory	38	38	38		😊	
Community Protection	162	163	173	-10	😞	
Emergency Planning	46	46	46		😊	
Environmental Protection	109	109	97	12	😊	
Environmental Services	71	56	17	39	😊	Old Central departmental cost centre travel expenses budget unspent - Expenses are now coded to services. This budget has been reallocated to services in 21/22
Licensing & Food Safety	60	44	37	7	😊	

Regulatory Total	486	456	408	48	😊	
Place Total	2,066	2,283	1,686	597	😊	

People and Communities						
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Assistant Director - Community Services	38	38	38		😊	
Waste LATC/Procurement	125	125	67	58	😊	Overall underspend due to the Waste LATC project not going ahead.
Waste Customer Services	61	61	90	-29	😞	Overspend due to reallocation of senior job role from Ops Management
Ops Management	198	221	198	23	😊	Underspend due to reallocation of senior job role to Waste Customer Services
Dry Recyclable Collections	902	904	850	54	😊	Underspend due to higher than budgeted income, driven mainly by increased tonnages which resulted in higher than budgeted recycling credits of £59k. In addition there was a higher than budgeted rebate from the MRF of £17k, and higher than budgeted income from new property bin fees of £7k; all of which helped offset increased disposal costs of £27k because of the increased tonnages
Recycling-General	58	109	52	57	😊	Underspend on budget due to no longer having responsibility for contracted services for the Norfolk Waste Partnership following transfer to Great Yarmouth Borough Council, and not employing students over summer due to the pandemic
Garden Waste	-947	-946	-1,034	88	😊	Higher than budgeted income due to an increase seen in number of bins sold and recycling credits due to tonnage figures
Recycling / Street Cleansing / Litter Collection	802	824	758	66	😊	Underspend due to lower than budgeted costs to contracted service supplier
Waste Collection-Clinical Waste	81	82	3	79	😊	Underspend due to the anticipated level of service being superseded by a cheaper alternative, partly funded by County.

Waste Collection Domestic / Others	1,233	1,238	1,217	21	😊	
Community Services Total	2,551	2,656	2,239	417	😊	

People and Communities continued						
Cost Centre	Original Annual Budget	Latest Annual Budget (LAB)	2020/21 Outturn (O)	Variance (LAB-O)		Explanation if variance is over £25,000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Assistant Director - Individuals & Families	38	38	38		😊	
Member Grants	31	31	15	16	😊	
Communities Team	361	338	245	93	😊	Overall underspend against budget of £66k due to not being able to run the community groups and tots to teens during Covid
Early Help Hub	26	26	51	-25	😞	Overspend due to an increase in need for domestic abuse services and the potential opportunity for future joint funding with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk at the end of 2021
Policy & Partnerships	73	76	62	14	😊	
Benefits & Housing Team	872	820	293	527	😊	Underspend on Housing Benefit Team of £527k due to a number of housing grants received in the past now being recognised as income in the account
Benefits & Housing	-252	-118	-146	28	😊	Underspend due to additional government grants & other income of £78k offset by additional accommodation and project costs due to demand during the pandemic.
Housing Standards Team	380	375	312	63	😊	Underspend budget due to vacancies within the establishment
Improvement Grants	30	30	30		😊	
Warm Homes Fund	54	188	132	56	😊	The WHF project should all be recoverable and therefore no cost to the council
Individuals & Families Total	1,613	1,804	1,032	772	😊	
People & Communities Total	4,164	4,460	3,271	1,189	😊	

Appendix 2

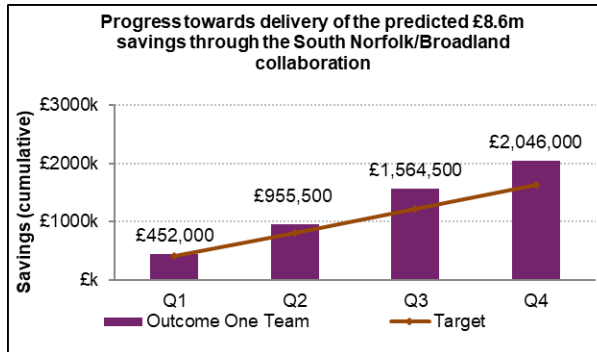
Broadland District Council – Delivery Measure Performance for Quarter 4 2020/21

Appendix 2 provides a detailed overview of the performance of the Council against its Delivery Plan.



Progress towards delivery of the predicted £8.6m savings through the South Norfolk/Broadland collaboration (Measure reference 1)

RAG Status: GREEN



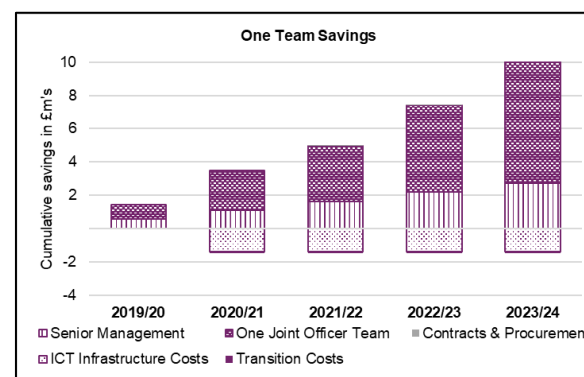
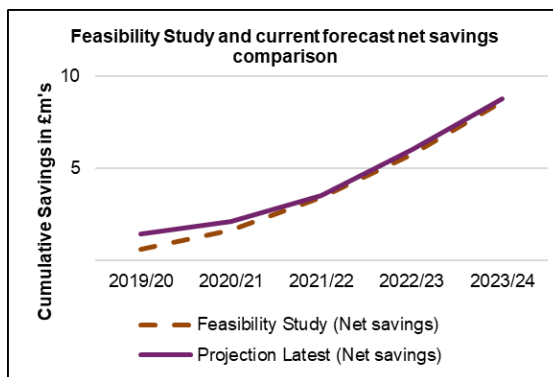
Year End Success Target: £1,632,000

RISKS

Officers have reviewed the deliverability and timeframe for some of the One Joint Officer Team savings, as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed back the timeframe for delivering some of the efficiency improvements and savings anticipated. There is a risk that further slippage will take place if Covid-19 continues to divert resources away from our programme of transformation.

CONTEXT

The graph to the left below shows the current net savings projection (solid line) for the coming years for the collaboration compared to the Feasibility Study forecasts (dotted line) over the same period. This shows that the collaboration is currently forecast to achieve greater savings than originally anticipated. The graph to the right shows the savings broken down in more detail.





Customer satisfaction survey (%) (Measure reference 2)

RAG Status: BASELINE

COMMENTS

With the exception of our customer complaints data, we do not currently have an embedded way of measuring customer satisfaction across the Council as part of our business as usual practices.

In recognition of this, a Customer Experience project is underway to map where and how customer satisfaction is currently gathered to better understand how this can be shaped Council wide. Alongside this, research has been carried out as to best practice approaches and recommendations so that we can outline how we can begin to implement this in a way that customer satisfaction can be measured consistently across the Council and its' individual services. In April 2021, we launched a 'pilot' Customer Survey on the Broadland District Council website and will start to move the survey onto other customer channels over coming months. We will provide an update on this in the next performance report in Q2.

Year End Success Target: Baselining

RISKS

Without confirmation of the customer satisfaction baseline, we are not able to fully impact the overall results of our wider transformation programme from a customer's perspective. However, snapshots of customer satisfaction can be taken prior to and post implementation on a case by case basis to mitigate this risk at an individual project level.

CONTEXT

An update report was taken to Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee (SIEC) in January 2021 which outlined the progress that had been made on the implementation of the new telephony system. As a result of the new Mitel telephony system, all contact centre teams now have access to real time data including call volumes, wait times and abandonment rates and have the ability to provide reports against all of these metrics. As part of the baselining for customer satisfaction, we will seek to include data around telephony performance as part of our quarterly performance reporting.

We will also provide further updates on progress when we bring the Customer Satisfaction Strategy and Customer Charter to Cabinet in July 2021



Staff satisfaction (Measure reference 3)

RAG Status: BASELINE

COMMENTS

The staff satisfaction survey completed in January gathered information from staff on their perspectives of the Councils. Looking at how satisfied staff are with the current situation and actions to take forward. From the feedback gained, an action plan was created encompassing the development of wellbeing resources and support for staff, as well as increased contact for staff when working remotely, and increased performance recognition available for staff. High level progress in response to this has been an increase in staff satisfaction levels in further surveys, ensuring feedback is consolidated and acted upon. Guaranteeing staff have access to a wider range of wellbeing resources and support, contact is maintained with all staff working on- site or remotely and staff performance is recognised consistently throughout the year and at year end.

There are regular staff 'pulse' surveys to understand what's important to our team, and initiatives are undertaken in response to this, such as provision of wellbeing and mental health support available to all staff. The staff intranet contains links to varied resources covering holistic wellbeing. Weekly wellbeing webinars are available for all staff to attend, giving professional information on topics such as stress and resilience.

A key action was in relation to the provision of Mental Health First Aiders - the Councils have now trained 43 members of staff, who have had a real impact on the workforce, offering professionally trained support to Councils' staff members. In Q4, 14 hours of drop- in support sessions for staff have been offered. Regular broadcast messages have continued for staff, ensuring all staff receive regular updates. Virtual all-staff briefings continue regularly for staff and new communication sections are available for employees on the Councils' intranet.

A new performance management framework has been rolled out to staff and is being trialled for the Year End conversation. Informal staff consultation has been open for 8 weeks to gather information from employees on the proposed reward and recognition element of the scheme, with workshops held with staff members and line managers throughout the organisation. Q&A sessions with employees have also taken place over the last 6 weeks to answer any queries on the proposals. Trade union and staff rep consultation and negotiation forums are in place to promote open and honest two-way dialogue and regular staff engagement in key organisational issues

Year End Success Target: Baselining

RISKS

The challenging current climate due to the Covid-19 pandemic and impact on workload poses a risk to staff wellbeing that may in turn impact staff satisfaction levels.

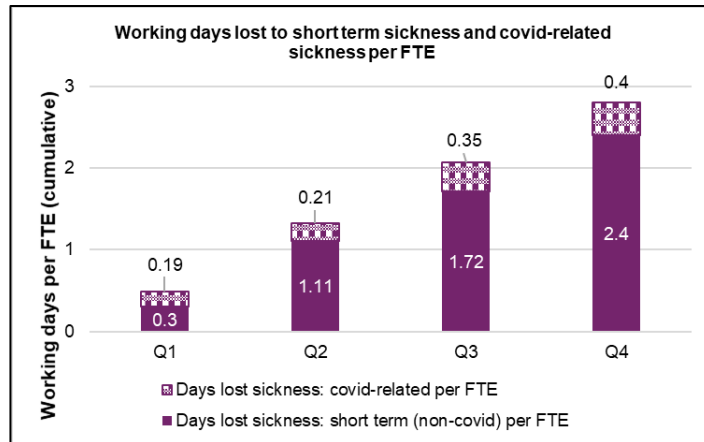
CONTEXT

This is year one of tracking staff satisfaction as the One Team, and as such no comparison data is available.



Staff absence levels– working days lost to short term sickness per FTE (Measure reference 4)

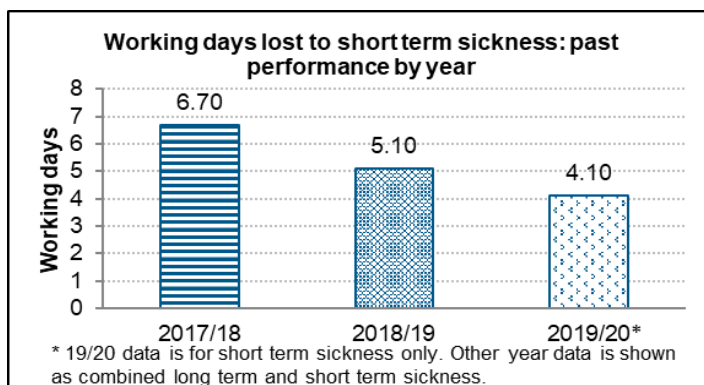
RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 4.5 days

RISKS

While there is a very slight fluctuation between Quarters, generally the figures remain low compared to the target. The Council has focussed on wellbeing and continues to champion the importance of working balanced hours with the HR team supporting managers to ensure appropriate support and guidance is provided.



COMMENTS

Short term sickness is defined as a period of absence that totals no more than 19 working days. If this is exceeded, then the period of absence is classified as long-term sickness. Absence figures are lower than the target, with levels of short-term sickness showing a minor increase into Q4, which coincides with annual seasonal increases in short-term absence levels due to winter ailments. However, short-term sickness levels at year end are below the targeted level for the organisation, even including the Covid-19 related absences, and reflects the pro-active work to continually keep sickness absence levels low. The majority of staff continue to work remotely from home, qualitative feedback from staff as well as national opinion suggests that they are more unlikely to take sick absence due to this increased flexibility and lack of commute. Staff are being advised to continue to take periods of absence if they are unable to work, and resources around physical and mental health have been communicated to staff to ensure they are staying healthy and reporting any problems or queries. Covid-19 related absences are recorded as a separate 'Covid-19 related absence', these cover self-isolating, positive tests and symptoms.

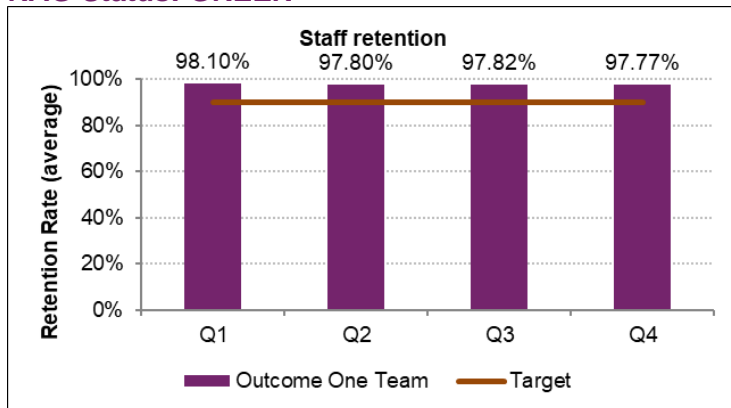
CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows the comparison data for short term sickness days lost for the last three years. This shows that the number of working days lost is lower than previously. The number of working days lost to sickness generally in the public sector has been consistently higher than the rate for the private sector since 1995, although both sectors have seen an overall decrease in the last few years (ONS, Labour Force Survey 2019). In 2018, the number of days lost to the public sector stood at 5.6. For context, the One Team currently has a lower than average sickness rate.



Staff retention (Measure reference 5)

RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 90%

COMMENTS

Staff retention levels remain high with only a small decrease in staff retention from Q3 to Q4, bringing the average rate to 97.77%. Levels are likely to remain high and at a stable rate due to higher levels of local and national unemployment. Retention levels are quite consistent across Directorates. The Council is keen to engage with the workforce, and regularly checks on engagement levels through wellbeing surveys and promoting issues such as stress awareness month, international woman's day and the promotion of National Mental Health Awareness day. A management development programme is planned to develop our front-line managers, senior managers and leadership team, helping to develop skills and nurture talent within the organisation. The One Team performance scheme also encourages regular check in conversations on professional development and opportunities, ensuring that employees are recognised and rewarded for their work, with learning and development opportunities promoted. The Council is also keen to ensure that the performance management framework is bold in its thinking and helps to attract and retain excellent staff - this is currently out to consultation with all staff.

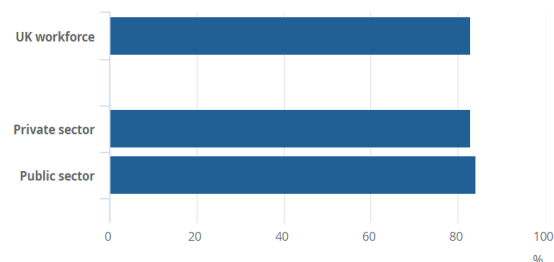
The Feasibility Study estimated that 1 in 4 posts that become vacant through natural turnover would become a saving, due to scales of economies. A review of vacancies is currently taking place, including an analysis against the Feasibility Study estimation.

RISKS

Due to the current economic climate we anticipate retention figures remaining at a similar level.

Figure 1: One-year retention rates in the largest public sector occupations are mostly above the workforce average

One-year retention rates, by occupation, UK, 2016 to 2017



CONTEXT

The latest data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows that from 2016 to 2017, the UK workforce one-year retention rate was 83% and the overall public sector one-year retention rate was 84%. Similar to the trend seen across the workforce, most of the larger public sector occupations saw a fall in their one-year retention rate, between 2012 to 2013 and 2016 to 2017.

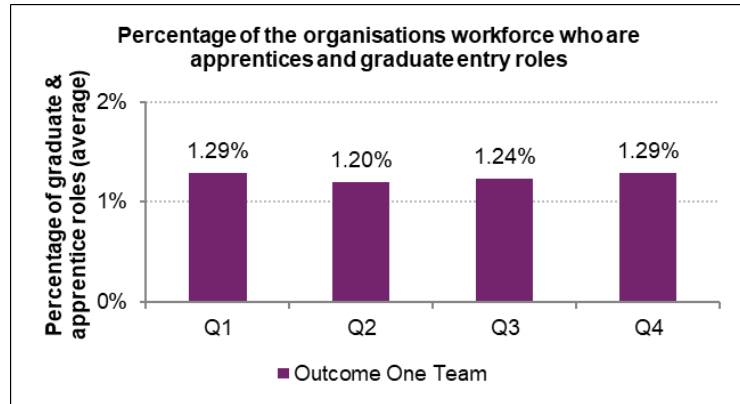
For Local and National Government, the retention rate currently sits at 89%, showing that the One Team has a higher retention rate than average.

Source: ONS, Annual Population Survey 2016/17



Percentage of the organisations workforce who are apprentices and graduate entry roles (Measure reference 6)

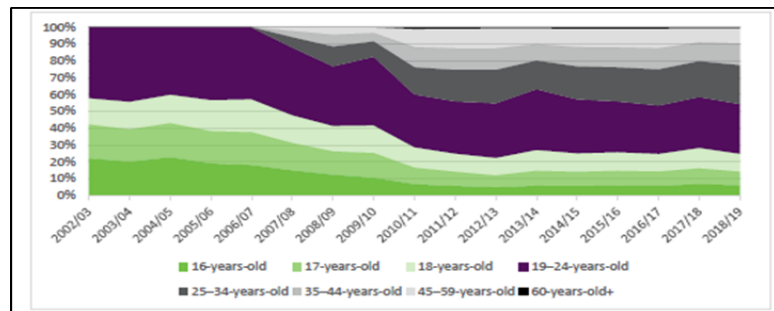
RAG Status: **BASELINE**



Year End Success Target: **Baselining**

RISKS

The availability of relevant Apprenticeship standards/courses is a risk. The Council is keen to invest in future growth and grow our own skills, however, some hard to recruit areas have limited Apprenticeship course options available.



COMMENTS

Part of the Councils' strategy is to increase the number of graduates and apprentices that work within the organisation, ensuring graduates and apprentices are spread throughout the organisation in a varied range of roles. There are currently 11 apprentices and 2 graduates in areas such as Human Resources, Marketing and Communications, Communities and Procurement.

There is an apprenticeship network both internally and externally with partners to create opportunities and celebrate apprenticeships. Two apprentices have been nominated for an apprentice of the year award, recognising their talent and hard work.

The apprenticeships will be promoted through the Norfolk Careers and Skills Festival events, and there is a plan to create strong networking links with local schools' colleges and universities. Through the National Graduate Development Programme, the Council is keen to secure another graduate to complete a two-year placement, working within directorates to provide a cross section of working and skills exposure. The Kickstart programme is also progressing, which will offer a mixture of internal and external opportunities via our local partners, all of which receive employability advice and support to help them continue to find work.

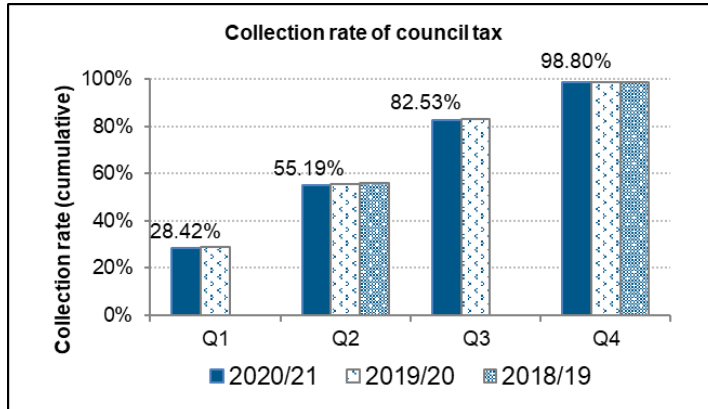
CONTEXT

The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) July 2020 report (left) found that most apprenticeships go to existing employees rather than new labour market entrants with an increasing share of opportunities going to those aged 25 and over. Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, employers have increasingly focused their investment in providing apprenticeship training to older and in many cases, already highly experienced and qualified workers, which is evidenced by the growing numbers of apprenticeships in leadership and management and other professional training. (Source: Apprenticeship statistics DFE, 2002-2019). The Council is in line with other businesses where apprentice and graduates starts have slowed due to the current climate, however it has been the aim of the Council to focus on recruiting entry level apprentices and graduates from September 2020



Collection rate of Council Tax (Measure reference 7)

RAG Status: AMBER



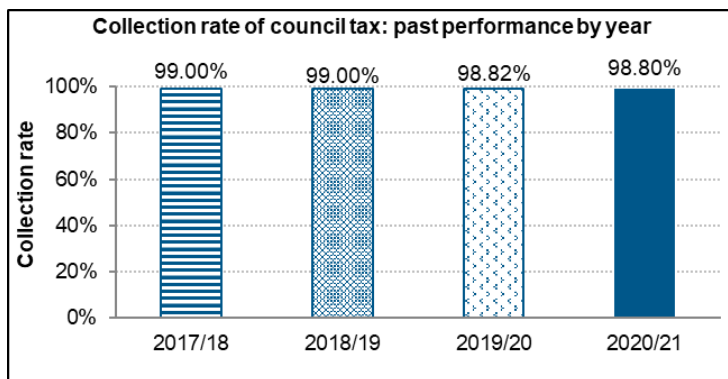
Year End Success Target: 98.9%

COMMENTS

The recovery rate, while not reaching the challenging target, has exceeded expectations due to the challenges facing council tax collection, which have been unprecedented due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The usual process of recovery action was severely disrupted with no formal recovery action undertaken in Q1, although soft reminders were sent. A re-engagement process began in Q2 to remind people of outstanding instalments and the team has been proactive in taking action to engage with and remind people of outstanding sums since Q2. The effect on many residents' circumstances has led to the need to offer a flexible approach to payment arrangements and signposting to debt advice and benefits. One important factor which has influenced outturn has been the suspension of court action for non-payment which lasted until October when courts re-opened for our work. One summons issue was undertaken before the second lockdown prevented further courts. We have since resumed court action from January, but we are behind our normal position with recovery action. Although our collection rate has been impacted, the proactive action taken to re-engage and continue to issue notices has helped us to maintain a good collection rate finishing only marginally below the target.

RISKS

The team will work to recover unpaid council tax from 2020/21 in the year ahead as well as to mitigate impacts on 2021/22 collection. The resulting increase in arrears and residual effects of the Covid-19 pandemic may have an adverse effect on collection rates in 2021/22, as some of our residents try to balance paying the new financial year's Council Tax with other debts and Council Tax arrears. There is a risk that as more people come off furlough and the general impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economy, that they may find it difficult to pay ongoing charges.



CONTEXT

The graphs below show the Council Tax collection rate performance for previous years for comparison.

EMPTY HOMES

Area	Empty Homes 2019	Empty Homes 2020	% change*	Empty properties (2020) as % of dwellings*
Breckland	481	609	27	1
Broadland	347	380	10	0.6
GYBC	586	712	22	1.5
KLWN	966	979	1	1.3
Norwich	560	779	39	1.1
NNDC	572	554	3	1
South Norfolk	285	310	9	0.5
Norfolk	3797	4323	14	1

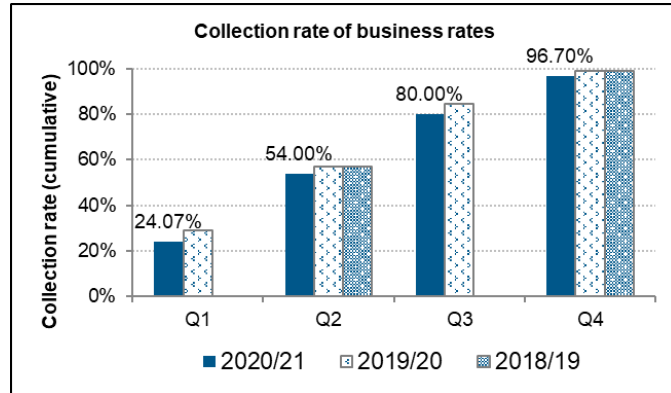
CONTEXT

The number of empty homes is new context introduced in Q4. The empty homes policy will be reviewed by Cabinet in June 2021 to update the current policy in light of new best practice guidance. Broadland empty homes have gone up in the last 12 months but is still well below the Norfolk average.



Collection of Business Rates (Measure reference 8)

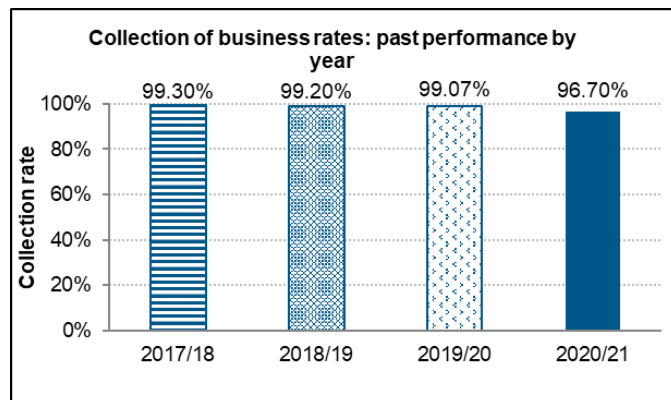
RAG Status: RED



Year End Success Target: 99%

RISKS

There is a significant risk that collection rates will continue to be adversely affected into 2021/22 by the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and the downturn in the economy. Arrears levels are higher at the end of this year compared to normal and the risk of further lockdowns may also affect collection rates. Additionally, the effect on businesses of employees coming off furlough and businesses having less national support may also play a part.



COMMENTS

Collection performance has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst some sectors such as retail have benefited from additional help through emergency Business Rate Relief, other sectors have not had the same form of assistance. The team have worked with businesses to offer extended and deferred payments where appropriate and this has involved proactive contact to offer assistance. The recovery process was suspended in the Spring of 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and while we restarted the process of engaging with non-payers in the summer, many businesses have struggled to pay their rates. The team have done their best to engage businesses to see how they can be assisted or signposted to our Economic Development team. Another factor affecting collection has been the suspension of Court action until late last year by the Court service. There has also been an effect on the collection rate from a small number of large businesses with high rateable values going into administration or voluntary arrangement.

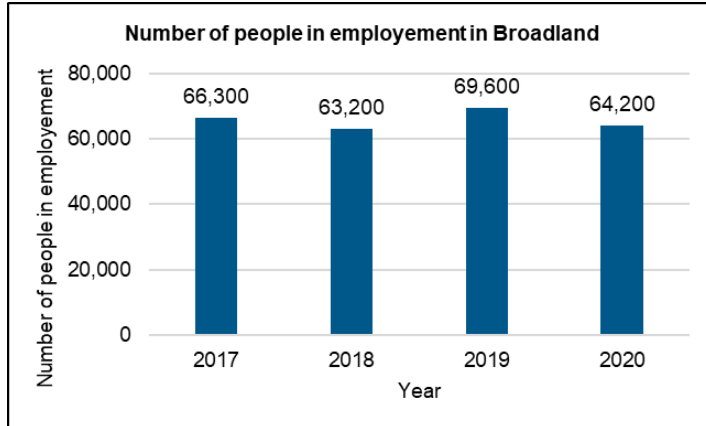
CONTEXT

The graphs below show the Business Rates collection rate performance for previous years and quarters for comparison. Collection rates are lower in comparison to previous years due to the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Number of new jobs created (Measure reference 9)

RAG Status: BASELINE



Year End Success Target: To meet the target for Greater Norwich as set out in the emerging Local Plan

COMMENTS

This baseline figure from the ONS annual population survey shows that from January – December 2020, 64,200 people were in employment in Broadland. This is a decrease on the number of people in employment from 2019, but higher than the number in 2018. ONS do not report the number of new jobs created at a local level and so the employment number has been used instead.

It is difficult to predict the future employment trend due to Covid-19, in part because furlough is undoubtedly affecting employment figures. The pace of recovery will probably determine the rate of net new jobs created, but we must acknowledge that it is likely to fall below previous expectations.

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

RISKS

Due to Covid-19 there is a risk of this target not being met. The Covid-19 pandemic has mandated several sectors to close during the various lockdowns and it will be 12 months until this effect can be fully measured.

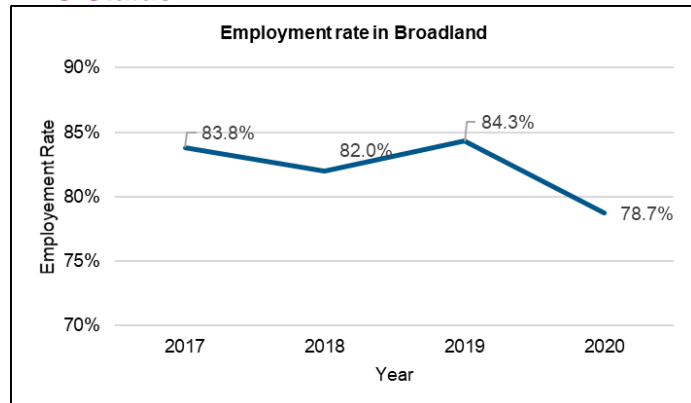
CONTEXT

The decrease in numbers will reflect some of the early effect of Covid-19 and it may decrease further once the effect of furlough ending and the economy opening up again play out. Measuring the number in employment will eventually reflect the net effect of Covid-19 job gains and losses.



Employment rate (Measure reference 10)

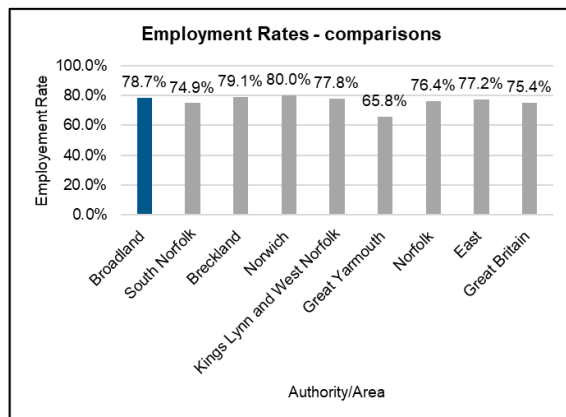
RAG Status: RED



Year End Success Target: increase on employment rate

RISKS

Due to Covid-19 there is a risk of this target not being met. It is unlikely that the employment rate will reflect 2019 figures again until the economy recovers, and new jobs created and/or businesses return to growth.



COMMENTS

The fall in the employment rate reflects the first national lockdown and early job losses as a result. It is likely that when the impact of furlough feeds into the annual statistics, the employment rate will show an initial decline. The business survey taking place across several districts in Norfolk points to a real concern of respondents that they will have to release staff if the recovery is slower than expected. However, the Bank of England are predicting Britain is on track for the strongest growth since the second world war this year as it stages a faster-than-expected recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. To support a fast recovery, officers are undertaking a number of measures to address the threat of increased unemployment. These include acting as a lead partner in the Government's Kickstart scheme, supporting our businesses with a range of grant schemes, including the locally devised Additional Restrictions Grant, Autumn & Winter Adaptation Fund and Tourism Funds. We are also looking to support our retail sector with the Click it Local online sales and delivery platform. Additionally, the Greater Norwich Manufacturing Group is leading on a programme of training to improve skills and attract jobs to the sector.

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

CONTEXT

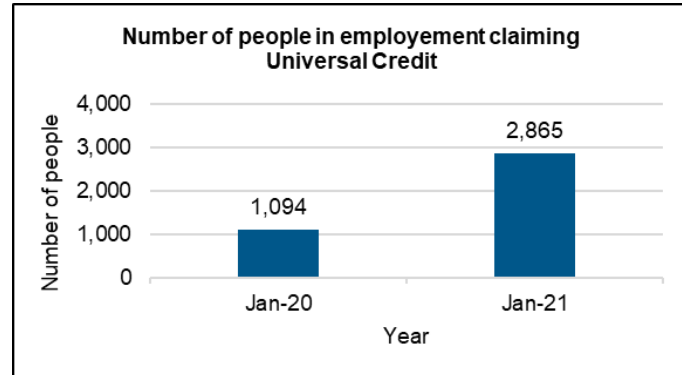
The average employment rate in Norfolk is 76.4% at the end of December 2020. Broadland currently has a higher employment rate when compared to the Norfolk, East and Great Britain averages.

Broadland currently has a higher than regional or national average number of 16-64-year-old females in full time jobs.



Those in employment claiming benefits (Measure reference 11)

RAG Status: RED



COMMENTS

This statistic is reported by DWP, so the reported figure for this quarter (from Feb 2021) will form a baseline. The current number of those in employment and claiming Universal Credit in Broadland is 2,865. This is 42.9% of those claiming Universal Credit.

Year End Success Target: Decrease on the number of those who are in employment and claiming benefits

RISKS

It is almost certain that there will be a net increase in this figure, post Covid-19, as the economy opens. Many of those jobs lost during the Covid-19 pandemic are low pay or zero hours, so we would expect an increase in employed Universal Credit Claimants

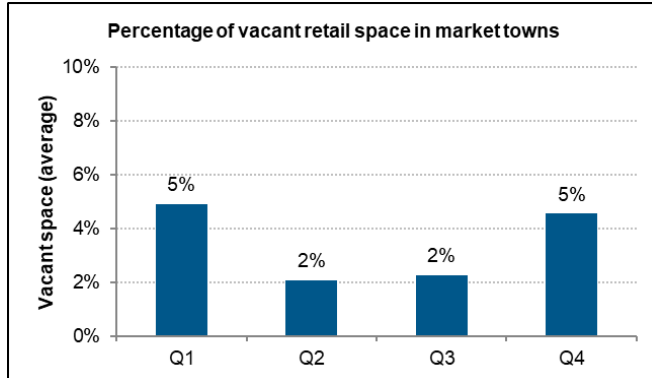
CONTEXT

We expect employment to increase over the next few quarters in line with national predictions of economic growth from the Bank of England, OECD and others. The positive economic growth forecasts are mainly driven by expectation that social restrictions will be removed in line with the Government roadmap. However, many of those jobs may be zero hours or part time, reflecting uncertainty around the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, we would expect the numbers of those in employment claiming benefits to increase. As overall unemployment should decrease, we expect the percentage of those claiming Universal Credit that are in employment to increase.



Percentage of vacant retail space in market towns (Measure reference 12)

RAG Status: BASELINE



Year End Success Target: Baseline

COMMENTS

The Covid-19 pandemic may be starting to impact on occupancy rates of retail units in the market towns at this time. There could yet be a further delayed effect with business grants still in place for hospitality and non-essential retail premises and retail rate discounts continuing in 2021/22.

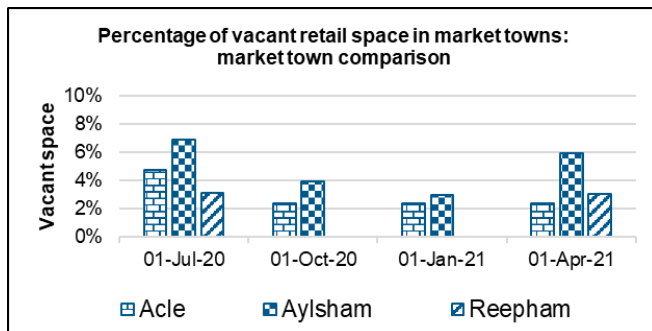
Changes from the previous quarter end are that there are three more vacant units in Aylsham, one unit now vacant in Reepham (up from zero) and no net change in vacant units in Acle. These figures are based on a snapshot of Business Rates data.

The average rate is derived from the vacancy figures as a proportion of the total number of retail units across all 3 market towns. The individual vacancy rates for each town are:

- Acle 2.4%
- Aylsham 5.8%
- Reepham 2.9%

RISKS

The true economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic may not yet be presenting itself in terms of vacant units with business grants still in place for hospitality and non-essential retail premises and retail rate discounts continuing in 2021/22.



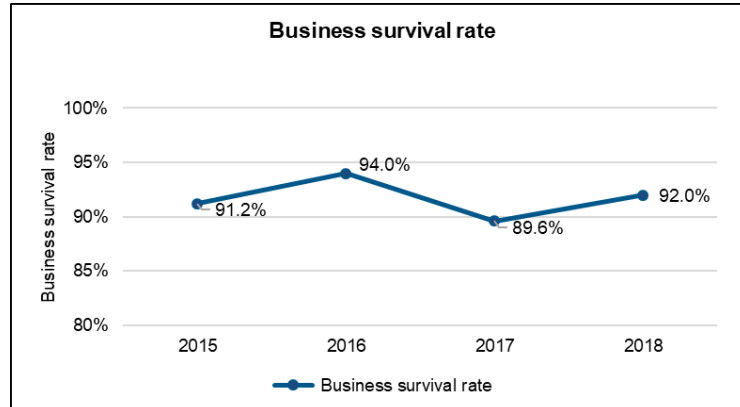
CONTEXT

The chart to the left shows the occupancy vacancy rates for each of the market towns in Broadland for 2020/2021. Although there has been an increase in Q4 vacancy rates remain lower than those reported in Q1.



Business survival rates (Measure reference 13)

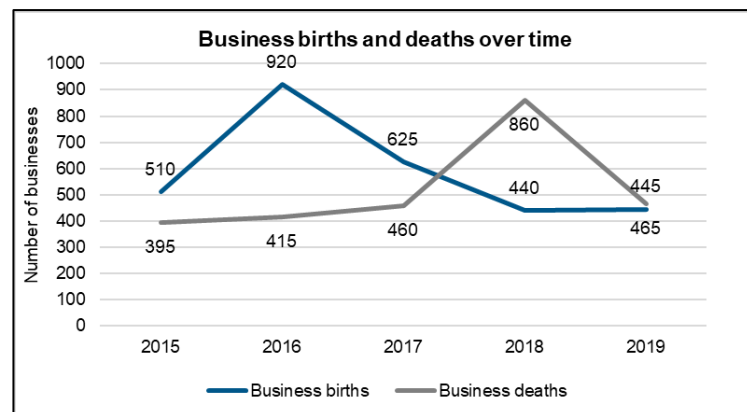
RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: Increase in the % of business start ups that survive over one year

RISKS

Due to Covid-19 there is a real risk of this target not being met.



COMMENTS

The latest data available indicates that for 2018 the percentage of businesses surviving over one year was 92% in Broadland.

Although this was an increase on the previous year, a RAG status of amber represents the strong likelihood that this Business Survival rate will fall when this figure is next reported as the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is not yet registering in the data available.

It is highly likely that more up to date surveys and data will provide a much clearer picture following the Covid-19 pandemic as this will be a key indicator. Although we are aware the data is now being collected, there will probably be a delay of at least twelve months before the results are published.

Source: Office for National Statistics (Business Demography 2019)

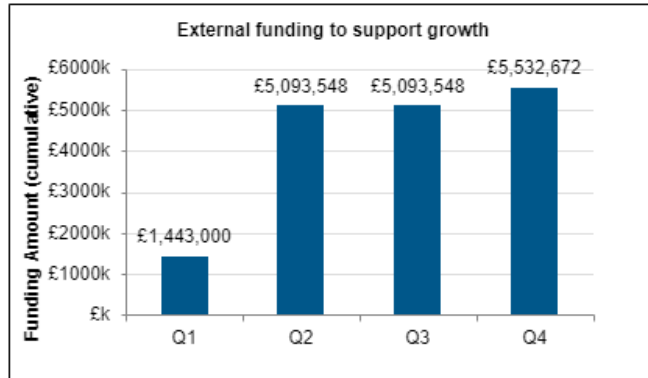
CONTEXT

This is a baseline figure and there is a two-year lag on the report data. 2019 data for business births and deaths is shows a net loss of 20 businesses overall but the data does not provide detail on the length or the size of operation for businesses. Although there is expected to be a steep upturn in the number of new businesses started in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the net figure may well show a loss. This is most likely to be in the younger businesses that have either not been adequately funded initially, or those without sufficient trading history to survive the lockdowns. There is also likely to be a number of businesses which will fail due to the increased cost of operating during Covid-19 whilst suffering from a reduction in turnover and net profits.



External funding to support growth (Measure reference 14)

RAG Status: **BASELINE**



Year End Success Target: **Baselining**

COMMENTS

A further £439,124 external funding has been secured this quarter bringing the total funding secured in 2020/21 to £5,532,672. Two projects have received funding through the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Investment Fund - Phase one of the Brundall Sports Hub project, which will include a multi-sport floodlit 3G artificial grass pitch and other facilities, has secured £100,000, and £259,124 will deliver improvements along the Bure Valley path including a crossing over the A140 for safe passage for cyclists and pedestrians. £80,000 funding has been awarded from the One Public Estate Land Release Fund for on-site works at Plumstead Road, Thorpe St Andrew to enable the release of land for development of infrastructure and housing. Work has also continued on a number of economic development related funding applications this quarter, including the Food Innovation Centre, which has secured over £4m investment this year to date, and confirmation of European match funding for this project is expected early in 2021/22.

No Covid-19 related funding has been included within this return.

RISKS

Food Innovation Centre - The ability to secure the additional 50% of European funding needed to deliver this project remains the principle risk to the project. Work is ongoing to secure tenants for the building to ensure delivery against the business plan.

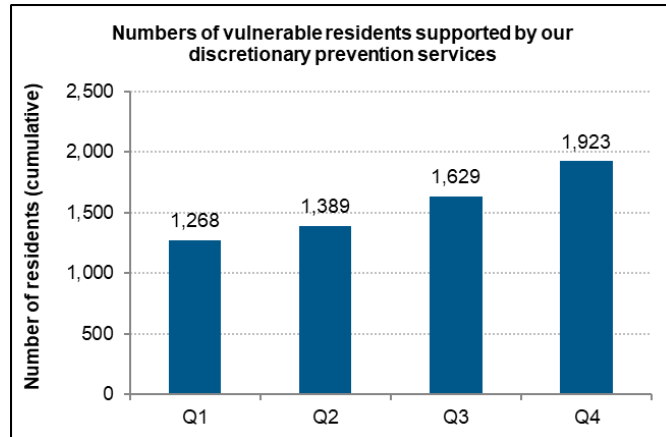
CONTEXT

The Council continues to seek out opportunities to secure investment which will help deliver vital infrastructure for both existing and future communities. We continue to move closer to delivery of the first dedicated Food Grade Innovation Centre facility in Norfolk and Suffolk. Located on the Food Enterprise Park at Honingham Thorpe, the facility will enable greater levels of innovation and growth within the food and drink processing sector, providing thirteen food grade units to help facilitate growth of food and drink businesses in conjunction with opening up the Food Enterprise Zone. The Centre will include a food innovation hub offering test kitchen facilities, a sensory tasting facility and meeting / exhibition space. The project will also deliver an innovation support programme for eligible businesses and a Food and Drink Cluster to facilitate greater levels of knowledge exchange, new business and supply chain opportunities and enabling ground-breaking innovation collaborations with e.g. the Norwich Research Park



15) Numbers of vulnerable residents supported by our discretionary prevention services (Measure reference 15)

RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 2,000 residents (combined figures for BDC and SNC)

COMMENTS

Our discretionary prevention services, in particular our Help Hub and Communities functions, have provided the basis for our Covid-19 response work through the last year. In the last quarter, and most recent lockdown, we have not seen as high demand for Covid-19 welfare support.

This is because residents are more familiar with community resources, including mutual aid groups, with whom we have worked extensively with over the last 12 months. Customers are using the contacts they have made to access support directly.

We have seen a continued increased in the number of people accessing our business as usual services on the last quarter.

The volume of cases coming into the service directly from the general public, via the Help Hub is increasing. We will see a further increase in Q2 21/22, as the services are promoted as part of an ongoing campaign.

RISKS:

With increased financial pressure on the Council, the risk is prevention resources and funding streams are cut to reduce budgets. This will potentially have a negative impact on our services as we deal with more complex cases that have not been resolved at an early stage.

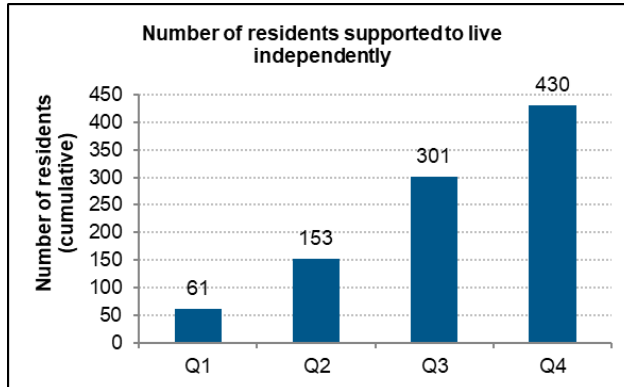
CONTEXT

The Help hub, community functions and discretionary services have been invaluable over the last 12 months in identifying and supporting residents and communities in need. In the last year, we have distributed 8 tonnes of food to residents, supported 45 community support groups with over 4,000 volunteers and collected 2,750 prescriptions taken over 20,000 calls asking for help, 4,373 individuals have been visited from enhanced contract training to support self-isolation.



Number of residents supported to live independently (Measure reference 17)

RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: 700 residents

COMMENTS

We did not quite meet this target this year due to Covid-19 and being unable to access people's homes to carry out assessments and work. This measure is about working with vulnerable residents, many of whom were isolating and shielding.

In Q4, 13 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) have been completed, along with 105 handyperson visits and 12 low level grants, totalling 130 homes supported.

By the end of April, £447,000 of the Council's £885,905 Better Care Fund (BCF) allocation had been spent with a further £184,000 of commitments. The Council's BCF representative has confirmed that underspend in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic impact can be carried forward into 2021/22.

This compares to 41 DFGs, 134 handyperson visits and 35 low level grants in quarter four of 2019/20. Delivery has been below to that expected in a normal year due to the national lockdown that has been in place since January.

RISKS

Most housing standards work relates to clinically vulnerable and extremely vulnerable residents, which has caused significant impact on our work during the Covid-19 period. Currently, Council staff and tradespeople are permitted to work in people's homes in accordance with social distancing and PPE use, although some residents are understandably apprehensive allowing people into their home which causes delays to delivery of service.

CONTEXT

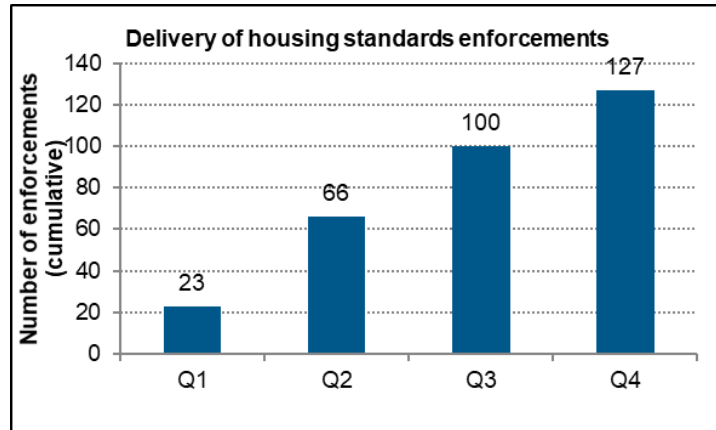
One of the key responsibilities for the Council is to support people to remain in their own home. This has the dual effect of reducing pressure on other services, as well as enabling our residents to remain independent and confident in their own homes. We therefore have a range of tools to designed to help residents in a variety of ways. Our key focus is disabled facilities grants (DFGs), which enable us to physically adapt people's properties to meet their needs. Additionally, the Council's handyperson scheme offers small household repairs and minor adaptations.

This target enables us to judge how many people we can support, by assessing trends in cost, complexity, delivery levels and resource.



Delivery of housing standards enforcement (Measure reference 18)

RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 75 enforcements

COMMENTS

Q4 figures relate to 27 disrepair complaints having been resolved and 0 occurrences of gypsies and travellers being reported. This brings the total number of enforcements for the year to 127. Disrepair complaints on private rented properties are varied, with the team using an 'education first' approach to encourage landlords to comply.

This compares to 29 disrepair cases and 6 reports of travellers in Q4 of 2019/20.

The movement of travellers has been low this year, but this is expected to increase as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted during 2021/22 and return to normal levels during the summer / autumn.

RISKS

Where possible, disrepair issues are being sorted remotely with the use of photos, videos, and the option of video calling. This method is in its infancy and we need to understand the benefits of this compared to physically assessing people in their home.

CONTEXT

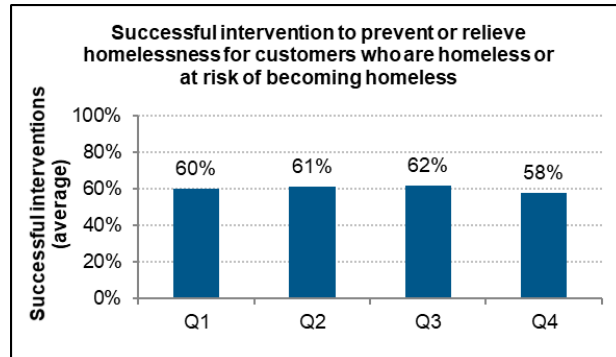
A key aim of the Council is to ensure that we deal appropriately with private sector landlords who rent their properties out. Our role is to ensure that these properties are maintained to an acceptable standard. This work includes identifying, registering, and monitoring Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) to ensure they are safe, compliant and are not used for exploitation. We have identified an additional 11 HMOs in the district

We also ensure that unauthorised gypsy and traveller sites are dealt with appropriately, balancing the welfare of gypsies and travellers, with the impact on the local community.



Percentage successful intervention to prevent or relieve homelessness for customers who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (Measure reference 19)

RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: 80% successful interventions

COMMENTS

This measure is calculated by the number of individuals or families who present to the Council as homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless (within 56 days) but we prevent them from becoming homeless. We aim for preventing at least 80% of these cases. This year, the impact on homelessness has been felt with people asking for support. The team has experienced many more people asking for help, who were unknown to the Council, tending to be caused by household breakdowns who previously did not need support. Due to the short-term nature of these presentations, and the strict criteria regarding household mixing at times of lockdown, our normal approach regarding repatriation or family mediation had to change as more people needed housing in temporary accommodation. Despite prevention of being at risk of homelessness has not been as high as the Council would like, no family or individual has gone unsupported or been without a roof over their head. The team have received 50%+ more contact this year and have struggled to meet demand, with annual call rates reaching 51,764 as one team, averaging monthly housing advise cases sitting at 1,693 a month, as well as delivering key projects such as the new housing system and allocations policy, and development of the rough sleeper initiative and housing first services. The team has coped well with the additional pressure and with additional resources added are well placed to support families in 2021/22.

RISKS

Due to ongoing support regarding resources throughout the year we are well placed to meet demand next year with the team growing by 10%, all 12 monthly fixed term contracts. The risk however is maintaining resource with temporary contracts. It is likely that demand will be more sustainable throughout the year with lockdowns being less frequent, if at all. The caseload will however remain high. People are in arrears, currently landlords are happier to work with people to allow them to reduce those arrears, the six-month notice period leaving them with reduced choices. If, however, the six-month notice period is revoked then we could see a surge, although this seems to be the unlikely approach by central government.

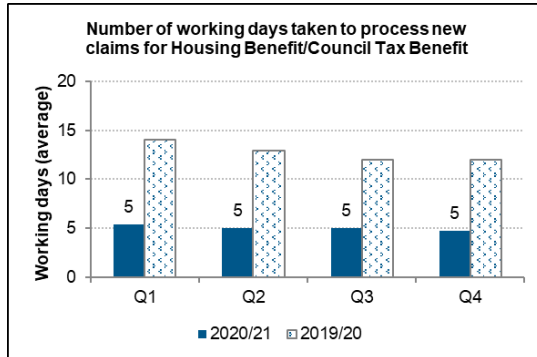
The team have been through a massive transition this year. The new system and policy went live from April 2021, and this will help mitigate the risk. In parallel to the system rollout a large-scale training schedule has been undertaken throughout the year to increase the skill base within the team. The system allows for more self-service providing the team the opportunity to focus on assessment and action rather than administration.



Number of working days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit/Council Tax benefit

(Measure reference 20)

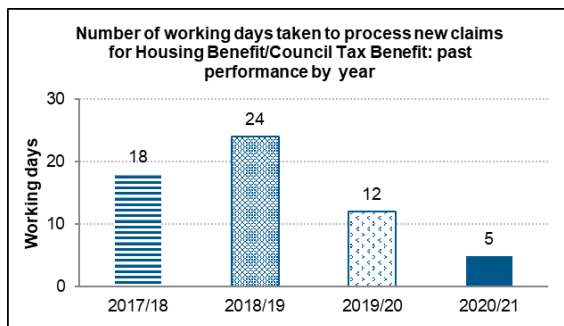
RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 7 working days

RISKS

Temporary staffing resource needs to be managed carefully as the economy opens up and permanent roles become available, to ensure we maintain an effective staff team to cope with demand. Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) funding has been reduced by 25% - this reflects the increase in local housing allowance (LHA). While officers believe that the increase is useful to assist renters, especially those in the private sector, the increase in LHA doesn't assist councils with higher rents. While the increase will open up the private sector more, we will have to keep an eye on to whether this balances out with the 25% decrease in funding of DHP.



COMMENTS

Successfully hitting this target is a great achievement by the team. Throughout the year we have seen a 74% increase in new claims as one team, receiving calls of 51,764 and assisting all residents with the advice they need.

Many of those accessing the service were new to the benefits system, so were in need of further support. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the team has also been dealing with track and trace, created to assist residents through the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in £178,000 being provided to help people isolate. Also, £14,000 paid in extra hardship support grants to those who otherwise would have accessed unsustainable funding sources, failed to pay their rent or gone without. With adding resources when needed, a coming together as one team to meet this additional demand, and a new flexible working model, the team have met this additional demand.

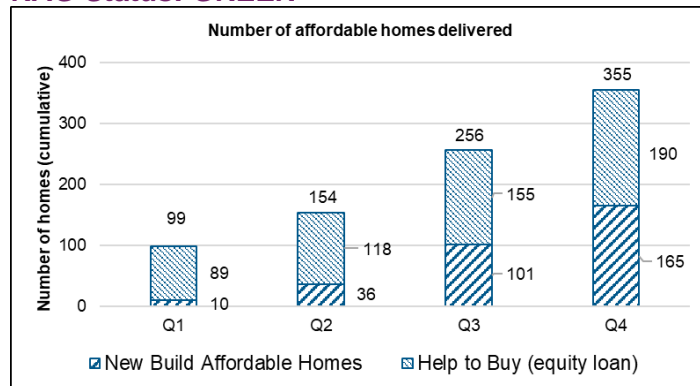
CONTEXT

Performance compared to last year remains very strong.

This success has come from embedding new staff into an already very strong team, aligning the service and providing flexibility to staff who are often balancing life and work.

Number of affordable homes delivered (including help to buy) (Measure reference 21)

RAG Status: GREEN



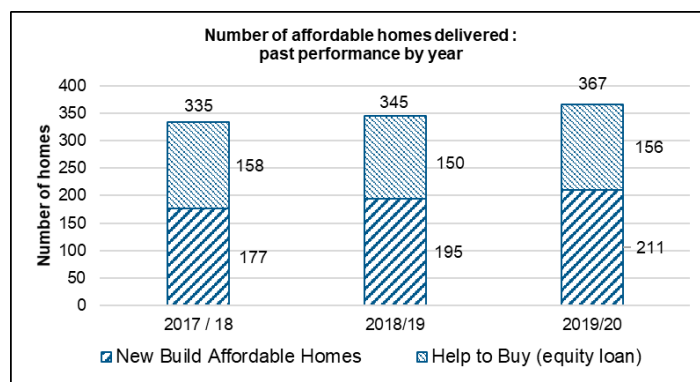
Year End Success Target: Sufficient affordable housing to meet the needs of residents in accordance with the Strategic Market Assessment

COMMENTS

A further 64 new build affordable homes have been completed in Q4 bringing the cumulative total for the new affordable homes delivered by developers for handover to Registered Providers to 165 in 20/21. In addition, Help to Buy Equity loan has provided a further 35 homes in Q4. So, after the low delivery seen for Q1 and Q2 the district has seen good continued recovery in affordable housing delivery. Across the district affordable housing delivery has continued at Hellesdon, Horsford, Sprowston, and Blofield, plus new homes have just been completed at Swannington (all for Social Rent). Similarly, there have been further starts on new sites by developers across the district. This includes a 58 bed Independent Living Scheme (Extra Care Housing) on the former Herondale site at Acle. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Central Norfolk (2017) indicates a yearly target of 96 new build affordable homes for Broadland. So based on the cumulative total of 165 new build affordable homes (and not including Help to Buy Equity Loan figures) Broadland has exceeded the yearly target requirement for new affordable homes. Despite showing slightly reduced new build affordable housing delivery for 2020-2021 the overall cumulative total (including Help to Buy equity loan) still provides a comparable level of affordable housing delivery to previous years.

RISKS

At present there has not been a slowing in the post-Covid-19 recovery with the affordable housing delivery in Q4 continuing to deliver pre-Covid-19 quarterly levels of new affordable homes. So, the cumulative new build affordable housing completions for this financial year are comparable to those seen for previous years (see Graph below).



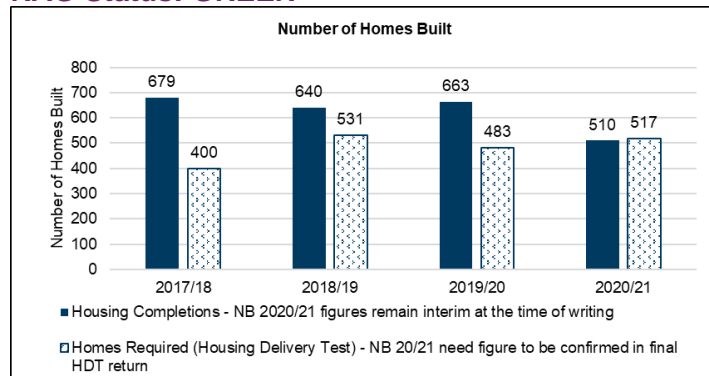
CONTEXT

This graph shows previous years' Total Affordable Housing Completions and Cumulative Total including Help to Buy (Equity Loan) Completions. The affordable housing delivery data over previous years shows fairly consistent new build affordable housing delivery. This approximates to 30% of the total new build dwellings per year. When the Help to Buy Equity Loan sales completions is included in the cumulative total, this provides in excess of 300 new affordable homes per annum.



Number of new homes delivered (Measure reference 22)

RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: To achieve more than 100% in the Governments Housing Delivery Test for Greater Norwich ensuring the 5 year Housing Land Supply is maintained to deliver planned growth

RISKS

It is important that the Council continues to take a positive approach to planning applications for housing, works proactively with developers to overcome barriers to deliver of permitted sites and more generally supports the Covid-19 recovery. This will help ensure housing delivery returns to the buoyant levels of the recent past as soon as possible in order to ensure that sufficient houses are being delivered to meet forecast needs, and avoid a shortfall in supply against the HDT, with its resultant impacts on the determination of planning applications.

CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that, except in specific and limited circumstances, where the HDT indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. In practical terms this means that planning applications would be determined in a much more permissive regime that would otherwise be the case.

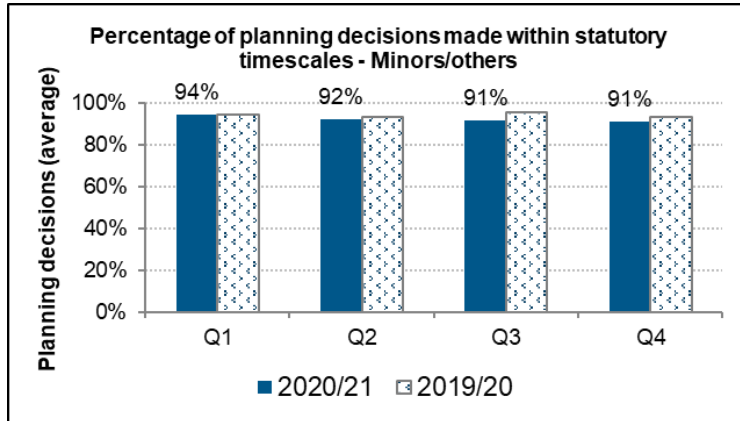
COMMENTS

The results of the 2020 Housing Delivery Test (HDT) were published on 19th January 2021 and demonstrated that Greater Norwich had delivered 133% of the homes required. Individually Broadland's requirement for the 2021 HDT, to be measured against completions in 2020/21, is calculated as 517 homes. Initial monitoring returns indicate that Broadland has completed 510 homes in 2020/21. This is slightly below Broadland annual Local Housing Need (LHN) requirement and is also below the forecast of 589 homes to be delivered in 2020/21 as set out in the most recent 5-year housing land supply assessment. It should be noted however that at the time of writing this is only an interim figure and that final figures will be confirmed in the 2020/21 annual monitoring report. However, given that Greater Norwich achieved a surplus of 1,393 homes over the period 2018-19 and 2019-20 i.e., the first 2 years of the 3-year rolling period for the 2021 HDT, it is considered unlikely that a shortfall in delivery will be recorded against the HDT in 2021.



Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales – minors/others (Measure reference 23)

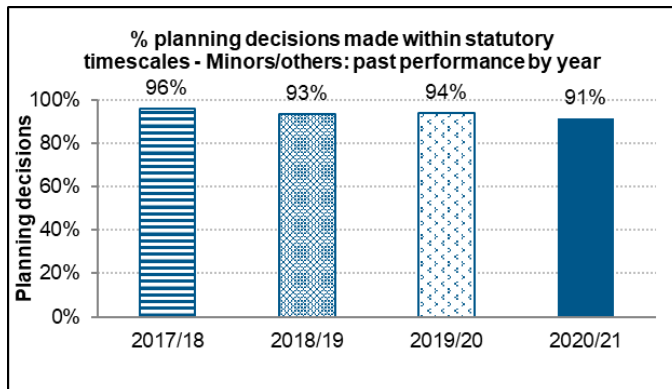
RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: 90% minors/others in agreed time

RISKS

We are currently meeting our internal target, and exceeding the national target of 70%, so there is no risk.



COMMENTS

The Q4 figure relates to 222 out of 245 applications (90.6%). 142 applications were determined in the statutory time period of 8 weeks and a further 80 were determined in an agreed extension of time. This brings the average decisions to 91% for 2020/21.

The national average for "Other" applications determined in 8 weeks or agreed time limit for Q4 in 2020 was 90%.

We are now measured as part of a national measure for a rolling 2-year performance. If we fall below the national measure of 70%, we will have special measures introduced. Our current rolling 2-year performance for minors/others is 92.8 %, which against the national target of 70% is good, and as such the Authority is not at risk of special measures. "Other" applications include advertisement consent, Listed Building consent, Certificates of Lawfulness, etc

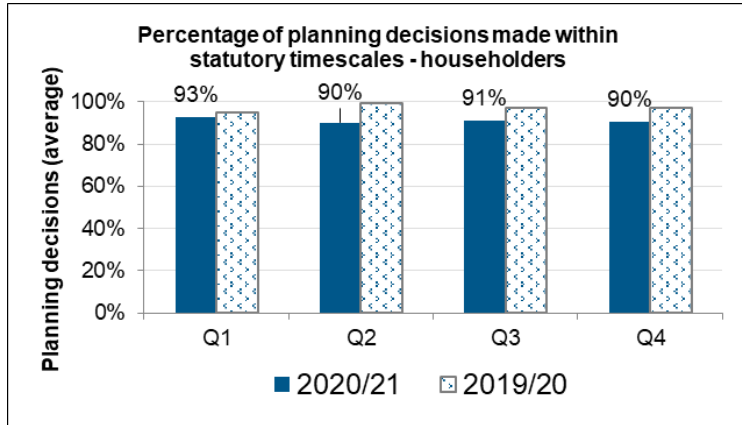
CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows a comparison for previous years. This shows that Broadland is currently performing better than previous years on this measure.



Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales - householders (Measure reference 23)

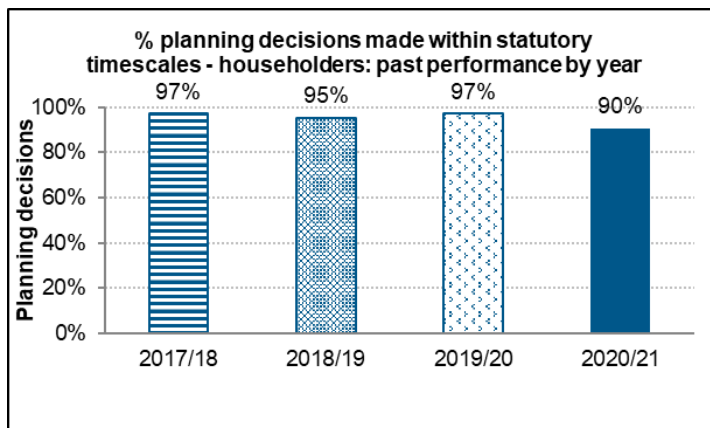
RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: 95% of decisions

RISKS

This is the first year we have set this measure and is below our internal target of 95% for this quarter, which has been partly due to necessary changes in working practices during Covid-19, such as the need to pre-book site visits, and the subsequent delays associated with this. We have now reviewed how we speed up the display of site notices for householder applications. The average figure is 90% for the year.



COMMENTS

Q4 figures relates to 138 (88.5%) out of 156 applications. 102 (65%) were determined within the statutory time limit and 36 were determined within an agreed extension of time. 19 (12%) were determined in 6 weeks or less. This brings the average decisions to 90% for 2020/21.

There has been a significant increase in the number of applications submitted compared to previous years (Q4 in 2019/2020 had 140 applications validated, Q4 in 2020/2021 had 192 applications validated) which together with delays associated with Covid-19 restrictions such as pre-booking site visits and the challenges of home working.

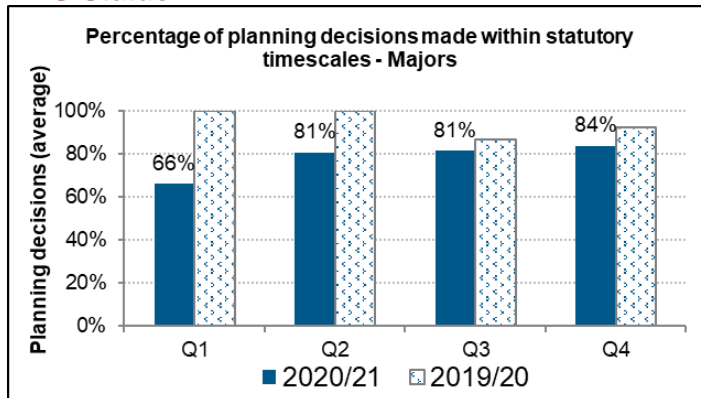
CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows a comparison for previous years. This shows that Broadland is currently performing better than previous years on this measure



Percentage of planning decisions made within statutory timescales - majors (Measure reference 23)

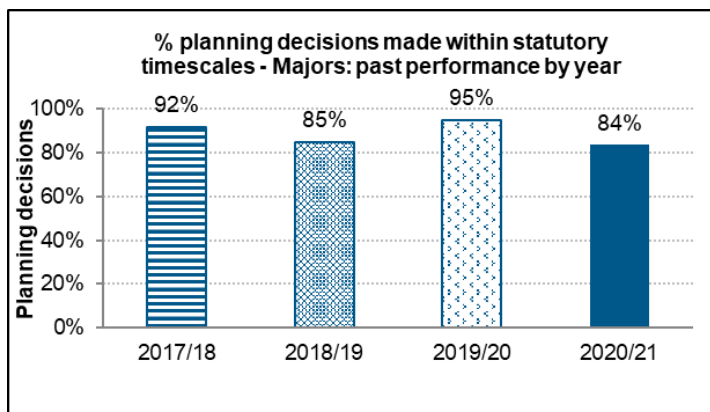
RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: 95% of decisions

RISKS

This is the first year we have set this measure and is below our internal target of 95% and is lower than the national average for the same quarter last year (pre Covid-19), however we are in excess of the national measure of 60% both for the quarter and the rolling two year measure and significantly higher than previous years for Broadland and as such, are not at risk. Following a review of the use of agreed extensions of time there is an improvement in the performance in the quarters compared to the previous quarter.



COMMENTS

The Q4 figure of 90% relates to 9 applications out of 10. 4 were determined within the statutory time limit and 5 were determined within an agreed extension of time This brings the average decisions to 84% for 2020/21.

The national average for "Major" applications determined in 13 weeks or agreed time limit for Q4 in 2020 was 89%.

We are now measured as part of a national measure for a rolling 2-year performance. If we fall below the national measure of 60% we will have special measures introduced. Our current rolling 2-year performance for majors is 88%, which is against the national target of 60% means the Authority is not at risk of special measures

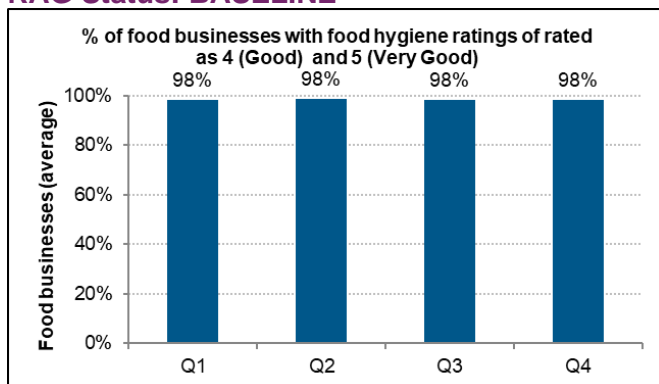
CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows a comparison for previous years.



Percentage of food businesses with food hygiene ratings of rated 4 (Good) and 5 (Very Good) (Measure reference 24)

RAG Status: BASELINE



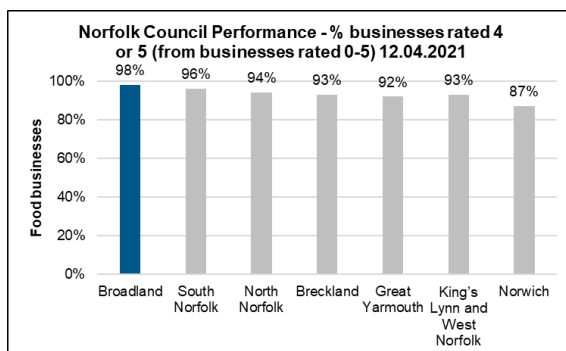
Year End Success Target: Baseline

COMMENTS

This measure shows businesses within the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) with a rating of 5 (very good) or 4 (good) - representing a total of 790 and 66 businesses respectively. There is a total of 873 food businesses within the FHRS. During Q4, a total of 34 visits were carried out, these include food safety inspections, sampling visits and advisory/monitoring visits, focussing on the higher risk businesses, in line with Food Standards Agency advice to local authorities. Food safety and hygiene inspections are taking place in food business establishments, face-to-face, for the first time in many of those premises since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. In some instances, the newly issued FHRS ratings shall reflect the shift from restaurant catering to an increase in takeaway and food delivery services, as well as the impact on routine maintenance and food safety management systems brought about by Covid-19. The updated FHRS ratings shall reflect how businesses have been adapted to closure and/or restrictions arising due to Covid-19. New ratings will consider any recent changes in terms of the handling of food, how food is stored & prepared, cleanliness, maintenance of food equipment and premises structure, plus how food safety is managed in the current trading environment.

RISKS

There is potential to see a percentage reduction of those businesses receiving the highest ratings (4 – Good and 5 Very Good) based upon early indications, as the food inspection programme resumes following lockdown. Whilst being only based on a small sample of higher risk premises inspected to date in Q4, inspection findings are encountering a slippage in food safety and hygiene compliance in some food business establishments; this may continue into the first half of 2021/22. The reasons behind this are complex and are a combination of trading circumstances for food businesses arising due to Covid-19 pandemic throughout the past year (refer to 'Comments').



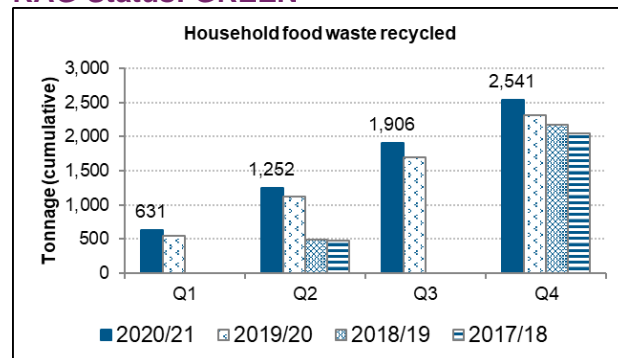
CONTEXT

The table below benchmarks the percentage of food businesses with a Food Hygiene Rating of 4 or 5 in other Norfolk authorities. Source: Food Standards Agency.



Household food waste recycled (Measure reference 25)

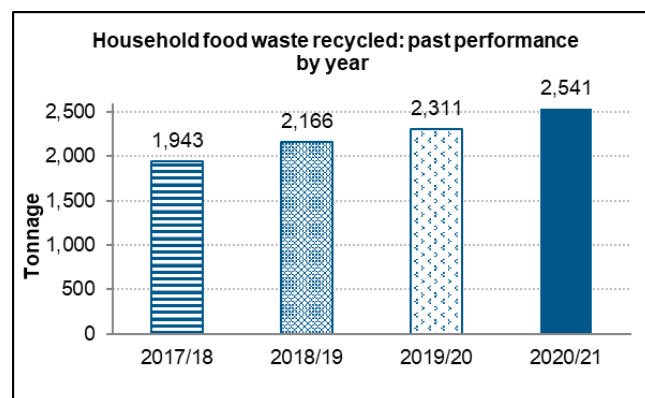
RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: Increase in overall gross tonnage

RISKS

Negative household behaviour occurring following the lifting of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Household apathy in not putting their food waste out for collection.



COMMENTS

The Q4 figure for food waste was 635 tonnes, 19 tonnes (2.9%) lower than in Q3, but 24 tonnes (3.9%) higher than the same quarter last year. It is not clear why there has been a decrease seen from Q4 to Q3, but this could be due to the high figure recorded in Q3 as more households stayed at home over the Christmas period, therefore, producing more food waste.

Overall, the year-end tonnage is 230 tonnes (9.9%) higher than last year at 2,450t. It is anticipated that the majority of this is due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic with more people being at home and producing more food waste.

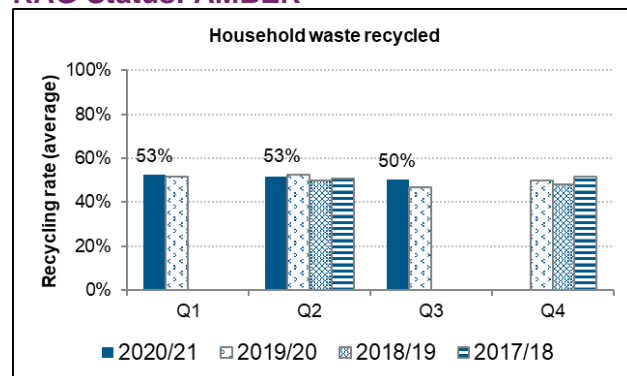
CONTEXT

There have been no changes in the number of properties included in the scheme this year. There will be a further 1,700 properties added to the scheme at the end of April 2021.



Percentage of household waste recycled (Measure reference 26)

RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: 2% increase

NOTE: Quarter 4 data is not available, this will be available in July 2021.

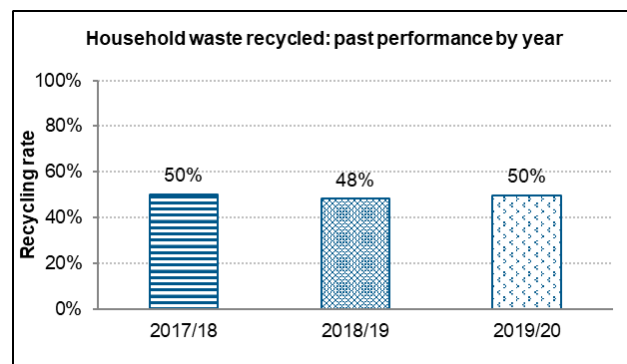
COMMENTS

This measure covers all types of recycling. The Q3 figure of 47% shows a decrease of 4% compared to the Q2 figure, which is due mainly to the expected seasonal variations in garden waste over the winter period. This brings the average recycling rate for Q1-Q3 down to 50%. A further breakdown of the Q3 data shows that dry recycling decreased by 0.5% (193t) from the Q2 figure, whereas the composting figure (garden and food waste) reduced by circa 4.5% (986t) and a positive reduction in the amount of materials not sent for either recycling or composting (138t - contamination).

Comparing the Q3 figure from 2019/20 to 2020/21 there has been a slight increase in the rate of recycling from 46.6% to 46.7%. Further analysing the breakdown shows that the dry recycling rate for Q3 reduced from 21.2% (2019/2020) to 20.7% (2020/2021), while the compost rate (food and garden waste) increased from 25.3% (2019/2020) to 26% (2020/2021). The decrease in the dry recycling rate may be due to coming out of lockdown with less production of dry recycling materials (the so-called Amazon effect), but with a corresponding increase in the volume of residual waste. On the current trajectory it is unlikely that the Council will meet its target to increase recycling rate to 60% by 2025.

RISKS

- Increased contamination rates in dry recycling
- Increase in the amount of residual waste collected, which means the overall % of recycled material in the waste stream decreases
- Ongoing Covid-19 pandemic resulting in changes in household recycling behaviour
- Adverse weather conditions impacting upon the amount of garden waste produced



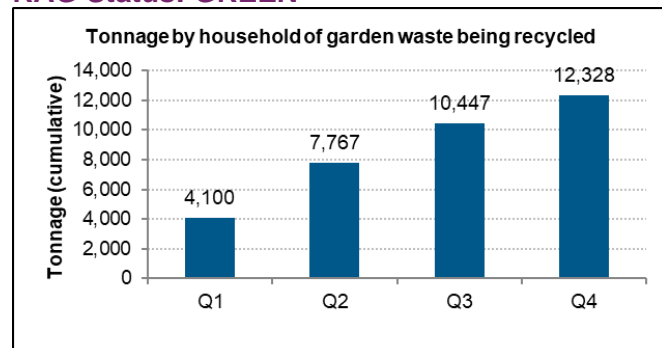
CONTEXT

Comparative data from waste data flow, excluding Norwich City council, shows that Broadland has the highest total recycling rate in Norfolk at 46.7%, with South Norfolk having the second highest figure 39%. Great Yarmouth has the lowest total recycling rate at 28.5%.



Tonnage by household of garden waste being recycled (Measure reference 27)

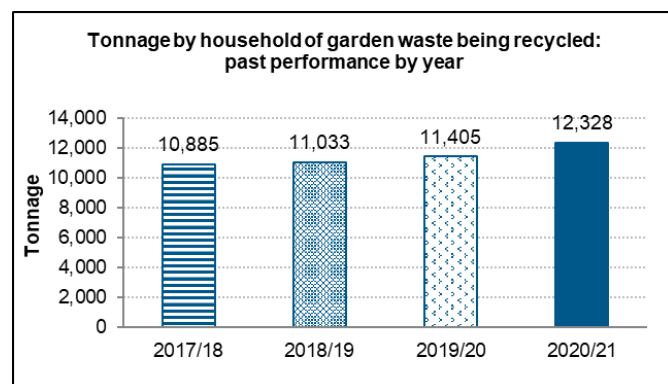
RAG Status: GREEN



Year End Success Target: Increase in tonnage

RISKS

- Adverse weather conditions impacting upon the level of garden waste produced, alongside changes in behaviour due to the Covid-19 pandemic and economic downturn.
- A reduction in the number of subscribers to the service
- The introduction by Central Government of a free universal garden waste service



COMMENTS

The tonnage for March 2021 was 1,881 tonnes, which was 83 tonnes higher than the same quarter in March 2020. In comparison, the Q4 tonnage was the same for 2020/21 as 2019/20. It is likely that this will be due to the snow in February 2021, leading to a temporary suspension in services during this time.

The annual tonnage for 2020/2021 was 12,327 tonnes, which was 922 tonnes (8.1%) higher than 2019/2020. The majority of this can be attributed to an additional 1,751 new subscribers to the service during 2020/2021, which generated £92,700 additional net income.

CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows the past performance for Broadland for tonnage of garden waste being recycled. This shows the figure has been fairly stable over the last three years.

Q4 data is not yet available, so a comparison cannot yet be made with the other Norfolk Councils.

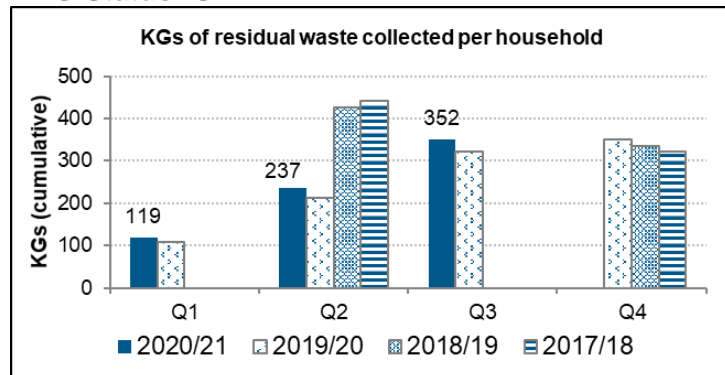
Comparing the Q3 data recorded in waste data flow shows that Broadland had the highest garden waste tonnage compared to all other Norfolk Councils at 2,680t. The lowest being Great Yarmouth at 841t.

The total amount of garden waste collected does not take into consideration the total number of households or subscribers for Broadland as this information is not recorded on waste data flow.



KGs of residual waste collected per household (Measure reference 28)

RAG Status: **GREEN**



Year End Success Target: Decrease in KGs of residual waste collected per household

COMMENTS

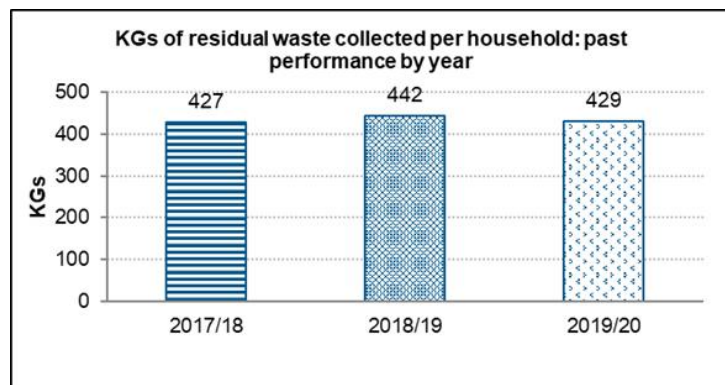
In Q3, the amount of residual waste collected per household was 115kg/HH which represents a reduction of 3kg/HH (2%) collected compared to the 118kg/HH collected in quarter 2. It is predicted that this could be due to the easing of lockdown restrictions with less time being spent at home.

Comparing the figure for Q3 2019/2020 there has been an increase of 9.2kg/ HH (8.6%). It is expected that this increase is due to more people remaining at home during the Covid-19 pandemic, producing more waste in general. This is in line with the general trend for all districts in Norfolk.

Note: Q4 data is not available, this will be available in July 2021 in line with waste data flow submissions. The figures are also provisional until the dwelling stock numbers are updated on Waste Data Flow

RISKS

Covid-19 pandemic changes in behaviour driving an increase in residual waste being produced.



CONTEXT

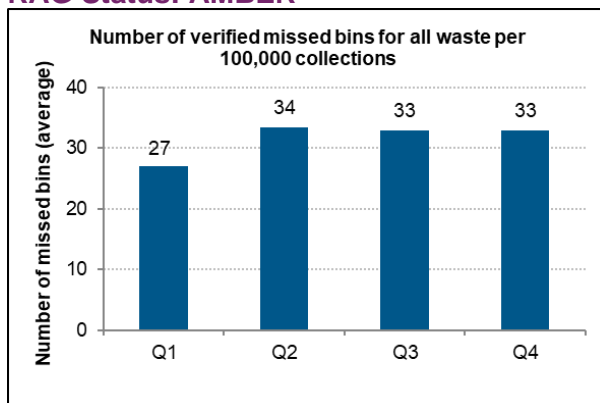
The graph to the left shows past year performance for Broadland for KGs of residual waste collected. The ongoing pandemic has led to a general trend of increased residual waste due to more residents being at home.

The figure for Broadland remains the lowest in Norfolk at 115 kg/HH, with South Norfolk, Breckland, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and North Norfolk District Councils having figures ranging between 130 to 134 kg/ HH and Great Yarmouth Council with the highest 148 kg/HH being recorded in Waste Data Flow. This report excludes data from Norwich City Council.

Note Q4 Data will not be available until July 2021

Number of verified missed bins for all waste per 100,000 collections (Measure reference 29)

RAG Status: AMBER



Year End Success Target: No more than 30 missed bins per 100,000 collections

COMMENTS

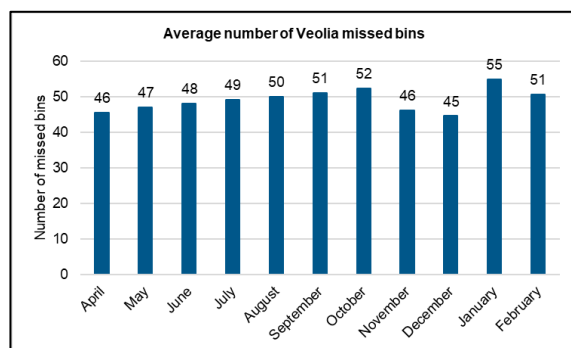
In Q4 the figure remained 33 per 100,000 bins collected, while this is just above the target of 30 per 100,000, these means that total of only 435 bins were missed out of the 1.32 million bins collected in the quarter and this was despite the adverse weather conditions in February. The average across the whole year was 33 bins per 100,000.

The Veolia average across a number of their contracts has been consistently around 50 per 100,000 collections, however the figure for the Broadland contract peaked at 40 per 100,000 in Q2.

It is anticipated that there will be a marked improvement over the coming year as Veolia have recently implemented a new in-cab Management System (ECHO) on their Brown Bin rounds. This has reduced the number of missed brown bins significantly from 42 (Apr to Nov) to less than 10 in Dec, Jan and Feb.

RISKS

The overall risk to the service from Covid-19 is starting to reduce, however, this cannot be fully discounted. Some of the perceived risks of additional people working from home and creating access problems due to more parked cars or staff shortages has not materialised.

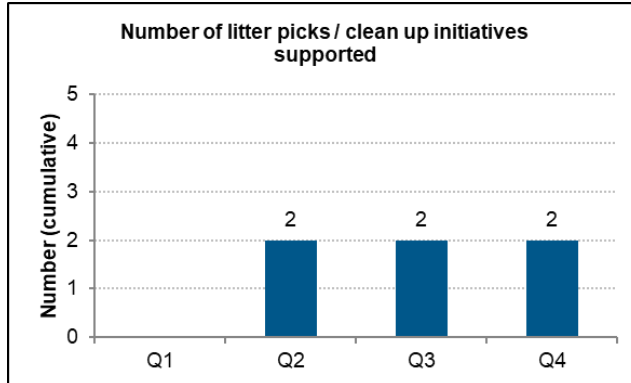


CONTEXT

The graph to the left shows how the number of missed bins has fluctuated over the year across all Veolia contracts. Broadland has a lower missed bin rate compared to other contracts.

The number of litter picks / clean up initiatives supported (Measure reference 30)

RAG Status: BASELINE



Year End Success Target: Baseline

COMMENTS

For the majority of the 2020/21-year, Community litter picks have not been encouraged due to the government restrictions throughout lockdown. There were a few groups that organised socially distanced events during Keep Britain Tidy's campaign and the Great British September Clean which the Council is aware of.

Only one group needed to borrow equipment from the council, the other groups already had their own equipment provided by a long-term loan from the council

The Council haven't been loaning out equipment to groups since September but will be reviewing this position over the next couple of weeks in line with changes in social distancing requirements and will be reengaging with groups to promote community litter picks

RISKS

Continued Covid-19 lockdown measures and restrictions on numbers of people that can meet, and restrictions on non-essential journeys.

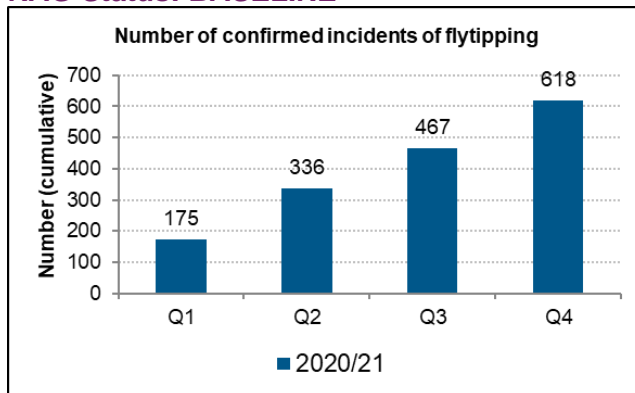
CONTEXT

Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean was postponed last year due to the introduction of lockdown measures. They thought it was unsafe to encourage residents to litter pick, particularly in groups. Keep Britain Tidy then ran another scheme for a few weeks in September called the Great British September Clean, which the Council ran a scheme alongside.



Number of confirmed incidents of fly tipping (Measure reference 31)

RAG Status: **BASELINE**



Year End Success Target: Proposed annual target of 600

COMMENTS

There was a total of 151 confirmed fly tips across the quarter, a slight increase from the 131 recorded in Q3.

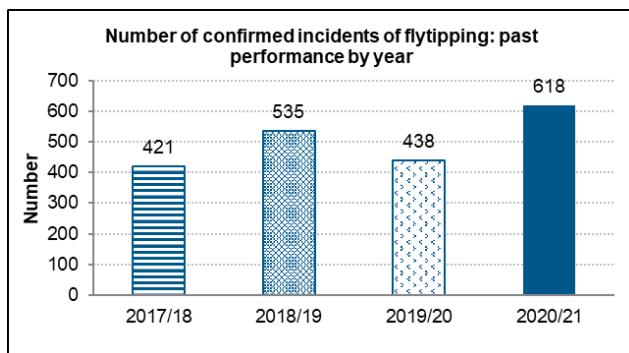
The figure for fly tipping this year has stayed fairly steady with a minor spike at the beginning of the year, likely due to lockdown being introduced and the increase in people clearing out their houses as they are spent more time at home. This also corresponded to a period when the Household Recycling Centres were closed.

There has also an increase in residents noticing and reporting fly tipping due to more walks and exercise being undertaken in the local neighbourhoods. Moving forward the additional resources approved for environmental enforcement action should help to reduce the figure.

It is proposed that an annual target of 600 is set for this year to reflect the abnormal conditions that existed across the period.

RISKS

There is a risk that the impacts of Covid-19 will have a continued impact on the number of recorded fly tips, however, the reopening of the HRCs should help to mitigate against this. Additional resources to undertake enforcement action will also act as a deterrent.



CONTEXT

The graph shows the total number of confirmed fly tipping incidents in Broadland over the previous years. As can be seen, the number of incidents has increased from the base year of 2017/18, this is a trend that has been recorded nationally and is a consequence of both Covid-19 and improved recording. Broadland has the lowest rate at 3.3 per 100,000 head of population, with SNC having the third lowest rate in Norfolk at 5.1 per 100,000. This compares with an East of England figure of 9.8 per 100,000 and a national figure of 17.3 per 100,000.

EMPTY HOMES POLICY

Report Author: Victoria Parsons
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Portfolio: Housing and Wellbeing

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of the Report:

To present the draft Housing Standards Empty Homes Policy for Cabinet approval for adoption.

Recommendations:

1. Cabinet to approve adoption of the Empty Homes Policy.
2. Cabinet to agree proposal that Cabinet provides approval to seek to undertake Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPOs) processes on a case by case basis.
3. Cabinet to approve creation within the 2021/22 financial year of:
 - A reserve fund of £500,000 in order to undertake a voluntary offer of purchase as part of a Compulsory Purchase Order procedure
 - A Housing Standards formal enforcement budget of £50,000 per annum

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Environmental Strategy 2020-2025 sets out a clear five year vision to create the best place for everyone now and for future generations, with a key priority to protect our natural and built environment, such as open spaces, parks, homes and places of work and leisure, while maximising quality of life. One of the approaches to achieving this is through making sure our green spaces, streets and public places are clean, safe and attractive.
- 1.2 In addition, one of the Councils key functions is to ensure the quality of life of residents. This work is delegated across the Councils' various functions which includes, housing, planning, community services and environmental protection. Within the housing standards enforcement remit sits specific requirements around Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Empty Homes, Gypsy and Travellers and ensuring safe living conditions in the rental sector. The remits feed into, and works closely with, the wider enforcement functions of the Council under a broad regulatory framework.
- 1.3 The Council's enforcement policy to date has been one of education first, using enforcement powers when required. Enforcement activity can be split broadly into two areas, actions where the council has a statutory duty under legislation, and actions where we have a discretionary power. The Empty Homes Policy renews our approach of, when appropriate we should use support and incentives to encourage compliance, but also to have the resources and skills in place to be able to take a more muscular approach to enforcement when we see non-compliance, particularly when vulnerable people are affected or it has a high community impact.
- 1.4 The Council's Housing Standards Enforcement Policy for **statutory** enforcement was agreed in November 2020. However, the Council also has a number of **discretionary activities and powers** that can be drawn upon through the housing standards team in relation to empty homes as a means bring homes back into use.
- 1.5 The Empty Homes Policy will be complementary to the existing Housing Standards Enforcement Policy. It clearly sets out the parameters in which discretionary activity will take place in relation to empty homes, in particular the assessment process for formal enforcement and the approval routes for funding costs to bring homes back into use.
- 1.6 The approach will be aimed at being clear and transparent to residents about the action we can take, and when we will take these actions, but also give confidence to our communities that the Council will take action to enforce when required. In addition it will provide clarity and alignment in the direction of the one Housing Standards team in addition to being part of a wider council response to maintain and improve our environment.

2 BACKGROUND – EMPTY HOMES

- 2.1 Council Tax base statistics published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in November 2020 state there are a reported 268,385 long term empty properties in England. That is properties that have been empty for more than six months and equates to around 1% of dwellings in England.
- 2.2 Homes can be empty for a variety of reasons including:
- Financially prohibitive for owners to undertake repairs or property upkeep
 - Poor marketing or pricing of the property on the market
 - Difficulty identifying owners of property, for example tracking down heirs to a property or owner disputes.
 - Planning restrictions
 - Owners unwilling to sell, let or inhabit the property
- 2.3 For example, properties in Probate can add to numbers of empty homes and there are council tax exemptions and discounts that can be applied following the death of the owner. Due to the circumstances, a sensitive approach is recommended from the perspective of enforcement. However formal approaches can be taken, for example, if the property has been empty for some time and probate has not yet been granted or if following a long period of probate the property is still not either sold, transferred or occupied.
- 2.4 An empty home can have a negative impact on the property, the local community and, in some cases, the wellbeing of the owner. Empty homes can also raise multiple concerns for communities, including anti-social behaviour, nuisance, and unauthorised entry and for some adjoining properties, structural or disrepair issues. In this regard, bringing an empty home back into use can benefit everyone, owners can be better off financially as well as giving someone a much-needed new home. This also contributes to sustaining the local economy and local services while improving the outlook of the local community.
- 2.5 In addition, the New Homes Bonus rewards local authorities for net additional homes added to the Council Tax Base. The Bonus also applies in respect of long-term empty properties brought back into use. This feature of the bonus was to strengthen the incentive for local authorities to identify empty properties and work with property owners to find innovative solutions that allow these properties to be brought back into use. However, the Government has recently consulted on the future of the Bonus from 2022/23 onwards, although outcomes of the consultation are not yet known, there was a consideration for whether empty homes brought back into use should be part of the formula for determining the amount of Bonus awarded.

- 2.6 In terms of tackling empty homes, the Council has a series of powers it can call upon in order to take action against empty properties in their area under a comprehensive set of legislation. The two main legislative tools the Council can apply in order to enforce empty properties being brought back into use are the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) under the Housing Act 2004 and/or Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and the Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) under the Housing Act 2004.

Compulsory Purchase Orders

- 2.7 As mentioned above a CPO is detailed in the Housing Act 2004 and/or Town & Country Planning Act 1990. The Planning legislation legitimises the process where the empty property is detrimental to the local environment. To use the housing legislation option, a demonstration of housing need is required. The use of both acts therefore, requires considerable back up work and analysis prior to the initiation of legal procedures. A CPO allows local authorities to acquire a property compulsorily which they can then place straight on to the open market, re-develop or restore for sale or alternative use. Although CPO's allow councils to take control of a property, to make necessary repairs and to ensure it would eventually provide a home or homes, they involve lengthy procedures, requiring a significant amount of officer time to engage with the owners and develop the evidence needed throughout the application.
- 2.8 Since 2016, following refusal of a CPO application by the Secretary of State, a change in best practice guidance recommends that for a local authority to demonstrate the CPO is a last resort action, they should make at least one offer of voluntary purchase to the owner. This must be prior to any commencement of the CPO process and the offer must be for a fair and reasonable purchase price. If the owner accepts, the local authority will again need to agree appropriate compensation with the owner as per 2.9 below, although further CPO action is averted. The local authority would then own the property outright as an asset and can choose to keep or resell. If the owner declines the offer, this then forms part of the evidence base for formal CPO action.
- 2.9 If a formal CPO action is approved by the Secretary of State, on completion of 'purchase' under a CPO, the Council is required under the legislation to pay the owner compensation to ensure they are 'brought back into an equivalent position'. This is in the form an independently valued market rate for the property, usually the actual price achieved for the property from its sale once in the ownership of the Council. In addition to this there can be further financial considerations in the form of:
- Compensation to the owner for their legal fees and other costs
 - Reimbursement of surveyor's and the Council's legal fees including stamp duty and solicitors costs is required.
 - Potential costs for repairs and bringing the property up to a safe standard where necessary

- Marketing the property.

- 2.10 These considerations pose a financial risk to the Council which can be up to an estimated £25,000 and means that there is usually a cost to the Council that is non-recoverable. However, the Council may keep the money gained through the sale of a property if no compensation claim is received within seven years of the CPO.
- 2.11 It should also be noted that with a CPO there is a risk of an Upper Tier Tribunal regarding a compensation claim which could pose a very large financial risk if costs are awarded against the local authority. It constitutes best practice that every effort is made to ensure the claimant has every opportunity to seek a fair compensation in order to avoid this.
- 2.12 Table 1 below provides an example of CPO costs based on a sample of cases by a local authority. Costs to bring the property to sale include, any clearance, repairs and energy performance works and costs to secure the property. It also includes sale costs of stamp duty, marketing and surveyors fees in addition to costs of issuing the notices. As each case is highly individual, complex and lengthy it is difficult to provide an exact overview of predicted costs at the outset of a CPO process.

Example CPO Procedure – property valued at £250,000 Case Load - approx. 3 months Officer time. Case Length - 10 years +	Cost £
Property value at sale	£250,000
Compensation Costs to be paid to the owner (sale price)	£250,000
Additional agreed compensation costs paid	£4,500
Costs to bring property to sale est.	£25,000
Management Costs i.e. Council Tax	£2,000
Overall costs to the Council	£31,500

Table 1: Example of costs/time associated with CPO procedure.

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMO)

- 2.13 An EDMO allows local authorities to take over the management of unoccupied properties and use them as part of a housing offer, such as the provision of accommodation for those on the housing list. There are exemptions to which properties can have an EDMO applied and there is a staged process. An EDMO is a temporary arrangement for a Council which would require us to manage the property on the owner's behalf but does not provide a long-term solution to the problem.
- 2.14 An application for an Interim EDMO is the first stage and lasts for 12 months. During this time the property can be let and have repairs made to it organised by the local authority only if the owner provides consent. If consent is withheld, the

local authority can make a further application for a final EDMO which can be in place for up to seven years.

- 2.15 Local Authorities can choose to apply a further final EDMO at the end of the seven years if they feel there is a strong case the property will fall empty again. Conversely, Councils are also bound to consider periodically during the life of an EDMO the effect of the EDMO and the necessity to continue with it. An owner can request revocation at any point of the EDMO, this is initially with the local authority and if refused, through an appeals tribunal. Consideration would also need to be given to any tenants of the property during this process.
- 2.16 The local authority can recoup any costs such as those outlaid in bringing the property to a decent standard or ongoing management costs through rental income received or a charge against the property. However, any money left over after deductions for expenditure must be paid to the owner, thus providing a form of income. In addition, the Council can choose whether to manage the property themselves or seek an external management agency.
- 2.17 Table 2 below provides a sample of costs to the local authority associated with an EDMO procedure.

Example EDMO Procedure	Costs £
Case Load - approx. 7-9 months Officer time Case Length 10 years +	
Costs to bring property to a decent standard	£27,000
Management Costs during period of EDMO	£1,500
Legal Costs awarded to Local Authority	£1,500
Rental Income during EDMO period	£29,000
Overall costs to the Council	£0

Table 2: Example of costs/time associated with EDMO procedure

- 2.18 In some instances, where informal engagement with owners has failed, the Council can raise the potential of formal enforcement action which can be an incentive to commence or re-establish contact by the owner. In practical terms however, CPOs and EDMOs can be complex, costly and lengthy and extremely resource intensive procedures with no guarantee they will be approved. To this end CPOs and EDMOs should only be used as a very last resort where all steps and options to engage with owners and bring the property back into use have been exhausted. Appendix A provides an overview of EDMO and CPO considerations.
- 2.19 As has also been noted above, particularly where there is complexity, working in partnership with other council departments and organisations is vital to, and can help to identify alternative regulatory options to tackling these issues. For example, the use of Community Protection Notices (CPNs) under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 can be an effective response where it can be argued that a person's conduct is continuing to unacceptably affect victims and the

community. However, it should be noted that a CPN cannot enforce an owner to bring a property back into use.

3 CURRENT POSITION/FINDINGS

- 3.1 Data gathered by MHCLG as informed by the Council Tax Base shows that Broadland District Council has one of the lowest rates of empty homes in actual terms and as a percentage of overall dwellings in the county. The rate is also below the England average.
- 3.2 The figures below are based on a snapshot of a particular day of properties that have been empty for more than six months and excludes those that are empty due to flooding. The total number of empty homes will vary from day to day as properties become empty and others move back into use.

Area	Empty Homes 2019	Empty Homes 2020	No of dwellings (as at 2020)	% change*	Empty properties (2020) as % of dwellings*
Breckland	481	609	62357	27	1
Broadland	347	380	59178	10	0.6
GYBC	586	712	48381	22	1.5
KLWN	966	979	74157	1	1.3
Norwich	560	779	67745	39	1.1
NNDC	572	554	55390	3	1
South Norfolk	285	310	63420	9	0.5
Norfolk	3797	4323	430628	14	1
England		268385	24800000		1

*Figures rounded

Table 3: Empty Homes by Norfolk Local Authority Area. Source: Action on Empty Homes from MHCLG data November 2020

- 3.3 However, between 2019 and 2020 the numbers of empty homes have increased. This may be due to increased identification of properties following the introduction of the council tax premium applicable to long term empty properties. There may also be impacts as a result of the pandemic restricting opportunities for officers to undertake property visits and a slow turnover in the housing market during the initial lockdown period.
- 3.4 The Council currently takes a reactive approach to dealing with empty homes where empty properties are reported by members of the public or other departments/organisations. When this occurs, engagement is sought with the owner and advice and support is offered. A check is also made to ensure the property is on the correct council tax banding as per 3.9 below. Formal enforcement activity could be considered for very long-term empty properties or where conditions require a quicker response.

3.5 The Council also has a financial assistance offer comprising:

- Provision of a letter for properties empty for longer than 2 years to allow building works to take place at a reduced VAT rate of 5%
- An interest free loan of £4,000 for renovation of empty properties, a further £1,000 can be made available for insulation of solid external walls only. Loans are placed as a land charge against the property and are repayable upon sale.
- A loan of up to £3,000 per converted unit can be made available to owners to help in the conversion of single to multiple dwellings.
- £8,000 for properties where owners are having difficulties completing renovation projects. Properties must have been empty for longer than two years and the loan must be repayable within 12 months and placed as a charge against the property as a land charge
- A non-secured loan of £1,000 for general maintenance, decorating and gardening work, to help the sale process for properties that have been marketed for longer than 6 months. Once the property is sold or taken off the market the loan shall be repaid. For this loan an equitable charge will be placed on the property at the land registry.

3.6 Take up of these financial assistance offers is quite low with only 1-2 applications completed each year. However this is reflected in other best practice areas and highlights the individualised and complex nature of empty homes cases.

3.7 Following the changes to best practice guidance, we need to redefine our position on the pursuit of a CPO or EDMO, particularly around commitment to meeting the costs to the Council in terms of property purchase, repairs or maintenance. This can be problematic when preparing a case for a CPO or EDMO application if work commences but is unable to progress.

3.8 In terms of measuring the impact of discretionary activity in relation to bringing empty properties back into use, successful outcomes from a CPO or EDMO provide an obvious indicator. In addition, statement of intention to commence a formal procedure may highlight some measure of success if the property subsequently comes back into use. However, where the majority of cases would consist of a support, advice and guidance offer, it would be difficult to determine where any properties brought back into use were the result of officer intervention or would have come back into use naturally.

Council Tax Premium for Empty Properties

3.9 In April 2019, changes were made to council tax charges as a result of legislation through the Local Government Finance Act 1992 amended by the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings Act) 2018. This gave discretion to local authorities to place additional charges on long-term empty properties in order to incentivise owners to bring very long-term empty properties

back into use. The additional charges adopted by the Council are the maximum amounts allowable and the dates of implementation are given below.

Time property has been empty	Additional charge from April 2019	Additional charge from April 2020	Additional charge from April 2021
Empty between two and five years	100%	100%	100%
Empty between five and ten years	100%	200%	200%
Empty over ten years	100%	200%	300%

Table 4: Scale of additional council tax charges for long term empty properties

- 3.10 As of March 2021, 94 properties in Broadland are subject to the additional premium having been empty for longer than two years. Of these 26 have been empty for longer than five years and 11 have been empty for longer than ten years. At present it is too early to know if the additional charges are having an impact in reducing the number of empty properties

Best Practice Examples

- 3.11 In terms of best practice examples, Chichester District Council has one of the lowest rates of empty homes as a percentage of dwellings in the country at 0.2%. They have also reduced the numbers of empty homes in their district by 42% between 2019 and 2020. To achieve this they have been undertaking a review of empty homes in the district, writing to owners and asking them to respond to an online request for information. They provide detailed leaflets on their website and can offer a grant of up to £10,000 over a five-year period to bring a property up to accreditation standards with the property being let through their Homefinder scheme for a minimum of five years.
- 3.12 Wyre Council have a rate of 0.18% as a ratio of empty properties compared to overall dwellings. They keep an ongoing list of empty properties and use a scoring process which takes into account matters such as length of time they have been empty, state of repair, maintenance of gardens, impact on the neighbourhood etc. to identify where further action needs to be taken. They also signpost owners to external sources of grant funding. As with Chichester, funding is caveated on the property being able to let through a specific service.
- 3.13 Locally, Breckland Council launched the Restore Grant in 2019. Providing up to £10,000 to help with the cost of bringing a long-term empty property back into use. The grant can also be used in conjunction with other funding, where applicable and owners agree as a funding condition to let the property for a minimum of 24 months to a household on their housing waiting list.
- 3.14 The examples above are similar to the work previously undertaken by the Council showing that what seems to work best is a service that comprises information, support and guidance for the owner, an offer of incentives to bring the property

back into use and for extreme cases a move towards formal action using powers available to the authority.

4 PROPOSED ACTION

- 4.1 The model detailed in Empty Homes Policy provides a robust approach. It will respond to reports of empty homes, supplemented by an online offer to report and high-level assess empty properties with a clear timeline for action and staff resource to undertake formal action for prioritised cases.
- 4.2 It also allows the Council to bring in some new thinking in terms of our approach. For example, updating the online reporting form can help to undertake a high-level assessment of the property and the likely involvement of the officers. A diagnostic tool would provide some feedback on the steps officers are likely to take and this could be provided to the person making the report at the time to provide some clarity and transparency.
- 4.3 As stated in the best practice examples above, a financial assistance offer to the owner can provide a good incentive to bring an empty property back into use. It is proposed that the Council continues with the current offers as stated in section 3.5 with refreshed marketing for the schemes to expand uptake.
- 4.4 Another incentive will be an offer to the owner of a place on the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme through the Housing and Benefits team. Conditions would need to be met, such as, if the property is assessed as being in a good location, sufficient size and close to amenities in addition to requirements on rent levels set at Local Housing Allowance rates so as to be affordable and for length of time for the property to be made available to the council.
- 4.5 The model provides clarity on what kind of action may be taken and places emphasis on approach to initially engage and educate the owner, offering advice and support. It also allows for the commencement of up to four (two for BDC and two for SNC) formal enforcement procedures per year, this further reflects the council's commitment to an initially supportive, but muscular if no improvement, approach. This approach recognises that these can be very long and complex processes and also seeks to minimise any significant costs to taxpayers.
- 4.6 The enforcement procedure will be for high risk empty properties, using a robust Criteria for Action assessment that will give particular consideration to properties that have been empty for more than 5 years. It will also assess and score on property details, location, community impact and engagement with the owner. The final score will determine if a CPO or EDMO is an appropriate action to take. Where the Criteria for Action assessment provides an overall score of more than 700, this will indicate the threshold has been met for a CPO or EDMO process, scores below 700 will not be considered for enforcement. A template for the Criteria for Action Assessment can be found at Appendix B.

- 4.7 Where the threshold has been met for a CPO or EDMO process, it is proposed that approval is given for a further Financial Assessment to be completed by the Community Enforcement Officer. For an EDMO this will determine that the Council can reasonably recoup any initial costs to bring the property to a useable standard and ongoing management costs.
- 4.8 For a CPO, the financial assessment will concentrate on an evaluation of property value, in addition to allowing for indicative costs to bring the property back into use and additional compensation to be negotiated with the owner. The financial assessment will need to demonstrate that it is unlikely that there would be any significant cost to taxpayers from pursuing a CPO and/or making a voluntary offer of purchase as part of a CPO process. For example, demonstrating that the Council would be able to recoup the vast majority of the compensation costs either from an onward sale, or from ongoing rental income.
- 4.9 The offer price of the property will be based on a surveyor's assessment based on providing a realistic quick sale price for the property. We will offer a price based on this assessment to reduce the potential cost to the Council. Whilst there will always be risk to purchasing a property, this will reduce the likely impact on the Council budget.
- 4.10 Additional expenditure to be assessed will include all indicative costs to bring a property back into use, either to a lettable standard or to make safe for resale. For an EDMO procedure, consideration will need to be given to the potential for the Council to recoup these costs through rental income. However in relation to a CPO, these costs are likely to be unrecoverable and will need to be met from budget.
- 4.11 Where more than 4 properties reach the 700 threshold, prioritisation will take place, taking into account the length of time empty, community impact and the highest scoring properties above the 700 points mark in consultation with the Assistant Director Individuals and Families and the Portfolio Holder Housing and Wellbeing.
- 4.12 It is further proposed that final approval to seek to undertake an EDMO or CPO process is granted by Cabinet upon presentation of the particulars of each case, including outcomes from the Criteria for Action and Financial Assessments.
- 4.13 To facilitate the Council's formal enforcement approach it is requested that the Council set aside a reserve fund of £500,000, equal to the total cost of two properties at £250,000 each, which is just under the average cost of a property in the district of £290,964¹. It should be noted that this fund would only be drawn upon should a voluntary offer of purchase be accepted and the Council required to pay compensation to the owner prior to any further sale. Where the property is sold on, or compensation not claimed after seven years, proceeds would be returned to the reserve for further use.

¹ Land Registry Data, March 2021

- 4.14 Where a full CPO process is undertaken and approved, it is unlikely the reserve fund will be required as compensation is generally paid to the owner once the property sale has been completed.
- 4.15 In addition, it is proposed that a Housing Standards budget of £50,000 is created to bring an empty property back into use. As above the £50,000 figure is reflective of example costs for two properties and will include spend on items as outlined in 2.2.1 of the draft Empty Homes Policy. Where a CPO process is undertaken, it is highly unlikely these costs will be recoverable. However, where a property is under EDMO, it is expected that the Council will be able to recoup those costs and they will be recycled back into the budget.
- 4.16 Adopting this approach will provide clarity on the Council's commitment to tackling empty homes to officers and our residents and the process in which we will do it. It also provides officers with the tools to start to take action and to work with owners through the provision of advice, support and guidance.
- 4.17 Setting approval to commence CPOs and EDMOs through a Cabinet decision provides a transparent and robust accountability framework in addition to serving as a further motivational tool to encourage owners to seek to bring their property back into use. It also evidences that while this formal enforcement is undertaken as a last resort, the Council will take a muscular approach where necessary.

5 OTHER OPTIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet may choose an alternative approval process for commencement of CPO or EDMO procedures.
- 5.2 Cabinet may choose to consider alternative approaches to empty homes activity and enforcement. For example through greater monitoring of empty homes and a commitment to undertake a larger number of formal enforcement processes. Although this may have the potential to bring more empty properties back into use, Cabinet would need to be mindful of the necessity for a corresponding increase in staffing resource and commitment to costs.
- 5.3 Conversely, Cabinet may choose to consider reactive or less intensive approaches for example, a 'no formal enforcement' approach. However this would mean the Council would be making a clear statement on no CPO or EDMO activity. As above, this will need to be balanced against the ambitions set out in the Delivery Plan and Environmental Strategy for consistent delivery of a comprehensive housing standards enforcement service across both districts in addition to making sure our green spaces, streets and public places are clean, safe and attractive.

6 ISSUES AND RISKS

6.1 Resource Implications –

- **Staffing** – Staff resource for the empty homes approach will be met within existing capacity.
- **Costs of CPO and EDMO enforcement** – Limiting consideration of formal enforcement to two properties per year seeks to minimise risk to the Council. In addition, any properties assessed as being suitable for possible EDMO or CPO action would be subject to a separate financial assessment for indicative costs. Due to the highly complex and lengthy and individual nature of CPO/EDMO action, it is difficult to provide exact costs for action at the outset. This is particularly relevant in relation to potential legal action against the Council by property owners and the final agreement of compensation to an owner through a CPO process.
- It is proposed to review the Criteria for Action and Financial Assessments every 12 months in order to reflect current costs of stamp duty etc. It will also reflect changes to legislation and best practice in addition to our own learning from undertaking these processes in order to predict as accurately as possible indicative costs. This will help to ensure that it is unlikely that there would be any significant cost to taxpayers.
- As has been stated above, this report is proposing an approval mechanism, reserve fund and costs budget to undertake EDMOs and CPOs as part of the Council's draft Empty Homes Policy. This provides clarity to officers from the outset that where assessed appropriately, an EDMO or CPO can commence following Cabinet approval. This includes at least one voluntary offer of purchase if a CPO is found to be the best course of action. If the owner accepts a voluntary offer, the reserve fund will ensure that the Council can meet that offer. The Council would then be in possession of an asset it can choose to sell, develop or manage.
- **Financial Incentives to bring properties to a decent standard/back into use -** Broadland currently has a loan budget of £30,000 which incorporates funds for Empty Homes in addition to Healthy Homes Loans. This budget can continue to be used for a financial assistance offer.
- **Interdependencies with other departments** – A joined up approach to discretionary activity and enforcement in relation to empty homes will be crucial to the success of activity across the Council. There will be links into and out of other departments in order to provide a multi-agency approach is taken when tackling housing issues. It will also ensure that where needs for an individual or family are identified, these needs can be assessed and met appropriately. These links within the Council include, Environmental Protection, Planning, Housing & Benefits, the Help Hub, Council Tax and the Communications Team.

- 6.2 **Legal Implications** – The report presents the proposed policy direction for discretionary activity and enforcement within the Housing Standards team specifically regarding empty homes and relates to powers within legislation the

Council may wish to utilise to form an additional clear and holistic approach to fulfilling its statutory duties. It also ensures that the Council can meet the requirements needed to apply for an EDMO or CPO. The policy will form part of the Councils' wider regulatory framework.

- 6.3 **Equality Implications** – Options contained within the report are designed to have a positive impact, including for those with one or more of the protected characteristics.
- 6.4 **Environmental Impact** – Complementary to the Housing Standards Enforcement policy, agreed options for discretionary activity and enforcement in relation to empty homes will seek to address any adverse environmental impacts that may arise as a result of a property being empty.
- 6.5 **Crime and Disorder** – The Empty Homes Policy forms part of the overall remit of the Housing Standards team. This will include reducing the potential for criminal and anti-social behaviour within and surrounding empty properties.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This report is presenting the Empty Homes Policy for Cabinet approval to adopt. In particular, approval is sought for the model to tackle empty homes including approach and costs of formal enforcement through a CPO or EDMO procedure. This is particularly vital for CPO procedures not only in relation to best practice guidance that the Council make at least one offer of a fair and reasonable purchase price for an empty property prior to commencing a CPO but also the unrecoverable costs that may arise from the process.
- 7.2 In addition, the one Housing Standards team has been in place for 18 months and with the statutory Enforcement Policy approved in November 2020, there is a crucial need for an additional Empty Homes Policy. Adoption of the policy will make the best use of the staffing resource available to deliver the ambition of the Housing Standards team. In addition, agreement on approach to specific enforcement through CPOs and EDMOs will provide consistency and confidence to residents and officers.
- 7.3 The Empty Homes Policy will form part of the discretionary enforcement activity undertaken by the Housing Standards team. However it will also contribute to an overall regulatory response to enable the Council to demonstrate a holistic and muscular approach to; tackling housing issues and support our work with residents, including those who are vulnerable. An Empty Homes Policy will also feed into further strategic ambitions to ensure the quality of life for our residents and support the vision of the Environmental Strategy.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet to approve adoption of the Empty Homes Policy.
- 8.2 Cabinet to agree proposal that Cabinet provides approval to seek to undertake Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPOs) processes on a case by case basis.
- 8.3 Cabinet to approve creation within the 2021/22 financial year of:
- A reserve fund of £500,000 in order to undertake a voluntary offer of purchase as part of a Compulsory Purchase Order procedure
 - A Housing Standards formal enforcement budget of £50,000 per annum

Background Papers

Housing Standards Enforcement Policy

Appendix A: Overview of empty homes formal enforcement action – EDMO and CPO procedures

	Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)	Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)		
Requirements	Property must be empty for more than two years before commencement.	Must demonstrate a CPO application is a last resort process. Level of evidence needed to demonstrate last resort is high. This includes at least one voluntary offer of purchase to the owner.		
Approval body	Residential Property Tribunal	Secretary of State		
		No agreement to fund Voluntary Offer of Purchase re: CPO	Voluntary Offer of Purchase	Offer Declined - CPO procedure
Potential Costs to the Council	<p>Works to secure and bring property to a decent standard.</p> <p>Management costs of property while under EDMO</p> <p>Surplus rental income paid to the owner</p> <p>Legal costs to be paid by the Council</p> <p>Any legal costs awarded to the owner</p> <p>Liability for council tax lies with owner/tenant.</p>	None	<p>Compensation (sale value)</p> <p>Additional compensation negotiated</p> <p>Legal costs to be paid by the Council</p> <p>Works to secure and bring the property to a decent/safe standard</p> <p>Council Tax while property is empty</p> <p>Sales fees and surveyors valuation if selling</p> <p>Management/void costs if renting</p>	<p>Works to secure and bring the property to a decent/safe standard:</p> <p>Sales fees and surveyors</p> <p>Compensation (sale value) once the property is sold which is negotiated with the owner</p> <p>Additional compensation negotiated</p> <p>Legal costs to be paid by the Council</p> <p>Any additional legal costs as a result of upper tier tribunal findings against the Council</p>
Potential income to the Council	Council can recoup initial and management costs from rental income.	If empty for more than 2 years owner will be liable	Onward sale price of property including any increase in value.	Few opportunities unless costs are awarded to the council through any legal procedures or

	Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO)	Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)		
		for additional Council Tax Premium	Or: Rental income	compensation is not claimed within seven years of CPO.
Outcomes	Property can be rented as part the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme providing a home for a household at risk of homelessness.	Unlikely any CPO application will be approved as Council cannot demonstrate CPO is a last resort measure. Recourse to engagement work with owner.	Council has an asset. Property is brought back into use. It can be brought up to a decent/safe standard and either sold or managed as part of a housing offer providing a much needed home.	Property is compulsorily purchased. Property is brought back into use. It can be brought up to a decent/safe standard and either sold or managed as part of a housing offer providing a much needed home.
Risks	Not a permanent solution. Requirement to reapply at end of EDMO period. Opportunities for EDMO to be appealed by owner Costs to bring property back into use may be significant. May not recoup costs during rental period, Council would need to follow up with owner.	Unknown if/when property will come back into use	If offer of purchase is accepted, council to fund purchase which is through compensation negotiated with owner. Additional compensation to be paid to the owner may be negotiated. Risk property sale may not recoup money spent by the council. If managing as rented property may not cover management/void costs.	Opportunities to appeal the process by owner ending the CPO process and risking a home remains empty. Risks that costs will be awarded against the council and that compensation agreed/mandated is more than the sale price.



Broadland District Council

Empty Homes Policy

Adopted: June 2021
Review Date: June 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Policy Statement

The Council has a clear vision to work together to create the best place and environment for everyone, now and for future generations. This will be achieved through protecting and improving our natural and built environment, whilst maximising quality of life, supporting individuals, including those who are vulnerable, and empowering communities. This can only be realised by working collaboratively, across services, councils and external organisations.

This Empty Homes Policy feeds into these strategic ambitions. It sets out how we will work proactively, using our discretionary powers to support and advise when tackling Empty Homes giving confidence to our communities that the Council will use its resources responsibly but take action to enforce when required, demonstrating a holistic and muscular approach.

1.2. General Principles

The Council's enforcement approach is one of education first and using enforcement powers when required. Enforcement activity can be split broadly into two areas, actions where the council has a statutory duty under legislation, and actions where the Council has a discretionary power. This policy seeks to set out activity undertaken by the Council in relation to Empty Homes where the Council may act using the powers available to it through discretionary enforcement.

This Empty Homes Policy is complementary to the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy* adopted in 2020 and forms part of the Council's overall regulatory framework. Where statutory enforcement action arises from discretionary activity, the legislation, conditions and principles as set out in the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy* will be adhered to and referenced in this document.

As per Section 1.1 *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*, all enforcement action, including that relating to discretionary enforcement will be based upon an objective assessment following consideration of all the facts of the matter, and will not be based on anecdotal evidence, hearsay or other subjective assessment.

All discretionary action will have regard to the Informal Action and Formal Action conditions as laid out in Section 2 of the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*

In addition, all action shall have regard to relevant legislation, duties and powers, codes of practice, guidance and case law periodically issued by the Government, the Chartered Institution of Environmental Health, Local Government Regulation and other relevant bodies. This also includes the Human Rights Act 1998 and the test of proportionality. Regard will also be had for departmental procedures and work instructions.

All authorised officers, when making enforcement decisions will abide by the requirements of this Empty Homes Policy in conjunction with the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*. Any departure from these policies must be exceptional, be capable of justification and be fully considered by the Assistant Director, Individuals and Families before the decision is taken, unless there would be a significant risk to public health and/or safety by delaying the decision.

The Housing Standards team will work collaboratively with other Council departments and external organisations such as:

- Environmental Protection
- Council Tax
- Community Safety
- Food Safety and Licensing
- Help Hub
- Housing and Benefits
- Planning Enforcement
- Adults Social Care/Children's Services inc. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Health Services
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue;
- Voluntary and Charitable Sector

This is not an exhaustive list and will be in order to determine the best approaches to tackling the issues, including formal enforcement based on assessment of circumstances. This demonstrates the Council's comprehensive and muscular approach to enforcement.

2. APPROACH TO EMPTY HOMES ACTIVITY AND ENFORCEMENT

An empty home can have a negative impact on the property, the local community and, in some cases, the wellbeing of the owner. Empty homes can also raise multiple concerns for communities, including anti-social behaviour, nuisance, and unauthorised entry and for some adjoining properties, structural or disrepair issues.

Bringing an empty home back into use can benefit everyone, owners can be better off financially as well as giving someone a much-needed new home. This also contributes to sustaining the local economy and local services while improving the outlook of the local community.

The Council will take a measured and responsive approach to reports of empty homes in the district.

The Council will:

- Provide feedback on likely action to those reporting an empty home based on an assessment of the information provided.
- Liaise with Council tax department to establish:
 - a. Owner details
 - b. Length of time property has been empty
 - c. Specific circumstances recorded as to why property is empty
 - d. Correct council tax banding has been applied, including any applicable premium.
- Make contact or take steps to trace property owners
- Undertake a visit to the property to assess site and property condition, including evidence of anti-social behaviour

2.1 Informal Action

The Council will make an offer of support to the owner to assist with bringing the home back into use. This can include:

- Advice and guidance
- Financial Assistance, where appropriate:
 - Provision of a letter for properties empty for longer than 2 years to allow building works to take place at a reduced VAT rate of 5% or as HRMC proscribes at the time.
 - An interest free loan of £4,000 for renovation of empty properties, a further £1,000 can be made available for insulation of solid external walls only. Loans are placed as a land charge against the property and are repayable upon sale.
 - A loan of up to £3,000 per converted unit can be made available to owners to help in the conversion of single to multiple dwellings. The Housing Standards team will also work with owner to ensure compliance under the House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Mandatory Licence (Housing Act 2004) including the application of a licence where necessary.

- £8,000 for properties where owners are having difficulties completing renovation projects. Properties must have been empty for longer than two years and the funding is not being used to undertake additional renovations unless they are necessary to bring the property to a decent standard. This loan must be repayable within 12 months and placed as a charge against the property as a land charge.
- A non-secured loan of £1,000 for general maintenance, decorating and gardening work, to help the sale process for properties that have been marketed for longer than 6 months. Once the property is sold or taken off the market the loan shall be repaid. For this loan an equitable charge will be placed on the property at the land registry.

Further detail can be found in the Council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Financial Assistance Policy amended 2018.

- An offer for the property to be let through a Private Sector Leasing Scheme managed through the Housing and Benefits team, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The property is leased to, and managed by the Council for a minimum two year period
 - b. The property is let to a household on the housing list or to enable the Council to discharge a duty under the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
 - c. The property is let where there is demonstrable practical use for a home in that area subject to assessment of property size, location, access to amenities.
 - d. Property is let at the Local Housing Allowance rates to allow for affordability
 - e. The Council will fund the costs of any works to bring the property to a decent standard not exceeding the equivalent value of 6 month's rent.
 - f. Rent is guaranteed to the owner, minus the Council recouping the cost of works to bring to a decent standard and paid 6 monthly in advance.

2.2 Formal Action – Compulsory Purchase Order and Empty Dwelling Management Order

The Council provides resource for a Community Enforcement Officer to explore formal enforcement, namely an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) under the Housing Act 2004 or Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) under the Housing Act 2004 and/or Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for up to two properties per year.

2.2.1 Criteria for Action and Financial Assessments

These properties will be identified for prioritisation using a Criteria for Action Assessment. The Assessment will score on:

- Length of time empty, (particular consideration given to properties empty for longer than 5 years)
- Community impact – Nuisance, Anti-Social Behaviour
- Category One or Category Two hazards present
- Location
- Property size
- Access to utilities
- Engagement with the owner/person responsible for the property
- Renovations in progress

This assessment will also help to determine which enforcement action would be most appropriate. Where the Criteria for Action assessment provides an overall score of more than 700, this will indicate the threshold has been met for a CPO or EDMO process to be explored, scores below 700 will not be considered for enforcement. This assessment will also help to determine which enforcement action would be most appropriate.

Properties scoring above 700 will be subject to a further financial assessment considering:

Compulsory Purchase Order	Empty Dwelling Management Order
<i>Costs associated with bringing the property to a useable standard</i>	<i>Costs associated with bringing the property to a useable standard</i>
Repairs/maintenance required to correct hazards and bring the property to a safe standard, where applicable.	Repairs/maintenance required to correct hazards and bring the property to a useable standard
Property/Grounds clearance and removals/Storage costs	Property/Grounds clearance and removals/storage costs
Costs to secure the property	Costs to secure the property
<i>Costs associated with the sale of the property</i>	<i>Costs associated with the letting and management of the property</i>
Market value of property	Estimated Rental Income
Costs to market the property for sale	Void costs
Stamp duty	Property management costs
<i>Compensation and Legal costs</i>	<i>Legal costs</i>
Compensation to be paid to the owner/person responsible for property (property sale price) Either with voluntary offer of purchase or following vestment of CPO	Legal Costs (Council)
Additional compensation costs negotiated with owner/person responsible for property	Further legal costs awarded against the Council
Legal Costs (Council)	
Further legal costs awarded against the Council	

Compulsory Purchase Order	Empty Dwelling Management Order
Public Notices	

Table 1: Costs to be considered when bringing enforcement action

For an EDMO this will determine that the Council can reasonably recoup any initial costs to bring the property to a useable standard and any ongoing management costs.

For a CPO, the financial assessment will concentrate on an evaluation of property value based on surveyor evaluation, in addition to allowing for indicative costs to bring the property back into use and additional compensation to be negotiated with the owner. The financial assessment will need to demonstrate that it is unlikely that there would be any significant cost to taxpayers from pursuing a CPO and/or making a voluntary offer of purchase as part of a CPO process.

Where more than 2 properties reach the 700 threshold, prioritisation will take place, taking into account the length of time empty, community impact and the highest scoring properties above the 700 points mark in consultation with the Assistant Director Individuals and Families and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing.

The Criteria for Action and Financial Assessments will provide direction on the use of the property once an EDMO or CPO has been approved by the relevant authority.

EDMO:

- Let and managed by the Council as part of the Housing & Benefit's Private Sector Leasing Scheme
- Offer to an external management company to let the property on behalf of the Council

CPO

- Sale of the property through the open market
- Purchase by the Council as an asset to be used as per EDMO above

The Criteria for Action assessment will be reviewed annually.

2.2.2 Authorisation to commence formal enforcement

Approval to seek to undertake an EDMO or CPO processes will be granted by Cabinet upon presentation of the particulars of each case, including outcomes from the Criteria for Action and Financial Assessments.

2.3 Adjacent Legislation (working in partnership)

The Housing Standards team will work collaboratively with Environmental Protection to determine if issues arising as a result of an empty home require formal action under Environmental Protection legislation. This may include, but is not limited to, the issuing of a Community Protection Notice (CPN) to help rectify any such issues.

The Housing Standards team will work collaboratively with the Planning team to determine if issues arising as a result of an empty home are detrimental to the

amenity of the local area. This may result in issuing a notice under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

In relation to this section 2.3, where the conditions of any notice are not met within the specified time, the Council may seek to undertake works in default as determined within section 2.2.12 of the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*

The Housing Standards team may consider an Enforced Sale Procedure where a debt arises through the property as a result of action taken by the Housing Standards team. Where a debt arises in relation to other Council functions, for example Council Tax, the Policy as laid out by that function will be followed.

2.4 Empty Homes Data

Elected Members will be provided with numbers of empty homes at town/parish level as part of quarterly performance reporting. This will be for properties empty for longer than two years and for total numbers. It will not identify individual properties.

Empty Homes Criteria for Action

Property										
System Ref			Assessment Date							
Position		Points	Score	Access			Years Empty			
Urban GN		150	0	Good	Good	10	0-2 yrs	5-10 yrs	0	0
Market Town / Service Village		100	0	Adequate		-20	2-5 yrs		50	0
Village		80	0	Poor		-80	5-10 yrs		300	300
Rural		0	0				More than 10 yrs		400	0
Rural Isolated		-150	0							0
Property Type				Services						
Detached	Detached	0	0	Gas	Yes	50				
Not Detached		100	0	Electric	Yes	10	Renovation in progress			
				Oil	Yes	20	Yes under 2 yrs	No	-50	0
				Telephone	Yes	10	Yes over 2 yrs		100	0
				Mains Water	Yes	30	No		150	150
				Satisfactory Sewage	Yes	20				
No of Bedrooms				Category One Hazards			No of Complaints			
1	2	100	0	None	Above 6	0	Nuisance	1	50	50
2		150	150	Between 1 and 3		40	Believed Community Impact	2	50	100
3		150	0	Between 4 and 6		60	Rats/Vermin		50	0
4		50	0	Above 6		100	Planning Enforcement		50	0
More than 4		0	0							
Garden size				Estimate of Category 2 Hazards D or E		40	Brief Estimate of Costs (don't impact on assessment at this stage)			
No Garden	10-50m2	10	0	More Than 6	More Than 6		Less than £2000	£2000 - 5000	200	0
Less than 10m ²		30	0				£2000 - 5000		150	150
10-50m ²		50	50				£5000 - £10000		100	0
More than 50m ²		10	0				£10000 - £15000		0	0
				Category Score		700	£15000 - £25000		-100	0
							Above £25000		-250	0
				Category Band		A	Estimated Property Value	£301,00-£350,000		
				EDMO/CPO		350	£0 - £150,000		200	0
							£151,000 - £200,000		150	0
							£201,00 - £250,000		100	0
							£251,000 - £300,000		0	0

Brief Estimate of Costs

Less than £2000	Less than £2000	200	0
£2000 - 5000		150	150
£5000 - £10000		100	0
£10000 - £15000		0	0
£15000 - £25000		-100	0
Above £25000		-250	0

Estimated Property Value

£0 - £150,000		200	0
£151,000 - £200,000		150	0
£201,00 - £250,000		100	0
£251,000 - £300,000		0	0
£301,00-£350,000		-100	0
£351,000 +		-150	0

Capital Gains Tax likely to be due**Column1**

£0 - £150,000
£151,000 - £200,000
£201,00 - £250,000
£251,000 - £300,000
£301,00-£350,000
£351,000 +

Column1

Not Eligible
Offered - Application progressed
Offered - Declined

Column1

Fully engaged
Engagement with support
Engagement ceased
No engagement recorded

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITY POLICY

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Portfolio: Housing and Wellbeing

Wards Affected: All

Purpose of the Report:

To present the draft Housing Standards Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy for Cabinet approval for adoption.

Recommendations:

1. Cabinet to approve adoption of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy.
2. Cabinet to approve amending an existing vacancy from Band E to Band F enabling recruitment to 1fte Community Enforcement Officer post.

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Environmental Strategy 2020-2025 sets out a clear five year vision to create the best place for everyone now and for future generations, with a key priority to protect our natural and built environment, such as open spaces, parks,

homes and places of work and leisure, while maximising quality of life. One of the approaches to achieving this is through making sure our green spaces, streets and public places are clean, safe and attractive.

- 1.2 In addition, one of the Councils key functions is to ensure the quality of life of residents. This work is delegated across the Councils' various functions which includes, housing, planning, community services and environmental protection. Within the housing standards enforcement remit sits specific requirements around Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Empty Homes, Gypsy and Travellers and ensuring safe living conditions in the rental sector. The remits feed into, and works closely with, the wider enforcement functions of the Council under a broad regulatory framework.
- 1.3 The Council's Housing Standards Enforcement Policy for **statutory** enforcement was agreed in November 2020. However, the Council also has a number of **discretionary activities and powers** that can be drawn upon through the housing standards team. In relation to HMOs this can be a means to maintain and improve living conditions and detect illegal activity; such as modern slavery.
- 1.4 This report presents the Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy which details the proactive approach the Council will take in identifying and monitoring HMOs outside of the Council's statutory functions.
- 1.5 The approach is aimed at being clear and transparent to residents about the action we can take, and when we will take these actions, but also give confidence to our communities that the Council will take action to enforce when required. In addition it will provide clarity and alignment in the direction of the one Housing Standards team while forming part of a wider policy structure and service offer to support residents including those who are vulnerable. This is in addition to being part of a wider council response to maintain and improve our environment.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has a number of statutory duties in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's), this includes being the licensing authority for any HMO's. A house is considered an HMO if both of the following apply:
 - At least three tenants live there, forming more than one household, and
 - Facilities such as a toilet, bathroom or kitchen are shared with other tenants.
- 2.2 From April 2018, the mandatory licensing requirements for HMOs were extended to properties that are occupied by five persons or more forming more than one household, regardless of the number of storeys. A licence is also required for any purpose build flats where there are up to two flats in the block and one or both are occupied as an HMO, including flats above or below shops and other businesses.

Councils can levy a fee for the provision of a five year licence and in Broadland this is £579 for up to 5 lettings.

- 2.3 The Council is also responsible for ensuring HMOs meet mandatory requirements as laid out in the Housing Act 2004 and associated regulations, this can include areas around minimum space standards, facilities, property condition and fire safety, for example escape routes.
- 2.4 In addition, the Council during the course of its activities may be in a position to identify HMOs, including those above commercial premises that are being used for the purposes of housing victims of modern slavery. Accommodation of this type tends to be overcrowded, substandard and may put occupants at significant risk.

3 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 In Broadland there are currently 17 licensed HMOs and approx. 35 known unlicensed HMOs in that they do not meet the conditions for requiring a licence.
- 3.2 Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Housing Standards team took a mainly reactive approach to working with HMOs. This includes undertaking the licensing process and responding to reports of potentially licensable properties and queries regarding standards of accommodation. In addition, where staff capacity allowed inspections of HMOs also took place using a risk-based prioritisation approach.
- 3.3 This would also include responding to any concerns relating to modern slavery activity including reports through the Council's licensing teams and the environmental protections teams. If a premises should be identified as being connected to modern slavery, a multi-agency approach would be adopted linking the council as a first responder, the police, and relevant social services departments etc. Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the Council also has a duty to notify the Home Office of potential victims of modern slavery. Additionally, the Council is represented on the Norfolk Anti-Slavery Network, which seeks to enhance the response to modern slavery and human trafficking in Norfolk.
- 3.4 During the initial pandemic period in March-June 2020, staff resource to undertake enforcement activity was restricted due to lockdown requirements meaning that visits were only undertaken where absolutely necessary. In addition staffing levels were impacted due to the redeployment of members of the Housing Standards team to support the council's community response to Covid-19.
- 3.5 However, as part of the Councils involvement in implementing local outbreak management plans in response to a number of outbreaks in factories, an opportunity was discovered through the test and trace process for those employees, to identify previously unknown HMOs within the district. This identified 11 potential HMOs in Broadland and 43 in South Norfolk. For all properties identified the team liaised with the Council tax team to share information on the number of potential occupants and every property was followed up / investigated.

This included; sending formal Notices to the owner / landlord of each property requesting details on the number of occupants and arranging visits, where possible due to lockdown circumstances, where the Council had information concerning unsatisfactory conditions.

- 3.6 As a result of the follow up action, three HMO licences have been issued at Broadland and six at South Norfolk. Further HMO licence applications have been made and licences are in the process of being issued. As restrictions ease, if sufficient resources are in place the Council will undertake further inspections. It should also be noted that during the first lockdown the Housing Standards team had the assistance of two leisure centre employees who were tasked with identifying HMO's using internet property searches, site observations, etc. This process identified seven potential HMO's in Broadland and twelve in South Norfolk and provides an example of additional resource enabling a proactive approach to identifying HMOs.

4 PROPOSED ACTION

- 4.1 The HMO discretionary activity model outlined within the policy will embed the work that began as a result of the pandemic and allow the housing standards team to proactively identify and inspect all HMOs in the districts. This will enable the development of a register of all HMOs in Broadland and South Norfolk, encompassing both those who require or do not require a licence, with a corresponding inspection regime. Priority will be given to high risk properties for example, those above commercial premises and those properties associated with risk of modern slavery e.g. car washes nail bars, restaurants and agricultural workers.
- 4.2 Adopting this approach means that officers can actively work with landlords to reduce risk and potential escalation of hazards, ideally before it gets to the point where they would have been reported to us. It also provides opportunities for statutory enforcement work where this is necessary, including supporting licence applications where appropriate. It could result in the levying of a fine through a civil penalty process where there is strong evidence of non-compliance. This will ensure that HMOs provide a safe place to live for our residents. In addition, officers will be well placed to feed into work to identify where there may be instances of modern slavery.
- 4.3 Following the successful work as part of the pandemic, there is an opportunity for proactive work be undertaken in partnership with local businesses where it is likely there is increased incidence of employees living in HMOs. This would increase the visibility of the Housing Standards team, improve knowledge of mandatory living standards for tenants and where to seek support and increase identification of HMOs.
- 4.4 In order to meet the ambitions of this model and to build resilience into the Housing Standards team, the Council is seeking Cabinet approval to recruit to 1fte

Community Enforcement Officer post at Salary Band F. Currently, there is an existing vacancy within the Housing Standards team for 1fte Housing Technical Officer which sits at salary Band E and it is proposed to repurpose this vacancy to allow for the recruitment of a Community Enforcement Officer.

- 4.5 There would be an increase in salary spend to facilitate this role up to £3,436 inc. on-costs if appointed at the mid-point range. This increase can be met through savings within the Individuals and Families budget and would ensure that staff resource within the team can deliver a comprehensive approach to enforcement.
- 4.6 In addition, to provide further capacity to allow for the initial roll out of HMO discretionary activity, a further temporary role is to be recruited to. This 0.5fte Community Enforcement Officer post will be in place for two years and will be funded through the COVID-19 Outbreak Management Fund.
- 4.7 Together, the two posts will ensure that the forward thinking and proactive approach enabled last year can be permanently adopted within Housing Standards. The additional capacity will provide an opportunity for the Council to develop good working relationships with HMO landlords meaning that issues can be identified and rectified sooner. This is particularly relevant in seeking to engage with the landlords of the additional HMOs identified as a result of the pandemic.
- 4.8 A preventative approach benefits all, from our residents in terms of a safe place to live, landlords in terms of costs and the council, as it reduces the need for formal enforcement. In addition, existing knowledge and skills within the team will provide resilience if needed.

5 OTHER OPTIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet may choose to not to undertake discretionary activity in relation to HMOs. However, this risks undoing the strides taken to identify HMOs last year. It means unknown HMOs could continue to operate in our districts, including those that, whether by accident or design, place our residents at risk or seek to exploit those who are vulnerable.

6 ISSUES AND RISKS

6.1 Resource Implications –

- **Staffing** – As noted above, for the Community Enforcement Officer post, it is proposed that an existing 1 fte Housing Technical Officer (Band E) vacancy is repurposed to a Community Enforcement Officer (Band F) position which will provide resource to deliver the activities contained within this report in addition to the provision of additional enforcement capacity within the Housing Standards team. This will require a small increase in salary spend which can be found within

savings in the Individuals and Families budget. A second temporary 0.5fte post will be met through the COVID-19 Outbreak Management Fund.

- **Interdependencies with other departments** – A joined up approach to discretionary enforcement in relation to HMOs will be crucial to the success of activity across the Council. There will be links into and out of other departments in order to provide a multi-agency approach is taken when tackling housing issues. It will also ensure that where needs for an individual or family are identified, these needs can be assessed and met appropriately. These links within the Council include, Environmental Protection, Housing & Benefits, the Help Hub, Council Tax and the Communications Team.

6.2 **Legal Implications** – The report presents the proposed policy direction within the Housing Standards team specifically regarding HMOs, and relates to powers within legislation the Council may wish to utilise to form an additional clear and holistic approach to fulfilling its statutory duties. The policy will form part of the Councils' wider regulatory framework.

6.3 **Equality Implications** – The Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy is designed to have a positive impact, including for those with one or more of the protected characteristics. This could include younger people who are more likely to live in HMOs and those on lower incomes. In addition, victims of modern slavery can vary in terms of gender, race, age and disability depending on the type of industry in which they are victims of.

6.4 **Environmental Impact** – Complementary to the Housing Standards Enforcement policy, agreed options for discretionary activity in relation to HMOs will seek to address any adverse environmental impacts that might arise from poor housing conditions.

6.5 **Crime and Disorder** – The Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy forms part of the overall remit of the Housing Standards team. This will include proactively identifying enforcement needs to help keep residents living in HMOs safe and to contribute to work to identify incidents of modern slavery.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 This report is presenting the Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy for Cabinet approval for adoption. Although this activity is undertaken by the Housing Standards team it also forms part of an overall regulatory response to enable the Council to demonstrate a holistic and muscular approach to; tackling housing issues and support our work with residents, including those who are vulnerable. It also feeds into wider strategic ambitions to ensure the quality of life for our residents and support the vision of the Environmental Strategy.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Cabinet to approve adoption of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy.
- 8.2 Cabinet to approve amending an existing vacancy from Band E to Band F enabling recruitment to 1fte Community Enforcement Officer post.

Background Papers

Housing Standards Enforcement Policy



Appendix 1

Broadland District Council

Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy

Adopted: June 2021
Review Date: June 2023

CONTENTS

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Policy Statement
- 1.2 General Principles

SECTION 2 APPROACH TO HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITY

- 2.1 Function of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
- 2.2 Discretionary Activity for Houses in Multiple Occupation
- 2.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Model

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Policy Statement

The Council has a clear vision to work together to create the best place and environment for everyone, now and for future generations. This will be achieved through protecting and improving our natural and built environment, whilst maximising quality of life, supporting individuals, including those who are vulnerable, and empowering communities. This can only be realised by working collaboratively, across services, councils and external organisations.

This Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy feeds into these strategic ambitions. It sets out how we will work proactively, using our discretionary powers to provide advice and guidance for landlords and tenants of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) giving confidence to our communities that the Council will use its resources responsibly but also taking action to enforce when required, demonstrating a holistic and muscular approach.

1.2. General Principles

The Council's enforcement approach is one of education first and using enforcement powers when required. Enforcement activity can be split broadly into two areas, actions where the council has a statutory duty under legislation, and actions where we have a discretionary power. This policy seeks to set out activity undertaken by the Council in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

This Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy is complementary to the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy* adopted in 2020 and forms part of the Council's overall regulatory framework. Where statutory enforcement action arises from discretionary activity, the legislation, conditions and principles as set out in the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy* will be adhered to and referenced in this document.

As per Section 1.1 *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*, all enforcement action, including that relating to discretionary enforcement will be based upon an objective

assessment following consideration of all the facts of the matter, and will not be based on anecdotal evidence, hearsay or other subjective assessment.

All discretionary action will have regard to the Informal Action and Formal Action conditions as laid out in Section 2 of the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*

In addition, all action shall have regard to relevant legislation, duties and powers, codes of practice, guidance and case law periodically issued by the Government, the Chartered Institution of Environmental Health, Local Government Regulation and other relevant bodies. This also includes the Human Rights Act 1998 and the test of proportionality. Regard will also be had for departmental procedures and work instructions.

All authorised officers, when making enforcement decisions will abide by the requirements of this Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy in conjunction with the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*. Any departure from these policies must be exceptional, be capable of justification and be fully considered by the Assistant Director, Individuals and Families before the decision is taken, unless there would be a significant risk to public health and/or safety by delaying the decision.

The Housing Standards team will work collaboratively with other Council departments and external organisations such as:

- Environmental Protection
- Council Tax
- Community Safety and
- Food Safety and Licensing
- Help Hub
- Housing and Benefits
- Planning Enforcement
- Adults Social Care/Children's Services inc. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Health Services
- MAST – (Missing, Adult sex working, Slavery, Trafficking);
- The Norfolk Anti-Slavery Network
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue;
- Norfolk Constabulary, in particular 'Safeguarding & Investigations Command'
- Voluntary and Charitable Sector

This is not an exhaustive list and will be in order to determine the best approaches to tackling the issues, including formal enforcement based on assessment of circumstances. This demonstrates the Council's comprehensive and muscular approach to enforcement.

2. APPROACH TO HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITY

2.1 Function of Houses in Multiple Occupation

A well-managed HMO provides a vital function in offering a low cost accommodation option for people such as, single people, those who are younger, people on low incomes, people who don't want to live alone or need accommodation for working or studying away. In addition, HMO rents tend to have bills included meaning it is easier to budget and tenants feel able to approach their landlord and have confidence that any issues will be swiftly resolved.

Less well-managed HMOs can at the very least provide an uncomfortable living space, due to issues around space standards, lack of washing and cooking facilities and lack of privacy. At the extreme end, HMOs can be hazardous and a risk to health and life, they can provide opportunities for exploitation of people with vulnerabilities as they may have less choice in alternative accommodation options or feel able to complain. HMOs can also be sites for criminal activity including modern slavery.

The Council has a number of statutory duties in relation to HMOs under:

- House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Mandatory Licence (Housing Act 2004)
- The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018
- The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Description) (England) Order 2018

As set out in Section 2 of the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy* and as above, the Council's approach is to seek to advise and support landlords to manage licensed (where applicable) properties that meet, or exceed mandatory requirements. A robust approach to enforcement will be taken for non-compliance.

2.2 Discretionary Activity for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

The discretionary activity is as laid out in Section 2 of this Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Policy is complementary to the statutory duties. It sets out the proactive approach the Council has adopted in order to comprehensively manage HMOs in the district to ensure that:

- The Council has detailed knowledge of HMOs in the district.
- All HMOs requiring a licence have the opportunity to submit an application
- A preventative approach is maintained, seeking to identify potential hazards or issues before statutory intervention is required
- Tenants of HMOs are living in safe accommodation and any vulnerabilities are not exploited.
- Tenants are able to access a full range of support where necessary
- Strong, open relationships with HMO landlords, tenants, specific large employers and external support organisations are developed
- The Council is well regarded for having a supportive, but muscular approach to enforcement.

- Intelligence gathered by the Council supports actions to identify and eliminate disreputable practices by some landlords, unsafe living conditions and modern slavery.

2.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation Discretionary Activity Model

The HMO discretionary activity model comprises:

- Community Enforcement Officer resource working across Broadland and South Norfolk districts to proactively identify and inspect all HMOs.
- A target of 30 properties per year across both districts to be identified. This figure to be reviewed annually.
- A register of all HMOs across the district
- A proactive inspection regime for all HMOs
- Prioritisation given to high risk properties, for example those at increased risk of fire and those associated with risk of modern slavery.
- Partnership work with local businesses where it is likely there is increased incidences of employees living in HMOs
- Partnership working with other council departments and external organisations for the provision of additional guidance and support where needs are identified, particularly for those who are vulnerable and/or believed to be victims of modern slavery.

Where the need for formal enforcement action is identified, this will be undertaken as part of the Council's statutory duties under the *Housing Standards Enforcement Policy*