

People and Communities Policy Committee

Agenda

Members of the People and Communities Committee:

Cllr D Bills (Chairman)
Cllr S Blundell
Cllr M Dewsbury
Cllr J Easter
Cllr T Holden

Cllr J Hornby (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N Legg
Cllr S Nuri Nixon
Cllr J Wilby

Date & Time:

Thursday 31 March 2022
11:00 am

Place:

Council Chamber, South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

Contact:

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Email: committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk
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PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:

If a member of the public would like to observe the meeting, or speak on an agenda item, please email your request to committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk, no later than 5.00pm on Monday 28 March 2022. Please note that due to the current rules on social distancing, places will be limited. Please see further guidance on attending meetings at page 2 of this agenda

Large print version can be made available

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance.

Public Speaking and Attendance at Meetings

All public wishing to attend to observe, or speak at a meeting, are required to register a request by the date / time stipulated on the relevant agenda. Requests should be sent to: committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Public speaking can take place:

- Through a written representation
- In person at the Council offices

AGENDA

1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;
2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, “by reason of special circumstances” (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 4)
4. Minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held
17 February 2022
(attached – page 6)
5. Supporting our Communities – In Year Opportunities;
(attached – page 11)

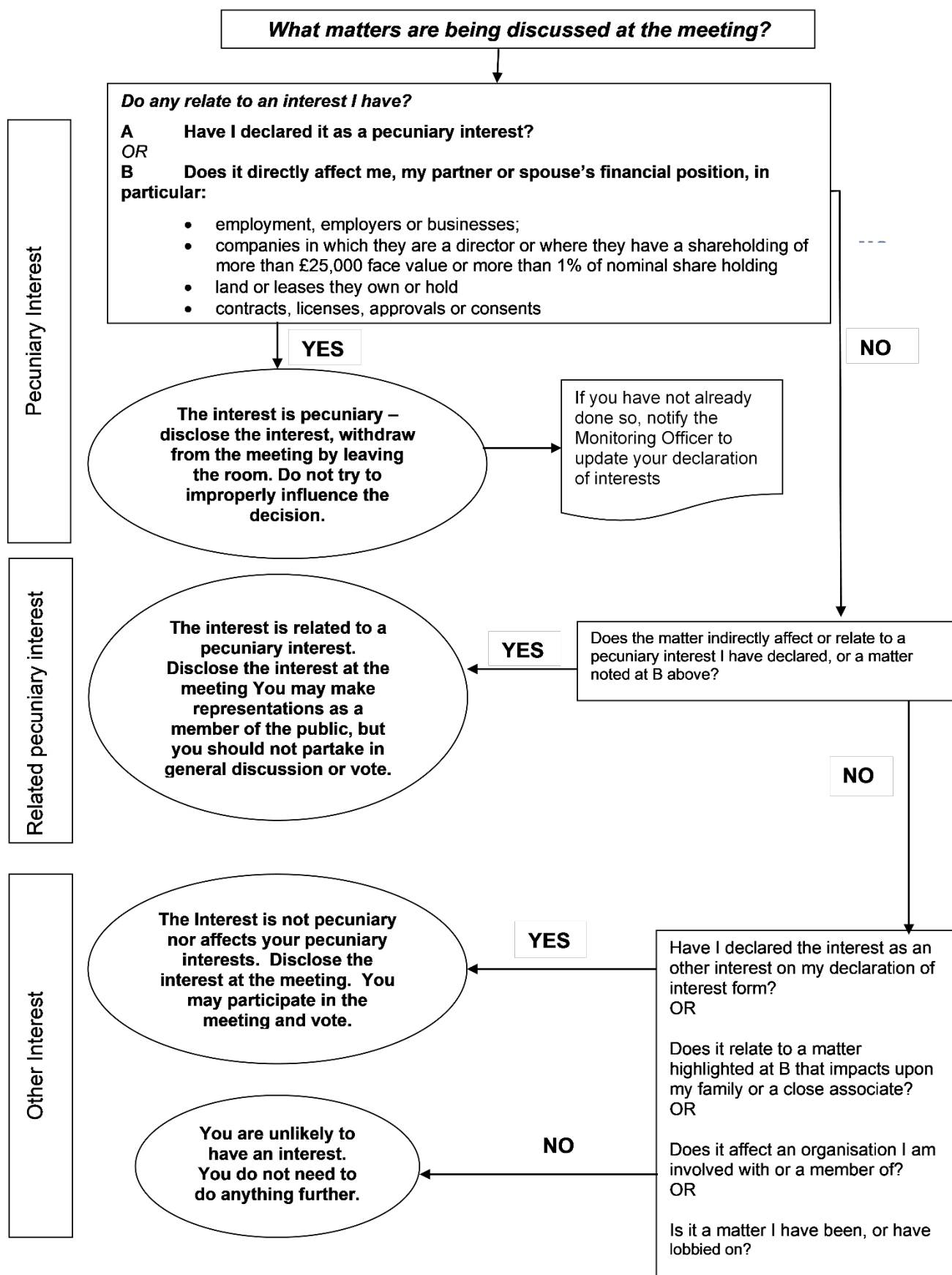
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

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



Agenda Item: 4

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Thursday 17 February 2022 at 10.00am.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: J Easter (Temporary Chairman), S Blundell, M Dewsbury, T Holden, N Legg, S Nuri-Nixon and R Savage (sub for D Bills)

Officers in Attendance: The Assistant Director Individuals and Families (M Pursehouse), the Housing and Wellbeing Manager (R Dunsire) the Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager (K Strandoo), the Policy and Partnerships Officer (V Parsons) and the Democratic Services Officer (DM)

34 APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN

In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, the Democratic Services Officer invited nominations for a temporary Chairman for the meeting. Cllr J Easter was proposed, seconded and duly elected.

Cllr Easter in the Chair

35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bills, J Hornby and J Wilby.

36 URGENT BUSINESS

No items of urgent business were raised.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made

38 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held on 7 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

39 SOUTH NORFOLK AND BROADLAND ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY 2022-2025

Members considered the report of the Policy and Partnerships Officer which Set out the draft South Norfolk and Broadland Rough Sleeper Strategy 2022-2025 and provided background to the statutory context within which the strategy had been developed.

The Policy and Partnerships Officer introduced the report stating that the strategy complimented and aligned with the Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2020 and supported the Council's approach to the prevention of homelessness. The Strategy would feed into the rough sleeper initiative and help to secure a 3 year funding package to ensure the continuation of the rough sleeper accommodation programme. When developing the Strategy, the opportunity had been taken to review customer access to rough sleeper services, the demographics of clients and the identification of need and to align the Strategy with the Government's National Rough Sleeper Strategy, which had the overarching aim of ending rough sleeping. Four key strategic areas of the Strategy were: prevention - to prevent rough sleeping from happening, intervention – to offer the right accommodation and support at the right time, recovery – to embed long lasting positive impacts and, finally, systems - to create a joined up approach to eliminating rough sleeping.

In response to a question regarding how information was gathered about the number of rough sleepers and how rough sleepers were made aware of the help available when there was no "walk in" facility available, the Housing and Wellbeing Senior Manager reported that information was gathered from a number of different sources including the Police. Whilst there was no fixed location available for rough sleepers to attend, accommodation could be sought 24 hours a day, either through the rough sleeper team or the out of hours service. Anyone found to be rough sleeping was offered immediate accommodation whilst their situation was investigated. There was, at the current time, just one person rough sleeping in the district and their situation was currently under review with a view to resolution by existing partnership services. The Strategy was essential in facilitating this work and securing ongoing funding to retain rough sleeper levels at the current low level or no cases at all. Continued work on intervention was also essential. A walk in facility was available in Norwich but rough sleeper numbers were significantly higher in the City. As part of the "Pathways" initiative, any South Norfolk rough sleepers presenting in Norwich were referred back to the Council.

Officers confirmed that 5 staff members were currently employed in homelessness work, the cost of which was funded by Central Government. A single central contact number was available for enquiries regarding homelessness and each contact made was assessed by the housing team to determine priority need. Anyone with acute health needs was regarded as

priority need and managed accordingly, in partnership with health providers and District Direct.

The point was made that the Rough Sleeper Strategy should not be viewed in isolation but as part of a package of support provided in partnership with a range of other agencies with a view to securing long term solutions and ensuring work focussed on genuine rough sleepers.

In response to a question about the number of rough sleepers willing to take up employment, officers commented that cases were often complex and had a long history of issues needing to be addressed. Many rough sleepers were willing to engage and take up employment but this could often take a number of years to put into place the support needed. With more straight forward cases where a person had just fallen on hard times for the first time, a variety of practical help including interview clothing, transport etc. could be provided.

Reference was made to the differences in the priorities contained within the South Norfolk and Broadland Rough Sleeper Strategy and those in the Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy and if these should be more aligned. Officers responded that efforts had been made and were ongoing to continue to align the priorities but at the present time due to the much higher number of cases in the Norwich area and the positive progress made in recent years by Broadland and South Norfolk Councils on their rough sleeper work, there were differences in the current priorities with the district councils being further along in their journey to prevent rough sleeping. A suggestion was made that this might be something which could be discussed between the relevant chairmen/portfolio holders at each council.

With regard to the “No Homelessness in Norfolk” initiative, officers commented on the positive benefits of bringing together all partner agencies, including securing funding for a wider footprint, but that this also brought challenges.

A member raised concerns about difficulties experienced in securing responses to rough sleeping enquiries at the weekend and officers undertook to revisit this and raise it with the out of hours service.

A suggestion was made that it would be helpful if the contact number for rough sleepers was published regularly and officers undertook to arrange this.

The Chairman thanked officers for their report, and it was then unanimously

RESOLVED

To note and recommend the draft South Norfolk and Broadland Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 to Cabinet for approval.

40 DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM STRUCTURES POLICY

The Committee considered the report of the Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager which presented the development of a revised Health and Wellbeing Strategy in the context of the emerging Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System structures. The proposals reflected a move away from competition to one of collaboration.

The integrated care system in Norfolk was still emerging, and whilst the structures were known, the precise functions of the groups were still being worked out. The Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager drew members' attention to the diagram at paragraph 2.11 of the report setting out the current structures of the system. One main element being the statutory NHS body which looked at the NHS planning functions, under which sat the 5 local health care alliances. The boundaries of the 5 alliances were not coterminous with district council boundaries. The other main element was the Integrated Care Partnership which brought together the NHS, Local government and community sector partners under which sat the local health and wellbeing partnerships. This Partnership was responsible for developing an integrated care strategy to meet the wider needs of the local population. The 7 local partnerships were aligned along district council boundaries.

When revising the Councils' Strategy, officers were looking to work closely with the local health and wellbeing partnership for the two councils. The reasons for this were to create an opportunity to consult more widely with local partners, to work with them to help drive services at a local level and to more fully understand the needs of the local population. It would also create an opportunity to be influential in its dealings with the overarching bodies and policy.

It was hoped that the revised strategy would be delivered by end of this year, followed by the development of a more detailed delivery plan.

The Portfolio Holder advised members that she was the district council member, and Vice-Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board. As a County Councillor she was appointed to the Integrated Care System Transformation Board and was the only non NHS representative. She would be in a position to put forward a local government perspective into the work of the Board. Currently the Integrated Care Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board were doing same thing and they would be meeting soon to look at how this would emerge and how to dovetail their efforts into one effective partnership. The Integrated Care System was due to come in being in April

but had been delayed until July – work was now moving into the more detailed arrangements for the system.

Officers undertook to keep members informed of progress on this work.

It was then;

RESOLVED

To note the process for revising the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the upcoming structural changes to Norfolk's health care systems driven by the Health and Social Care Bill.

(The meeting concluded at 10.57 am)

Chairman

Supporting our Communities – In Year Opportunities

Report Author(s): Mike Pursehouse
Assistant Director
01508 533861
mike.pursehouse@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Portfolio: Better lives

Ward(s) Affected: All wards

Purpose of the Report:

The purpose of this report is to update members on our approach to utilising in-year savings in 2021-22 to support our communities and residents in the next financial year. This support will be via three themes, focusing on building resilience in our communities, improving our temporary accommodation and supporting residents through the cost-of-living rise to households.

Recommendations:

1. The committee is asked to recommend to Cabinet the proposal of spending in-year savings to support our communities and residents.

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following a Cabinet review in February 2022 of in-years savings, a report was asked to come to relevant policy committees to outline how officers would use funding to support workstreams in the next financial year. This funding provides an excellent opportunity to enhance our existing workstreams to ensure the Council is well placed to meet future demands.

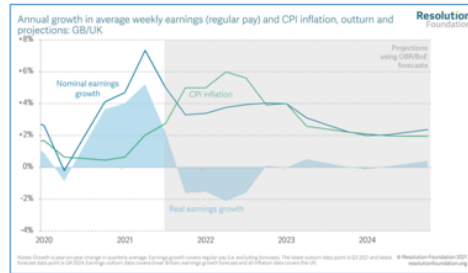
2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 South Norfolk Council has had strong historic support for community organisations, enabling and empowering groups to support their own communities. Through the member ward grant, and community action fund, and go for it grants during a normal year these schemes provide circa £100,000 directly into our communities to support existing and emerging groups. A strong and resilient communities is essential to the health, safety, and wellbeing of residents.
- 2.2 South Norfolk Council has three main temporary accommodation units based in the district, comprising of single and family accommodation. Through our best-in-class housing approach we have managed to virtually end rough sleeping, part of this is through our accommodation which is above average quality compared to other districts. However, statutory homelessness is currently high due to the impact of Covid. However, we can always improve on our accommodation, and we want to make it safer, replace items that have been in constant use during Covid and reduce our carbon footprint.
- 2.3 With the increase in inflation and prices, we will see a cost-of-living squeeze to individuals and families in South Norfolk which is likely to last until 2028. This squeeze has come from a range of factors, made worse by families recovering their finance from Covid and the Ukraine conflict. As always, reduction in household incomes hit poorer families harder, who have less resilience and are likely to have high energy prices.

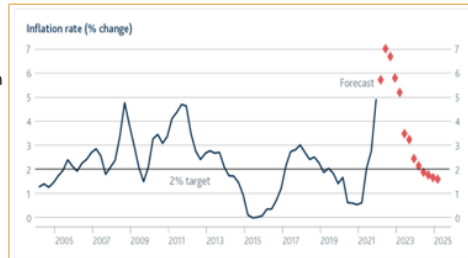
3 CURRENT POSITION/FINDINGS

- 3.1 The cost-of-living rise will affect a significant number of households in South Norfolk and place more people at risk of homelessness. This cost-of-living rise is caused by several factors including:

Resolution Foundation – Annual growth in average weekly earnings and CPI inflation forecast



Bank of England – Inflation rate forecast



Issues - Inflation

- CPI expected to peak at 7.25% in the spring 2022.
- High inflation expected to return to target levels Q2 2024.
- Interest rate at 0.5% (with Bank of England suggesting a further rise this year).
- Stagnation in incomes and earnings until 2028, with an expected drop of 1.7% in real income levels in the first half of 2022.

Source: Bank of England, Monetary Policy Committee Meeting Minutes, January 2022; Institute for Fiscal Studies, Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2021; IFS analysis, October 2021; Resolution Foundation, Wages and the cost of living in 2022, December 2021.

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Issues – Energy prices

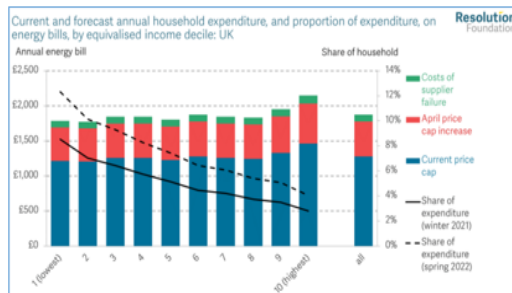


Chart: Resolution Foundation. Note: Proportion of household expenditure by income deprivation decile – lowest income (1) to highest income (10).

- Sharp increases in wholesale gas and electricity prices. The Ofgem announced that the average household's energy bill will rise by £693 annually after a 54% increase to the price cap.
- Bills for the average customer on a default tariff will rise to £1,971 a year from £1,277.
- Prepayment customers will see an increase of £708 from £1,309 to £2,017 (many low-income families are on prepayment meters).
- As shown in the chart, the impact of energy prices will be felt most acutely by poorer families. Households in the bottom income decile will see their energy spend rise from 8.5 to 12% of their total household budget which is three times the proportion for those in the top decile (approximately 4%).

Source: BBC news, As it happened: Energy price cap, February 2022; Institute for Fiscal Studies, The cost-of-living crunch, January 2022; Resolution Foundation, Wages and the cost of living in 2022, December 2021

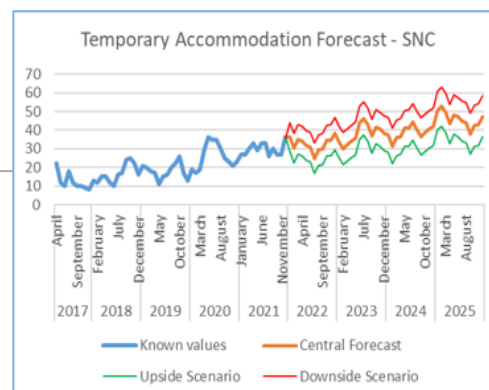
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- 3.2 These issues are a potential risk to the Council as this will place an additional burden on already stretched resources. Part of this issue is a lack of available properties in the social and private rented sector meaning we are unable to move people out of temporary accommodation as quickly. As the diagram shows below, the project demand for housing is expected to significantly increase.

3.3

Projected demand for services for the Councils HOUSING

- All scenarios present a continuous fluctuation in TA occupancy in South Norfolk from 2022 to 2025.
- Following pre-pandemic levels, a central scenario is more likely to happen with an average of 30 households in TA per month between this period.
- However, with current economic projections and government policies likely to raise the cost of living, a downside scenario would have an average of 48 households in TA per monthly during the same period.



SNC Forecast (total number of households in TA)

Year and Quarter	Upside Scenario	Central Scenario	Downside Scenario
2022 Q1	79	101	125
2023 Q1	69	96	122
2024 Q1	76	105	133
2025 Q1	121	152	184

4 PROPOSED ACTION

- 4.1 These factors are likely to see an increased pressure on our services over the next few years. To combat this, we need to build resilience and support within our own services, and to our communities to support those who need our help the most, empower those who can help themselves, and minimise the impact on services.
- 4.2 Our response will be via three workstreams:
- directly supporting households with cost-of-living rise
 - Improve our temporary accommodation
 - Supporting our community groups.
- 4.3 Future Policy reports will detail more about our future temporary accommodation ambitions and set out further support for cost-of-living rise. These workstreams can be found at appendix one. Improving temporary accommodation and supporting community groups will be one -year programmes, supporting households with the cost-of-living rise will be three years.

5 ISSUES AND RISKS

- 5.1 With the impact of the squeeze on energy prices, there is a substantial risk that the Council will have a significant increase in demand on services. To deal with this increase, we need to provide immediate support for those in crisis to prevent

escalation and take a long-term view to target households to prevent crisis happening.

- 5.2 **Resource Implications** – Existing resources will be used where possible, but this programme will require £0.4 million additional investment which will come from in-year savings from 2021-22.
- 5.3 **Legal Implications** – none.
- 5.4 **Equality Implications** – Indications are that those in lower paid job, young people and older people will be adversely affected by the household income squeeze.
- 5.5 **Environmental Impact** – none.
- 5.6 **Crime and Disorder** – now
- 5.7 **Risks** – There are clear plans in place to ensure that the money is spent on time and within budget to ensure there is no slippage in spend.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Council has a strong track record of delivering support for our communities and our vulnerable residents and this approach and use of in-years savings will enable us to build more resilience in our communities and services.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The committee is asked to recommend to Cabinet the proposal of spending in-year savings to support our communities and residents.

Appendix 1

Supporting households to cope with increased costs of living	
<p>The cost-of-living rise approach will be via three focused areas. Our focus will on those who are in hardship which will be defined as those who are unable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet new fuel bills • pay rent • buy food • run a vehicle to access work / essential services and medical appointments. <p>Crisis minimisation will involve providing an immediate response to emerging hardship through services like direct funding, fuel relief, temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Recovery will involve providing advice and support to address presenting need and will be delivered by our debt and welfare advisors, community connectors and housing advice and standards teams. This could involve support for budgeting, wellbeing and mental health, and energy efficiency.</p> <p>Crisis prevention will take the form of two work strands, reducing cost and increasing income. We can support families to reduce costs through improving energy efficiency of the home, providing proactive budgeting advice, reducing food waste, and supporting residents to access services online.</p> <p>This approach will use existing resources where possible which will include remaining COMF spend but will supplemented by £0.2 million additional funding from in-year savings, which will be divided over three-years to provide ongoing support to households until 2025. During this period, we will also seek to identify additional funding streams to support our approach, particularly around crisis prevention.</p>	
Costs	
This approach will cost £0.24 million	
1 x Triage and assessment officer for three years	£89,511
1 x Debt and Welfare officer for three years	£105,069
Fuel poverty grant	£10,000
Timeline	<p>The staff resource will be in place by June 2022 and will be fixed term until March 2025.</p> <p>The fuel poverty grant will be used by 31 March 2023</p>
Risks:	Minimal risk to underspend, three-year recruitment will return good quality applicants.

Improving our temporary accommodation	
<p>Our temporary accommodation will be upgraded in the following work strands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing carbon footprint - window/heating/solar panels • Security and safety – CCTV, fire prevention etc • Furniture and fittings <p>The scoping and agreement of all these strands has already been completed and agreed. Except for reducing carbon footprint activity, all strands can be completed without delay once agreement has been obtained from Cabinet. Windows and heating systems have been quoted for and will only need installing, suggesting approximately an 8–12-week lead in time. Solar panels need to source, and planning permission investigated.</p>	
<p>Costs This approach will cost £0.095 million</p>	
Reducing carbon footprint	£55,000
Security and safety	15,000
Furniture and fittings	£25,000
Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have sourced quotes for windows, heating and will have a lead in time of approx. five months after approval and so will be installed no later than September 2022. • Solar panels -we are working on quotes, and we may require planning permission. Aim to have installed by December 2022 • Furniture and fittings. All quotes agreed and will be installed no later than September 2022.
Risks:	Minimal risk to underspend

Supporting our community groups	
<p>We have a successful track record in delivering our community action fund. This annual fund is led by members who complete application for a summer panel each year. The panel consists of five members who recommend to the Assistant Director of Individuals and Families applications for approval.</p> <p>The normal £50,000 fund has been consistently over subscribed for the last three years.</p>	
<p>Costs This approach will cost £0.1 million, bring the total fund to £0.15 million. Projects range from £1,000 to £15,000.</p>	
Timeline	The panel will ring in the first week in July where all money will be allocated.
Risks:	Minimal risk to underspend