Cabinet

Members of the Cabinet

Mr J Fuller  
Chairman  
Leader, External Affairs

Mr M Wilby  
Vice-Chairman  
Deputy Leader, Communities and Localism

Mrs Y Bendle  
Housing and Public Health

Mr D Bills  
Innovation and Efficiency

Mr K Kiddie  
Environment and Regulation

Mr G Wheatley  
Finance and Resources

Portfolio Holders

Group Meetings

Conservatives:  
Cabinet Office  8.00 am

Liberal Democrats:  
Kett Room  8.15 am

Date

Monday 2 December 2013

Time

9.00 am

Place

Cavell and Colman Rooms  
South Norfolk House  
Swan Lane  
Long Stratton Norwich  
NR15 2XE

Contact

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

Large print version can be made available
**AGENDA**

1. To report apologies for absence;

2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as matters of urgency pursuant to Section 100 B (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 held on Monday 28 October 2013; (attached – page 6)

5. Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan: Consideration of the Examiner’s Report;
   (report attached – page 19)

   This report considers the content and recommendations of the Examiner’s Report into the Examination of the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was held from September to November 2013. This Examiner’s Report concludes that that, subject to a number of recommended modifications, the NDP meets the Basic Conditions tests and the Examiner recommends that the modified NDP proceeds to a referendum, with the referendum area being the parish of Cringleford. This Cabinet report recommends that the Examiner’s recommended modifications be made, that the formal Decision Statement be published as soon as possible and that the (modified) NDP then proceeds to a public referendum in late January 2014. If the referendum is passed, the NDP will be formally ‘made’ and then be a part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk.

6. Council Tax Support Scheme;
   (report attached – page 68)

   The purpose of this report is to obtain Cabinet approval to go forward to Council with a Council Tax Support scheme for 2014/15. The report outlines the legal requirements and features of the scheme and proposes amendments to the original scheme approved in 2012. This is after reflecting on both the impact of Welfare Reform changes which have taken place this financial year and responding to feedback from a second consultation.
The Capital Strategy sets out the Council’s approach to the use of its assets and resources and how this links with the Council’s priorities and corporate planning process. The strategy has been updated to provide the framework for determining the capital programme and the effective use of the Council’s resources and will drive the revision of the capital programme for the next three years. The focus of the capital strategy continues to be on the use of capital resources to deliver either on-going revenue savings or additional revenue income. This will be achieved by investing in the Council’s assets and within the district to create economic growth.

At Cabinet on 23rd September 2013 the strategic direction for the leisure service was approved. The purpose of this report is to provide members with the business case for the enhancement programme. This report will include a financial analysis of the key aspects of the programme and the narrative to explain this.

Norfolk County Council is faced with the need to find an unprecedented £189 million in savings over the next 3 years. It is consulting on measures that aim to deliver £140 million savings. This report summarises the main proposals in the consultation and proposes a South Norfolk Council response. As part of its response, the Council is working on new ideas that would involve joint working and deliver additional savings for the public purse.

The Greater Norwich City Deal has yet to be finalised and work is still ongoing with regard to Governance Arrangements. An update report will be presented to Cabinet on 10 February 2014.

Tim Horspole
Director of Growth and Localism
Cringeford Neighbourhood Development Plan: Consideration of the Examiner’s Report

Planning Policy Manager

This report considers the content and recommendations of the Examiner’s Report into the Examination of the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was held from September to November 2013. This Examiner’s Report concludes that that, subject to a number of recommended modifications, the NDP meets the Basic Conditions tests and the Examiner recommends that the modified NDP proceeds to a referendum, with the referendum area being the parish of Cringleford. This Cabinet report recommends that the Examiner’s recommended modifications be made, that the formal Decision Statement be published as soon as possible and that the (modified) NDP then proceeds to a public referendum in late January 2014. If the referendum is passed, the NDP will be formally ‘made’ and then be a part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk.

Cabinet member(s): John Fuller
Ward(s) affected: Cringleford

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Tim Barker 01508 533801 tbarker@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1 Background

1.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans are a new part of the planning system introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Their purpose is to enable members of a local community to develop a planning policy document for their local area so they can better reflect the aspirations of local people in how they wish to see their community develop over the following 15 years or so, where development should go and what the nature of that development should be.

1.2 Cringleford Parish Council is one of the front-runners nationally in preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and has been preparing their Plan since 2011, with the support of South Norfolk Council. The primary purpose of the NDP is to allocate land for development to meet the requirements for Cringleford set out in the adopted Joint Core Strategy and set policies to shape the character of that development to reflect the character of the original village and create an integrated settlement.

1.3 In July, the Parish Council submitted their NDP to South Norfolk Council. Under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, South Norfolk Council then undertook a publication period in which interested parties were invited to submit representations prior to the NDP being passed to an independent Examiner (alongside any representations made). The Examiner’s
duty is to assess whether an NDP meets the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood development plans as set out in Schedule 4B, paragraph 8(2) (as varied) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. *(It is important to note that the Basic Conditions tests are explicitly not the same as the ‘tests of soundness’ which apply to any Local Plan Document; the ‘tests of soundness’ therefore do not apply to NDPs.)* An NDP needs to meet these basic conditions in order for it to be lawful, namely:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Plan;
- The making of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
- The making of the Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- The Plan must be compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

1.4 The Examiner conducted an examination into the NDP from late September to mid-November 2013 which included a two-day public hearing on 21 and 22 October. The examination has now been concluded and the Examiner has published his report into whether the NDP meets the basic conditions.

1.5 Production of Neighbourhood Development Plans is governed by Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Regulation 18 requires that the local planning authority decides whether to accept the modifications proposed within the report or whether to decline the plan proposal, and if the Plan is to proceed to a referendum whether to extend the referendum area proposed. This report therefore considers whether to accept the Plan proposal in accordance with Regulation 18.

2 Current Position and Issues

2.1 The Examiner’s Report has now been received (see Appendix 1). The Examiner commends (in paragraph 35 of the Report) the NDP for being “logical, clear, appropriately concise and intelligible” and for “seeking to face up to the difficult issue of meeting a considerable level of housing need for a relatively small community”. The Report concludes that a number of modifications are recommended as necessary, but subject to these modifications being made, the NDP meets the basic conditions tests. The full details of these modifications are included in Appendix A of the Examiner’s Report but a summary of, and Examiner’s rationale for, the main modifications is described briefly below.

2.2 Four main issues are addressed in the Examiner’s Report, with recommendations for modifications made. On the level of new housing in the Plan, in paragraph 41 of the Report, the Examiner concludes that Policy HOU1 of the Plan should be modified from a maximum of 1200 dwellings to “approximately” 1200 new
dwellings. In paragraph 53, the **housing density** is recommended to be modified to building densities that should average approximately 25 dwellings per hectare (gross) across the Housing Site Allocation Area. Policy ENV1 seeks to provide a “green, landscaped corridor” (a **Landscape Protection Zone** alongside the A47 to maintain the landscape setting of the village, maintain the existing wildlife corridor, mitigate traffic noise and retain a key strategic gap at the edge of new development. Paragraph 80 of the Examiner’s Report recommends that a narrower LPZ of 145 metres is appropriate. Finally, some modifications to the wording of Policy TRA1 on **transport impacts** are recommended, in particular to the need for development proposals (i.e. planning applications) to ensure that emerging preferred or identified improvement schemes for Thickthorn (which are in development and are required by the Joint Core Strategy to deliver growth in the wider area, not just Cringleford) would not be impacted adversely by such planning applications.

2.3 A number of other modifications are recommended in the Examiner’s Report, including themes such as the size and location of the site for a primary school, the reduction in the width of the “exclusion zone” either side of the power lines and some additional references in certain policies limiting their effect if to do otherwise would render needed development unviable. A number of modifications to the Proposals Map consequent on the recommended policy changes are also necessary.

2.4 Subject to those modifications, however, the Examiner concludes that the Plan meets the basic conditions and he recommends that the modified Plan proceeds to a referendum, with the referendum area being the parish of Cringleford.

3 Proposal and Reasons

3.1 Officers have assessed the Examiner’s Report and recommend to Cabinet that all the Examiner’s recommended modifications be made to the NDP, thus allowing the NDP to progress to the public referendum stage.

3.2 If Cabinet resolves to continue to proceed with the Plan and the modifications noted, the Council has to publish a decision statement on the Plan. This will set out South Norfolk Council’s decision on the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan and the reasons for making that decision. South Norfolk Council will then make the suggested modifications to the Plan and publish a final version of the Plan on South Norfolk Council’s website along with details of the modifications made.

3.3 A statement about the referendum and other specified documents required by the regulations must also be published. This starts the process of the referendum. The referendum has to be at least 28 clear working days after the information statement and documents in relation to the Plan are published. The referendum must be organised, undertaken and paid for by South Norfolk Council.

3.4 Based on this, it is assumed that a referendum would most likely occur in late January (the exact date will be finalised as soon as is practicable, and a verbal update at the Cabinet meeting will be given). The referendum will follow a similar format to an election. All those registered to vote within the neighbourhood area (the parish of Cringleford) will be given the opportunity to be involved in the referendum. Local residents will receive a ballot paper with the question: “Do you want South Norfolk Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Cringleford
area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”. Residents will be given the opportunity to vote ‘yes’ or ‘no’. If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote ‘yes’ then South Norfolk Council is required to bring the plan into force. There is no minimum turnout required for the referendum.

4 Other Options

4.1 Cabinet could decide not to agree with some or all of the Examiner’s recommended modifications. However, not agreeing to make some or all of these recommended modifications would run a significant risk that the NDP would not pass the Basic Conditions tests, and so could not progress further. The NDP would have to either be returned to an earlier stage, with further work taking place on the policies prior to re-submitting and re-examining the NDP, or be abandoned completely. Cabinet could also decide not to progress the NDP to the public referendum, but there would not appear to be any reasons why this decision should be taken.

4.2 Not proceeding with the NDP would result in a gap in the Local Plan in regard to Cringleford. The South Norfolk Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document allocates land for development across the rest of the district. It excludes Long Stratton and Wymondham (where Area Action Plans are being prepared), and also specifically excludes Cringleford on the assumption that the Neighbourhood Plan will perform this role. Without a Neighbourhood Plan, there will be no Local Plan document that allocates specific land for the growth set out in the Joint Core Strategy or sets a development boundary to define where new development in Cringleford should be located. In the short and medium term there would be an incomplete Local Plan for Cringleford, which would militate against the plan-led approach for development, and could lead to forms of development emerging which would be sub-optimal (but might not be as resistible if the NDP is in place). This Local Plan gap would need to be filled by the production of a Cringleford-only Local Plan Document by South Norfolk Council, which would obviously take additional (unplanned) time and resources to undertake and risk considerable local frustration (and consultation fatigue) amongst Cringleford residents.

5 Relevant Corporate Priorities

5.1 Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in – the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan will provide a major role in shaping future development in Cringleford to ensure it provides a desirable place to live and enhances the community.

5.2 Promoting a thriving local economy – through the economy policies in the Plan which will have an important role in promoting sustainable economic growth in Cringleford.

5.3 Supporting communities to realise their potential – the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan helps realise the Localism agenda by empowering local communities to take more control over policies for future development in their area.
6 **Implications and Risks**

6.1 **Financial** – as a front-runner project, there has already been funding given to the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. In addition, the Government has announced that where a Neighbourhood Development Plan is adopted, 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy from development in that area will go to the Parish Council to be spent on local infrastructure projects.

6.2 As the Examination phase has been completed satisfactorily (i.e. the Examiner recommends that the NDP progresses to the referendum stage), then South Norfolk Council can now claim £20,000 from the Department of Communities and Local Government as part of the Neighbourhood Planning funding arrangements. This money is not contingent on the Council progressing the Plan to the referendum stage, or the referendum being passed.

6.3 **Legal** – the decision on whether to accept the modifications contained within the Examiner’s report is required under Regulation 18 of Part 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. As detailed in paragraph 3.1 above, officers consider that it is appropriate to accept all the Examiner’s recommended modifications, and not necessary to introduce any additional modifications.

6.4 If Cabinet agrees to proceed with the NDP to the referendum stage (i.e. to accept the Examiner’s recommended modifications), there is a period of six weeks within which an aggrieved person may lodge a legal challenge to this decision. It is worth noting that one of the earliest NDPs to pass its examination and be progressed to referendum – Tattenhall, in Cheshire – has been legally challenged, so this is not just a theoretical concept for NDPs. However, there is no legal requirement to wait the six weeks before issuing the referendum documentation (which must be at least 28 days before the referendum takes place). Whilst issuing the referendum documentation before the end of the 28 days would run the risk of a legal challenge potentially halting the referendum process, with the potential loss of some of the money spent on the referendum process, the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations emphasise, in several different places, that local planning authorities should proceed to the later stages of the neighbourhood planning process “as soon as possible after making a decision”.

6.5 Further legal advice from NP Law on the situation is being sought, and this advice will be reported verbally at this Cabinet meeting. However, unless the legal advice advises delaying until the end of the six-week challenge period, it is recommended that the formal notice of the referendum is issued as soon as is practicable after the call-in period for the Cabinet decision (should Cabinet agree to proceed) expires on 10 December 2013, with the referendum held in late January 2014.

6.6 **Risks** – the Neighbourhood Development Plan will form part of the Development Plan. If the Neighbourhood Development Plan were not to be adopted the Council would have a hole within the Development Plan covering Cringleford which could make it difficult to defend against planning applications that do not reflect local aspirations for development in Cringleford.

7 **Conclusion**

7.1 The successful completion and adoption of the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan would be an important part of delivering localism in South Norfolk, a key priority for the Council. It would also be the culmination of a great
deal of hard work by Cringleford Parish Council and would move closer to completing/updating the Development Plan for Cringleford.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Cabinet is recommended to accept the Examiner’s Report into the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan, and the recommended modifications contained within it, make the modifications and to progress the (modified) Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan to a public referendum in late January 2014.

CRINGLEFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2013 - 2026
(Examination Version July 2013)

Report of the Examination into the Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan

2013-2026

Timothy Jones, Barrister,

Independent Examiner,

No 5 Chambers

15th November 2013.
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1. Introduction

Neighbourhood planning

1. The Localism Act 2011 Part 6 Chapter 3 introduced neighbourhood planning, including provision for neighbourhood development plans. If approved by a referendum and made by the local planning authority, such plans form part of the Development Plan for the neighbourhood concerned.

2. This report concerns the draft Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026 (Examination Version July 2013) (“the Draft NDP”).

The examiner’s role

3. South Norfolk Council (“SNC”), with the agreement of Cringleford Parish Council (“CPC”), has appointed me, to examine the Draft NDP. I am a member of the planning bar and am independent of SNC, CPC, and of those who have made representations in respect of the Draft NDP. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by it.

4. My examination has involved considering written submissions, considering what was said at the public hearing into specific matters that I conducted and two detailed site visits (one unaccompanied on Sunday 20th October 2013 and one accompanied on Tuesday 22nd October 2013).

5. My role may be summarised briefly as to consider whether the Draft NDP meets the basic conditions, to consider any human rights issues that arise, to recommend which of the three options specified in paragraph 13 below applies and, if appropriate, to consider the referendum area.

2. Preliminary Matters

Public Consultation

6. The consultation was significantly more than required by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. I am satisfied that CPC took public consultation seriously and that proper, genuine and sufficient consultation resulted from this approach.

7. I also bear in mind that parish councillors are democratically accountable, subject to a code of conduct and likely to be in close contact with the community they represent.

Miscellaneous statutory requirements

8. I am satisfied of the following matters:
(1) The Draft NDP area is the parish of Cringleford. CPC is authorised to act in respect of this area (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("TCPA") s61F(1) as read with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("PCPA") s38C(2)(a);

(2) The Draft NDP specifies the period for which it is to have effect, namely 2013 to 2026, does not include provision about development that is excluded development (as defined in TCPA s61K), and does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area (PCPA s38B(1));

(3) No other neighbourhood development plan has been made for the neighbourhood area (PCPA s38B(2)); and

(4) There is no conflict with PCPA sections 38A and 38B (TCPA Sch 4B paragraph 8(1)(b) and PCPA s38C(5)(b)).

9. To date the relevant requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 have been met.

3. The Extent and Limits of an Examiner’s Role

10. I am required to consider whether the Draft NDP meets the basic conditions specified in TCPA Sch 4B paragraph 8(2) as varied for neighbourhood development plans, namely:

   (a) Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Plan;
   (d) The making of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
   (e) The making of the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area); and
   (f) The making of the Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.¹

11. The combined effect of TCPA Sch 4B paragraphs 8(6) and 10(3)(b) and the Human Rights Act 1998 means that I must consider whether the Draft NDP is compatible with Convention rights.

12. In my examination of the substantial merits of the Draft NDP, I may not consider matters other than those specified in the last two paragraphs. In particular I may not consider whether any other test, such as the soundness test provided for in respect of examinations under PCPA s20 and in respect of which guidance is given in the Framework paragraph 182, is met. Rather it is clear that Parliament has decided not to use the soundness test, but to use the, to some extent, less demanding tests in the basic conditions. It is not my role to write or to rewrite a neighbourhood development plan for Cringleford. If I recommend a

¹ The omission of (b) and (c) results from these clauses of paragraph 8(2) not applying to neighbourhood development plans (PCPA s38C(5)(d)).
modification, my recommendation should be limited to what is required to meet basic conditions.

13. Having considered the basic conditions and human rights, I have three options, which I must exercise in the light of my findings. These are: (1) that the Draft NDP proceeds to a referendum as submitted; (2) that the Draft NDP is modified to meet basic conditions and then the modified version proceeds to referendum; or (3) that the Draft NDP does not proceed to referendum. If I determine that either of the first two options is appropriate, I must also consider whether referendum area should be extended.

4. The Public Hearing

14. The general rule is that the examination of the issues by the examiner is to take the form of the consideration of the written representations. However an examiner must cause a hearing to be held for the purpose of receiving oral representations about a particular issue in any case where the examiner considers that the consideration of oral representations is necessary to ensure (1) adequate examination of the issue or (2) a person has a fair chance to put a case. The latter does not apply: No persons have shown themselves unable to put their case in writing. In particular, there is no reason to believe that any person who wished to make representations lacked adequate literacy. Having considered the written material, I concluded that (1) applied in respect of the level of housing provision under the Draft NDP and I gave directions and guidance in respect of these. The public hearing took place on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd October 2013 in the Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett, Norfolk, NR9 3DL.

5. The Basic Conditions and Human Rights

Regard to National Policies and Advice

15. The first basic condition requires that I consider whether it is appropriate that the plan should be made “having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State”. A requirement to have regard to policies and advice does not require that such policy and advice must necessarily be followed, but it is intended to have and does have an effect.

16. The principal document in which national planning policy is contained is the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) (“the Framework”). This includes the following: “Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives. This should be a collective enterprise. Yet, in recent years, planning has tended to exclude, rather than to include, people and communities. In part, this has been a result of targets being imposed, and decisions taken, by bodies remote from them ... introducing neighbourhood planning addresses this.” [Ministerial Foreword page i]
The Framework “provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive... neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.” [paragraph 1]

“The... Framework must be taken into account in the preparation of... neighbourhood plans... Planning policies... must reflect and where appropriate promote relevant EU obligations and statutory requirements.” [paragraph 2]

“The application of the presumption” [in favour of sustainable development] “ will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:

- develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;
- plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan... [paragraph 16]

“Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin... plan-making... These 12 principles are that planning should:

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct... neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should... be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;
- not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk..., and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;

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2 No Green Belt is relevant to this report.
3 A Flood Zone is shown on the Proposals Map. It is not suggested that any other area is at risk of riverine flooding.
encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;

- promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);

- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;

- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and

- take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.” [paragraph 17]

To deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should:

- plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);

- identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations, reflecting local demand... [paragraph 50]

... neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;

- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;

- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;

- create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;

- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. [paragraph 58]

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes... can use neighbourhood planning to:

- set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications... [paragraph 183]

“Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the
Local Plan... Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans... should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.” [paragraph 184]

“Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area…” [paragraph 185].

17. I asked the participants at the public hearing whether I needed to consider any document other than the Framework as a source of “national policies and advice” for the purposes of the first basic condition. Nobody suggested any and none has been suggested in written representations.

Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development

18. The second basic condition means that I must consider whether the making of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Unless the Draft NDP, or the Draft NDP as modified, contributes to sustainable development, it cannot proceed to a referendum. This condition relates to the making of the Plan as a whole. It does not require that each policy in it contribute to sustainable development.

19. The bulk of the Framework constitutes guidance on sustainable development. As its paragraph 6 says, “The policies in paragraphs 18 to 219, taken as a whole, constitute the Government’s view of what sustainable development... means in practice for the planning system.”

20. The Framework includes the following:

“...sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.” [Ministerial Foreword page i]

“International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 24/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.” [page 2]

“There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.” [paragraph 7]

“These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.” [paragraph 8]

Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life, including (but not limited to):…

widening the choice of high quality homes.” [paragraph 9]

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through… plan-making …[paragraph 14]

“Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. However, the Government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.” [paragraph 29]

“Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making... Plans should be deliverable. Therefore, the sites and the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. To ensure viability, the costs of any requirements likely to be applied to development, such as requirements for affordable housing, standards, infrastructure contributions or other requirements should, when taking account of the normal cost of development and mitigation, provide competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable the development to be deliverable.” [paragraph 173]

21. I asked the participants at the public hearing whether any consider that I needed to consider any document other than the Framework in order to understand what “sustainable development” means the purposes of the second basic condition. Nobody suggested any and none has been suggested in written representations.

General conformity with the development plan’s strategic policies

22. The third basic condition means that I must consider whether the draft NDP is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority. The adjective ‘general’ allows a degree of (but not unlimited) flexibility. In this case the only development plan document that any persons making representations has relied on or indicated may be relevant is the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and
South Norfolk (submission document February 2013) (“the JCS”). The JCS comprises those parts of the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (March 2011) (“the original JCS”) that were not quashed in Heard v Broadland District Council and submission content (which is underlined in the extracts below). Only those parts that are not underlined constitute the development plan for, inter alia, the purpose of considering the third basic condition.

23. In 2011 three local authorities, Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, adopted the original JCS. The original JCS was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (“SEA”) under Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Mr Heard, a resident in an area earmarked for growth known as the North East Growth Triangle (“NEGT”) brought proceedings under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 s113 challenging that adoption. The NEGT is some distance from and on the opposite side of Norwich to Cringleford.

24. In 2012 Ouseley J gave the judgment in respect of that challenge. He upheld the challenge in part, finding that, in adopting the original JCS earmarking the NEGT for major urban growth, which was subject to an SEA, the authorities had not explained their reasons for not selecting certain reasonable alternatives and failed to examine those reasonable alternatives in the same depth as the preferred option and that, in doing so, they had failed to comply substantially with the Directive's requirements. In the Order that was drawn up following the judgment, 35 parts of the original JCS (comprising policy, text, and associated maps and diagrams) were remitted, treated as not adopted and taken back to the Regulation 19 (Publication of a Local Plan) stage to be treated as not having been subject to examination and adoption. The remainder of the original JCS remains adopted. While relatively recent, it predates the Framework, so that to the extent (if any) that it conflicts with the Framework it is not up to date.

25. The decision helps to explain the current situation in respect of the adopted and the emerging development plan. However, it relates to an area of land a little distance from Cringleford, succeeded on grounds relating to reasons and the degree of examination, and did not involve most of those involved in the draft NDP. No person making representations in respect of the Draft NDP has relied on it.

26. In February 2013 the three LPAs issued the JCS This states, inter alia, with submission content being underlined:

Growth will be focussed on brownfield land in the Norwich urban area and in a very large mixed use urban extension within the… growth triangle… Other large-scale growth will take place at the expanded communities of… Cringleford… New and expanded communities will

be highly sustainable with good access to local jobs and strategic employment areas and will be served by new or expanded district and local centres providing shops, health, education, services and facilities easily accessible by foot, bicycle and public transport… [page 20, part of the Spatial Vision].

Development in Norwich, and at the strategic growth locations at… Cringleford… may be required to contribute financially to the provision of strategic sewers linking to Whittingham. Development will need to progress in tandem with their provision [page 40, paragraph 5.19].

Mixed tenure housing with care will be required as part of overall provision in highly accessible locations. In particular provision will be required in… Cringleford… [page 41, part of policy 4].

The policies of the Joint Core Strategy distribute growth according to the following settlement hierarchy:

1. Norwich urban area. The existing urban area includes the built-up parts of the urban fringe parishes of… Cringleford… [p 55, paragraph 6.2].

The scale of development generally decreases at each level of this hierarchy. However, within the Norwich Policy Area well located and serviced settlements have, in some instances, been identified for a larger scale of growth than their rural counterparts. Large-scale mixed use developments… are provided… at Cringleford… [p 55, paragraph 6.3].

Housing need will be addressed by the identification of new allocations to deliver a minimum of 21,000 dwellings distributed across the following locations…

- Cringleford: 1,200 dwellings…

All the numbers above show the minimum number of dwellings to be delivered in each location [p 56, part of policy 9].

Major growth… at Cringleford… will be masterplanned as attractive, well serviced, integrated, mixed use development using a recognised design process giving local people an opportunity to shape development. Development will achieve the highest possible standards of design and aim to address current service and infrastructure deficiencies to benefit existing communities. In addition each major development location will:

- deliver healthy, sustainable communities with locally distinctive design and high quality green infrastructure within the development and contributing to the surrounding network
- provide for a wide range of housing need…
- seek to achieve a high level of self containment through the provision of services to support the new development while integrating well with neighbouring communities
- achieve a major shift away from car dependency and be designed around walking and cycling for local journeys and public transport for longer journeys
- include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), on site or nearby renewable energy generation, for example large-scale wind turbines/farms and biomass fuelled Combined Heat Power and Cooling (CHIC), and water saving technologies
- include new or expanded education provision addressing the needs of the 0-19 age range, local retail and other services, community, police and recreational facilities, small-scale employment opportunities and primary healthcare facilities
- ensure high quality telecommunications and adequate energy supply and sewerage infrastructure

The developers of major Strategic Growth Locations will be required to ensure there is an ongoing commitment to support community development throughout the period until the development is completed [p 62, part of policy 10].

Cringeford
This location is dependent on expanded capacity of the A11/A47 Thickthorn junction and will deliver modest growth to the existing village to include:

- at least 1,200 dwellings
- expansion of the existing services nearby
- new pre-school provision and a primary school within the new development...
- enhanced bus services to the city centre with potential for bus rapid transit also serving Wymondham, Hethersett and Norwich Research Park
- safe and direct cycle routes to the city centre, Hethel, Norwich Research Park and the hospital
- Green infrastructure to provide enhanced public access to the countryside and the Yare valley

Detailed proposals will be developed through the preparation of the South Norfolk Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document [pp 64-65, part of policy 10].

Capacity improvements to the A11/A47 Thickthorn junction are likely to require expansion of the existing Park and Ride site with improved access from the A11 northbound. Growth at... Cringleford is dependent on significant enhancement to public transport infrastructure which will include Bus Rapid Transit if a viable route can be implemented... [page 67, paragraph 6.20].

The existing Norwich urban area includes the built-up parts of the urban fringe parishes of... Cringleford... It will be expanded through significant growth in the... growth triangle and smaller urban extensions at Cringleford, and... [page 74, part of policy 12].

27. The policies quoted in the preceding paragraph are strategic. It follows that the draft NDP must be in general conformity with them. The only other document that any person who has participated in the examination has described as containing strategic policy is SNC’s supplementary planning guidance “Recreational Open Space Requirements for Residential Areas (December 1994)”. This is not part of the development plan. I have considered this document and am satisfied that it is not strategic within the meaning either of the third basic condition or of the Framework.

28. There is no requirement to be in general conformity with emerging policy, although this may reflect government policy to which regard must be paid and it may be based on reasoning relevant to consideration of the basic conditions.

EU obligations

29. The fourth basic condition requires me to consider whether the draft NDP breaches or is otherwise incompatible with, EU obligations. This matter can be dealt with briefly in advance of detailed consideration of the contents of the draft NDP. I am satisfied that the SEA complied with EU law. There are no European sites within adjoining the Parish or affected by proposed development proposed in the parish. No written or oral representation submitted that there was any breach of or incompatibility with EU obligations. Natural England is satisfied that significant effects on Natura 2000 sites from the draft NDP are unlikely.
30. I asked the participants at the public hearing whether there was any breach of or incompatibility with EU obligations. Nobody suggested any and none has been suggested in written representations.

31. I am satisfied that nothing in the Draft NDP breaches or is otherwise incompatible with EU law.

Human Rights

32. It is also necessary to consider whether the draft NDP would cause any right under the European Convention on Human Rights to be breached. English Planning law in general complies with the Convention. This matter can be dealt with briefly in advance of detailed consideration of the contents of the draft NDP. I have considered whether anything in the Draft NDP would cause a breach of any Convention right. In particular I have considered the Convention’s Articles 6(1), 8 and 14 and its First Protocol Article 1. I note that in the Statement of Community Involvement, CPC recognised its duties under race-relations and disability legislation and that fair and equal treatment must be accorded to all. I asked the participants at the public hearing whether the draft NDP would cause any right under the European Convention on Human Rights to be breached. Nobody suggested any and none has been suggested in written representations.


6. The Draft NDP

34. The draft NDP has a clear structure, being divided into twelve chapters. Of these, that relating to policies, chapter 7, has six sections relating respectively to: general policies; policies for the environment; policies for housing; policies for the local economy; policies for society, community and culture; and policies for transport.

35. Overall I commend the Draft NDP for being logical, clear, appropriately concise and intelligible to a reasonably intelligent lay reader with no expertise in town and country planning. I also commend CPC for seeking to face up to the difficult issue of meeting a considerable level of housing need for a relatively small community: a further 1,200 dwellings in a parish where 1,000 new dwellings are already being constructed in Round House Park.

36. The following sections of the report consider whether the Draft NDP complies with the first three basic conditions. I have concluded that some modification is necessary, but that with this modification, the Draft NDP can proceed to a referendum. My recommended modifications are in bold. Proposed new wording is underlined and deletions appear in this report as struck-through text: the underlining and striking-through text should not, of course, appear in the version subject to the referendum. I do not show changes in case resulting from
the substantial changes. I have not in this report given detailed consideration to policies in respect of which no representation has been made. I have nonetheless borne them in mind, particularly in assessing whether the draft NDP satisfied the second basic condition.

7. **Policies for Housing**

37 Several policies affect or may affect housing numbers. Rather than consider the draft NDP’s policy sections in the order they appear, I shall therefore consider housing before moving to other parts of the plan.

**Housing numbers**

38. Policy HOU1 of the draft NDP states:

“The maximum of 1,200 new homes should be dispersed across the Housing Site Allocation Area as shown on the Proposals Map.”

39. The JCS provides for a minimum number of 1,200 dwellings to be delivered in Cringleford. This is a strategic policy. This requirement is not unconditional. Rather the Local Plan makes it dependent on:

1. “expanded capacity of the A11/A47 Thickthorn junction” which is “likely to require expansion of the existing Park and Ride site with improved access from the A11 northbound”; and
2. “significant enhancement to public transport infrastructure which will include Bus Rapid Transit if a viable route can be implemented”.

40. The provision of at least 1,200 dwellings is also expressed as being with: “expansion of the existing services nearby”; “new pre-school provision and a primary school within the new development”; “enhanced bus services to the city centre with potential for bus rapid transit also serving Wymondham, Hethersett and Norwich Research Park”; “safe and direct cycle routes to the city centre, Hethel, Norwich Research Park and the hospital”; and “Green infrastructure to provide enhanced public access to the countryside and the Yare valley”.

41. The Framework paragraph 184 states that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan. I must have regard to that and to the overall approach of the Framework to support development particularly housing. I recognise: that the test is general, not absolute, conformity; that the obligation is to have regard to national policies, not to follow them in all respects; and that achieving sustainable development relates to the effect of the Draft NDP as a whole. Nonetheless I am satisfied that a policy, or a combination of policies, that would be likely to result in significantly fewer than 1,200 dwellings despite the matters on which this is dependent5 being satisfied, would not be in general conformity with the Local Plan and would not (without proper reasons) be showing regard for national policies and advice. Further I could not be confident that such policies

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5 Paragraph 39 above.
would leave the draft NDP as whole contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. In order to comply with the basic conditions, I share Norwich City Council’s view that policy HOU1 should specify approximately 1,200. Paragraph 5.3, which forms part of the Chapter ‘The Vision: Cringleford 2026’ should reflect this. I have reached this conclusion by considering the first three basic conditions, not arguments based on the soundness test and criticisms of the JCS advanced by Deloitte. That does not constitute a carte blanche for house-building. Other policies will restrict it, but (except in respect of the matters on which the JCS makes the provision of at least 1,200 dwellings dependent) should not so in such a way as to reduce the number of dwellings below approximately 1,200 new homes. In making this recommendation I am conscious that the Framework’s paragraph 184 says that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies and that the JCS provided for at least 1,200 dwellings. This is policy, not law. The law is not absolute compliance with such policy, but general conformity. Bearing in mind the qualified nature of the first three basic conditions as explained above, I am satisfied that a modification of the maximum of 1,200 to approximately 1,200 new homes would meet them. Policies that might result in significantly below 1,200 new dwellings being built would not.

42. I have reached my conclusion on housing numbers, primarily on the basis of the part of the JCS that constitutes the development plan and on the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government’s support for substantial new house-building expressed in the Framework. I recognise that this will disappoint a substantial number of local residents. However, I note that one of those concerned pointed out that Cringleford has suffered many losses, including its post office closure. New housing often provides the numbers needed to save community facilities that would otherwise close.

Recommended modification

43. I therefore recommend that Policy HOU1 of the draft NDP and the second sentence of its paragraph 5.3 should be modified to state:

**HOU1**

The maximum of Approximately 1,200 new homes should be dispersed across the Housing Site Allocation Area as shown on the Proposals Map.

**5.3**

... However, this there is the maximum a limit to the number that is compatible with the environmental, economic and social objectives of the Plan...

Sustainable waste management and minimising the use of energy and clean water

44. Policy HOU2’s final indent provides:
“Layouts for new development should... provide for sustainable waste management, principally by having adequate storage space for refuse bins and incorporate Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS) principles to minimise flood risk.”

45. Policy HOU6 begins:
“All dwellings should be designed to minimize the use of energy and clean water.”

46. Anglian Water is happy to see the reference to SUDS and water efficiency in the draft NDP and has no further comment to make. The EA considers specifying the use of sustainable drainage as part of the text of HOU2 beneficial and endorses the efficient use of water, especially in new developments. Policy 10 of the JCS provides for the inclusion of SuDS and water saving technologies. Policies HOU2 and HOU6 meet the first and third basic conditions and contribute significantly to the draft NDP meeting the second basic condition.

Housing Density

47. Policy HOU3 states:
“To preserve the open and green character of the village and its role in the urban/rural transition zone, net building densities should not exceed a maximum of 25 dwellings per hectare across the Housing Site Allocation Area.”

48. Deloitte argued that this is too restrictive, pointing out that a 48-hectare allocation, the figure given in the draft NDP’s paragraph 7.3 would provide exactly 1,200 houses at 25 per hectare (but not a maximum of 25 per hectare) and arguing that an average figure would be more appropriate. Indeed this is the figure given for mixed development, largely housing, so if the measurements in the draft NDP were correct, this would inevitably provide fewer than 1,200 dwellings. Deloitte seek to make the policy more flexible by introducing a range of appropriate densities. Cgms argues that this would not be making the most efficient use of use, would not be using natural resources prudently and would affect viability. Norwich City Council considers that the policy means that it would not be possible to provide anywhere near the 1,200 new homes referred to in policy HOU1 and seeks its deletion.

49. Policy HOU3 should be compared with the JCS, whose Spatial Vision Objective 2 ends “Appropriate densities will make sure land is used efficiently and community needs will be met” and whose policy one includes “Development will... make the most efficient appropriate use of land, with the density of development varying according to the characteristics of the area, with the highest densities in centres and on public transport routes”.

50. CPC considered that a density of 25 per hectare would provide 1,200 dwellings. If this is right, unless there were a uniform density of 25 per hectare on all sites, fewer than

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6 In late evidence that others had little chance to consider, CPC put forward figures that were a little different from this. These do not have major effect on the overall picture and are clearly very approximate.
1,200 houses would be provided on the HSAA as shown in the Proposals Map of the draft NDP. However the substantial reduction of the Landscape Protection Zone (“LPZ”) that I am recommending and the resulting net increase in developable land alters that situation, even after allowance is made for the possible problems with the deliverability of land between the A11 and Cantley Lane and west of the Round House roundabout that might result from the new policy TRA2.7

51. Mr Lloyd considers that the overall density is too high in general terms and specifically much too high in areas that adjoin the older and more established areas of Cringleford, such as Cantley Lane, where it would not be in keeping with existing layouts, densities, amenity and style. While I understand his position, there is no basis in either JCS or national policy for reducing densities in the way he seeks.8 Further reducing density from that in the draft NDP would take it further from general conformity with the JCS and from the Framework. Hence recommending such a course of action would not be within my powers.

52. SNC considers that there could be a case for allowing some higher density development of high design quality.

53. A neighbourhood plan may include a density policy provide this does not conflict with the basic conditions. Localism enables parish councils promoting a neighbourhood plan to choose between meeting strategic policies as to housing numbers by higher density housing on less land or lower density housing on more land (or by permutations of these). I understand CPC’s concern about too high a density and resulting town-cramming and bear in mind that both the Framework and the JCS support local people shaping development; but consider that the current wording of the policy is too restrictive, since it would be likely to result in significantly fewer than 1,200 dwellings and to prevent a sufficient mix of dwellings. I also share Norwich City Council’s concern that a density significantly below 25 dwellings per hectare might make it difficult to provide effective public transport services or to support local services. These potential problems can be overcome by making 25 an approximate average rather than a maximum. Since no other alternative has been advanced that would give weight to the view of the local community while complying with the basic conditions, I recommend this.

have therefore (while recognising that it may be a little inaccurate) considered the matter on the basis of CPC’s previous figure of 48 hectares, which nobody had previously disputed.

7 Paragraph 118 below.

8 The impact of density on the setting of any listed building may require consideration, but the only listed building where this possibility appears to need to be considered is the grade II listed Round House, a 2-storey c1805 octagonal estate cottage in Newmarket Road. This does not have an extensive setting and so would not impact significantly on housing numbers.
54. SNC asked that the policy should specify that the density is gross. I agree. Two sentences paragraph 7.3, page 18, lines 1-4, are no longer accurate and, I recommend their deletion

**Recommended modifications**

55. I recommend that Policy HOU3 should be modified as followed:

To preserve the open and green character of the village and its role in the urban/rural transition zone, net building densities should not exceed a maximum of average approximately 25 dwellings per hectare (gross) across the Housing Site Allocation Area.

56. I recommend that Policy paragraph 7.3, page 18 should be modified by the deletion of two sentences:

... A low density was selected for housing on this land (20-25 dwellings per ha) in order to maintain and enhance the open, green and ‘semi-rural’ character’ of the village (5.2 and 5.3). Using the upper figure of 25 dwellings per ha, a simple calculation using the net dwelling density, provides for the construction of a total of 1,200 dwellings....

**Housing Mix**

57. Policy HOU4 states:

“The majority of dwellings proposed for any new development in Cringleford should be detached or semi-detached dwellings, whilst recognising the need for a mix of other property types in accordance with Policy 4 of the Joint Core Strategy. This would be in keeping with the predominant settlement pattern in the pre-2007 village.”

58. Mr Lloyd considers that new development should be in keeping with the style and proportion of what is already there, which is mostly 3- or 4-bedroom detached houses built in a traditional style and from sympathetic materials and that new properties should be of a similar nature in terms of size and style. Nothing in the basic conditions justifies altering the draft NDP in this direction. Rather the draft NDP must have regard to the Framework’s paragraph 50.9

59. Deloitte takes an opposite view, describing HOU4 as a rigid policy. If the policy were to reflect Mr Lloyd’s view, I would agree. There must be a mix, but policy HOU4 recognises that there will be and simply provides what the majority of that mix (which could be as low as only marginally over 50%) should be. Neighbourhood plans are produced by a parish council or a neighbourhood forum and care should be taken not unnecessarily to impose the expensive evidence bases required of principal councils for the soundness test into the less demanding basic conditions. The policy reflects the current mix in the parish, paragraph 5.23 of the JCS and local opinion. Provided there is a genuine and substantial provision for a mix and provided the 3-4 bedroom policy does not reduce the overall number of deliverable house

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9 Paragraph 16 above.
below 1,200, I would not be justified in recommending modification of policy HOU4. I am satisfied that the draft NDP does enough in this respect to correspond with the basic conditions.

60. I do not share Cgms’ view that the reference to the JCS’s policy 4 is misleading

The needs of the elderly

61. Policy HOU5 satisfies the first and third basic conditions and helps the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

RIBA standards

62. Policy HOU7 provides, “The amount of space provided in each dwelling must as a minimum meet but ideally exceed the minimum standards recommended by the RIBA in The Case for Space (2011). Adequate storage space must be provided in all new homes.” Cgms opposes this stating that The Case for Space is intended as a good practice, not for the purpose or prescriptive regulation. I see no reason why a neighbourhood plan should not choose to use this document as a basis for policy in an area like Cringleford that does not have exceptional pressure on space.

Garages

63. Policy HOU8 provides: “Garages must be built in direct association with the houses whose inhabitants may be expected to use them. They must be spacious enough to accommodate modern cars and bicycles. Proposals for rear or separate parking courts will not be permitted.”

64. Cgms object to this, saying that it is not practicable, especially in the case of main distributor roads. CPC did not respond to this and, while recognising the concerns of CPC, I consider that in some circumstances the policy would be impracticable and have concluded that the policy is too absolute.

Recommended modification

**Unless impracticable, garages must be built in direct association with the houses whose inhabitants may be expected to use them. They must be spacious enough to accommodate modern cars and bicycles. Proposals for rear or separate parking courts will not be permitted, unless alternative provision is impracticable.**

Dispersal of affordable housing

65. Policy HOU9 states “To encourage the social mixing implied by the concept of ‘balanced communities’, affordable housing should be dispersed in small groups throughout the development area.” Cgms object to this on the ground that it would not be expected to meet the requirements of effective management by a housing association, but have not
adduced evidence in support of this. I do not consider that the policy conflicts with the basic conditions.

Protection of heritage assets

66. Policy HOU10 states, “Heritage assets within the parish, especially the listed buildings in the Conservation Area, and their settings must be protected, conserved and enhanced when development proposals are brought forward.” Cgms objects to this on the ground that similar points are made in policies GEN2 and GEN3. While that is true, plans often include some repetition and this does not constitute a breach of the basic conditions. I bear in mind the Framework’s principle that planning should “conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations”. I see no reason to recommend a modification of policy HOU10.

Specific housing site

67. Mrs Nock objects to the housing site allocation between the A11 and Cantley Lane, which she describes as “the one and only green site remaining in [her] village”. She also spoke to me on the accompanied site visit, repeating (but not adding to) the points she had made in her letter. She also draws attention to problems crossing the A11 to reach the new school. I viewed the site from the A11, the public footpath running approximately alongside its western boundary as shown on the Proposals Map and Cantley Lane and saw nothing that rendered the land unsuitable for housing.10

68. It is important that communities contain open green space. Cringleford will continue to contain its substantial recreation ground, together with an LPZ and a Gateway Zone. The HSAAs will contain open green space within them. The land between the A11 and Cantley Lane is suitable for a housing allocation.11 Such an allocation does not conflict with the basic conditions.

8. General Policies

69. Each of policies GEN1, GEN2 and GEN 3 satisfies the first and third basic conditions and helps the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

70. Policy GEN4 provides

10 There was evidence from CPC that a small area of land in the north-eastern corner of this land was prone to flooding and I noticed a slight difference in vegetation on the accompanied site visit. Even if this were to be incapable of rectification, the area involved is too small to have a significant effect on housing numbers or to render the designation inappropriate.

11 The new policy TRA2 may limit this.
“Infrastructure as identified within the Cringleford Infrastructure Plan Programme (see Appendix) within the Parish Boundary and associated with the development of new sites must be provided directly by developers or be paid for or delivered by developers, either through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or through Section 106 agreements.”

71. This incorporates as a separate appendix the substantial number of requirements identified within the Cringleford Infrastructure Plan Programme (“the IPP”) as part of the Draft NDP.

72. I see no objection in principle to a neighbourhood development plan requiring developers to meet the categories of expenditure for which development plans and deeds of planning obligation under TCPA s106 often provide. The Framework’s advice “to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system” applies to neighbourhood development plans.

73. Nobody adduced evidence that went beyond assertion in respect of viability. The HSAA is greenfield land, there is no reason to believe that it is contaminated, the land, although uneven, does not have the sort of topography that would in my experience deter a developer (except for a modest area of the southern LPZ where the land slopes steeply towards Thickthorn Stream). Rather it is has gentle slopes. Cringleford is in a relatively prosperous area of England. As such, I think it right to treat assertions of lack of viability with caution. This caution is (to some extent) reinforced by the fact that planning applications for substantial housing development have been submitted in respect of the two main land ownerships in the HSAA and LPZ.

74. Nonetheless the totality of the financial obligations that might result from the policy remains potentially large and I am concerned that the cumulative extent of these obligations might render a substantial part of the proposed housing unviable and take the total provision of dwellings significantly below 1,200, with the result that the first three basic conditions would not be met.

Recommended modification

75. I therefore recommend that policy GEN 4 be modified to read:

Infrastructure as identified within the Cringleford Infrastructure Plan Programme (see Appendix) within the Parish Boundary and associated with the development of new sites must be provided directly by developers or be paid for or delivered by developers, either through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or through Section 106 agreements except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.

76. All participants at the hearing agreed that this modification would be appropriate. With that modification there is no need to modify the IPP.
9. **Policies for the Environment**

The Landscape Protection Zone and the Gateway Zone

77. Policy ENV 1 states:

A defined, continuous green landscaped corridor of 250m depth from the edge of the carriageway of the A47 will be provided to maintain the landscape setting of the village, maintain the existing wildlife corridor, mitigate traffic noise (Landsaped Protection Zone) and retain a key strategic gap at the edge of new development. In most cases it is envisaged that this will be a protected strip planted with trees but with pedestrian access. No new built development will be allowed within the zone unless the proposers can demonstrate that it will enhance the landscape and not have an adverse impact on the Strategic Gap between Cringleford and Hethersett, wildlife and buffering traffic noise. The visual impact of new development when viewed from approaching main roads and the surrounding countryside should be minimised by the use of site appropriate landscape bunding, screening and mature tree planting. New and existing protected areas will require an effective management regime to enhance biodiversity.

78. Policy ENV2 states:

Developers will be required to landscape a 30-50m tree belt, as indicated on the Proposals Map (50m Gateway Zone) on the A11 approach to Norwich from the Thickthorn roundabout. The width will secure adequate screening to both the road and the village and preserve the gradual transition from the countryside to the city.

79. Deloitte on behalf of Land Fund Limited criticised these policies for greatly restricting the development potential for housing between the edge of the current built-up area and the A47, pointing out that paragraph 7.3 of the draft NDP describes this as “the only major area of land available in Cringleford for development” and seeking a westward expansion of the HSAA. There is no general obligation to allocate all of an area that is potentially available for development. However, if the effect of policies ENV1 and ENV2 is to cause the draft NDP to be contrary to the basic conditions, that is a different matter.

80. Deloitte also argues that the land allocated needs to be expanded westwards in order to make development of it attractive to developers. It has provided no viability evidence in support of this. This is not a part of England where greenfield sites are unlikely to attract developers, even where they are as small as the triangles of land to the south of Cantley Lane. Nonetheless the 250-metre wide LPZ requires justification, especially since there is a need to allocate more land in order to ensure that approximately 1,200 dwellings are likely to be provided. I do not accept CPC’s argument that the third sentence of ENV1 is likely to make a significant difference. It might allow some building associated with open-space use, but would be unlikely to lead to dwellings on the LPZ.

81. In principle, there is nothing wrong with a fixed-width buffer zone close to a busy trunk road. Topography should be considered, especially where, as is the case here, the land
is not flat, or even approximately flat, and I therefore visited several parts the proposed land on my accompanied site visit and to a small extent on my unaccompanied site visit. Landscape features and landscape features should also be considered.

82. Deloitte argued that the LPZ should be reduced in size but did not specify an alternative distance or provide a map showing an alternative area. While Deloitte and Cgms objected to the extent of the LPZ, nobody argued that there should not be an LPZ.

83. Having visited the LPZ on a normal weekday and (to a limited extent) on a normal Sunday, I consider it appropriate to apply my judgment and experience to the matter, bearing in mind the noise levels, the fact that air pollution falls away rapidly in the vicinity of main roads and the need for more land for housing sites. I also consider it appropriate to bear in mind (with a degree of caution) the current proposals and indicative proposals from the landowners and developers. I consider that an LPZ as wide as 250 metres cannot be justified. No criteria-based proposed has been advanced and the alternative advanced on behalf of the landowners and developers lacks the “high degree of predictability and efficiency” that the Framework’s paragraph 17 requires. It may be that consideration of topography, landscape features, and inter-visibility could have led to a more sophisticated zone than one based solely on width; but I doubt that this would have been very different and I do not consider that these factors make the simpler solution of a fixed-width zone inappropriate. I have concluded that a 145-metre wide LPZ would be appropriate and recommend that policy ENV1 be modified accordingly.

84. I share SNC’s view that some open green space serving the HSAA can be provided within the LPZ. This does not require any modification of the policy. I do not share SNC’s view that an amendment of the development boundary is necessary to achieve this. Rather I see force in CPC’s concern that including the LPZ within a development boundary would create pressure for substantial development. Policy HOU2 does not require open green space that serves housing to be within that boundary and the limited scope for new development within policy ENV1 may allow modest buildings associated with open green space.

Recommended modifications

85. I recommend modifying policy ENV1 to read:

A defined, continuous green landscaped corridor of 250-145m depth from the edge of the carriageway of the A47 will be provided to maintain the landscape setting of the village, maintain the existing wildlife corridor, mitigate traffic noise (Landscaped Protection Zone) and retain a key strategic gap at the edge of new development. In most cases it is envisaged that this will be a protected strip planted with trees but with pedestrian access. No new built development will be allowed within the zone unless the proposers can demonstrate that it will enhance the landscape and not have an adverse impact on the Strategic Gap between Cridgeford and Hethersett, wildlife and buffering traffic noise.
The visual impact of new development when viewed from approaching main roads and the surrounding countryside should be minimised by the use of site-appropriate landscape bunding, screening and mature tree planting. New and existing protected areas will require an effective management regime to enhance biodiversity.

And as a consequence

**The depth of the LPZ on the Proposals Map should also be reduced to 145 metres.**

And a sentence should be deleted from paragraph 7.3, together with its footnote:

*Of the remaining 121.16/121.29 ha* around 74 ha will be needed for the green infrastructure envisaged in Section 7.2, leaving about 48 ha for mixed development, largely housing.

86. Less time at the public hearing was occupied considering the 50-metre Gateway Zone proposed in policy ENV2. It was however apparent from my site visits that the noise from the A11 was much less than that from the A47. I am satisfied that a zone is appropriate, but a 50-metre zone is not justified. Having viewed the site, I consider that 35 metres would be sufficient to provide an adequate tree belt.

**Recommended modifications**

87. I recommend modifying policy ENV2 to read:

**Developers will be required to landscape a 30-35m tree belt, as indicated on the Proposals Map (50 35m Gateway Zone) on the A11 approach to Norwich from the Thickthorn roundabout. The width will secure adequate screening to both the road and the village and preserve the gradual transition from the countryside to the city.**

And

**The width of the Gateway Zone on the Proposals Map should also be reduced to 35 metres**

88. The HSAA and Development boundary shown on the Proposals Map should be modified to cover the area removed from the LPZ and the gateway Zone. This should not include any land shown as an Environmentally Sensitive Area on the Proposals Map, nor should it involve removal from the Proposals Map of any hedgerow its shows as to be retained or any woodland.

**Protected areas**

89. Policy ENV4 provides:

“The Protected Areas will be excluded from residential or economic development because of their character and location (see Proposals Map). These sites form part of the environmental and landscape sensitive Yare Valley and sit adjacent to important County Wildlife Sites. The plots also lie within a recognised flood plain”

90. The Environment Agency’s (“EA’s”) welcoming of the policy to prevent development within the floodplain of the River Yare and the Thickthorn Stream relates to this
policy. It helps to make the draft NDP as recommended to be modified contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

91. Policy ENV5 provides:
“Sustainable drainage schemes should be used to provide wildlife areas and link where possible with existing County Wildlife Sites i.e. in the area of the Thickthorn Stream. These may include features such as ponds, swales, and permeable paving and should be designed as an integral part of the green infrastructure.”

92. The EA welcomes this policy. It contributes to the draft NDP as recommended to be modified meeting the second basic condition.

Other policies for the Environment

93. Policies ENV3, ENV6 and ENV7 each satisfy the first and third basic conditions and each helps the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

10. Policies for the Local Economy

94. Each of policies ECN1, ECN2, ECN3, ECN4 and ECN5 satisfies the first and third basic conditions. Together they make a modest contribution to helping the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. No modifications are necessary to section 7.5 and its policies.

11. Policies for Society, Community and Culture

School provision

95. Policy SCC1 begins:
“Provision must be made in the land allocated for new development for a single site of 2 hectares for a primary school including pre-school provision...

96. Cgms state that in its discussion with the local education authority indicate that a site of 1.6 hectares is required for a suitable primary school, including early years facility. CPC have not disputed this or given reasons for its area of 2 hectares. A requirement for a two-hectare site would therefore be unduly onerous and would unnecessarily remove land from an HSAA. Modification is therefore necessary. Cgms have also objected to the proposals map showing the location of the school. It is clear that this is intended to be indicative and I recommend modification of the proposals map to show this.

Recommended modification

97. Policy SCC1 should begin:
Provision must be made in the land allocated for new development for a single site of 1.6 hectares for a primary school including pre-school provision...

And
The text “Proposed School” on the Map should be followed by the words “possible site”

98. Policy SCC2 states, “New developments should make appropriate provision for the increased demand for medical facilities including dentistry.”

99. Cgms on behalf of Barrett object that there is no evidence to support such new facilities, stating that discussions with the local surgery and public health team have confirmed that there is sufficient potential for expansion on site. I have no doubt that some 1,200 dwellings in an expanding area – the JCS requires a minimum of 21,000 dwellings – will require new medical facilities, including dentistry. I also note support for such provision in the Framework’s paragraph 17’s twelfth principle and in the JCS’s policy 10 and spatial vision. A policy that provides for appropriate provision does not need detailed evidence as to the extent of that provision, nor does it mean that the provision cannot be met on an exiting site. Requiring provision that rendered development unviable would not be appropriate. Policy SCC2 accords with basic conditions.

100. Policy SCC3 satisfies the first and third basic conditions and helps the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

101. Policy SCC4 provides, “The construction methods and furnishing of community buildings must minimise energy and water use, and promote the use of alternative energy sources.” Cgms have objected that this is not a valid land-use policy. I see no basis for this and consider that there is no conflict with the basic conditions.

Sports pitches, etc

102. Policy SCC5 states, “The developers should provide for a 3.8 hectare playing field to accommodate a cricket pitch, football pitches and Pavilion to include changing rooms. Play areas for children must be provided and in accordance with the guidelines in force at the time.”

103. I am satisfied that provision of formal playing fields and changing facilities would be appropriate provided this does not render the provision of housing unviable. As it stands policy SCC5, unlike policy SCC2, is unqualified by any word that allows for viability. Without this the policy might reduce the number of new homes to significantly below 1,200. The policy therefore needs to be modified.

Recommended modification

The developers should provide for a 3.8 hectare playing field to accommodate a cricket pitch, football pitches and Pavilion to include changing rooms. Play areas for children must be provided and in accordance with the guidelines in force at the time. This policy does not apply to the extent (if any) that it would render needed development unviable.

Broadband
104. Policy SCC6 provides: “New developments on the allocated sites for housing must ensure that broadband infrastructure can be provided to guarantee a minimum speed of 24Mbps (superfast) and thus assist both community integration and business activity.”

105. Cgms object to this saying that it is not a valid land-use policy and that its objectives lie outside the control of developers and local planning authorities. I accept that Cgms’ argument to the extent that policy SCC6’s precise details lie outside such control, but reject the argument that such a policy could not be a valid land-use planning policy. I note that JCS policy 6 includes the following: “Fast broadband connections will be promoted throughout the area”, JCS policy 10 seeks to “ensure high quality telecommunications” and that the Framework’s paragraph 29 states that “Smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel.” Support for Broadband reduces the need to travel and would therefore contribute to achieving sustainable development. However policy SCC6, in going considerably beyond the JCS, without evidential support is overly prescriptive and could prevent the delivery of needed housing. It is necessary to modify it to ensure that it does not impose demands that would prevent needed housing. There is no reason why there should not be a less restrictive policy than the draft NDP’s SCC6 that broadly accords with the JCS

Recommended modification

**New developments on the allocated sites for housing must ensure that broadband connections that are at least fast infrastructure can be provided to guarantee a minimum speed of 24Mbps (superfast) and thus assist both community integration and business activity, except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.**

Libraries

106. Policy SCC7 states, “All developers will be required to make provision for additional library facilities for the library service which serves the development. This will be funded through either a Section 106 Agreement or the Community Infrastructure Levy.”

107. Cgms consider that it is not necessary or appropriate for specific reference to be made to this in a locally focussed land-use planning policy. I can see no breach of the basic conditions in doing so, but recommend modification to ensure that this does not render needed development unviable.

Recommended modification

**All developers will be required to make provision for additional library facilities for the library service which serves the development. This will be funded through either a Section 106 Agreement or the Community Infrastructure Levy except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.**
Policy SCC8 states:

“Space should be set aside for provision of allotments and a community orchard in allocated
development areas to meet the expressed local need. A possible site is indicated on the
Proposals Map.”

Mr Wilby objects to this saying that only 28% of responders to the March 2012
questionnaire strongly agreed that development should include spaces for
allotments/community orchard and that the land involved is close to the large open space at
the University of East Anglia and Earlham Park. ‘Close’ is of course a relative term. The
possible allotments site is not particularly close to the University and even less close to the
Park and is on the opposite side of the River Yare to these. Allotments and community
orchards are a minority interest; but this does not mean that plans should not cater for them.
28% strongly agreeing with their provision is not a basis for rejecting them.

Cgms does not consider that it is necessary or appropriate for the Proposals Map to
show the location of such facilities. I see no reason why the Proposals Map should not do so,
but it should be consistent with the policy and make it clear that this is a possible site.

I am satisfied that policy SCC8 complies with the first and third basic conditions and
helps the Plan as recommended to be modified to meet the second basic condition.

Policies for Transport

Policy TRA1 states:

“New major estate roads should be designed to allow free use as public transport routes and
the circulation of traffic. Development proposals should show how they integrate with other
roads and the existing community. The sites should be laid out to provide adequate car
parking to avoid obstruction to the route by parked cars.

New link roads providing access to the main development sites west of Round House Way
and Cantley Lane should be provided in the broad locations shown on the Proposals Map
and shall provide for access by public transport.

Developers of land in the area will be expected to make an appropriate and proportional
contribution or deliver improvement to the Thickthorn Interchange.”

SNC, Norfolk County Council (as Highway Authority) and the Highways Agency
propose an alternative wording.

“New major estate roads should be designed to allow the use as public transport routes and
facilitate the free flow of traffic. Development proposals should show how they integrate with
other roads and the existing community. The sites should be laid out to provide adequate car
parking to prevent obstruction of the main routes through development by inappropriate on
street parking.

New link roads providing access to the main development sites west of Round House Way
and Cantley Lane should be provided in the broad locations shown on the Proposals Map.

Developers of land in the area will be expected to make an appropriate and proportional
contribution or deliver improvement to the Thickthorn Interchange. As applications come
forward they will need to demonstrate that they do not prejudice the delivery of the options
for improvement under consideration by the local authorities (as published on the GNDP website). If a development proposal would prevent delivery of an emerging preferred or identified improvement scheme, then the proposal will need to be supported by appropriately detailed evidence to show that an acceptable alternative junction improvement proposal is deliverable and achievable that meets the requirements of the local authorities and the Highways Agency.”

114. CPC supports this proposed modification.

115. Cgms objects to the requirement that “New link roads... should be provided in the broad locations shown on the Proposals Map.” Apart from the link road south of Cantley Lane where detailed arguments have been given and which I consider in paragraphs 119-120 below. I do not consider that showing broad locations involve any conflict with the basic conditions. However it is clear that these are intended to be indicative and that the adjective ‘broad’ should be given weight. If the proposals map key is modified by adding “indicative” after “Proposed line of roads” and “Proposed line of cycleway/footpath”, that will suffice.

Recommendation

The Proposals Map key should be modified by adding “indicative” after “Proposed line of roads” and “Proposed line of cycleway/footpath”.

116. At the public hearing representative of Land Fund Limited objected to the proposed additional two sentences. I share their concern about the uncertainties as to works to possible work the Thickthorn Interchange. Nonetheless I have concluded that the substantive alteration to the final paragraph is necessary to ensure general conformity with JCS policy in respect of the A11/A47 Thickthorn junction. I therefore recommend the modification that has been proposed by two councils and the Highways Agency.

117. The alteration to the first paragraph is a modest improvement that is acceptable.

118. I agree with CPC that the final paragraph should become policy TRA2 and that there should be consequential renumbering.

Recommended modification

TRA1

New major estate roads should be designed to allow free the use as public transport routes and the circulation facilitate the free flow of traffic. Development proposals should show how they integrate with other roads and the existing community. The sites should be laid out to provide adequate car parking to avoid prevent obstruction to of the main routes through development by parked cars inappropriate on-street parking. New link roads providing access to the main development sites west of Round House Way and Cantley Lane should be provided in the broad locations shown on the Proposals Map and shall provide for access by public transport.

TRA2
Developers of land in the area will be expected to make an appropriate and proportional contribution or deliver improvement to the Thickthorn Interchange. As applications come forward they will need to demonstrate that they do not prejudice the delivery of the options for improvement under consideration by the local authorities (as published on the GNDP website). If a development proposal would prevent delivery of an emerging preferred or identified improvement scheme, then the proposal will need to be supported by appropriately detailed evidence to show that an acceptable alternative junction improvement proposal is deliverable and achievable that meets the requirements of the local authorities and the Highways Agency.

119. Mr Terry opposes the provision of a vehicular link between the A11/Roundhouse Way roundabout and Cantley Lane/Brettingham Avenue with the possible exception of a link for buses on the grounds that this would create a ‘rat-run’ that would be used as a short cut through to Keswick, Ipswich Road with its Tesco and further afield, and that this would have an adverse impact on residents. Such a link is shown as a “proposed line of road” on the Proposals Map. Mr Wilby also objects to the link and is concerned about congestion at Cringleford Bridge. He considers that these will bring more traffic into the historic village of Cringleford, add to congestion at Cringleford Bridge, bring more traffic onto Brettingham Avenue (currently an estate road used by, among others, children on their way between home and school and elderly people), cause Brettingham Avenue to become a ‘rat-run’ and increase noise pollution. He suggests that the new road should only go into the new housing and not provide a vehicular connection to Brettingham Avenue. Mr Lloyd is also concerned that the link would make Brettingham Avenue a ‘rat-run’.

120. There seems to be merit in these objections. There are potential problems from the link that the Proposals Map appears to support. It may perhaps be that the benefits of such a link will outweigh those problems. However, as matters stand, a case for the link has not been made out. While a detailed assessment may indicate otherwise, on the limited evidence that I have seen on this matter, I consider it to be more likely than not that there would be unjustified harm to residential amenity of sufficient substance to cause a conflict with the JCS and the Framework. At the public hearing CPC stated that it did not intend the arrow to imply a definite vehicular link to Brettingham Avenue. I therefore recommend that the Proposals Map should be modified so that the arrow from the A11/Roundhouse Way roundabout does not extend across the whole width of the HSAA to the south of the A11. That would leave the question whether there should be a link with Cantley Lane/Brettingham Avenue to be determined in the future.

121. Mr Wilby has also objected to the cycleway/footpath that the Proposals Map shows going close to the A47 on the grounds that it does not provide a short route to anywhere, so would not reduce the use of vehicles, he doubts that women would consider using it safe and
it would be noisy. Since these arguments do not show non-compliance with the basic conditions, I do not recommend modifying the Proposal Map to meet them.

**Recommended Modification**

**The arrow from the A11/Roundhouse Way roundabout should not extend across the whole (or substantially the whole) width of the HSAA to the south of the A11.**

122. It is clear that there is a longstanding concern about the safety of pedestrian crossing of the A11. Mr Lloyd considers that a footbridge or underpass must form part of the developers’ submission and budget. Mrs Nock also mentions the problems of pedestrians crossing the A11. I used the crossing over the A11 in both directions on each site visit. Nothing that I experienced or perceived would be the likely experience of others gave rise to any issue in respect of the basic conditions. Nobody has adduced accident statistics in respect of it. In the circumstances it would not be appropriate for me to express any opinion on the crossing.

123. Policy TRA2 (which will become policy TRA3) includes the following: “The concept of ‘Walking Neighbourhoods’ (10 minutes walking distance or about 800m) must be used in locating new community facilities, including a school, medical centre and playing fields, and in the provision of public transport.”

124. Cgms object to the mention of a medical centre on the ground that new centre is not needed and facilities can be provided in the existing centre. No evidence has been adduced to contradict this. On the other hand I cannot be sure that there will not be a new medical centre. I therefore recommend the addition of the words “(if any)” after the reference to a medical centre.

125. Cgms also object to the final sentence of policy TRA2: “A controlled pedestrian crossing of Round House Way will be required.” Having viewed Round House Way and noted the level of traffic using it even now, I am satisfied that this is indeed the case. I can see no way in which it would be appropriate to provide new housing on the far side of Round House Way from the retail/shopping areas, school and community centre without at least one controlled pedestrian crossing.

**Recommended modification**

**TRA23**

Integration of the village will be improved by the construction of new and enhanced walking and cycling routes between and within neighbourhoods, as required by the Joint Core Strategy. These should be incorporated in the major new development sites allocated and connect to the employment areas of the University of East Anglia, Norwich Research Park and Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.
A footway/cycleway route must be incorporated into layout designs for land west of Round House Way to connect with the community facilities planned for Round House Park and those located in newer developments (see Proposals Map). The concept of ‘Walking Neighbourhoods’ (10 minutes walking distance or about 800m) must be used in locating new community facilities, including a school, medical centre (if any) and playing fields, and in the provision of public transport.

A controlled pedestrian crossing of Round House Way will be required.

126. Policies TRA3 (which will become TRA4) satisfies the first and third basic conditions and helps the draft NDP as a whole contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

127. Mr Piggin would like to see a 20 mph speed limit through the village. That, however, is not a matter for an examination considering whether a neighbourhood development plan has met the basic conditions and I express no opinion on it.

13. The Proposals Map

128. The proposals map shows a 50-metre zone either side of power lines as unsuitable for residential or commercial development. Cgms object to the extent of this arguing that a 15-metre zone on either side is sufficient. Deloitte argue for a maximum of 15 metres on either side, stating that this accords with conversations with National Grid. SNC said it had no objection to the exclusion zone being reduced to 15 metres on either side of the lines. There is no evidence to contradict the 15-metre figure and I have no reason to doubt it. Also, CPC have explained that their figure of 50 metres was selected arbitrarily. I therefore recommend that the Proposals map should be modified to show a 15-metre zone either side of power lines and that 15m should be substituted for 50m in the relevant part of its key.

129. Mr King has written objecting to the green infrastructure link shown going through his property, Cringleford Hall, Intwood Road. He points out that there is no reference to a Green Infrastructure Link in the text of the draft NDP and is concerned that its being shown on the proposals map might lead to people wrongly assuming that there was public access to his land. He is right that there is no mention of a green infrastructure link in the text. Section 7.2 does include a paragraph that say: “The Plan envisages protecting and retaining specific open areas and identifies new Green Infrastructure corridors to form a landscaped area adjacent to the Norwich Southern Bypass (A47) and a green tree lined entry to Norwich (A11).” Similarly section 8 refers to “the enhancement of green infrastructure alongside the Norwich Southern Bypass (A47) and the creation of a green gateway on the A11”. I do not consider that not using the word ‘link’ in the text is significant; although consistency of terminology is desirable. I bear in mind the EA’s support for green infrastructure links.
However, nothing in the text justifies such a corridor or link to the east of Intwood Road. I therefore recommend deletion of this part of the link from the proposals map.

**Recommended modifications**

130. From the above I recommend that the proposals map be modified as follows:

1. The depth of the LPZ should be reduced to 145 metres from the north-eastern side of the A47 and 145m should be substituted for 250m in the corresponding part of the key;

2. The width of the Gateway Zone should be reduced to 35 metres from each outer side of the A11 and 35m should be substituted for 50m in the corresponding part of the key;

3. The HSAA and the Development Boundary should be extended to cover the land removed from LPZ and the Gateway Zone (other than the Environmentally Sensitive Area);

4. The zone on either side of power lines should be reduced to 15 metres and 15m should be substituted for 50m in the corresponding part of the key;

5. The arrow from the A11/Roundhouse Way roundabout should not extend across the whole (or substantially the whole) width of the HSAA to the south of the A11;

6. The replacement in the proposal map’s key of the phrase ‘Green Infrastructure Links’ with ‘Green Infrastructure Corridors’;

7. The removal from the proposals map of the Green Infrastructure Link shown to the east of Intwood Road;

8. The proposals map key should be modified by adding “indicative” after “Proposed line of roads” and “Proposed line of cycleway/footpath”;

9. The text “proposed Allotments” on the Map should be followed by the words “possible site”; and

10. The text “Proposed School” on the Map should be followed by the words “possible site”.

14. **The Referendum Area**

131. Nobody has asked for the referendum area to be extended beyond the parish of Cringleford and I see no reason why it should be. I therefore recommend that the referendum area be limited to the parish of Cringleford.

15. **Conclusions**

132. As a result of the combination of some overly prescriptive policies the draft NDP would have been likely to deliver significantly fewer than 1,200 new homes and as a result
would have failed to meet the first and third basic conditions and probably have failed to meet the second basic condition. I have therefore recommended modifications to policies to increase that number of new homes that the NDP would be likely to deliver. With these modifications I am satisfied that approximately 1,200 new homes are likely to be provided within the plan period.

133. I recommend that the draft NDP be modified in the terms specified in Appendix A in order to meet basic conditions.

134. With those modifications the NDP will meet all the basic conditions. Specifically

   § Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Plan;

   § The making of the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development – indeed it makes a substantial contribution to this;

   § The making of the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the CPC (or any part of that area); and

   § The making of the Plan does not breach, and be otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

135. The modified NDP is in all respects fully compatible with Convention rights contained in the Human Rights Act 1998.

136. I recommend that the modified NDP proceeds to a referendum, the referendum area being the parish of Cringleford.

Timothy Jones, Barrister,

Independent Examiner,

No 5 Chambers

15th November 2013.
Appendix A: Recommended Modifications

The Vision

Modify the second sentence of paragraph 5.3 to read:

… However, this there is the maximum a limit to the number that is compatible with the environmental, economic and social objectives of the Plan…

General Policies

GEN4

Infrastructure as identified within the Cringleford Infrastructure Plan Programme (see Appendix) within the Parish Boundary and associated with the development of new sites must be provided directly by developers or be paid for or delivered by developers, either through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or through Section 106 agreements except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.

Policies for the Environment

ENV1

A defined, continuous green landscaped corridor of 250-145m depth from the edge of the carriageway of the A47 will be provided to maintain the landscape setting of the village, maintain the existing wildlife corridor, mitigate traffic noise (Landscaped Protection Zone) and retain a key strategic gap at the edge of new development. In most cases it is envisaged that this will be a protected strip planted with trees but with pedestrian access. No new built development will be allowed within the zone unless the proposers can demonstrate that it will enhance the landscape and not have an adverse impact on the Strategic Gap between Cringleford and Hethersett, wildlife and buffering traffic noise.

The visual impact of new development when viewed from approaching main roads and the surrounding countryside should be minimised by the use of site-appropriate landscape bunding, screening and mature tree planting. New and existing protected areas will require an effective management regime to enhance biodiversity.

ENV2

Developers will be required to landscape a 30-50 35m tree belt, as indicated on the Proposals Map (50 35m Gateway Zone) on the A11 approach to Norwich from the Thickthorn roundabout. The width will secure adequate screening to both the road and the village and preserve the gradual transition from the countryside to the city.
Policies for Housing

paragraph 7.3, page 17 last two lines and page 18, lines 1 - 4

Delete: “Of the remaining 121.16/121.29 ha* around 74 ha will be needed for the green infrastructure envisaged in Section 7.2, leaving about 48 ha for mixed development, largely housing. A low density was selected for housing on this land (20-25 dwellings per ha) in order to maintain and enhance the open, green and ‘semi-rural’ character’ of the village (5.2 and 5.3). Using the upper figure of 25 dwellings per ha, a simple calculation using the net dwelling density, provides for the construction of a total of 1,200 dwellings.”

The footnote on page 17 should be deleted.

HOU1

The maximum of Approximately 1,200 new homes should be dispersed across the Housing Site Allocation Area as shown on the Proposals Map.

HOU3

To preserve the open and green character of the village and its role in the urban/rural transition zone, net building densities should not exceed a maximum of average approximately 25 dwellings per hectare (gross) across the Housing Site Allocation Area.

HOU8

Unless impracticable, garages must be built in direct association with the houses whose inhabitants may be expected to use them. They must be spacious enough to accommodate modern cars and bicycles. Proposals for rear or separate parking courts will not be permitted unless alternative provision is impracticable.

Policies for the Local Economy

No modification should be made to section 7.4.

Policies for Society, Community and Culture

SCC1

Provision must be made in the land allocated for new development for a single site of 2 1.6 hectares for a primary school including pre-school provision, with the site to be transferred by the applicant/developer free of charge to Norfolk County Council. The primary school and pre-school provision and future improvement of the catchment high school will be funded by the developers either through a Section 106 Agreement or the Community Infrastructure Levy or possibly a combination of both. Land transfer will be dealt with separately through a
Section 106 Agreement in the event that the Community Infrastructure Levy is used to fund any building works for the schools.

**SCC6**

The developers should provide for a 3.8 hectare playing field to accommodate a cricket pitch, football pitches and Pavilion to include changing rooms. Play areas for children must be provided and in accordance with the guidelines in force at the time. This policy does not apply to the extent (if any) that it would render needed development unviable.

**SCC6**

New developments on the allocated sites for housing must ensure that broadband connections that are at least fast infrastructure can be provided to guarantee a minimum speed of 24Mbps (superfast) and thus assist both community integration and business activity, except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.

**SCC7**

All developers will be required to make provision for additional library facilities for the library service which serves the development. This will be funded through either a Section 106 Agreement or the Community Infrastructure Levy except to the extent (if any) that this would render needed development unviable.

**Policies for Transport**

**TRA1**

New major estate roads should be designed to allow free the use as public transport routes and the circulation facilitate the free flow of traffic. Development proposals should show how they integrate with other roads and the existing community. The sites should be laid out to provide adequate car parking to avoid prevent obstruction to of the main routes through development by parked cars inappropriate on-street parking.

New link roads providing access to the main development sites west of Round House Way and Cantley Lane should be provided in the broad locations shown on the Proposals Map and shall provide for access by public transport.

**TRA2**

Developers of land in the area will be expected to make an appropriate and proportional contribution or deliver improvement to the Thickthorn Interchange. As applications come forward they will need to demonstrate that they do not prejudice the delivery of the options for improvement under consideration by the local authorities (as published on the GNDP website). If a development proposal would prevent delivery of an emerging preferred or identified improvement scheme, then the proposal will need to be supported by appropriately detailed evidence to show that an acceptable alternative junction improvement proposal is
deliverable and achievable that meets the requirements of the local authorities and the Highways Agency.

**TRA23**

Integration of the village will be improved by the construction of new and enhanced walking and cycling routes between and within neighbourhoods, as required by the Joint Core Strategy. These should be incorporated in the major new development sites allocated and connect to the employment areas of the University of East Anglia, Norwich Research Park and Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.

A footway/cycleway route must be incorporated into layout designs for land west of Round House Way to connect with the community facilities planned for Round House Park and those located in newer developments (see Proposals Map). The concept of ‘Walking Neighbourhoods’ (10 minutes walking distance or about 800m) must be used in locating new community facilities, including a school, medical centre (if any) and playing fields, and in the provision of public transport.

A controlled pedestrian crossing of Round House Way will be required.

**TRA3**

This should be renumbered as TRA4.

**The Proposals Map**

should be modified as follows:

1. The depth of the LPZ should be reduced to 145 metres from the north-eastern side of the A47 and 145m should be substituted for 250m in the corresponding part of the key;

2. The width of the Gateway Zone should be reduced to 35 metres from each outer side of the A11 and 35m should be substituted for 50m in the corresponding part of the key;

3. The HSAA and the Development Boundary should be extended to cover the land removed from LPZ and the Gateway Zone (other than the Environmentally Sensitive Area);

4. The zone on either side of power lines should be reduced to 15 metres and 15m should be substituted for 50m in the corresponding part of the key;

5. The arrow from the A11/Roundhouse Way roundabout should not extend across the whole (or substantially the whole) width of the HSAA to the south of the A11;

6. The replacement in the proposal map’s key of the phrase ‘Green Infrastructure Links’ with ‘Green Infrastructure Corridors’;

7. The removal from the proposals map of the Green Infrastructure Link shown to the east of Intwood Road;
(8) The proposals map key should be modified by adding “indicative” after “Proposed line of roads” and “Proposed line of cycleway/footpath”;

(9) The text “proposed Allotments” on the Map should be followed by the words “possible site”; and

(10) The text “Proposed School” on the Map should be followed by the words “possible site”.
Appendix B: Documents

In examining the Draft NDP I have considered and borne in mind what I consider to be the relevant parts of, the following documents:

(1) The draft Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026 (Examination Version July 2013);

(2) The following written representations from individuals:
   a. Mr Edward King (e-mail 25th September 2013),
   b. Mr Neil Lloyd (e-mail 16th August 2013),
   c. Mr and Mrs Perry (e-mail 18th October 2013)
   d. Mr Jon Piggin (web enquiry 15th August 2013),
   e. Ms Gail Stanley (e-mail 17th September 2013),
   f. Mr Ian C Terry (letter 27th September 2013), and
   g. Mr M Wilby (e-mail 11th August 2013);

(3) The following written representations from prospective developers:
   a. Cgms on behalf of Barratt Homes Eastern Counties (letter 25th July 2013),
   b. Deloitte LLP on behalf of Land Fund Ltd (letter 27th September 2013 with two appendices; letter of 17th October 2013 with 4 appended documents);

(4) The following written representations from public bodies:
   a. Anglian Water (letter 13th August 2013),
   b. Colney Parish Meeting (letter 1st August 2013),
   c. Environment Agency (letter 12th February 2013 as read with their e-mail of 18th July 2013),
   d. Highways Agency (e-mail 23rd September 2013),
   e. Norfolk County Council (e-mail 16th July 2013, Stephen Faulkner),
   f. Norfolk County Council (response document, Richard Dolman),
   g. Norwich City Council (letter 27th September 2013), and
   h. South Norfolk Council (response document 27th September 2013);

(5) CPC’s response to representations (17th October 2013);

(6) Correspondence from and to CPC
   a. The letter 31st August 2012 from CPC’s parish clerk to SNC and its accompanying map,
   b. Letter from SNC to CPC 3rd January 2013 confirming the designation of Cringleford as a neighbourhood area,

(7) File from CPC relating to Site Specific allocations, comprising:
   a. Satellite image of Cringleford 2011,
   b. Sites suggested by landowners,
   c. Site analysis,
d. Decisions on land use,
e. Proposals map;
(8) Summary of the responses from the Public Open days on 25th-26th November 2011;
(9) CPC Newsletter (October 2011 and March 2013);
(10) Cringleford NDP Statement of Community Involvement (January 2012);
(11) Cringleford NDP Plan Programme;
(12) Cringleford NDP Questionnaire;
(13) Analysis of Responses to Cringleford NDP Questionnaire;
(14) Sustainability Appraisal;
(15) Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026 (Consultation draft December 2012);
(16) Analysis of responses to the consultation draft;
(17) Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026 (Revised Version June 2013);
(18) Analysis of responses to the Revised Version;
(19) The Consultation Statement (June 2013);
(20) The Strategic Environmental Assessment (June 2013);
(21) The Infrastructure Delivery Programme 2013-2026 (June 2013);
(22) The Basic Conditions Statement (July 2013);
(23) The Consultation Statement (July 2013);
(24) Dates and Minutes of meetings of the NDP team (September 2011 to August 2013);
(25) The Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (submission document February 2013);
(26) The judgment and order of Ouseley J in Heard v Broadland District Council;\textsuperscript{12}
(27) The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012);
(28) The versions currently in force of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012 SI No. 637); and
(29) Miscellaneous supporting documents namely:
a. National Census Population totals 1801 to 2011,
b. Map of historic development,
c. English Heritage List of Listed Buildings in Cringleford,
d. Significant buildings not listed and not included in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record,
e. South Norfolk age and sex structure,

f. South Norfolk journey to work percentages,
g. Cringleford Household income percentages,
h. Cringleford Council tax bands,
i. Businesses in Cringleford,
j. Cringleford Clubs and Societies,
k. Norfolk Historic Environment Record monument list report, monuments,
l. South Norfolk Council Local Landscape Designations Review (June 2013).

(30) Cringleford Extension Indicated Proposed Layout (Illustrative Master Plan);
(31) An aerial photograph showing Land Fund Limited’s site boundary;
(32) RUA Vision Framework: Contextual Master Plan;
(33) Land at Cringleford Potential Development Parcel sites;
(34) A plan submitted by Norfolk CC showing land that might be needed for highway works connected with the Thickthorn Interchange;
(35) SNC’s supplementary planning guidance “Recreational Open Space Requirements for Residential Areas (December 1994)”;
(36) SNC CIL draft Charging Schedule;
(37) Report to GNDP on the examination of the draft CIL charging schedules 4.12.2012;
(38) Attendance lists for each day of the public hearing; and

A draft of this list was circulated at the start of the public hearing. Nobody suggested any addition to it. Additional documents (30 – 38) were submitted during the course of the public hearing. The letter from Natural England of 11th November 2013 was the only response to a consultation after the public hearing in respect of consultation on screening for the Habitat Regulations Assessment.
Appendix C: Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this report

CIL Community Infrastructure Levy
CPC Cringleford Parish Council
DPD Development plan document
Draft NDP Draft Cringleford Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2026 (Examination Version July 2013)
EA Environment Agency
EU European Union
Framework National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
GNDP Greater Norwich Development Partnership
ha hectare
HSAA Housing Site Allocation area
IPP Infrastructure Plan Programme
JCS Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (Submission document February 2013)
m metre
NEGT North East Growth Triangle
original JCS the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (March 2011)
p page
PCPA Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
s section
Sch Schedule
SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment
SNC South Norfolk District Council
TCPA Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Council Tax Support Scheme

Revenues & Benefits Manager

The purpose of this report is to obtain Cabinet approval to go forward to Council with a Council Tax Support scheme for 2014/15. The report outlines the legal requirements and features of the scheme and proposes amendments to the original scheme approved in 2012. This is after reflecting on both the impact of Welfare Reform changes which have taken place this financial year and responding to feedback from a second consultation.

Cabinet member(s): Yvonne Bendle

Ward(s) affected: All

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail:

Amanda Adams 01508 533773 aadams@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1. Cabinet approved a draft Council Tax Support scheme for 2014/15 ready for consultation on 23 September 2013. Consultation with major precepting authorities, residents and stakeholder groups has now taken place.

1.2. As part of the Welfare Reform Act 2011, Council Tax Benefit was withdrawn by the Government on 31 March 2013. From 1 April 2013 the Government required each local Council to set up a local Council Tax Support scheme under the following legislation:

1.3. The Local Government Finance Act 2012, which inserted into Section 13A(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the requirement that –

1.4. “Each billing authority in England must make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable, in respect of dwellings situated in its area”.

Schedule 4, Part 1 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 states that for each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise or replace its scheme with another and that this must take place by the preceding 31 January.
There is also a requirement that each authority must, as it thinks fit, include a transitional provision within its revised scheme if such a scheme has the effect of removing or reducing a person’s entitlement.

Statutory requirements are in place to protect people of pension age at the same levels of support as applied under the Council Tax benefit scheme.

Under the legislation local authorities are required to consult each year on their proposed Council Tax Support Scheme even if they retain the current scheme they have in place.

1.5. Early in 2012 a working group of elected members was set up to work with officers to develop our approach to the design of our local Council Tax Support scheme. The challenge was to design a scheme within a limited budget (after funding cuts) while protecting pensioners at previous levels of support. This meant that in South Norfolk, working age customers would be adversely affected within the new scheme, because of the high percentage of pensioner claims within our caseload (currently at 53%).

1.6. The working group established a number of guiding principles to set our scheme. These were that our local scheme is:

- as fair as possible within the budget constraints
- aligned with rules for other state benefits wherever practical in order for it to be more easily understood (e.g. Universal Credits)
- protects as far as possible those working and those with young families
- operationally efficient to manage

1.7. In the summer of 2012 we consulted on a draft scheme which was approved by Cabinet September 2012. In October 2012 the government offered transitional funding to councils if they limited the effect of the cut on the working age so they paid no more than 8.5% of their current net council tax liability under the new scheme. Although there was a cost to the council, South Norfolk Council applied for the funding and minimised the effect on residents.

1.8. Results of our consultation in 2012 showed that more than 50% of those who responded agreed with the characteristics of the scheme design. Where there was not a significant majority in agreement, the scheme design was reviewed. We took notice of the areas where people were unsure of the proposals and responded by amending the scheme. The number of responses gave us the confidence that we could continue with implementation.

1.9. In 2013/14 South Norfolk Council ensured that the costs of funding Council Tax Support would not impact on Parish and Town Councils as we passed on the transitional funding we had from the government in addition to a ‘top-up’. However, reductions in the general funding for the Council have meant that this
year (for 2014/15) we will have to pass on those reductions and will not be able to fund the Parish and Town Councils to the same levels as previously.

2 Current Position and Issues

2.1 We have monitored carefully the effects of all the reforms over this financial year and our response is reflected in our proposals for going forward in 2014/15 with the Council Tax Support scheme.

2.2.1 Since the scheme design last year the Welfare Reform agenda has taken effect and has meant that this year a number of benefit changes have been implemented which have affected our residents; this includes the reduction in Housing Benefit for under occupation which has affected 716 social housing tenants and the Benefit Cap which has affected 16 families so far.

2.2.2 Our response has been to adopt a framework approach with our partners so that we can work in a 'joined up' way. Working together with an emphasis on early prevention measures we have helped to pre-empt some of the adverse effects of Welfare Reform. For example our staff have shadowed those who work for Job Centre Plus and using that knowledge while jointly visiting residents with Social Landlord staff have provided an end-to-end service for customers affected by the Benefit Cap thus covering benefit, housing and employment issues in one hit. Of those who we have visited jointly, 100% are either paying some or all of their rent whereas previously they had a large shortfall.

2.2.3 It looks unlikely that there will be a further transitional grant for 2014/15, therefore it is proposed that we adopt a scheme which is financially sustainable within a lower funding level which does not put a financial burden on Council Tax payers or result in service cutbacks. However, we continue to have the issue of protecting those of pension age which means less will be available for support of working age.

2.2.4 The draft Council Tax Support Scheme 2014/15 has been out to consultation. The legal position required that SNC consulted the major precepting bodies before publishing a draft scheme and then consulted others likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme. SNC consulted Norfolk County Council and the Police Authority who were in agreement with the broad principles of the scheme.

2.2.5 The scheme went through a public consultation exercise for the period 14/10/13 until 19/11/13. The scheme design was outlined and scenarios of how the scheme affected different households were given. We asked a series of questions relating to the characteristics of the scheme design (14 questions specifically geared toward each characteristic).

2.2.6 South Norfolk Council officers attended a workshop for Registered Social Housing providers and support agencies in order to publicise our scheme and open out the consultation process to those who support the people most affected by Council Tax Support. This was a joint consultation exercise with other Norfolk authorities.
2.2.7 Through an email campaign we invited 5,300 people to complete an online survey, we canvassed a further 2,000 people via the post and publicised the consultation on our website. From this we had a total of 290 responses.

2.2.8 The results of the consultation process show that in principle more than 60% of those who responded agreed with all characteristics of the scheme design apart from one. There was a high positive response as to the assumption that non-dependants should contribute to the household. However, the proposed weekly rate of £7.50 did not attract high support (only 47% agreed it should be this level).

2.2.9 The feature which received the next lowest level of support was the proposal to reduce support to those on ‘passported’ benefits for working age. These are people who do not work and claim means tested benefits for example; Job Seekers Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support. We consulted on a proposed reduction for these people of 20%. This feature of the scheme is to support the principle of incentivising work. This would be in addition to the 15% cap of maximum support across the board for all working age claimants. Of respondents 56.9% regarded this as an acceptable means of promoting incentives to work, 23.9% did not agree and 19.2% responded with ‘Don’t Know’.

2.2.10 Although the consultation gave broad consensus for the proposals we have taken notice of the area where people had greatest concerns and have developed the proposals below. We directly canvassed 13% of our residents in addition to giving the consultation publicity on our website and this has given us the confidence that we have no need to re-consult and can continue with implementation.

3 Proposal and Reasons

3.1.1 South Norfolk Council used transitional funding for the year 2013/2014 to help limit the reduction in support. South Norfolk Council will continue to take a stepped approach to reducing support. With this stepped approach it is not felt that any further transitional provisions need to be implemented.

3.1.2 This draft scheme most closely matches the requirements of the overriding principles initially agreed by our working group in addition to making the necessary savings.

3.1.3 The scheme is the one approved by Cabinet September 2012 with one new feature for 2014/15 which seeks to protect any newly unemployed people (who have not claimed benefit in the last year) for 13 weeks by awarding full Council Tax Support while they find alternative employment. This will prevent debt in the early stages of unemployment.

3.1.4 The first proposed amendment as a response to the 2013 consultation is that we reduce the level of non-dependant deduction from £7.50 per week to £5.00 per week.
3.1.5 The second proposed response to the consultation is to lessen the extent of the further reduction in support for those in receipt of ‘passported’ claims from 20% to 15% (please see para. 2.2.9 for clarification of ‘passported’). In considering the cumulative effect of welfare changes (which will be further embedded by 2014) the proposal to amend the 20% to 15%, would acknowledge that some people will be vulnerable if we continued with a 20% reduction, while following the principle of promoting incentives to work.

3.1.6 The draft scheme approved for consultation incorporating the proposed amendments at 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 and costed in the table in 7.1.2 will now be referred to as ‘the proposed scheme’.

3.1.7 This proposed scheme will include a discretionary fund to provide short-term additional support to residents experiencing significant hardship.

3.1.8 The impact on residents of the proposed scheme protects families with children and incentivises work. This is demonstrated within the results of the Equality Impact Analysis.

4 Other Options

4.1.1 The modelling over the current caseload gave other options which would realise different levels of savings and have varying effects on different households. These were considered, but the proposed scheme was developed as it most closely aligned with following the principles of Universal Credit by supporting those in work in addition to our local preferences and needs.

4.1.2 The option to continue with the current scheme was considered but deemed not viable as that is considered unaffordable within the future budget.

5 Consultation

5.1.1 In accordance with the legislation we have consulted with the major precepting bodies before publishing the draft scheme and have consulted others likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme. Residents and stakeholders have been invited to take part by completing an online survey or contact us over the phone.

5.1.2 We have taken notice of the areas where people are unsure of the proposals and have responded by proposing amendments to the scheme and referring it back to Cabinet for Council approval.

6 Relevant Corporate Priorities

6.1 Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.
7 Implications and Risks

7.1 Financial - The new Council Tax Support Scheme was funded for 2013/14 year to 90% of the previous Council Tax Benefit level by central government. We opted for a grant from central government in order to lessen the adverse effect of the cut in funding, however, there was still a cost to the council. After accounting for the transitional grant, the costs to the major precepting authorities were anticipated to be in the region of:

Cost to SNC £78k (included additional support for the effect of Council Tax Support on parishes for 2013/14 only)
Cost to County Council £342k
Cost to Police £59k

7.1.1 We have developed costings based on our current caseload profile, for the proposed scheme incorporating the amendments put forward (paras. 3.1.4 and 3.1.5). The total of support that would be given under this proposed scheme is £6.724m (not including any discretionary hardship fund). The funding for the Council Tax Support Scheme has now been rolled up into the Revenues Support Grant and Baseline Business Rates funding each local authority will receive from the Government, however it is anticipated that after applying the anticipated reduction in funding to the current year’s figures there will be a cost to the major precepting authorities in the region of the figures set out below:

Figures below based on total value of proposed scheme of £6.724m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Proposed scheme with £5 non dependant deduction and 15% reduction for passported cases.</th>
<th>% cost to each authority of total scheme value above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>£56k</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk County</td>
<td>£484k</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>£85k</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.2 The funding of variations to the cost of the scheme in the future will be shared between the County Council, Police Authority, South Norfolk Council and parishes. It is critical that a new scheme is affordable to these authorities and that any volatility in costs can be absorbed by them.

7.1.3 There is a financial risk if there is a rise in claimant numbers as any increase in the cost of the scheme during the financial year would fall on the collection fund, which ultimately impacts on South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council and Police. We will need to review the scheme annually to ensure it continues to meet priorities, is affordable and because the law requires us to do so.
7.1.4 It is intended that we will have a discretionary fund available for help for those individuals and families for who the scheme has unintended consequences. The policy on use will outline how it will be used as short term help for those in financial crisis rather than long term support. Adverse effects on residents will be monitored carefully and home visits will continue to give holistic and individual assistance for those requiring advice and support.

7.2 Legal - there will be a legal requirement to make a scheme under the Local Government Finance Act (Section 8 and Schedule 4)

7.3 Equalities – We have assessed our scheme against an equality impact assessment. The purpose of the analysis within the assessment is to allow Members to make informed choices during the decision making process. Due to the reduction in funding for the scheme there is likely to be a significant impact on residents, some of whom will be vulnerable and the analysis clarifies where this will fall.

7.3.1 With specific regard to those in receipt of disability benefits, South Norfolk Council has considered its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and intends to retain all those features (that previously existed under Council Tax Benefit and Council Tax Support for 2013/14) which give an enhanced level of support to those receiving disability related benefits. This recognises the fact that those with disability related benefits have higher living expenses.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Local Authorities are required to design a Council Tax Support Scheme. Officers and Members have developed a scheme which supports this council’s priorities. This scheme supports families, makes work pay and is affordable within the councils budget.

8.2 Following Cabinet, officers will make the detailed scheme document (which will be ‘draft’ pending Council resolution) available for members to view in advance of full Council on the 9th December 2013.

9 Recommendations

9.1 To recommend that Council approves the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme for 2014/15, as outlined above.

10 Background Papers


10.2 Equality Impact Analysis
Equality Analysis: Council Tax Support Scheme

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Amanda Adams, 01508 533773, aadams@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1. A local Council Tax Support replaced the national Council Tax Benefit from 1 April 2013. Under the new rules councils only received 90% of funding to run these new schemes in that first year. From 2014 onwards there is no separately identification of funding that specifically relates to local Council Tax Support, however, the funding has been further reduced.

1.2. When developing policy, procedures, practices or services we need to consider any potential impact on protected groups in relation to the three aims of the duty which are to:

   1.2.1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
   1.2.2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
   1.2.3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

2. Background

2.1. Over the last year there have been a number of changes in areas of Welfare Benefits which have impacted on those who have protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

2.2. The changes significant to our residents have been the reduction in Housing Benefit for those who are deemed to be over occupied (aka the ‘Bedroom Tax’) alongside a ‘Cap’ in benefits being introduced. These changes disproportionately affect those who are vulnerable and in the lowest income brackets, many of which rely on benefits.

2.3. Overall, the funding available to local authorities, of which local Council Tax Support is one element, is reducing. This does not account for any fluctuation in our caseload over the coming year. During the early part of the recession our caseload grew at 6% per year. This in real terms has meant an increase in cases of over 14% since 2008.

2.4. In order to protect pensioners on low incomes, the scheme at South Norfolk Council is required to replicate as far as possible the existing provisions under which pensioner eligibility for council tax benefit was assessed. Under the previous council tax benefit system a person becomes eligible for pensioner-related council tax benefit at the age at which they can qualify for state pension credit (the pensionable age for a woman). South Norfolk Council will
continue follow this rule and adapt accordingly where there are further welfare reform changes.

3. **Statistics**

3.1. This section details groups in our current caseload (where information is available)

3.2. Of the total caseload:

- 89 Single people are aged 17 - 25 (0.09%)
- 542 are in receipt of a disability related premium (6%)
- 299 are in receipt of a Carer’s premium (3%)

Lone Parents: Of the total caseload:

- 1496 (16%) are Lone Parents, of which
- 578 (6%) have a child under 5 years

3.4 Ethnic Origin (only disclosed in 32% of cases)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British/Bangladesi</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British/Indian</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian British/Other</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black British/Other</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/British African</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black British/Caribbean</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White British</td>
<td>91.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Other</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not disclosed by customer</td>
<td>1.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed White and Black African</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed White and Asian</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Irish</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Other</td>
<td>1.86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two largest groups in our caseload are single females over 60 years old (28%) and families (25%). Our smallest group is the single under 25’s (0.9%).

4. Impact Analysis

4.1. Under the current proposal, the reduction in support for someone who is working and living in a Band B property will be 7%. This works out to be around £6.50 extra to pay monthly if paid over 12 months.

4.2. Under the current proposal, the reduction in support for someone who is not working (and on passported benefits e.g. Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Income Support) and living in a Band B property will be 21%. This works out to be around £20.75 extra to pay monthly if paid over 12 months.

5. Mitigation

5.1. The protected groups most vulnerable to reductions in benefit are those who may have more difficulty in gaining employment such as lone parents with young children, older people and disabled people. Older people are protected from any reductions under the new scheme by the legislation and therefore the reduction in benefit will be borne by the remainder of those in receipt of Council Tax Support.

5.2. Of those who chose to tell us about their ethnic origin, the ethnic profile of the benefits caseload is predominately ‘white’ (92%) with 36 people describing themselves as either Chinese, Mixed white and Asian, mixed white and black Caribbean, Mixed white and black African, mixed other, black British/Caribbean, black British/African, black British other, Asian British/other, British Indian or British/Bangladeshi. The changes at national level to the benefits system is likely to have a cumulative effect and these people, if working age, will be impacted by changes to council tax support alongside other working age people and may have to pay more council tax. We will offer support through the discretionary fund available for applications from those who have a shortfall in their council tax liability.

5.3. Lone parents with children under 5 years are protected as it is considered that they may have more difficulty in obtaining employment due to child care issues.

5.4. We considered carefully how we would decide on protection for disabled people as not all those with disabilities receive entitlement to a qualifying benefit. However, it would not be appropriate for us to introduce a scoring system locally to decide if a claimant had entitlement to disabled person protection as we do not have the appropriate skills or expertise. We have therefore decided to base any help we give disabled people around Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010 and will offer support through the discretionary fund available for applications from those who have a shortfall in their council tax liability.

5.5. Disabled people often find it much harder to secure employment than non-disabled people so employment incentivisation could impact on this group who find it more difficult to access the labour market. In addition, many national changes to disability benefits are happening simultaneously which will have a cumulative effect.
6. **Conclusion**

6.1. Any scheme that leads to a reduction in support for those on means-tested benefits will have a negative impact, leading to difficult decisions to be made as to where such cuts should fall.

6.2. As part of our considerations we have been mindful of those who are protected under the Equality Act 2010 when reaching our proposal for the new Council Tax Scheme.

6.3. We believe that by introducing the Council Tax Support Scheme where we disregard certain incomes, offer Lone Parents with children under 5 full protection and discretionary protection for disabled people who may or may not have qualifying benefits, alongside the Discretionary Fund for all who suffer hardship we are offering the best fit scheme for the resources that we have available to us.

6.4. We believe that our scheme;

   Is family friendly

   Incentivises work, and

   Is affordable within the constraints of government funding.
Cabinet

2 December 2013

Agenda Item No. 7

Capital Strategy 2014/15 to 2016/17

Head of Finance

The Capital Strategy sets out the Council’s approach to the use of its assets and resources and how this links with the Council’s priorities and corporate planning process. The strategy has been updated to provide the framework for determining the capital programme and the effective use of the Council’s resources and will drive the revision of the capital programme for the next three years. The focus of the capital strategy continues to be on the use of capital resources to deliver either on-going revenue savings or additional revenue income. This will be achieved by investing in the Council’s assets and within the district to create economic growth.

Cabinet member(s):  Garry Wheatley
Ward(s) affected:  All

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail:  Debbie Lorimer 01508 533981 dlorimer@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1. The Council in preparing the current capital strategy recognised that the current climate of reductions to the level of Government funding would continue beyond the current comprehensive spending review period and indeed the indications from central Government are that further cuts in public funding could last as long as 10 years.

1.2. These funding reductions will mean the Council will have to radically change the way it delivers services and reduce or even stop some services in future years unless it can deliver on-going revenue savings or additional revenue income. Therefore the focus of this capital strategy is to continue to use the capital resources available to the Council to invest in projects which will deliver these two aspects, alongside some aspects of the traditional capital programme, to provide the Council with the best chance of being able to deliver quality services to its residents for the foreseeable future.

1.3. The Comprehensive Spending Review 2013 (CSR13) announced the Government’s intention to continue concentrating their efforts in reducing the national budget deficit and driving economic growth. This emphasis continues and as announced in the summer of 2013 the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) will take the lead role in stimulating growth on a regional basis. In order to
achieve this a “Single Growth Pot” for funding growth has been set up against which LEPs will bid for funds. In 2015/16 an element of funding for LEPs will come from a proportion of the New Homes Bonus currently received by Local Authorities.

1.4. This report presents the Capital Strategy for the financial year 2014/15 to 2016/17. The Capital Strategy sets out South Norfolk Council’s approach to the use of its capital assets and resources. How this links with the Council’s priorities and corporate planning process is contained within Appendix A. The strategy provides the framework for determining the capital programme and the effective use of the Council’s resources and will be reviewed and updated as required during the period 2014/15 to 2016/17 to reflect major changes in priorities and the processes of delivering these.

1.5. The Council’s corporate priorities are:

- Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.
- Promoting a thriving local economy.
- Supporting communities to realise their potential.
- Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

1.6. This Capital Strategy focuses investment to:

- Support changes to introduce more efficient forms of service delivery
- Support opportunities to generate additional income
- Support economic development within South Norfolk

1.7. The Capital Strategy is closely linked to the annual Treasury Management Strategy which will be presented to members in February 2014. The prudential code permits Councils to determine the appropriate level of capital investment to deliver quality public services, subject to affordability.

1.8. With low interest rates continuing for the foreseeable future and the on-going volatility in the banking sector there remains the opportunity to invest monies in property as an alternative to bank deposits if the rate of return exceeds the rate of interest which would be achieved through cash investments. However members need to be aware that this form of investment is deemed to be capital and under the current guidance therefore if an investment property is sold the sale proceeds will be accounted for as capital receipts and cannot be used for revenue purposes in the future.

1.9. During the summer of 2013 the Government consulted on proposals for the use of capital receipts from asset sales to invest in reforming services. We await the response to this consultation and this may lead to changes in the future on how Local Authorities utilise capital receipts.

1.10. Members’ involvement is essential in order that the Council can demonstrate that capital expenditure plans are affordable, financing plans are prudent and sustainable, and that treasury decisions are taken in accordance with good practice.
1.11. Details on the definition of capital expenditure and on-going revenue implications are contained within Appendix A, along with details on the process for procuring, prioritising and monitoring the progress of capital projects.

1.12. An overview of the Council’s Assets, together with further details of Land and Buildings is contained within Appendix B for background information.

2. Future Capital Programme

The projects which will be incorporated into future years’ capital programmes continue to focus on delivering either on-going revenue savings or additional revenue income by investing in the Council’s own assets and in the district. Details of the projects which will deliver this together with any service enhancements are described below, and those projects which continue to deliver the traditional capital programme follow.

2.1. Projects to deliver on-going savings, additional income or service enhancements

a) Leisure Centres – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

Investment in improving both the equipment and Leisure Centre buildings will lead to business growth, improvements to products and services, improved customer experience, improved reputation and a reduction in on-going maintenance costs. A review of Leisure Centres and the services provided has been undertaken and proposals include upgrading Wymondham Leisure Centre and the provision of a separate dry side centre in Diss.

These improvements linked with an electronic booking system to enable online booking of classes, activities and swim school as well as other leisure activities will assist in reducing the subsidy of the Leisure Centres and improve the revenue generated. The business case for these enhancements is elsewhere on this cabinet agenda.

b) Investment Property – (Promoting a thriving local economy)

Within the Economic Strategy for 2011-14 there are areas identified that need to be considered within the Capital Strategy. The focus is on the Council investing and developing a commercial property portfolio which will not only support economic growth through providing quality accommodation at affordable rents but also provide a return on the investment to support the revenue budget.

Developing commercial property will also support the local economy by providing jobs within the building sector.

The Council already manages an investment portfolio of £5.738 million with an expected return of about 6.9% (Gross) for the current financial year which exceeds the return on investments made with bank accounts although the potential risk is greater.
Included within the investment portfolio are land, industrial units, business centres, and shops. Further strategic investment in a mixture of asset classes over the coming years will strengthen the Council’s portfolio. These investments would need to provide a suitable return on capital as well as contribute to the economic wellbeing and regeneration of the district. The rental income would support the revenue budget and in the future would help to offset borrowing costs. Investing in commercial property is not entirely risk free as property investments may fall in value with reductions in rents. There is also the possibility that the Council might have to sell a property investment to obtain cash at a lower than market rate. Finally any proceeds from the sale of investment property will be classed as a capital receipt and cannot be used to support the revenue budget.

The current capital programme already includes the ongoing development of land at Poringland. The Council is working with a developer to deliver approximately 20 residential properties and 2 commercial units in 2014. Alongside this the Council is currently undertaking a procurement exercise to procure a Partner to develop the remainder of the site at Poringland and Cygnet House, as well as investing in the development of the Norwich Research Park within the timeframe of this strategy to allow the Council to invest in any other suitable property development in the long term. The schemes will bring benefits to the Council in the form of rental income, Council Tax income, CIL and NNDR income and provide a stimulus to the local economy.

c) Infrastructure within the LIPP to deliver the City Deals – (Promoting a thriving local economy)

It is important that investments are in appropriate infrastructure to ensure the areas are ready to take up the opportunities that arise as the economy starts to pick up. The funding from CIL, should it be adopted, is to be used to provide this infrastructure however there are timing issues between when CIL will be received and when the infrastructure is required. There are also major infrastructure projects within the Local Infrastructure Project Plan (LIPP) which are Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) wide and partners are working with the LEP and other organisations to deliver the majority of the infrastructure as part of the City Deals bid which is currently with ministers.

It is estimated that there will be a £64 million shortfall in funding for the 15 year LIPP between the three GNDP partners even after all funding sources, such as CIL, S106 agreements and from other government agencies has been taken into account, however the amount of the shortfall will vary as other funding sources emerge. Norfolk County Council has agreed to underwrite any borrowing requirement to enable the delivery of the LIPP & City Deals. Governance arrangements are currently being drawn up, but there will be a requirement for South Norfolk Council to contribute the CIL it receives to fund these projects.

d) IT Investment – (Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware)

As the Council is faced with having to make savings of £2.5 million over the next
three years the ICT Strategy along with the LEAN process will aid the delivery of these savings through driving down operating costs while maintaining or improving service delivery. This may in some cases require the use of capital investment.

Projects will need to be evaluated, appraised and prioritised, taking into account any changes in the method of delivery of services such as shared services. In some cases systems require an option appraisal prior to any Business Case being progressed. The current capital programme currently has £900,000 funding to support new IT projects in the three year period 2013 to 2016.

In order to realise the ambitious plan to expand the CNC Building Control model to a regional basis, there will need to be further investment in the Uniform Planning & Environmental System. Funding for the development of the regional model is described further in section 3.1 of this report.

Alongside the IT investment it is important that the Council continues its cultural change, through its Moving Forward Together programme, to develop its staff to continually improve processes and service delivery to ensure the value of the IT investment is maximised.

e) Ketteringham Depot

The Council is in the process of negotiations in expanding Ketteringham Depot to cater for future growth in service demand. It is known that the Council will need to invest in drainage improvements in the longer term.

2.2. Projects which continue to deliver the traditional programme

a) Affordable Housing – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

The affordable housing programme is supported by the affordable homes element of the New Homes Bonus. £111,440 was received in 2013/14 made up of elements from the previous two years (£50,400 in 2011/12 and £61,040 in 2012/13) and additional funding is anticipated in each year this capital strategy covers. Pump priming of £300,000 was provided in 2012/13 to support projects in the early years as the funding stream builds over the six year period (The Council receives additional funds for a period of six years for each new affordable home it delivers).

b) Disabled Facilities Grant – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

The Council receives some funding from the government towards these grants. These grants are valuable in keeping people in their own homes, although pressure will increase on the budget once funding for Aids & Adaptations ceases. In 2014/15 the grant will be received and administered by Norfolk County Council. South Norfolk Council is to propose that it continues to administer this
scheme with Norfolk County Council passing the funding to us.

c) Aids and Adaptations – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

This has been funded from LSVT receipts and was for a 10 year period finishing in May 2014. Once funding ends, applications will be considered through the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.

d) Decent Home Loans – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

The loans are placed on homes and are not repayable until the house is sold. The loans are one off payments to enable people to remain in their own homes by providing funding for essential maintenance.

e) Vehicle Replacement – (Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in)

The replacement programme was established to finance the replacement of vehicles and equipment through direct purchases rather than lease financing. Refuse rounds are continually reviewed and the life of the vehicles is now expected to be extended. Although the Council could lease vehicles this would impact on the revenue budget which is already under strain, therefore the Council will continue to fund the replacement programme from the reserves, where the revenue impact is the loss of investment interest.

f) The Localism Act – (Supporting Communities to realise their potential)

The Localism Act includes rights for local communities to enable them to deliver the services they want and need. The act includes Community Right to Buy and the Community Right to Challenge.

Community Right to Buy – under the Community Right to Buy scheme, important local amenities and buildings can be nominated for listing by the local authority as assets of community value. If an asset which is on the list then comes up for sale the community will be allowed extra time to prepare a bid to take them over. This will allow assets to remain in public use and part of the community. Apart from the requirement of the Council to maintain a list of community assets, any of the Council’s buildings could be included on the list and this could therefore impact on their disposal. For example this could include Public Conveniences, amenity land.

Community Right to Challenge – This enables voluntary and community bodies, employees of the authority that wish to form a mutual organisation to deliver the service, and parish councils the right to express an interest in running a local authority service. The authority must consider expressions of interest and, where they accept them, run a procurement exercise. The right provides an opportunity for groups to put forward their ideas about how services can be run differently or better, ensuring their ideas get a fair hearing, and that they get the time they
need to prepare effective bids for services. Under the act, the local authority in considering the expression of interest and running a procurement exercise, must take into account how it will promote or improve the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of its area. This ensures that the local authority takes into account the benefit to the community over and above the delivery of the actual service. Under the act local authorities do not have to accept an expression of interest where it would breach other legislation, including the duty to achieve best value.

As a result of the right above, should an expression of interest be received which does fulfil the requirements of running a service more efficiently which is not to the detriment of other areas of the community, then capital assets may also transfer. Alternatively there may be a need to enhance existing assets prior to transfer to the community.

g) Capital Grants – (Supporting Communities to realise their potential)

The current year’s capital programme includes funding of £150,000 to support Neighbourhood Projects. In future years it is anticipated that following the adoption of CIL, Neighbourhoods will fund capital projects from their share of the CIL income.

3. Financing the Capital Programme

3.1. Under the Prudential Code, Council’s determine how much they will borrow as long as any borrowing is affordable and prudent, thus clearly linking the financing of capital with the Treasury Management Strategy and the revenue budgets. The Council can finance its capital programme from various sources as outlined below:

- Revenue – General Fund Revenue Balance Reserve is not used.
- Revenue Reserves – from time to time existing reserves are used to fund specific projects. However a number of reserves are earmarked for specific use which does not include capital projects.
- Capital Receipts from asset disposals – When the Council disposes of any assets it holds, the income it receives can only be used to fund new capital projects.
- Right to Buy Receipts – as part of the LSVT agreement the Council will continue to receive income from the sale of right to buy properties. The amount per property is reduced on a sliding scale over the next 30 years and an administration fee from Saffron Housing Trust. The amount is paid over in a lump sum in the April following the financial year they relate to, which is subject to the Pooling Levy. As a reflection of the emerging recovery from the recession, right to buy receipts are anticipated to increase from the low levels of recent years.
- LSVT Receipt – The Council received £31,659,527 from the transfer. Once payments have been made in respect of Sewage Treatment Works, Aids and Adaptations, financing replacement vehicles which had previously been financed through lease, it is estimated that there is a balance at 31 March 2014 of around £8 million. This source of funding has been used to
purchase replacement vehicles and equipment, which then frees up revenue resources. The investment of £8 million is currently earning interest of around 1.19% per annum; however the current capital programme expenditure utilise the majority of these funds by the end of 2016/17.

- Grants – as well as government grants the Council has taken advantage of lottery and any other grants in the past. The Council encourages and supports partner organisations in making applications for external funding, assisting where possible by ‘pump priming’.
- Transformation Funding – As a result of a bid to DCLG, the Council has successfully been granted transformation funding of £500,000 to develop a regional model of the CNC Building Control service. An element of this funding is likely to be used to fund capital expenditure.
- Private Finance Initiative/Public Private Partnership – these can be used as a means of finance but so far there has not been a project which makes this a viable proposition.
- VAT Shelter – Revenues and Excise have agreed that Saffron Housing Trust can reclaim the input VAT incurred on work carried out to ensure the housing stock meets the decent home standard. These works will reduce over time, and, as such, the VAT share will also reduce. The LSVT agreement provides the Council with a 50% share of this VAT. The agreement states that this will cease in 2013/14 or at a later date if any of the works are still outstanding until all works have been completed. Discussions are ongoing with Saffron to identify the current situation.
- CIL – This is a form of levy on every property built in the district. A report will be brought to Cabinet in February regarding the adoption of CIL. A percentage is required to be set aside for local communities to use for their infrastructure requirements. 25% to the local community if they have adopted a local neighbourhood plan reducing to 15% for those communities who have no plan in place. The remainder will be spent on the infrastructure requirements outlined in the LIPP.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – This allows local authorities to borrow against predicted growth in their locally raised business rates. The borrowing is used to fund key infrastructure and other capital projects, which will support locally driven economic development and growth.
- New Homes Bonus – The Government match funds the additional council tax raised on the net growth of new homes and homes brought back into use for a period of six years. An additional sum of £350 per annum is given for each new affordable house, again for a period of six years. The match funding is based on the national average council tax for each band and the District retains 80% with 20% going to the County Council. This scheme began in 2011/12. The funding can be used for either revenue or capital purchases. However after 2012/13 a large proportion is recycled Revenue Support Grant and therefore not additional money for the Council. From 2015/16 an element (potentially up to 35%) will be used to fund the LEPs growth plans.
- Bonds – There is potential that the Council can either on its own or within a consortium could offer bonds to source capital finance. A group of councils can create a special purpose vehicle so they would have a significant Bond to issue that the Capital Market investors would be
interested in. A well-known public sector bond created is from Transport for London with an issue of £200 million. The LGA is working on creating a municipal bond agency.

3.2. At the start of the current financial year the Council had over £28 million invested as listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cash and Investments as at 31st March 2013</th>
<th>£000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Investments</td>
<td>4,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>10,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term Investments</td>
<td>13,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,698</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Representing:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Used to fund the Capital Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Receipts</td>
<td>11,981 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Capital</td>
<td>4,657 No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable Reserves (includes earmarked reserves)</td>
<td>10,660 Yes but prudently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fund Balance</td>
<td>1,400 No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28,698</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Treasury Strategy shows that over the next few years the total amount of investments and cash will fall as cash is spent on the capital programme and reserves are used to support the revenue budget. It is anticipated at the current time that the current year’s capital programme will not use any money from the capital receipts balance of £12 million. With the exception of the Disabled Facilities Grant funding, it will be fully funded by the Usable Reserves.

3.3. As part of the budget setting process a review of all usable reserves will be undertaken. It is critical that the authority retains a level of reserves to enable it to cope with the uncertainty that comes with the new financing regime of local authorities. There will be a requirement to ensure sufficient levels of reserves are available to respond to this. It is vital therefore to retain earmarked reserves for particular risks e.g. volatility of business rates and council tax benefit claims. This means that any volatility in year can be managed through reserves rather than affecting services during that year. This protects service delivery by ensuring that there is no knee jerk reaction whilst allowing time to plan for the future.

Currently of the £10.7 million of usable reserves above, £6 million is earmarked for specific use including the renewals reserve and the “invest for the future” reserve. The remaining £4.7 million relates to the revenue reserve, which is currently being used to support the reduction in funding of the revenue budget.

3.4. As shown above in 3.2 it would be prudent not to use all of the £29 million to finance the capital programme. Of the Useable Reserves only the Renewals Reserve relates directly to capital expenditure. The proposed resources available to finance a capital programme going forward from 2014/15 based on this year’s capital programme and funding of the renewals reserve will be in the region of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>£million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The consequence of funding the capital programme with these resources is a reduction in the amount of cash available to invest and therefore a reduction in income from investments which supports the revenue budget. However this could be countered by investing in commercial property to achieve revenue income, this type of investment is classed as capital expenditure.

4. Borrowing

4.1. Within this strategy there is a great potential that within the five year period the Council will be in a position where it will be required to borrow. However, any borrowing must be affordable in line with the requirements of the prudential code.

4.2. The need to borrow is not based on our levels of investment balances/reserves but on the Council’s capital financing requirement (CFR). A certain level of cash will still be required for working capital; this can be held in money market funds, call accounts and short term investments. However the Council will not be permitted to make long term investments.

4.3. The most likely sources of borrowing would be through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB); however there are alternative options which include the following:

- Borrowing from other local authorities
- Borrowing from institutions such as the European Investment Bank and directly from commercial banks
- Borrowing from the money markets
- Local Authority stock issues
- Local Authority bills
- Commercial paper
- Structured finance

4.4. It is feasible for Council’s to get themselves rated to increase their attractiveness to investors. The fee can range from £12,500 for a credit assessment to £40,000 for a full rating, but this can pay for itself if a higher quality lender is able to loan money at a reasonable rate below say the PWLB rate. To date only a handful of local authorities have taken the opportunity to obtain ratings and these have generally been larger authorities such as Birmingham City.

4.5. An example of a PWLB loan is as follows:

Principal: £1,000,000, Years: 15

EIP (Equal Instalments of Principal) where the principal is paid back over the period equally plus interest would cost £277,600 interest over the 15 years at 3.47%
Annuity (where an equal amount is paid back over the period) £311,679 interest over 15 years at 3.58%

Maturity (interest only paid until maturity) interest would be £651,000 over the 15 years at 4.34%

4.6. This is only an example but the additional pressure on the general fund will need to be considered when a decision to invest in significant projects that will lead us to no alternatives but to borrow. The Treasury Strategy will provide greater detail around borrowing. Most authorities are currently using the EIP option when borrowing from the PWLB as it reduces the total interest paid and means the loan is fully repaid by the time it reaches maturity.

5. Relevant Corporate Priorities

The report covers all of the Corporate Priorities below:

5.1. Enhancing our Quality of Life and the Environment we live in

5.2. Promoting a thriving local economy

5.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential

5.4. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware

6. Implications and Risks

6.1. There are no further known risks that have not been highlighted elsewhere in this report.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The focus of this Capital Strategy continues to be on the use of capital resources to deliver either on-going revenue savings or additional revenue income by investing in the Council’s Leisure Centres, IT systems and investment properties which will also promote economic development.

7.2. The outcome of this evaluation will be to propose a capital programme to cover 2014/15 to 2016/17 to Cabinet and Council in February 2014 which meets the priorities of the Council.

8. Recommendations

8.1. It is recommended that Cabinet adopts the Capital Strategy in order to guide the formulation of the new three year programme. The strategy will be reviewed annually, but not updated until 2016/17, unless the Council’s environment changes significantly.
Definition of Capital Expenditure and Revenue Implications

1.1. The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2003 states that capital expenditure is normally interpreted in accordance with proper accounting practices, however there are a few exceptions described below:

- Expenditure on computer software can be treated as capital expenditure. The cost of the purchased software together with the direct costs incurred in the commissioning or enhancement of the software are capitalised when it will bring benefits to the council for more than one financial year. The balance is amortised to the relevant service revenue account over the economic life of the investment (5 years).

- Loans or grants provided to a third party for capital expenditure. Previously known as Deferred Charges but now referred to as “Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital under Statute”. These represent expenditure that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but which do not result in the creation of tangible assets. Deferred Charges incurred during the year are written off as expenditure to the relevant service revenue account in the year.

- Repayment of any grant or other financial assistance given to the Local Authority for capital expenditure

- The acquisition of share capital or loan capital

- Expenditure incurred on works to any land or building in which the Local Authority does not have an interest but which would be classified as capital expenditure if they did have an interest.

- Expenditure of Investment Properties to be used to gain income.

1.2. Capital expenditure relates to the acquisition or enhancement of assets, which have a useful life in excess of 12 months and is charged to the Council’s Balance Sheet and shown as a fixed asset. To be an enhancement the expenditure on the asset must either lengthen substantially the useful life of the asset or increase substantially the open market value of the asset or increase substantially the extent to which the Council can use the asset.

Any expenditure within the capital programme, which does not conform to the definition above is charged to the revenue account in the year it is incurred this includes loans or grants to third parties.

1.3. Where work has been carried out to an existing asset which would be classified as an enhancement as defined in 1.2 above, the advice of a valuer may be necessary to determine a new value/asset life.
1.4. Internal salary costs or external fees may be charged to a capital project provided they meet the definitions of capital expenditure.

1.5. Any preliminary expenses, directly attributable to the cost of acquisition or construction of an asset, which is then not actually acquired or constructed, must be transferred to a revenue account relative to the service that had initially intended to acquire or construct the asset.

1.6. There is a de-minimis level of £10,000 under which expenditure on assets will not normally be capitalised; this was adopted from 1st April 2005. There are no plans to increase the de-minimis level.

1.7. The capital programme impacts on revenue in three main ways as listed below.

- Cash flow and therefore investment income as a result of the use of cash to fund the projects.
- Contribution from revenue to cover capital expenditure
- Increased revenue costs to cover running expenses or a decrease if savings arise from a capital project.

1.8. Assets are required to be re-valued and given new lives to reflect significant changes in their value. It has been agreed with the auditors that all land and buildings (excluding Investment Properties) will be re-valued on a five year rolling programme. Investment Properties will be re-valued annually.

Links to other relevant Strategies and Plans

The documents that support the Capital Strategy are as follows

- Corporate Business Plan – this provides details of the Corporate Priorities.
- Directorate Plans – these provide the detail on how the Corporate Plan will be delivered.
- Asset Management Plan – this provides information on the requirements of the Council’s assets in relation to their upkeep and use and is reviewed by the Asset Management Group.
- ICT Strategy – this focuses on using IT to enable customers to self serve and thus reducing revenue costs in the future.
- Economic Strategy – this focuses on encouraging economic growth in the District, which is linked to the need to increase Business Rates income in the future in line with the Government’s proposal for the localisation of Business Rates.
Appraisal and Prioritisation

1.1. The Council reviews its Capital Strategy each year, which can influence the 3-year capital programme produced each year.

1.2. In relation to the prioritisation of projects, elements of the capital programme will be determined as follows:
   - Vehicle replacement is driven by the replacement programme.
   - The IT strategy outlines the general amount required and then the Corporate Management Team prioritises the list for cabinet to approve.
   - Asset management plan will inform any asset maintenance work.

1.3. The revenue implications of any capital bids will be costed and considered in its appraisal as regard to affordability and sustainability.

1.4. In some instances a detailed business case will be required before the project can proceed.

Procuring Assets

1.1. The Council has a Procurement Strategy and this together with the Rules for Financial Governance, which includes Contract Standing Orders, will govern the procurement of capital projects. It encourages full evaluation of options and new ideas covering partnerships and developing the market to provide the appropriate services. The Council always evaluates options taking into account the full costs over the life cycle of the project.

Performance measurement and monitoring

1.1. Progress on capital projects are monitored monthly by Financial Services and the relevant budget managers. On a quarterly basis Cabinet reports are produced, which are open to review by the Scrutiny Committee and managers are asked to complete a formal budget monitoring form monthly which is used to compile this report.

1.2. Budget managers are encouraged to report changes to profiling as early as possible to enable the possibility of bringing other projects from future years forward and to request that the project slipping is included/completed in the following years programme. This action requires the agreement of Cabinet.

1.3. The capital funding is also reviewed quarterly to ensure sufficient resources are available to fund the capital programme or to enable the
Cabinet Strategy 2014/15 to 2016/17

programme to be reduced should there be a significant drop in funding available.

1.4. Bids for additional capital resources will only be considered if they comply with both the Corporate Plan and Capital Strategy. The decision on whether to fund such projects will depend on being able to afford both the capital cost and the revenue implication in future years.
Overview of the existing assets of the Council

1.1. The Council’s assets are split between physical tangible assets (e.g. building and land) and cash deposits. These two forms of assets are managed through the Asset Management Plan by the Asset Management Group and the Treasury Management Strategy respectively.

1.2. As at 31 March 2013 the Council’s Assets were valued at £59.516 million and was split as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset Type</th>
<th>As at 31/3/13 £ Million</th>
<th>As at 31/3/13 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land &amp; Buildings</td>
<td>15.673</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles, Plant, Equipment &amp; Other</td>
<td>2.678</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Property, Plant &amp; Equipment</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.351</strong></td>
<td><strong>30.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Properties</td>
<td>12.467</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>28.698</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.516</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3. The Treasury Management Strategy details how the cash investments are monitored and the parameters within which those investments are made. Land and buildings and land awaiting development are monitored through the asset management plan. Both the capital programme and cash investments are monitored on a quarterly basis to Cabinet.

Existing Council Land and Buildings

1.1. The Council manages a portfolio of £18.351 million of property, plant and equipment, the upkeep of these assets is both revenue costs (maintenance) and capital. This is monitored through the asset management plan. The capital programme currently has £475,000 budget for asset management in 2013/14 and £510,000 in total over the next 3 years for the upkeep of the council’s buildings. However this capital strategy also includes additional investment in the Council’s Leisure Centres to enhance the provision and increase income and Ketteringham Depot which are additional to the sums described above.
1.2. South Norfolk House – The annual maintenance programme includes £128,500 of expenditure to be utilised in the current year’s capital programme with an additional £496,500 to be spent in the following two years. Works programmed include Car Park resurfacing, ceiling replacements and an air conditioning system replacement. The hosting of the CNC building control partnership will utilise the spare capacity within South Norfolk House and help to support the revenue budget.

1.3. Leisure Centres (excluding the enhancement programme) – Traditionally a leisure centre with a pool has a life expectancy of 10 years. Diss is over 20 years and Wymondham is over 10 years, however essential maintenance is carried out and structurally they are sound. The only main cost would be if a filter needed replacing costing £60-£70k per leisure centre. This is likely to occur in both centres in the next five years.

1.4. Ketteringham Depot – The depot provides a site from which all the cleansing services are delivered from. There are issues around the current drainage provision. The Council is currently negotiating to expand Ketteringham Depot to ensure it can cater for increased demand in future years as a result of housing growth in the district. It is envisaged that drainage improvements will be part of the expansion plan.

1.5. The Council holds land for development which predominantly consists of land at Poringland, Pulham St Mary and Cygnet House Long Stratton.

In relation to the land at Poringland, the development will take place in two stages. Stage 1 is currently underway and will consist of the construction of approximately 20 houses and 2 commercial units. The second stage will be developed under a Joint Venture arrangement. This is currently being procured under an OJEU tender for a partner. The second stage will consist of the construction of approximately 30 houses and 3 commercial units. This will not only provide a return for the Council to boost its revenue budget but also assist economic development within the district.

A planning application has been submitted and is to be determined on the site at Chestnuts, Pulham St Mary.

Potential designs for the development of land at Cygnet House have been consulted on and planning permission is currently to be determined. It is proposed that there will be a number of commercial units in the development which the Council will fund and retain to receive rental income which would support the revenue budget and assist with economic development in the District.
Cabinet
2nd December 2013

Agenda Item No. 8

Leisure Enhancement Project

Healthy Living Manager

At Cabinet on 23rd September 2013 the strategic direction for the leisure service was approved. The purpose of this report is to provide members with the business case for the enhancement programme. This report will include a financial analysis of the key aspects of the programme and the narrative to explain this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Bills</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail:
Rob Adams 3926
radams@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1. The Leisure Policy Panel met on 25th November to discuss the leisure enhancement programme. They were happy with the detail and content of the business case and asked that the phases were pushed in parallel to reduce the overall time of the programme.

1.2. Whereas leisure is not a statutory service and South Norfolk Council is under no obligation to offer a leisure provision, it provides a valuable service in improving the health and wellbeing of the residents as well as teaching valuable life skills and generally increasing overall activity levels of the residents. With the emerging Public Health agenda the role of health and wellbeing providers such as leisure centres is becoming more important to help reduce the pressure on other agencies such as the NHS. The SNC leisure team have worked towards making the service sustainable and significant progress has been made to achieve this.

1.3. At Cabinet on 23rd September 2013 the strategic direction for the leisure service was approved in principle. Reducing the subsidy for the service and improving the health and wellbeing of the residents are the key priorities. Offering a broader range of services and facilities will provide increased footfall and income. This will involve moving away from the gym centric models we currently operate and offering community hubs where the focus is on health and wellbeing and not solely fitness.

1.4. The leisure centres currently generate around 480,000 visits per year and this is likely to increase this year. The product is varied and to a large degree
successful with the current offering. The subsidy has decreased through tight control of the budgets and a significant increase in income through products such as; swim school, Direct Debit memberships and corporate membership.

1.5. Despite the growth over the last 5 years, a large proportion of the investment has been earmarked for non-customer facing enhancements such as plant rooms (for swimming pool filtration). Minimal investment has been made to maintain a reasonable standard of presentation, however the centres are now in need of extensive modernisation in order to broaden the offering; retain the current members and attract new users.

1.6. The recommendations outlined within this report have emanated from various surveys, industry research and customer feedback over the last 12 months. It could be recommended that a more significant sum of money be invested in the leisure provision to get the facilities to an A1 standard. However this report has focused on priorities that include a comprehensive enhancement programme, recommendations for new business activities and improved wider leisure opportunities.

1.7. The outcome being sought from this programme is a reduction in the leisure subsidy and to improve the appeal of the existing facilities and opportunities to exercise to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents.

1.8. Leisure service improvements have been allocated £106,000 in Diss and £100,000 in Wymondham through Section 106 contributions which can be used in this programme.

1.9. New concepts are being proposed to improve the customer experience and generate new revenue streams. Cafeteria areas are proposed for Wymondham (WLC) and Diss (DSFC). At present customers just attend to participate in their chosen activity and leave, the centres are not viewed as a destination offering a broader service. In addition it is proposed that soft play areas are installed at WLC and LSLC to attract a different section of the community.

1.10. It is proposed that the work is divided into the following phases

 Phase 1: WLC, DSFC, Wider Leisure Initiatives
 Phase 2: Stand-alone fitness facility at Diss
 Phase 3: LSLC

2. New Activities/Facilities (Phase 1.)

2.1. Cafeterias encourage people to stay, socialise and contribute towards secondary spend. Research indicates that a rent in the region of £25,000 with the potential for profit share on gross income could be achieved. There will be some minor additional costs, e.g. cleaning, but these can be managed within existing budgets.
2.2. Alongside this it is proposed for Wymondham and Long Stratton (although this is proposed as part of phase 3 at LSLC) that play areas are installed with the aim of getting the very young people active as well as providing parents/guardians with the opportunity to relax in comfortable surroundings whilst their children play. These work hand in hand with the cafeteria areas and open up opportunities to offer fully catered parties. A business case for this can be seen in Appendix 1. Realistically this could expect to generate approximately £50,000 revenue per annum. Additional staffing costs may be incurred for this facility, however these will be for parties and other organised sessions and the staffing cost will be reflected in any proposed fees for such activities.

2.3. It is important that the centres look towards introducing new facilities and activities, these are pivotal in expanding the appeal of the centres. One of the key drivers is the public health agenda, the more people we can introduce to health and wellbeing initiatives the better chance we have of contributing toward this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Facility</th>
<th>Investment (£)</th>
<th>Annual net income after 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Total net additional income over 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Payback period (yrs)</th>
<th>Return in Year 5 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play (Wymondham)</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>54,591</td>
<td>254,656</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café (Wymondham)</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>25,978</td>
<td>124,895</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>280,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>80,569</strong></td>
<td><strong>379,551</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.7</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Enhancements to Existing Facilities and Services (Phase 1.)**

3.1. The software system that manages the memberships within the centre is unsupported and has been highlighted as a concern by the Public Services Network (PSN). At the very least the system needs upgrading. The current system will not support on-line functionality, which has been identified as a core priority for the Council. In addition the current system will not support access control which will ensure the flow of people through the centre is controlled and the customer experience is enhanced.

3.2. An extension was made to the gym at WLC in 2011. The investment made was under £20,000, it created about 50% more space and saw the addition of extra equipment. The Direct Debit amount now being claimed at the centre for memberships has increased by £10,000 per month.

3.3. For the enhancements at WLC and DSFC it is envisaged that additional staff costs would be minimal and only for activities such as parties. In advance of commencing works shown in this report, a lean review is taking place to optimise efficiency. It is anticipated that any additional staff costs can be accommodated through these efficiencies. Such costs would be factored into any facility fee.

3.4. Making better use of existing space and creating new space will provide much needed social space where community groups can hold meetings/gatherings.
This is an essential part of the programme in order that the centres can move away from the gym centric model that currently exists. These spaces can then be used for additional activity sessions, training courses, meetings and social activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Facility</th>
<th>Investment (£)</th>
<th>Annual Income after 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Total additional income over 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Payback period (yrs)</th>
<th>Gross Return in Year 5 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing Rooms, Showers, Fitness Suites</td>
<td>488,000</td>
<td>123,167</td>
<td>527,918</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software upgrades and entry systems</td>
<td>86,000</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>98,405</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Repairs and Timetable Improvements</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>73,125</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximising Space/Partition Walls</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>5,852</td>
<td>27,606</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Branding, Decoration</td>
<td>208,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>947,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>163,325</strong></td>
<td><strong>727,054</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17.20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5. For the enhancements to existing facilities, payback and gross return is good for all activities (but will be less than the return to be gained by creating new offerings). Maximising space/partition walls has a much slower rate of return as installing mezzanine levels is expensive. Consideration should be given to this though as at WLC this will allow for; additional studio space/meeting rooms/social rooms for community groups which is an important part of the leisure offer. Party packages are also very popular and with the proposed cafeteria and play area an area for parties would be a good income generator. In addition to this, facilities of this type will draw people to the centres other facilities. Software upgrades and entry systems will generate business growth through the prevention of unauthorised access and will generate savings through the reduction of casual employees.

4. **Wider Leisure Provision (Phase 1.)**

4.1. Ensuring that leisure is more accessible throughout the district is an important consideration of this programme. At present a trial of the mobile gym service is being held in Costessey and Loddon. Research points to the fact that there is a generous offering of physical activity throughout the district, however awareness of these sessions needs improving. Some of the wider health and wellbeing initiatives are being proposed to be supported through the Your Neighbourhood, Your Choice scheme, which are also being considered at this cabinet meeting. The District Council could improve awareness by adopting a more joined up approach to promotion through an enhanced website and on line functionality.
Within the centres the introduction of self-serve, on line booking and entry systems would ensure significant service improvement within the centres and pave the way for a reduction in casual labour on receptions.

4.2. Working with community partners such as schools and Parish Councils will improve the overall provision and access to leisure/sport/wellbeing throughout the district. This will support the health agenda and will get more residents active.

5. **New Stand-alone Fitness Facility Diss, Cafeteria at DSFC (Phase 2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Facility</th>
<th>Investment (£)</th>
<th>Annual Net Income after 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Total additional net income over 5 years (£)</th>
<th>Payback period (yrs)</th>
<th>Net Return in Year 5 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Café (Diss)</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>12,989</td>
<td>62,447</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diss Fitness Facility</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>46,774</td>
<td>(67,159)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>830,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>59,763</strong></td>
<td><strong>(4,712)</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.2 Ave</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A stand-alone fitness facility is proposed for Diss. The current facility is limited in size and the car park restricts growth of this product. Research has highlighted a need for more fitness classes and improved fitness facilities in the town. There is a large catchment area in and around Diss and a separate fitness offering would be very successful. The number of members at WLC far outweighs the other two centres; this proposal would balance this out as well as meet the demand. WLC has the largest membership base of the three centres and it is hoped with development, Diss membership could closely match this. This particular enhancement would require a revenue budget, and this can be seen in Appendix 3. Appendix 2 of this document provides the financial analysis for phase 1 and 2 of this programme. This also illustrates that the proposed new centre would start to return an operating profit in years 3-4, once facilities are closer to capacity.

6. **Long Stratton Leisure Centre (Phase 3.)**

6.1. The transfer of the freehold at Long Stratton Leisure Centre (LSLC) is still being progressed but at the time of writing this has yet to be finalised, therefore it is suggested that the enhancement programme for this centre be taken into a follow up phase. This will enable Members to make informed decisions as to the direction of LSLC on the back of the success of the initiatives introduced at the other centres, e.g. play facilities.

7. **Other Options**

7.1. **Option 1: Do nothing**

If no investment were to be made the business growth rate within the service would eventually plateau, inevitably increasing the subsidy, and would lead to increased negativity from the users.

7.2. **Option 2: Minimal redecoration**
This would be a short term solution with minimal impact and return on investment. The redecoration would be required annually, increasing the revenue budget through an increase in on-going maintenance.

8. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

8.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.

8.2. Promoting a thriving local economy.

8.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

8.4. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

9. **Implications and Risks**

9.1. Financial

The cost of the work could be higher than budgeted. Stringent procurement would be utilised to ensure best value for money.

9.2. Legal

The transfer of the freehold of LSLC to South Norfolk District Council is still ongoing and this would involve a transfer of all liabilities for the centre.

9.3. Risks

There will be inevitable service disruption and temporary closure that will result in customer inconvenience and a reduction in income, albeit temporarily, however careful planning would minimise this disruption.

10. **Conclusion**

10.1. This report provides the business case for the leisure enhancement programme, many of the new activities provide an impressive return on investment. The enhancement to existing facilities also offer a good return on investment, with the exception of the partition walls and mezzanine decks all investments are returned within 5 years.

10.2. The proposed new fitness centre in Diss would meet the demand for a quality fitness facility offering classes and gym. The business model proposed offers a return in investment in years 7-8, this investment paves the way to freeing up car parking space at the current swim and fitness centre as well as offering a franchise opportunity in the shape of a café.

10.3. The net additional revenue income is predicted to be in the region of £1,101,893 within a five year period, giving a return on investment of 54% when compared to the capital cost of investment of £2,057,000.
11. **Recommendations**

11.1. Cabinet approves the release of £1,021,000 from the approved capital programme for the enhancement works at Wymondham and Diss Swim and Fitness Centre (Phase 1). The learning from this phase will then determine the precise nature of further phases.

11.2. The proposed stand-alone fitness centre at Diss will form part of a second phase, costing £800,000 with an additional £30,000 to create a cafeteria area within the existing swim and fitness facility. The final stage will be the improvement programme at LSLC. A further report will be presented to approve these later phases.

11.3. Agree that the implementation of phase 1 of the enhancement programme be steered through the Leisure Policy Panel.
Appendix 1: Soft Play Proposal

We have spoken to a company which manufactures and installs indoor play areas. They have provided us with some options and estimated costs for soft play areas within the leisure centre for consideration.

It proposed that a purpose built area is created at Wymondham and a squash court is converted at Long Stratton to create a soft play space.

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3
The below drawing is an example of a squash court conversion carried out by Soft Bric. The cost of this was approximately £45,000.

The proposed opening times are:

Monday-Friday: All day casual 10-6
Saturday: Casual 9-2; Parties 2-6
Sunday: All day casual 10-6

The cost of casual use will be £3 and the cost for a party with sole use of the structure is proposed at £40, with an additional £20 being charged for extra room rental.

**Potential Income (Based on WLC)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Estimates</th>
<th>Average of 5 children per hour and 3 parties per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>£915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>£47,580</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Option 1 (£)</th>
<th>Option 2 (£)</th>
<th>Option 3 (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>47,580</td>
<td>47,580</td>
<td>47,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Maintenance</strong></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facility Cost</strong></td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building Cost</strong></td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>155,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*annual maintenance charge (1.5% of original price)
Cabinet
2nd December 2013

The Council would be responsible for providing a safe play environment but parents would ultimately be responsible for supervising their own children. We could however use the play areas as a childcare option for parents who wish to use the other leisure facilities. Charged supervised play times could be timetabled to match certain class times/peak gym times so parents with children could attend.
# Appendix 2: Business Case Financials

## Leisure Enhancement Business Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Enhancement</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Net Income 0-1</th>
<th>Net Income 1-2</th>
<th>Net Income 2-3</th>
<th>Net Income 3-4</th>
<th>Net Income 4-5</th>
<th>Total Additional Net Income</th>
<th>Approx Payback Period</th>
<th>Net Return in Year 5</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing Rooms and Showers and Extended Fitness Suites and Additional Fitness Equipment</td>
<td>488,000</td>
<td>56,358</td>
<td>112,716</td>
<td>116,097</td>
<td>119,580</td>
<td>123,167</td>
<td>527,918</td>
<td>4.5 years</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
<td>Extension at WLC generated a 20% increase in DD’s in yr 1 and 17% in yr 2. A £9393 monthly increase in income within 2 years. After 2 years 3% growth has been factored in each year. (Yr 1 = 50% of increase achieved within 2 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximising space - partition walls</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>5200</td>
<td>5,356</td>
<td>5,516</td>
<td>5,682</td>
<td>5,852</td>
<td>27,606</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>Rental charges for meetings etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Area</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>47,580</td>
<td>49,007</td>
<td>50,477</td>
<td>53,001</td>
<td>54,591</td>
<td>254,656</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>Mini business case written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Upgrade + Entry Systems</td>
<td>86,000</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>19,681</td>
<td>98,405</td>
<td>4.5 years</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>Majority benefits are customer focus related, however the prevention of unauthorised entry, charging up front for booked classes, using a dishonoured booking facility will all generate income (£6,000). Savings on casual reception shifts will also contribute to subsidy reduction approx 30 casual hours per week will be saved at WLC at a cost of £13681.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria WLC</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>24,480</td>
<td>24,969</td>
<td>25,468</td>
<td>25,978</td>
<td>124,895</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>Potential franchise opportunity, 2% annual increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria DSFC</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,240</td>
<td>12,484</td>
<td>12,734</td>
<td>12,989</td>
<td>62,447</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>Potential franchise opportunity, 2% annual increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-decoration</td>
<td>188,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Branding</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Repairs &amp; Timetable Improvements</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>14,625</td>
<td>73,125</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>£3.75 x 25 x 52 x 1.5hrs = £7315.5 per centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diss Fitness Facility – Net Cost as per table below</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>(60,636)</td>
<td>(42,824)</td>
<td>(19,901)</td>
<td>9,428</td>
<td>46,774</td>
<td>(67,159)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>Based on 75% WLC DD Performance (£22438 difference per month). Casual income 80% of WLC, new secondary spend for 50% Gross Profit on Goods for resale at £14k (£21k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking 12 months income for class and gym casual use at WLC (£44,765) Providing casual income of £33,573 at 75% of WLC. 2% annual increase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diss Fitness Facility</th>
<th>Year 0-1</th>
<th>Year 1-2</th>
<th>Year 2-3</th>
<th>Year 3-4</th>
<th>Year 4-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross Income</td>
<td>137,288</td>
<td>159,058</td>
<td>186,019</td>
<td>219,466</td>
<td>261,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Costs</td>
<td>197,924</td>
<td>201,882</td>
<td>205,920</td>
<td>210,038</td>
<td>214,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit/(Deficit) for Diss Fitness</td>
<td>(60,636)</td>
<td>(42,824)</td>
<td>(19,901)</td>
<td>9,428</td>
<td>46,774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Diss Revenue Budget (Stand Alone Fitness Facility)

**Employee Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salaries</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Pension</th>
<th>NI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duty Officer/Team Leader 1</td>
<td>17,802</td>
<td>21,578</td>
<td>2,670</td>
<td>1,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty Officer/Team Leader 2</td>
<td>17,802</td>
<td>21,578</td>
<td>2,670</td>
<td>1,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner 1</td>
<td>3,601</td>
<td>4,141</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner 2</td>
<td>3,601</td>
<td>4,141</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception 1</td>
<td>12,604</td>
<td>15,028</td>
<td>1,891</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception 2</td>
<td>12,604</td>
<td>15,028</td>
<td>1,891</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>81,494</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,202</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Premises Related Costs**

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Sewerage</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste Disposal</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Maintenance</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window Cleaning</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>63,300</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transport Costs**

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff Travel</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supplies and Services**

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplies and Materials</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies for Resale</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Purchases</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Repairs &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Hire</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Insurances</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Insurances</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Fees</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing &amp; Stationery</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Collection</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS (Performing Rights Society)</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPL (Phonographic Performing Licence)</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTS (Body Training Systems – Classes)</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49,050</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

|                      |          | 194,044|         |       |
Cabinet  
2nd December 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1 (£)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82,715</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Refocussing the New Homes Bonus to better demonstrate the benefits of growth

Communities and Active Life Manager

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Cabinet a coherent programme of initiatives aimed at ensuring that the communities of South Norfolk reap the benefits of growth. The report identifies the priorities for the Communities Team and recognises that the Council’s approach to localism and the investment of New Homes Bonus money should be part of mainstream corporate activity under the “Working With You, Working For You” strapline rather than as a discrete programme of activity that was Your Neighbourhood Your Choice.

Cabinet member(s): Martin Wilby
Ward(s) affected: All

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: lan Lambert 01508 533943 ilambert@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1. This report provides Cabinet with an updated position following their consideration of this item at the 28th October Cabinet meeting. It also takes into account the outcome of the cross-party meeting convened by the Leader on 5th November to further consider this issue.

1.2. Your Neighbourhood Your Choice (YNYC) has been the Council’s main tool for delivering localism in South Norfolk. This approach has led to national recognition for the way we give local people the opportunity to have a greater say in the services they receive. A Local Government Association Peer Review Team visited the Council to learn more about our approach and support us in improving this delivery mechanism.

1.3. Neighbourhood Boards took a central role in identifying and delivering improvements to the quality of life in their communities. By becoming more active in consulting with the community, identifying local priorities and working with the communities to identify how best to achieve progress. However, their role as a catalyst in building capacity within communities has been limited – or at best mixed – and this is likely to become ever more important.

1.4. Whilst there have been some positive outcomes from Year One, the emphasis on working creatively and in partnership to ensure that communities feel the benefits of growth has not been fully realised. Furthermore, it is at the heart of the Council’s approach to localism that initiatives funded through the allocation of New Homes Bonus (NHB) money should build sustainability into local
communities and organisations. It is not intended that NHB money should provide ongoing revenue support.

1.5. This report identifies how the Council, through the work of the Communities Team in particular will approach this challenge and how the proposed package of initiatives before Cabinet represent a coherent programme that address and deliver key corporate priorities, build sustainable economic growth and ensure that local communities feel the benefit of growth.

2. Current Position

2.1. New Homes Bonus funding is likely to reach a plateau in 2014/15 and will reduce significantly thereafter. Furthermore, the government is consulting on a proposal to redirect up to 35% of NHB to New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) from 2015/16. Given our overriding focus on economic growth initiatives it is possible that we could secure a significant proportion of this back into the district. Nonetheless, given that South Norfolk Council is likely to have to substantial savings in 2015/16 and 2016/17 the Communities Team and the programmes it supports will need to be able to demonstrate value for money.

2.2. Analysing the lessons from YNYC has provided an opportunity to reflect on how we move forward. This will mean changes to the localism approach and the role of the Communities Team. The benefits of growth must still be shared across communities but there is now a greater emphasis on entrepreneurship, income generation, growing the economy and using that growth to ensure health and wellbeing and support to those that need it most. This will be delivered under the corporate strapline of “Working with you, working for you” rather than a continuation of the YNYC brand. This recognises that the use of New Homes Bonus funding, and the role of the Communities Team must be fully focused on corporate priorities and not a discrete, stand alone programme.

2.3. Joining up service delivery at a local level and growing existing or joining new partnerships are likely to be key transformational approaches going forward and are embodied in the Market Towns’ Initiative proposals.

2.4. While Neighbourhood Boards continue to utilise their experience and knowledge to establish what the important issues are for local people, the emphasis in the future will be on identifying local initiatives that build capacity within communities and reduce demand on Council services.

3. The Proposals

Market Towns Initiative (Economic growth)

3.1. The Market Towns Initiative is a programme that brings together a mixture of new initiatives, partnerships with others, and a refocusing, and joining together of some of the Councils core services. But the purpose is a clear unified one, to bring economic growth and vibrancy to the Market Towns as hubs for the whole of South Norfolk generating wealth which in turn will ensure the wellbeing of residents and provide the capacity to support those in most need.
3.2 South Norfolk’s market towns play an important role for the local economy and the communities they serve; they play an important role in the future growth, and economic and social vibrancy, of the district. South Norfolk Council wants do all it can to strengthen the economic and cultural base of our market towns but recognises neither it, nor any other single organisation can do this on its own. What we are working with our partners on is a shared vision and approach which brings together stakeholders and expertise. Working with and alongside Town Councils is essential to the success of this initiative, but it is also important that residents and businesses are involved in the initiative. Nonetheless there is a clear leadership role for South Norfolk Council.

3.3 We are already establishing our baseline metrics to ensure that we are able to confidently demonstrate that the initiative has driven up footfall, reduced vacant premises, and generated economic growth. We will expect to see greater cultural and social activity within the towns and a strong awareness of the brand of South Norfolk Market Towns both regionally and nationally.

3.4 The proposals contained in Appendix 1 represent a wide range of activities, many to be delivered in the short to medium term, including:

- Promotional events in the run up to Christmas (Festive Fusions).

- Access to a renowned retail academy for local businesses.

- Ensuring a quality, welcoming environment with effective signage.

- Clean and attractive streetscenes including public toilets fit for purpose.

3.5 Looking further ahead the Council will work within the Market Town partnerships to develop tourism, deliver international food markets or craft festivals across all four Market Towns, take forward infrastructure projects (potentially with NALEP support), and deliver regular programmes of festivals and events to maintain vibrancy and footfall. It is intended that all initiatives will be sustainable and that investment will be maximised by exploiting opportunities for sponsorship and charging wherever appropriate.

3.6 A Council wide Working Group to coordinate activity across the Council and ensure connections are made has been established and is chaired by the Communities Manager. The group will report back to the Growth & Localism Committee.

3.7 In addition to their focus on the delivery of the Market Towns Initiative the Communities Team will also:

- work with partners and with SNC colleagues to develop cost effective approaches to service delivery

- work with partners to develop joint approaches to commissioning (or de-commissioning) services to deliver savings to SNC (Communities Officers)
• develop, enhance or reconfigure services to allow them to generate income
e.g. Events team delivering programmes that generate income and/or sell their
expertise in event management to third parties.

• work with local communities to continue to identify locally generated initiatives
aimed primarily at building sustainable communities that will reduce reliance
on SNC services.

**Wellbeing and Supporting those in need.**

3.8 In addition to the Market Towns’ Initiative, working in this way has resulted in the
development or enhancement of schemes that address the Council’s other key
priorities of promoting wellbeing and/or supporting those in most need. These
schemes are all designed to provide some form of early or preventative
intervention that will increase wellbeing and reduce levels of dependency within
communities. Examples include:

• two schemes – an enhancement to the Handypersons scheme and a Safe and
Well initiative – aimed at increasing independence and reducing demand on
health and social care services by helping vulnerable people remain in their
own homes.

• Several schemes – including village games, mobile gyms, and coaching
bursaries – aimed at keeping individuals and communities fit and well

• And a Community Awards scheme to ensure that those who contribute to the
life of their communities are acknowledged and celebrated – with the aim of
encouraging them to continue, and others to begin, leading their communities
and reducing reliance on public services.

3.9 Several of these schemes will be developed further with potential partners to
explore opportunities for sharing investment in areas that will both enhance
independence and sustainability whilst also realising savings to the public purse.
Enhancing the Handypersons Scheme is one such proposal.

4. **Agreement Sought from Cabinet**

4.1 Members have already considered some of the proposals identified above. At its
meeting on 28th October Cabinet agreed to support proposals 1.1 and 1.2 of the
Your neighbourhood Your Choice Year 2 Proposals. These proposals (shaded
blue in Appendix 1) do not need to be reconsidered by Cabinet. They include:

• The Festive Fusion Programme of Christmas themed events aimed at increasing
footfall in all 4 market towns in the run up to Christmas;

• The employment of a brand/marketing manager for the Market Towns’ initiative
(with potential for deployment on other corporate initiatives);

• Adding value to existing market towns’ events and festivals

• South Norfolk on Show Roadshows

• Event management workshops
- Market Towns' Retail Academy for SMEs in conjunction with City College Retail Academy

- Programme of Norfolk and Norwich Festival activity in market towns to enhance economic and cultural offer*

*Subsequent to the 28th October Cabinet decision this initiative has been re-evaluated to ensure that it will deliver key priorities for South Norfolk Council. This initiative is resubmitted for Cabinet consideration in Appendix 2.

4.2 In accordance with the second Cabinet decision on 28th October the Leader held a meeting on 5th November - with the Neighbourhood Board Chairmen, Cabinet Member for Communities, the Chairman of the Growth and Localism Committee, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and Councillors Allen and Weeks – that considered and endorsed an initial Market Town’s Programme which encompassed most of the remaining initiatives that had not been considered at the October meeting (shaded in grey in Appendix 1). Cabinet is asked to ratify this recommended programme.

4.3 There are a small number of remaining initiatives that were not considered by either October Cabinet or at the subsequent cross-party meeting on 5th November. These are the initiatives, outlined in Appendix 2, that Cabinet is asked to consider today. They include:

- E-ngagement – working with Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) to ensure South Norfolk businesses are able to use new technology to revolutionise their business processes and help attract inward investment to the district.

- Your Handyperson Scheme – delivering low level maintenance services to vulnerable people to keep them living independently and out of hospital.

- Norfolk and Norwich Festival programme in Market Towns – forming part of the package for delivering economic and cultural growth into our market Towns.

- Community Coach Bursary Scheme – embedding sports coaches into local communities, helping young people gain confidence which they can transfer into their wider lives, including employment.

- “Get Into” and “Get Started” Programmes (Princes Trust) – preparing young people for jobs and apprenticeships.

- Family Champions Scheme – to coordinate early support to vulnerable families to prevent their issues escalating.

- Community Mediation Programme – providing training and a framework which enables town and parish councils to address contentious community issues within their town or village.
4.4 The entire package of Initiatives (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) were considered at an informal meeting of the Growth and Localism Committee on 27th November, meeting also attended by the Leader and fellow Cabinet Members.

5. Relevant Corporate Priorities

5.1 YNYC meets three of the Councils four Corporate Priorities.

- Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in – by providing residents and communities with enhanced services that improve their quality of life.

- Promoting a thriving local economy - by supporting communities and businesses through service enhancements such as the Market Town Initiative.

- Supporting communities to realise their potential – by implementing services that build capacity within communities.

- Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

6. Financial Implications and Risks

6.1 This programme contains a range of initiatives some of which will be delivered immediately and some of which will be rolled out over the next 18 months. A profile of expenditure against the NHB allocation is outlined below. The budget should continue to contain sufficient flexibility to allow emerging initiatives from local communities to be funded if appropriate.

Funding Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13/14 Budget</th>
<th>13/14 Expenditure to Oct’13</th>
<th>13/14 Proposals</th>
<th>13/14 Total Planned Expenditure</th>
<th>13/14 Forecast Surplus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>822,622</td>
<td>171,958</td>
<td>464,200</td>
<td>636,158</td>
<td>186,464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14/15 Budget (Per Medium Term Plan)</th>
<th>14/15 Proposals</th>
<th>14/15 Unallocated Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>822,622</td>
<td>399,300</td>
<td>423,322</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 This investment forms part of a wider package of investment in Market Towns which also includes £350k for refurbishing public toilets, a potential multi-million pound investment in our Leisure Centres as well as investment from core budgets of £104k and investment by partners of £180.18k.

6.3 There is a risk that certain initiatives do not come to fruition. However there is strong corporate support for, and investment in, this programme which will minimise the risk of failure. Furthermore, risks will be mitigated by ensuring effective performance management and financial reporting, to Neighbourhood Boards, Growth & Localism Committee and Scrutiny Committee if required.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The transformational and financial challenges that the Council faces means that resources must be invested effectively. Stimulating economic growth, raising income and making savings are key prerequisites for being able to invest in measures to ensure the wellbeing of communities, to support those in most need and to ensure that the benefits of growth are felt across South Norfolk.

7.2 It is important that all activity funded through the New Homes Bonus is coordinated and targeted at key identified priorities.

7.3 Following significant revision the programme of activity now before Cabinet does this much more coherently. The programme comprises former YNYC elements, existing or planned, new elements to enhance the offer and a refocusing of some key core functions.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Cabinet are asked to:

- Ratify the Programme of initiatives contained in Appendix 1
- Agree the remaining initiatives identified in Appendix 2.
South Norfolk Council’s Market Towns Offer

Following the Cabinet meeting of the 28\textsuperscript{th} October, members agreed to support activity within Sections 1.1 and 1.2 of the YNYC Year 2 proposals; these proposals, shaded in blue below, do not require further decision.

At that Cabinet meeting, members also resolved to hold a cross-party meeting that considered and agreed an initial Market Towns Programme which encompassed most of the remaining initiatives that were not given consideration at the Cabinet meeting. These initiatives, shaded grey below, were endorsed at that meeting but require formal Member approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Events &amp; activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Festive Fusion Programme</strong></td>
<td>This is a programme of festive activities aimed at increasing footfall, improving events and allow us footing for better promotion of the district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Enhanced Christmas events via a <em>Christmas activity run by SNC on light switch-on event</em> to attract visitors</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td>£20k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Support for the towns to <em>increase their own events offer</em> with businesses match-funding to attract visitors</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A <em>Christmas bauble trail</em> with businesses in each of the market towns (and joining the 4 up) to drive footfall - with a prize draw</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Free car parking</strong> for Saturday light switch on, plus an extra day in the festive period of the towns choice to encourage shopping</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A school <em>Christmas tree decorating competition</em> with winners displaying their trees in the town to add to the street scene</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A <em>window display competition</em> to encourage shops to add to the towns theatre and experience and improve visual appearance – prize draw</td>
<td>Dec 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. a <em>free visual merchandising taster session</em> to enhance business skills in time for Christmas shopping</td>
<td>Nov 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. a programme of events throughout the season, promoted in our **Festive Fusion brochure**

9. **Ice rink** at Wymondham leisure centre with inflatable snowman where local businesses will be invited to sell produce for a fee

10. Promote **Your Local Christmas Market Small Business Saturday (7th)**

    - national campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Management Workshops</th>
<th>A workshop held in each of the market towns by the Events Team to help communities to:</th>
<th>Jan 2014</th>
<th>Within existing resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promote events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• License events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Risk assess events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Put together creative content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Your SN Market Town Week</th>
<th>• Test the market for the <strong>national Love Your Local Market fortnight</strong> in May</th>
<th>Feb 2014</th>
<th>£5k</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• SNC stall on the market place with the town team/council to continue to <strong>promote and engage partnership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• support towns to offer market stall <strong>peppercorn rent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• support businesses to run a <strong>promotional activity</strong> that will attract business e.g. butcher cooks up sausages and offer them as fee samples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• bespoke to each market town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play Rangers MT Days</th>
<th>Activities will include:</th>
<th>Feb 2014</th>
<th>£5k</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dodgeball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• giant jenga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• snakes and ladders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• volleyball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Frisbee</td>
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<td>• stuck-in-the-mud</td>
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<td>• skittles</td>
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<td>• face painting</td>
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<p>| National World | Following format used for the |         |     |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Appendix 1</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>War 1 Commemoration workshops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support MT to run activities and events to support this week in August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Science and Engineering Week</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A week of events run in the centre of MTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SNoS Roadshow</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building on the success of SNoS name we will tour the MT and work with them to sign post to key themes and encourage the community to be more proactive in areas that matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Norfolk Local Flavours</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building on the success of Norfolk Local flavours and the Waveney Food festival, 2 touring events for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tourist Information Points</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give visitors an interactive way of finding things to do &amp; places to stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Norwich Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To invest in our tourism offer by using the Visit Norwich brand as a marketing tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNC will offer:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- advice and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- promotional campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- and Easter egg hunt/trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
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</table>

| **Visit Norwich Partnership** |
| 1. micro launch in Wymondham & Diss |
| 2. Big promotion of the MTs using Festive Fusion programme |
| Jan 2014 |

| **Street Scene** |
| **Signage** |
| To help visitors navigate around the towns and to improve the visitors first impressions |
| 1. Signage study to: |
| - Examine existing signage provision |
| - Identify improvements that can be made |
| 2. Using the signage study as evidence, offer a one of grant to towns to develop signs that have: |
| - Consistent design |
| - Visually appealing |
| - Improves movability around town |
| - Enhances existing state of signs |
| Nov 2013 | £200k |
| Jan 2014 |

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Appendix 1</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Egcellent Easter</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the towns to build on the success of festive fusion and adopt some of the techniques used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNC will offer:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- advice and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- promotional campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- and Easter egg hunt/trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Tourism** |
| Tourist Information Points |
| To give visitors an interactive way of finding things to do & places to stay |
| Visit Norwich Partnership |
| To invest in our tourism offer by using the Visit Norwich brand as a marketing tool |
| SNC will offer: |
| - advice and support |
| - promotional campaign |
| - and Easter egg hunt/trail |
| April 2014 | £10k |

| **Visit Norwich Partnership** |
| 1. micro launch in Wymondham & Diss |
| 2. Big promotion of the MTs using Festive Fusion programme |
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| **Street Scene** |
| **Signage** |
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| 1. Signage study to: |
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| - Consistent design |
| - Visually appealing |
| - Improves movability around town |
| - Enhances existing state of signs |
| Nov 2013 | £200k |
| Jan 2014 |
### Street décor

1. Young farmers can run **Have You Herd** cow start statue trail to promote agriculture and improve footfall (similar to GoGo Gorillas in Norwich)
   - Cows made
   - Artist employed

### Clean and tidy

#### Enhanced street cleaning

Work with our MTs to identify and ensure the areas are visually appealing and clean

Building on the success of this year’s work, enhance and increase engagement in:
- **visibility** of street cleaners
- **coordination** of cleaning before and after key **events**
- **Leaf Clearance** to clear the way for winter months
- **Clean Sweep** where towns identify problem areas
- Increased visibility around **SNoS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conducted within existing resources</th>
<th>Nov 2013</th>
<th>Apr 2014</th>
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</table>

#### Community litter pick

12 weeks of Community Litter Pick events followed by prize draw

- **Community groups organising litter picks** in their local area to help keep it clean and tidy.
- The Council will provide **promotional materials** and information, risk assessments, measuring tools and collection equipment to enable the litter picks. We will also record the results of the litter picks and work alongside nationwide litter-picking charities to enable joint branding and promotion. Promote volunteering and working together.
- Groups to complete litter pick and return form/photos to be entered into **prize draw** with prize money to be spent on a community activity or project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feb 2013</th>
<th>£5k</th>
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</thead>
</table>

#### Graffiti Removal Scheme

- Fund graffiti removal kits to be provided to parish councils to be

| Dec 2013 | £3.5k |
Reduce the impact graffiti has on our community by supporting communities to remove their own graffiti which is quicker and more cost effective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business training</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Retail Skills Workshops** | 1. Work with City College to: deliver **workshops to existing businesses** that could include:  
• market towns marketing  
  – Branding  
  – Using social media  
  – Effective window displays and visual merchandise  
• There online offer (websites, apps etc)  
• Business planning  
• Selling and negotiation skills  
• your customers journey (customer service and buying-in the right products).  
2. We could also extend taster sessions to **young people to ‘get in to retail’** | Mar 2014 | £40k |

| **Enterprise Norfolk Business start-up** | Use the Retail Skills Workshop proposal as **match funding** for 2014 Enterprise Norfolk as the RSW is a the next step of training after business start-ups | Feb 2014 | £0 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement &amp; marketing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Manager</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Employment &amp; Engagement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job clubs</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health &amp; Social Care</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safe &amp; Well</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Increase the proactive response to keeping people safe and improve the way we targeted resources to assist vulnerable resident by:

- Purchasing sensors which can be placed close to vulnerable residents’ property and raises an alarm to identify when someone enters/leaves which will provide an earlier response.

- Work collaboratively with Police and Housing Providers to identify vulnerable residents and potential vulnerable areas to target those areas proactively rather than reactively to prevent crime.

- Enhance the existing assistive technology scheme in South Norfolk that targets vulnerable users and provides them with a range of electronic equipment to keep them safe.

- Support independent living by providing safe warm and well packs to vulnerable residents.

### Sports & Wellbeing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Village Games</strong></th>
<th>A roadshow held around the MT to promote services and advice</th>
<th>Mar 2014</th>
<th>£25k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Sports Development in South Norfolk, in partnership with Active Norfolk.</td>
<td>Small sporting activities to encourage applicants</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mobile Gym</strong></td>
<td>Instructor led physical activity sessions handed over to community group to run in centre of town</td>
<td>Jan 2014</td>
<td>£20k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended our leisure facilities to Loddon</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total** £544,500
Additional YNYC proposals

In addition to the proposals already approved at Cabinet on 27\textsuperscript{th} October 2013 and those considered at the cross party meeting held on 5\textsuperscript{th} November at cabinet’s instigation (See Appendix 1), the following proposals are also recommended for approval, all via the YNYC funding stream.

Each of these activities has a proforma at Appendix 2.1 providing more detailed information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outputs/Outcomes</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Events &amp; activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Collaboration with the Norfolk and Norwich Festival.** | • Increased income for local businesses of at least £107k, based on the methodology used by the 2013 EIA.  
• More people visiting our market towns – the events will act as a major magnet for people to the market towns during the festival fortnight; drawing footfall and associated visitor spend in local businesses.  
• Increased profile of the Market Towns Initiative – use the NNF brand to provide us with a vehicle with which to highlight our investment in the Market Towns Initiative, and display of SNC logos and branding in the NNF programme and website. | Festival Fortnight (9\textsuperscript{th} -25\textsuperscript{th} May 2014) | Up to £40k, depending on level and events chosen |
| **Support to Business** | | | |
| **Investment in Better Broadband** | Outcomes of this work include:  
- Identification of industrial areas that would benefit from better broadband.  
- Cost/benefit analysis of pylon/cabinet upgrade carried out. | January 2014 onwards | £100k |
| **Health & wellbeing** | | | |
| **Handy Person Scheme** | In Yr 1 of YNYC (Sept 12-August 13), the enhanced Handyperson Scheme carried out 644 jobs for | December 2013 – March 2015 | £75k |
## Appendix 2 – Additional Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Expected outcomes in Yr 2 include</th>
<th>Outcomes expected from this enhancement include</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing assistance for vulnerable people by undertaking basic maintenance and repairs jobs in their homes and gardens. Early intervention will reduce hospital admissions and other more costly interventions</td>
<td>• Increase in take up of scheme and greater number of jobs carried out.</td>
<td>• Reduction in enforcement action required in market towns (target of 5%)</td>
<td>February 2014 onwards</td>
<td>£3.5k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vulnerable people maintaining independence for longer.</td>
<td>• Increased satisfaction with how safe people feel about their area (target of 77%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Creation of work experience opportunities for young people with Handyperson scheme contractors.</td>
<td>• 7 town /parish councils trained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Mediation Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support for town and parish councils to be able to address community tension issues in their localities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Champions</td>
<td>• Increased community involvement in supporting families through training volunteers (5 new volunteers).</td>
<td>• Increased community involvement in supporting families through training volunteers (5 new volunteers).</td>
<td>February 2014 onwards</td>
<td>£21k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 20 families supported</td>
<td>• 20 families supported</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduction in number of families needing crisis support (5%)</td>
<td>• Reduction in number of families needing crisis support (5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Unemployment and Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Princes Trust</td>
<td>Expected outcomes of this work include:</td>
<td>Expected outcomes of this work include:</td>
<td>March 2014 onwards</td>
<td>£72k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with young people to prepare them for apprenticeships and the wider working world through the Get Started and Get Into</td>
<td>• 117 young people put through the programmes with;</td>
<td>• 117 young people put through the programmes with;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An average of 75% of young people into employment, education or training following the Get into</td>
<td>An average of 75% of young people into employment, education or training following the Get into</td>
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Appendix 2 – Additional Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sport and wellbeing</th>
<th>community coach bursary scheme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>programmes.</td>
<td>programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An average of 50% of young people into employment, education or training following the Get Started programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% of young people completing the Get into programme into employment.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>One young person selected to become Young Ambassadors for South Norfolk to represent PT and employment, education and training opportunities in South Norfolk for young people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Get Started and Get Into established as recognised delivery methods in South Norfolk and supported by private sector sponsors.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport and Wellbeing</th>
<th>Community Coach Bursary Scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide financial support for volunteer sports coaches to improve their skills by undertaking NGB coaching qualifications. Coaches will provide a valuable service in their community and develop generic skills to help them gain employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our target for the enhancement would be to support at least 23 volunteer coaches. This output would have the following outcomes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increased number of volunteers working within sport and physical activity settings in South Norfolk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Increased number of qualified coaches and in the quality of their delivery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Greater retention of players/members of sports clubs and increased participation in sport and physical activity in South Norfolk, especially among young people.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 2013 onwards</td>
<td>£7.5k</td>
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| Total | £319k |
Enhancement:
Investment in better broadband for South Norfolk via influencing and supporting Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN).

Why?

Many businesses are already using Broadband to maximise opportunities for growth, to expand their customer base and improve their bottom line. They are doing this by running meetings by video link, conducting training and delivering customer services remotely and using new technology to revolutionise their business processes.

Norfolk County Council (NCC) is the first in the UK to lead on developing better broadband through the BBfN partnership to transform access and speed of broadband across the district by the end of 2015 - this will give our residents, particularly businesses, an opportunity to better access information and services.

However, this will only account for 80% of premises and our research has already identified that part of the 20% not included are business areas within the market towns including:

Wymondham
- NR180WZ Penfold Dr Gateway 2 Industrial Estate

Harleston
- IP209BB Church St / London Rd
- IP209BH Fuller Rd / Mayflower Rd Industrial Estate

Diss
- IP214HD Diss Business Centre
- IP224AP Chapel St
- IP224XU/Y Shelhanger Rd
- IP224LE/N Denmark St

Also, the BBfN has no plans to incorporate how to get businesses digitally ready and realise the business benefits of fully utilising Broadband. As we have a number of SMEs that won’t immediately understand the variety of benefits of using online and having an effective broadband service.

Although SNC cannot influence bringing phases forward or change the current BBfN plans, it can make its own plans (working with BBfN) to resolve issues mentioned above.

What?

SNC can use the BBfN to better help businesses in two ways:
- invest in further reach pylons/cabinets to allow businesses not getting broadband (in areas identified above) to have access it. Including areas identified for development.

- business access drop-in sessions where business can find out more about better broadband and how it will enhance their business with a prize draw of free ‘hot spot’ for one of the retailers – this will allow them to give free internet access to customers. Including a marketing campaign to promote when better broadband is coming and provide all the relevant information so that residents and businesses are ready to exploit the potential.

**Evidence Base?**

The study by BT Business, which considered the effects of technology on businesses, found that 61 per cent of firms think quicker web connections have helped them improve their operations.

It was also revealed that companies which supported the use of technology had a 69 per cent better than average experience of the recession, while 30 per cent added that technology has helped them to save money.

Investing in better technology is emerging as a measure of success in the future for many businesses and identified as playing a critical role.

**Expected outcomes and targets:**

Enhanced economic growth through:

- Inward investment through businesses attracted by the better broadband capacity.
- Retention of existing businesses in South Norfolk Market Towns.
- Increased turnover of new and existing businesses using new technology.
- 8 additional pylons/cabinets installed across the business districts identified above by March 2015.

**Cost:**

There is no specific cost as each cabinet is bespoke, but range from £10k. Its advised that we assess each area as they come on stream using the formula ‘cost of cabinet to business ratio’ and limit the overall budget at £100k.

NCC has also ring-fenced £2m to improve the BBfN project past the planned phases. This will include allowing local authorities to match fund investments in pylons/cabinets for missed areas.

**Exit strategy?**

As we can work with BBfN in conjunction with the planned phases and have no requirement to enter
into an agreement, we do not need an exit strategy.

**Any wider benefits?**

Better coverage will also help to attract new businesses. BBfN are already being approached by landlords/businesses to assess broadband coverage before they embark on setting up.
**Enhancement:**

The South Norfolk Safe at Home Handyman Scheme - an early intervention project

### Why?

South Norfolk has a higher proportion (30% of population) of older people than nationally or generally in Norfolk. This proportion is projected to increase over the next 20 years with the greatest increase being in those aged 75 to 84.

A major concern for older people is home and garden maintenance. As they grow older many people report that they need help with small home repairs and they also often suggest that all that they need are simple adaptations that would create a safe, comfortable home in which they could continue to live independently and with peace of mind.

One of the health issues that particularly affect older people is falls. Falls represent the most frequent and serious type of accident amongst older people with about 35% of over-65’s living in the community experiencing 1 or more falls and about 45% of those aged over 80 falling. Half of all fallers will also have another fall within the next 12 months. Hospital admission rates from falls are rising and by 2020 in South Norfolk 9,020 people over 65 a year are predicted to have a fall and 734 are predicted to be admitted to hospital as a result.

People who have fallen have been found to have had most difficulties in bathrooms, kitchens, bedrooms and the access to these rooms, with particular falls related hazards being loose rugs, clutter, electrical cords, unstable furniture and the absence of simple aids such as bathroom grab bars, raised toilet seats and handrails on both sides of stairways.

Major loss of quality of life and even an unplanned and premature move into residential care is often the result of increasing worry about home maintenance or a traumatic incident such as a fall.

Evidence from studies elsewhere suggests that the risk to the health and quality of life of older residents can be significantly reduced and consequent health/social care expense avoided by the wider deployment of early intervention services such as local Handyman services. Funding is therefore being sought to further enhance the South Norfolk Handyman Scheme and to prove the worth of the concept locally with the aim of securing a long term working relationship with Health and Social Care commissioners.

### What?

In 2010 the Council’s Handyperson Scheme was launched and with a budget of c £10,000 it used 6 small local contractors to carry out works such as:

- Small repairs and minor adaptations that reduce the risk of falls and enable independent living;
- Home security measures that prevent burglaries and increase people’s sense of security in their own homes;
- The installation of key safes, grab rails, temporary ramps, or moving a bed or other furniture can reduce the length of hospital stay;
- Energy efficiency checks and measures which lead to improvements in health and wellbeing, safety, comfort and expenditure on fuel.

In 2012 all five Neighbourhood Boards approved one year funding (total £78,000) to enhance the scale existing scheme. Details of the increased work undertaken are provided in the evidence section below.
A budget of £75,000 for 15 months is now sought as ‘proof of concept’ funding and to enhance the Council’s existing Handyman Scheme still further. It is proposed that this enhancement will be in the form of the creation of a South Norfolk **Safe at Home** scheme with a directly employed handyperson with a van. Safe at Home would cover all the areas above and would also provide:

- a home screening/modification service targeting the removal of hazards such as loose rugs, clutter, electrical cords, unstable furniture and installation of, for example, bathroom grab bars and handrails. Other support would be provided with garden maintenance services, severe weather contact calls to check vulnerable residents are safe and the provision of information on community groups and activities that may be of interest.

- help for residents with dementia, possibly including handrails, signposting, extra lighting and for example gas detectors and water-level alerts.

- working with a partner it may also be possible to provide affordable assistive technology, care equipment, products and services to help older frail people to stay safe and independent in their homes. Such equipment might include hoists and stair lifts, as well as equipment including falls/motion detectors linked to a pager, location alerting systems, personal alarms, environmental control systems, automated lighting systems and memo minders with motion activated messaging.

- Links with the Fire Service might also see their smoke detector installation work targeted for cuts as part of NCCs Putting People First budget consultation being continued locally. (Fire Service callouts cost between £250 and £400)

- access to schemes to improve access to funding for homes insulation and more affordable heating and money/benefits advice

Safe at Home would have a strong emphasis on outcomes, including a later take up of formal care services, reducing social care demand, increased numbers of older people living more confidently in safer homes and vulnerable people aged 65 and over having a personal contact and greater links to local opportunities.

**Evidence Base**

See Appendix A and also background information in Sections: ‘Why’ and ‘Any wider benefits’

**Expected outcomes and targets:**

Experience to date suggest that if the Council invests in raising the Handyman Service to the next ‘opportunity ready’ level at a cost of £98,000 over eighteen months we could expect the following outcomes:

- An increased number of older and disabled people supported to undertake small repairs and DIY jobs
- Reduced unplanned hospital admissions, re-admissions and non-medical hospital visits
- Reduced demand for premature re-housing and admission to social care
- Reduced fear of crime
- Reduced social isolation
- Reduction in risks of winter related illnesses and injury
- Reduced cost to the wider public purse
Output Targets:

- Direct contact made with 1000 vulnerable and elderly residents
- 1200 DIY tasks undertaken

Cost:

£75,000 for 15 months (for a Handyperson and a van, and a small minor works budget)

Exit strategy?

In the event that further funding is not forthcoming through a longer term working relationship with Health and Social Care commissioners the intention is to promote the service as fee earning local handyman to residents, local charitable groups and RHPs with minimal stock holdings in the District.

The handyman would also undertake minor works, currently outsourced, on remote SNC sites for example, public toilets, business centres and the Depot

Any wider benefits?

As a proof of concept project the intention is that the format of the enhanced service will be such that it will be ‘opportunity ready’ to demonstrate in the course of current discussions with Health and Social Care services that it can contribute significantly to the Early Intervention and Integrated Services agenda by making tangible savings for the wider public purse. For example, the cost to the NHS of treating falls is substantial; a benchmarking study found that elderly patients who had a fall which did not require surgery spent on average 19 days in hospital, ranging from a week to 26 days with the average cost of a day case NHS bed being £682 and the average cost of an excess bed day being £264. A fractured femur has been calculated to be around £25,000 (BRE) and the average care home cost in the East of England is around £29,000 a year.
Appendix A

Handyman Service – comparative output figures for 2011/12 (base service) and 2012/13 (service enhanced with YNYC funding)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SEP</th>
<th>OCT</th>
<th>NOV</th>
<th>DEC</th>
<th>JAN</th>
<th>FEB</th>
<th>MAR</th>
<th>APR</th>
<th>MAY</th>
<th>JUN</th>
<th>JUL</th>
<th>AUG</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>77</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td>611</td>
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<td>2013/14</td>
<td>29</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Enhancement**

**Collaboration with the Norfolk and Norwich Festival.**

**Why?**

The Norfolk and Norwich Festival (NNF) is a flagship arts organisation for the East of England with a reputation for innovative, inspirational programming and commissioning. It stages one of the most significant arts festivals in the UK each May and collaborates with local, national and international partners to produce work for a large and diverse range of audiences, participants and communities.

Large scale arts and cultural events have long been recognised as a valuable tool in promoting and enhancing the vitality and attractiveness of an area, contributing in a positive way to local economies by bringing visitors (both local and from further afield) to locations to spend money in local businesses. It is the intention if this proposal that we commission the NNF to programme events and activities across South Norfolk’s market towns to realise these economic benefits.

**What?**

The NNF staff have visited South Norfolk’s market towns and come up with a number of different proposals, all or some of which could be delivered during the Festival Fortnight (9th – 25th May 2014). These are as follows:

- A large scale ‘Festival Day’ in Diss at the Mere which would feature circus and live theatre performances and walkabout acts, between 11am and 4pm, which would be free to attend, with families targeted. Cost estimated at £20,700k.
- A touring theatre performance in each of Wymondham, Diss and Loddon. Cost estimated at £8050
- A contemporary music performance in Diss, Wymondham or Loddon, cost estimated at £3450k.
- Performances and workshops at eight schools and early years settings in the market towns to build awareness of the festival and publicise additional events. Cost estimated at £7475.

**Evidence Base:**

The NNF commissioned an Economic Impact Assessment (EIO) of their 2013 Festival, which has outlined the following facts:

- 14% of the attendees at the NNF are from South Norfolk, which indicates that there is an existing audience for these types of events in the district.
- 95% of respondents to the survey said that they would attend a NNF event again in the future and 89% of the respondents thought that the events they attended were well organised and of a high quality, giving us reassurance about their delivery capability.
- There was a broad reach of attendees across Norfolk and further afield into Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk, giving us scope for further economic benefits from tourists.
- Of those visitors that stayed overnight (i.e. not living locally), over 51% stayed in paid accommodation.
- Total participant/attendee spend generated by the NNF is estimated at £1.4m, based on delivery spend of £2.3m.

**Expected outcomes and targets:**

If we invested in all events and activities proposed by the NNF at a cost of £39,675 we could expect the following outcomes:

- **Increased income for local businesses** of at least £107k, based on the methodology used by
the 2013 EIA.

- **More people visiting our market towns** – the events will act as a major magnet for people to the market towns during the festival fortnight; drawing footfall and associated visitor spend in local businesses.

- **Increased profile of the Market Towns Initiative** – use the NNF brand to provide us with a vehicle with which to highlight our investment in the Market Towns Initiative, and display of SNC logos and branding in the NNF programme and website.

### Cost:

Costs of delivering the proposals have been outlined in the ‘What’ section. These include the NNF providing all event management, crew, production and technical staff for each of the specific events but we would be required to supply a member of the Events Team to assist with local coordination and knowledge. This would be met from existing staff budgets.

It is also remembering again that we could choose to commission all or some of the proposals, which would alter the amount of investment required.

### Exit strategy:

It would be made clear to the NNF at this stage that the level of investment potentially made in 2014 would not be available in future years but that we hoped that it would be used to promote South Norfolk’s market towns as viable venues for future mainstream programming of the NNF, not reliant on SNC funding contributions. The events would be used to demonstrate the worth of investment to local Town Teams and businesses who may wish to secure investment from within the business community locally.

### Wider benefits:

If the benefits of investing in the NNF are recognised locally and by the business communities and we are able to remove our investment in future years, this may be able to reduce the need for us to provide activity in these towns which may result in future savings for the authority.

The NNF also relies on the use of volunteers to help deliver their events – we would use this to increase the appeal of volunteering locally and signpost them to other opportunities locally, such as the Diss Carnival or Wymondham Music Festival.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhancement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Additional support for Community Coach Bursary Scheme</td>
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**Why?**

Local volunteer-led sports clubs make up a vital part of the opportunities that exist for South Norfolk residents to take part in regular sport and physical activity, especially young people. The clubs provide a very localised pathway into lifelong participation in sport and are often an important part of the vitality and strength of communities, especially in rural areas.

Many of these clubs rely on volunteer coaches to lead and instruct participants. To become a qualified coach, volunteers are required to undertake National Governing Body (NGB) coaching qualifications. The cost of these can often run into several hundred pounds which acts as a major barrier, in the current financial climate especially, to volunteers undertaking courses and becoming volunteers.

**What?**

This scheme provides financial support to volunteers to allow them undertake NGB coaching qualifications, contributing towards course fees, travel and accommodation. It will cover up to 75% of total costs or £300 (whichever is lower), with the individuals or the clubs that they are associated with covering the additional amount. To be eligible, applicants must either live within the district or be a coaching member of a volunteer-led club situated within the district. Testimonies are required from club officials or the NBG with grants being paid on completion of the course to ensure adherence.

We use the Norfolk Community Foundation to administer the grants on our behalf, which are then agreed by the Deputy Leader and Communities Officer – Sport and Wellbeing. The NCF charges an admin fee of 6% of total grant cost.

**Evidence Base:**

The scheme was run so successfully over 2012 and 2013 that in September 2013 the funding committed by the YNYC programme was exhausted – by that time we had agreed 33 bursaries to volunteer coaches:

- Of these 33, 20 were aged 23 and below demonstrating success in getting young people engaged in volunteering.
- Of the 33, 21 were awarded to female volunteers, demonstrating success in getting females (who are under-represented in sports leadership roles) into volunteering in sport.

**Expected outcomes and targets:**

For the anticipated investment of £7500 we would expect to support at least 23 volunteer coaches. This output would have the following outcomes:

- Increased number of volunteers working within sport and physical activity settings in South Norfolk.
- Increased number of qualified coaches and an increase in the quality of their delivery.
- Greater retention of players/members of sports clubs and increased participation in sport and physical activity in South Norfolk, especially among young people.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cost:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The cost of the enhancement would be identical to the previous years at £7500.</td>
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<th><strong>Exit strategy:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Once qualified coaches then go on to volunteer in their local settings and no further support is required from South Norfolk Council.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Wider benefits:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>It is expected that the pattern of having a large number of young people becoming qualified coaches in their chosen sports will continue. This may have the additional benefit of offering these young people a pathway into sport as a career choice. Leadership gives young people confidence and aspirations for the future, which will only benefit them in the longer term.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Investment in Princes Trust ‘Get Started’ and ‘Get Into’ programmes.

**Why?**

The Princes Trust is a well-known and respected deliverer of provision to young people. They provide practical and financial support to enable young people to move into work, education or training.

It has become apparent that there is little or no training provision for young people in South Norfolk aside from that available from Colleges. A key issue is young people’s ability to access these services and there is need to improve the work readiness of young people.

Young parents have been identified as a particular group facing barriers to work. Supporting young parents to become economically active or learn new skills will help improve their family situation and reduce the burden on the public purse.

**What?**

This is the start of a sustainable package of support to:

- To work with businesses to help train young people to be work ready.
- Raise aspiration.
- Build relationships with the local business community.
- Reduce NEETs.
- Increase Apprenticeship & Traineeship Opportunities.

This will be achieved by commissioning the Princes Trust to deliver:

**Get Started** - Short courses that engage and develop young people through sport or the arts. They will work with South Norfolk Council to decide on the most appropriate course themes.

**Get Into** - Industry themed pre-apprenticeship courses that develop young people’s skills within a specific sector, providing them with work experience and supporting them into work. PT Outcomes team will work to secure real opportunities for young people with employers who are recruiting. Themes will be agreed, however these could include, construction, retail, tourism.

A key component of the proposal will be building strong relationships with the business community. PT is experienced in maximising these relationships and will work with SNC and key partners to ensure the programme remains in place after SNC has ‘pump primed’ its delivery through start-up funding.

**Evidence Base?**

- With the raising of the participation age to 17 next year and 18 the year after combined with the relatively poor provision at Six Form level and lack of alternative training provision provided locally it is increasingly important for young people to remain participating.

- Norfolk’s Children’s Services Age & Stage Profile shows young people’s attainment of a Level 2 or 3 qualification by age 19, is related to their attainment at age 16. In this respect Norfolk is consistently below the national average, the East of England average and the statistical neighbour average and the difference is increasing rather
than decreasing. It is recommended that this can be addressed by the introduction of 16 to 19 Study Programmes.

- The District Profile highlights South Norfolk as having the lowest number of Year 11 students moving into full time training. This is not through choice but through lack of accessible provision.

**Expected outcomes and targets:**

The programmes would meet the following aims:

- 117 young people put through the programmes with;
  - An average of 75% of young people into employment, education or training following the Get into programme.
  - An average of 50% of young people into employment, education or training following the Get Started programme.
  - 50% of young people completing the Get into programme into employment.

- One young person selected to become Young Ambassadors for South Norfolk to represent PT and employment, education and training opportunities in South Norfolk for young people.

- Get Started and Get Into established as recognised delivery methods in South Norfolk and supported by private sector sponsors.

**Cost:**

This proposal is for nine courses delivered over the course of 18 months, with the first Get Started course being planned in March 2014 for a May 2014 start.

**Indicative Costings (per year):**

**Young people engaged (over 18 months):**

- Get into x 3 (45 young people) £66,093
- Get Started x 6 (72 young people) £88,416
- Development Awards (20 from above) £10,000
- Get Started executives' time £32,668
- Total cost of programme: £197,177

- Funding requirement from SNC: £72,000
- Princes Trust funding and sponsorship: £125,177
- Total funding: £197,177

**Exit strategy?**

The Princes Trust has a proven track record of delivery through these programmes and are confident of achieving the targets they proposed. Appropriate contractual arrangements would be made to ensure payment relates to delivery.
Any wider benefits?

If the benefits of investing in the Princes Trust are recognised locally and by the business community we would not be expected to fund these in future years as other partners will have been identified. However an invaluable support package will have been established by then end of the contract.

The success of the programme may encourage more providers to offer training in South Norfolk as it will demonstrate demand as well need.
## Why?

- Norfolk has one of the highest number of young people going into care in the country per head of population. Statutory provision kicks in when the family is in crisis which is too late. The consequence is the family being more chaotic, resulting in the family being less likely to be economically active and a burden on the state. Also they can have a huge community impact that includes crime and ASB, unsightly properties which can affect the economic prosperity of businesses and the attractiveness and vitality of our market towns.

- Chaotic families are shown to cost 76 times more to the state than families who are on the universal pathway. The cost to South Norfolk for non-working family benefits payments alone is £17 million per year, without including other factors such as crime.

## What?

- South Norfolk Council will, along with partners, help coordinate early support for children and families in and around our market towns to prevent issues escalating. Families who have been identified as causing a community impact in and around our market towns will be targeted.

- A key focus will be on economic activity and aspirations of the family and integrating the family back into the community. The scheme will provide individual family support for up to a twelve week period.

- Volunteers will be trained to support the family, with the scheme encouraging successful users of the programme to support other families.

## Evidence Base:

- Research has shown that effective early family intervention can save up to £220,000 per family through an investment of around £18,000.

- Early help has been shown to improve the aspirations of children in the family who are then more likely to go on to be economically active and less burden on the state.

- It has been demonstrated that chaotic families have a negative impact on the community they live in through unsightly housing, antisocial behaviour and crime.

## Expected outcomes and targets:

- Increased community involvement in supporting families through training volunteers (5 new volunteers).

- 20 families supported

- Reduction in number of families needing crisis support (5%)
**Cost:**

- The cost of this enhancement will be £21,000 which will be for professional support, training and equipping volunteers with the skills needed to support families.
- Children Services will be putting £1,000 in officer costs per family to support the family = £20,000

**Exit strategy:**

The enhancement will train volunteers and successful families who can then take continue this work past the programme end. The programme will also seek to reduce the number of families moving into expensive crisis management in South Norfolk thus freeing up more funding to put into early help.

**Wider benefits:**

A reduction in the number of families seeking housing and benefit support from South Norfolk Council.
# Enhancement

## Community mediation initiative

### Why?

- Tension issues within our communities manifests itself through many different ways. Often minor issues escalate which can result in increased tension, alienation of individuals, less confidence in the public sector and reduced community cohesion.

- The consequence of this can often be less willingness get involved in community activities which can result in a less positive and vibrant community. This can be more obvious in towns where there already tends to be less cohesion compared to rural locations.

- When tension does escalate, often the only route is enforcement action which is time consuming and costly. As well as increasing the costs to the tax payer, the resulting actions can do little to improve the perpetrators understanding of the consequences of their actions.

### What?

- Over the next 12 months, the initiative will focus on training and educating our market towns and larger parish councils, on the use of restorative approaches (RA) and how it can help them to resolve issues more quickly and sustainably. This approach will identify issues at an earlier stage which we can then work with relevant partners and the community to resolve.

- Community involvement in this process is essential if we are to deliver long term solutions. Engaging the community successfully involves really listening to concerns, allowing the community, specifically those whose voices are not as loud (such as younger / older people) to be heard.

### Evidence Base:

Over the last four years we have been developing restorative approached to deal with crime and antisocial behaviour which has been hugely successful in speeding up the time it takes to deal with issues and reduce escalation of the issue.

A recent example of how effective this solution can be:

- An issue over teenagers using a small play area surrounded by houses has resulted in numerous complaints to South Norfolk Council and partners.
- Repairs and enforcement action had not resolved the issue and there was no chance of closing or moving the play area.
- Following the use of mediation, residents, young people and relevant agencies were able to hear the impact the issues was having and the reason these occurred. As a result, a plan was put in place to provide a more approximate place for the teenagers to congregate. For the 12 months before RA was used, there had been 24 visits to the area and had cost South Norfolk Council over £2000 in repairs. Since this incidents there has been no criminal damage and no visits.
**Expected outcomes and targets:**

- Reduction in enforcement action required in market towns (target of 5%)
- Increased satisfaction with how safe people feel about their area (target of 77%)
- 7 town/parish councils trained.

**Cost:**

The cost of this enhancement will be £3500 which is for training and promotion costs, with an additional £1300 given in officer time through existing resources.

**Exit strategy:**

The enhancement will provide our market towns and larger parishes with the skills and experience to coordinate their own RA. This learning can be rolled out to our other parishes through existing networks and funding.

**Wider benefits:**

An increase in cohesive communities will help to keep South Norfolk a safe and prosperous place to live and work.
Response to County Council Budget Consultation

Deputy Chief Executive

Norfolk County Council is faced with the need to find an unprecedented £189 million in savings over the next 3 years. It is consulting on measures that aim to deliver £140 million savings. This report summarises the main proposals in the consultation and proposes a South Norfolk Council response. As part of its response, the Council is working on new ideas that would involve joint working and deliver additional savings for the public purse.

1. Background

1.1. Norfolk County Council is forecasting a savings requirement of £189 million over the three years up to March 2017. It has identified measures it expects will deliver £140 million of these savings and is currently consulting on these proposals. Responses are requested by 12 December 2013. The full consultation document is available on the County Council’s website at http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/puttingpeoplefirst.

1.2. This report summarises the main proposals in the consultation and recommends how South Norfolk Council should respond.

2. Summary of the Consultation

2.1. The County Council is requesting responses in a number of areas which are summarised below:

The County Council’s priorities for Norfolk people and their impact

2.2. The County Council’s three priorities are described as

“Excellence in education – We will champion our children and young people’s right to an excellent education, training and preparation for employment because we believe they have the talent and ability to compete with the best. We firmly believe that every single child matters.

Real jobs – We will promote employment that offers security, opportunities and a good level of pay. We want real, sustainable jobs available throughout Norfolk.

Good infrastructure – We will make Norfolk a place where businesses can succeed and grow. We will promote improvements to our transport and
technology infrastructure to make Norfolk a great place to do business.”
(Consultation document Page 1)

2.3. All three of these priorities would help to deliver South Norfolk Council’s own priorities, in particular, promoting a thriving local economy, through jobs and infrastructure, and supporting communities to realise their potential, which can be done through excellent education.

The County Council’s financial approach and strategy

2.4. The County Council’s financial strategy includes increasing income by selling expert or professional services to others where practical and sustainable, increasing Norfolk’s share of EU grant aid and selling assets (property and land) that are no longer needed. It is looking to share more accommodation with other public bodies. It wants to collaborate more widely with others, especially other public bodies who provide services by sharing services and making sure that money coming into Norfolk is used in the most effective way.

2.5. This strategy is similar to South Norfolk Council’s own strategy, which focuses on generating income to reduce our dependence on central funding and on greater collaboration to share services, e.g. building control or legal services. Our approach differs in that while disposing of surplus assets, we are also currently purchasing property and land assets to increase our revenue through rents.

2.6. South Norfolk Council would have concerns that the impact of spending reductions by Norfolk County Council could simply transfer costs to other public bodies rather than producing overall savings to the public purse. The scale of the savings required will also be a great challenge for the Council to successfully deliver and South Norfolk Council would want to know what contingency plans are being developed should these proposals not be implemented.

Other ideas and solutions for different ways of supporting or delivering change to save money and help the County Council achieve its priorities for less

2.7. Even with the savings it is proposing, the County Council still has to find a further £49 million in savings for 2015/16 and 2016/17. It has been seeking to engage with all the Norfolk District Councils on ways it can achieve this. South Norfolk Council has developed a number of proposals which would benefit from a discussion with Norfolk County Council members and officers. Examples include:

- **Safe at Home** - This would be an early intervention service to improve the health outcomes for elderly residents through enhancing the existing Care and Repair and Handyman services. It would generate health and social care savings through delaying admission to more formal care settings by working to keep dementia sufferers in their own homes, reducing excess winter deaths and, as a first priority, preventing falls. Current “prevention” strategies concentrate on those who have fallen for the first time. In contradistinction, this new approach would target individuals who are professionally assessed to be at risk of falling but have not yet had a fall.

- **Integrated Early Interventions Team** - This would remove obstacles to people continuing to live in their own homes through enhancing the existing Integrated Housing Adaptation Team which already includes
social care staff. Through giving each individual a dedicated named Case Manager, a holistic needs assessments and support plan would be developed to address their particular needs. Housing caseworkers would be trained to undertake low level needs assessments currently undertaken by social care staff.

- **Addressing child poverty** - Child poverty creates substantial costs to children’s social services and education. South Norfolk Council’s approach would address child poverty through increasing economic resilience in the family. It would target those families that are in poverty, but do not have sufficient difficulties to be part of the “Troubled Families” programme. It would work with the County Council and the Top 20 companies in South Norfolk to offer 10 week traineeships designed to lead to a job or an apprenticeship and to expand the number of apprenticeships offered.

2.8. Other areas within the consultation where South Norfolk Council could work closely with the County Council on include:

- **Rationalisation of Property** – the two Councils could work to share their asset base, increasing the use of South Norfolk Council’s existing assets with the aim of freeing up public buildings which can then be disposed of saving on-going revenue costs and returning capital funds for future investment.

- **Additional Income** – the two Councils could work together to raise additional income to support the delivery of services.

- **Resources** – sharing staff training where applicable such as planning staff, and joint procurement in areas such as banking services, telephony and vehicle fuel.

- **Early intervention and Child Poverty** – Districts have a key role in ensuring families stay together in terms of housing provision, benefits and advice with strong links to providing comprehensive support networks through Citizen Advice Bureaux and other third sector providers.

- **Volunteers** – South Norfolk Council can offer the County Council its expertise in developing the volunteering role within the district, working with town and parish councils, to encourage residents/groups to take on community roles such as school crossing patrols and working with vulnerable people.

- **Housing services** – working together the two Councils can eliminate any duplication in providing housing services to vulnerable residents.

*The Council’s proposal to freeze its share of the Council Tax for 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17*
2.9. The County Council is proposing to freeze the level of Council Tax for the next 3 years. This will attract Council Tax Freeze Grant in 2014/15. Any increase over 2% would require a local referendum.

*The individual savings proposals and the package of proposals taken as a whole, for example, has the County Council prioritised the services that matter most?*

2.10. There are a total of 66 savings measures identified by the County Council. The ten proposals which save the most money (£94 million of the £140 million) are summarised below, along with the Council’s proposed response:
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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total Saving (£m)</th>
<th>South Norfolk Council Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make use of newer and cheaper ICT systems and practices</td>
<td>This includes implementing Digital Norfolk Ambition and the replacement and redesign of the Council’s overall ICT infrastructure. It includes the renegotiation of contracts for telephone use and internet, electrical testing and stationery. It also includes improvements to Children's Services' systems, the introduction of SMART ticketing in public transport, and using technology to improve transport monitoring.</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal and are already developing joint work on contracting telephony and investigating future opportunities for joint IT working. We could do further joint work and are working with the Norfolk Commissioning Academy to develop further ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change the way we set up and monitor key social care contracts to reduce costs</td>
<td>This includes reducing the costs of the Council's residential care contract with NorseCare and the mental health services contract with Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust. It will also improve our use of what we call 'block' contracts with home care providers and providers of respite care. We will also increasingly use electronic monitoring technology to monitor service use.</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal provided it works in a way that does not impact adversely on the quality of life of residents. Our proposals for keeping residents Safe at Home would reduce the need for them to go into residential settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing management, staffing and accommodation arrangements in services</td>
<td>This means we will review services with a view to rationalising the number of managers, staff and resources required to support, provide or commission services. This includes managing vacant posts, reducing temporary and intern staff and creating the Managing Director role. It also includes reviewing the accommodation requirements of services to reduce the amount of buildings we use, and sharing buildings to minimise costs and make energy savings/reduce waste. We will be reviewing and scaling business support services to match the shrinking size of the Council. This also includes senior management restructuring in Children's Services, the joining up of some management functions in back office services, and a staffing review in the Fire &amp; Rescue service.</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal and are open to sharing accommodation with County Council staff. Through the planning system we could promote multi-agency use of public facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make our systems and processes smarter and more efficient</td>
<td>Closely linked to proposals for using cheaper ICT systems, this proposal means we will make our processes for managing information and staff as efficient and straightforward as possible. This includes a reduction in our postage spend, and the increased use of digital media for marketing instead of printed material. It also includes more efficient financial processes through the better use of technology.</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal and are supportive of using digital rather than printed media where this does not prevent access to services for vulnerable residents. We would appreciate an opportunity to discuss how we can jointly design our web services around the customer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the way we work with the NHS and health services by sharing staff, funding and priorities</td>
<td>This includes work that will target people most at risk of health problems and reduce the number of people being admitted to hospital. It will also include establishing joint senior management posts across health and social care.</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal and our ideas on integrated Early Intervention and keeping elderly residents Safe at Home will contribute towards achieving this. This area lends itself towards community budgeting; aligning resources to need and delivering at the local level which we feel districts are ideally placed to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver the Willows energy from waste plant in King's Lynn</td>
<td>Implementation of a new waste treatment facility in King's Lynn.</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>South Norfolk Council is part of the Norfolk Waste Partnership which has identified and delivered significant savings in the collection and disposal of waste. Further opportunities to work collaboratively in this Partnership exist.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Make more income from chargeable services by improving our services, offering new services where there is a demand for them, and increasing charges where appropriate

- Income will come from a range of proposals including:
  - Selling our communications services to others.
  - Increasing NPLaw’s external income from trading.
  - Making more money from museums by establishing a fundraising foundation to enable gift aid to be reclaimed on admissions, and developing new ways of creating income.
  - Developing commercial opportunities in the Records Office.
  - Generating new income in key environmental services so that they pay for themselves in the long term.
  - Ensuring that we are paid enough money for the chargeable services we provide to ensure that we fully cover our costs.
  - Examples include stricter charges and regulations for companies undertaking streetworks, and charging for the full cost of support to developers during travel planning and support to bus providers involved in Smart ticketing.
  - Deliver a wider range of specialist highway services, such as laboratory services and Rider & Driver development, to increase income.
  - Develop a more joined up set of public safety services for schools and other key customers.
  - Secure more money from European Union and other funding schemes to use in delivering services.
  - Provide social care management services to people who fund their own care support.
  - Increase fees for registration services - which means the cost of registering things like births, deaths and marriages may go up.

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<td>Make more income from chargeable services by improving our services, offering new services where there is a demand for them, and increasing charges where appropriate</td>
<td>Income will come from a range of proposals including: Selling our communications services to others. Increasing NPLaw’s external income from trading. Making more money from museums by establishing a fundraising foundation to enable gift aid to be reclaimed on admissions, and developing new ways of creating income. Developing commercial opportunities in the Records Office. Generating new income in key environmental services so that they pay for themselves in the long term. Ensuring that we are paid enough money for the chargeable services we provide to ensure that we fully cover our costs. Examples include stricter charges and regulations for companies undertaking streetworks, and charging for the full cost of support to developers during travel planning and support to bus providers involved in Smart ticketing. Deliver a wider range of specialist highway services, such as laboratory services and Rider &amp; Driver development, to increase income. Develop a more joined up set of public safety services for schools and other key customers. Secure more money from European Union and other funding schemes to use in delivering services. Provide social care management services to people who fund their own care support. Increase fees for registration services - which means the cost of registering things like births, deaths and marriages may go up.</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>South Norfolk Council has a track record of generating additional income from existing and new revenue streams. We would consider collaboration across our communications functions to create a centre of excellence. We would welcome NPLaw expanding its income from other sources, provided this is not through charging more to local authorities. We could work together in environmental services, but would want to discuss with the County Council how to avoid knock-on costs to the District if increased charges divert waste to fly-tipping for example. European Union funding could be an area we could collaborate on and share resources.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Increase the number of services we have to prevent children and young people from coming into our care and reducing the cost of looking after children</td>
<td>We would put in place more services that would help to prevent children from having to go into care, and carry out additional work with families so that more children can remain at home. We would also focus on improving our processes so that the cost of looking after each child is reduced.</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>We welcome this proposal, but this would work only if it is delivered in a localised way, at the District level. Our proposals on child poverty could assist in this area. Districts have a key role in ensuring families stay together in terms of housing provision, benefits and advice with strong links to providing comprehensive support networks through Citizen Advice Bureaux and other third sector providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce funding for wellbeing activities for people receiving support from Adult Social Care through a personal budget</td>
<td>This means limiting the use of social care funding to pay for personal care, respite day care and residential care, but not for all wellbeing activities which would need instead to be funded by individuals or provided by the community.</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>This direction will require support for services that reduce the need for intense care and we can play a positive role in developing and delivering these services through our proposals to support early intervention and independent living. We also offer our help and expertise in developing the volunteering role within the District, working with our town and parish councils, to encourage residents/groups to take on community roles such as working with vulnerable people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reorganise how we provide care for people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities</td>
<td>We would re-negotiate the contracts that we have with organisations that provide care, look to reduce the number of people that receive care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and speed up the building of new housing with care schemes. Some people would see a change in their care package.</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>We would be concerned as to how this would impact on vulnerable residents and also the knock-on effect on our housing services. We would want to see more detailed proposals to comment further. We strongly support the development of new housing with care schemes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **South Norfolk Council’s Response**

3.1. The Council is responding through developing the ideas outlined in 2.7 and 2.8 to promote more cost effective delivery of services.

3.2. The Council’s formal response to the consultation is contained in the letter in Appendix A.

4. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

4.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.

4.2. Promoting a thriving local economy.

4.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

4.4. Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

5. **Implications and Risks**

5.1. Financial – There are potential financial risks to South Norfolk Council where County Council proposals impact on demand for our services or income generation measures lead to the Councils competing with each other for the same customers. Conversely, there are opportunities for savings to be made through joint working and delivering services on behalf of the County Council.

5.2. Equalities – the County Council has already carried out an initial, high-level equality impact assessment which is available on its website at: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/puttingpeoplefirst](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/puttingpeoplefirst)

6. **Conclusion**

6.1. The County Council’s budget consultation contains very challenging savings targets. South Norfolk Council will do its best to help the County Council achieve these, wherever it can help, and is already working on ways it can do this.

7. **Recommendations**

7.1. That Cabinet approve the formal response to the County Council Budget Consultation contained in Appendix A.

7.2. That Cabinet note the major proposals being discussed with the County Council outlined in 2.7. Subject to the outcome of these discussions, these proposals will be the subject of more detailed reports to Cabinet in February.
Norfolk County Council Budget Consultation

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on your budget proposals. As a local authority we appreciate the difficult situation we operate in with a need to continue to provide quality services while balancing demand for those services, which in some cases is ever increasing, with reducing government funding. We welcome opportunities to have discussions with members and officers on these proposals and look forward to seeing greater detail so we can clarify how we as a District Council can assist.

We have a good track record of sharing services and working together e.g. Nplaw, ICT Management and, in the future, telephony. From next year the creation of the NNDR Pool will help to deliver our joint aim of economic growth through the retention of the levy payments which will remain within Norfolk rather than being passed onto central government and which will be used for economic development. Furthermore the City Deals bid provides both our authorities with the opportunity to accelerate growth within the Greater Norwich area in particular at Norwich Research Park and South Norfolk is working closely with the County Council on the governance arrangements for this.

It is important that reductions in services and spending do not stifle the early shoots of economic recovery. The County Council’s priorities of “Excellence in education”, “Real jobs” and “Good infrastructure” all focus on providing the necessary ingredients to assist in economic growth, enabling our residents to become financially self sufficient and enhancing their quality of life. South Norfolk Council’s own priorities are:

Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.
Promoting a thriving local economy.
Supporting communities to realise their potential.
Driving services through being businesslike, efficient and customer aware.

Setting your priorities alongside South Norfolk Council’s, the shared priorities are clear.

Acting as an enabler for economic growth across the whole district through such work as our Market Towns Initiative, South Norfolk Council is working hard to stimulate economic
growth in these towns to help ensure their long term viability and vibrancy making them attractive places to work and live.

While we do have concerns that the impact of spending reductions by Norfolk County Council could simply transfer costs to other public bodies rather than producing overall savings to the public purse, we look upon the County Council’s budget proposals as an opportunity to improve further the services we provide our residents and businesses. There is always more we can do specifically around activities linked to the integrated early intervention team, ensuring people are safe at home and addressing child poverty and we look forward to taking these forward with Norfolk County Council. These areas lend themselves towards community budgeting; aligning resources to need and delivering at the local level which we feel districts are ideally placed to do.

Particular areas within the consultation we feel South Norfolk Council could work closely with the County Council on are as follows:

Rationalisation of Property – we would welcome the opportunity to share our asset base, increasing the use of South Norfolk Council’s existing assets with the aim of freeing up public buildings which can then be disposed of saving on-going revenue costs and returning capital funds for future investment.

Additional Income – we share the view that councils should be raising additional income to support the delivery of our services and offer our help in achieving this.

Resources – sharing staff training where applicable such as planning staff, and joint procurement in areas such as banking services and vehicle fuel.

Early Intervention and Child Poverty – Districts have a key role in ensuring families stay together in terms of housing provision, benefits and advice with strong links to providing comprehensive support networks through Citizen Advice Bureaux and other third sector providers.

Reducing health problems and keeping residents in their homes – utilising District Council services such as our handyman service and leisure services we can work together to support and improve the lives of our residents with the benefit of reducing costs by keeping residents out of hospitals and care homes.

Volunteers – we offer our help and expertise in developing the volunteering role within the district, working with our town and parish councils, to encourage residents/groups to take on community roles such as school crossing patrols and working with vulnerable people.

Housing services – working together we can eliminate any duplication in providing housing services to our vulnerable residents.

The areas above are those which we feel we can particularly work with yourselves to support our residents but of course we are conducive to other suggestions. We look forward to hearing the outcome from your consultation and continuing our work together to support our residents and businesses.

Yours sincerely

John Fuller
Leader of South Norfolk Council
## CABINET CORE AGENDA 2013/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet Meeting</th>
<th>Decisions: Key, Policy, Operational</th>
<th>Key Decision/Item</th>
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<th>Cabinet Member</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 Dec</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Cringleford Neighbourhood Plan</td>
<td>A Nicholls</td>
<td>J Fuller</td>
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<td>Deadline for reports</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Leisure Enhancement Programme  (report of the Task Group)</td>
<td>Rob Adams</td>
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<td>Your Neighbourhood, Your Choice</td>
<td>Ian Lambert</td>
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<td>20 Nov 12 Nov (CMT)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>NCC Budget Consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O</td>
<td>Capital Strategy</td>
<td>D Lorimer</td>
<td>G Wheatley</td>
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**COUNCIL: 9 DECEMBER 2013**


**Deadline for reports 29 Jan 17 Jan (CMT)**

| O                                    | Capital Update Q3 | D Lorimer | G Wheatley |
| O                                    | Treasury Review Q3 | D Lorimer | G Wheatley |
| O                                    | Budget Consultation 2014/15 | D Lorimer | G Wheatley |
| K                                    | Revenue Budget and Council Tax FY 2014/15 | D Lorimer | G Wheatley |
| K                                    | Long Stratton Area Action Plan Pre Submission Version | A Nicholls | J Fuller |
| K                                    | Site Specifics Allocations Document: Submission Version | A Nicholls | J Fuller |
| K                                    | Development Management Policies | A Nicholls | J Fuller |
| K                                    | Wymondham Area Action Plan | A Nicholls | J Fuller |
| O                                    | Joint Core Strategy: Consideration of the Inspector’s report | A Nicholls | J Fuller |
| O                                    | Final Draft of Directorate Plans | W Salmons | J Fuller |
| O                                    | Review of Service Level Agreements | I Lambert | M Wilby |
| O                                    | City Deals | T Horspole | J Fuller |
| O                                    | CIL Update | T Horspole | J Fuller |

**24 March**

Key decisions are those which result in income, expenditure or savings with a gross full year effect of £100,000 or 10% of the Council’s net portfolio budget whichever is the greater which has not been included in the relevant portfolio budget, or are significant (e.g. in environmental, physical, social or economic) in terms of its effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.

Core Agenda/CLW 181113