## Members of the Cabinet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Portfolio Holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr J Fuller, Leader</td>
<td>Mrs Y Bendle, Housing and Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr M Wilby, Chairman</td>
<td>Mr D Bills, Innovation and Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr K Kiddie, Vice-Chairman</td>
<td>Mr G Wheatley, Environment and Regulation</td>
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</tbody>
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## Group Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservatives:</td>
<td>Cabinet Office</td>
<td>8.00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrats:</td>
<td>Kett Room</td>
<td>8.15 am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Agenda

**Date**
Monday 31 March 2014

**Time**
9.00 am

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

**Contact**
Claire White  
tel (01508) 533669  
South Norfolk District Council  
Swan Lane  
Long Stratton Norwich  
NR15 2XE

Email: democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk  
Website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

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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.
A G E N D A

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 5)

4. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10 February 2014; (attached – page 7)


The Development Management Policies Document is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan. Alongside the policies of the Joint Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework, the Development Management Policies determine how the Council carries out its development management responsibilities to promote sustainable development.

The Pre-Submission representations period on the document took place in November and December 2013, with 140 representations made. 105 representations raise objections to the document on legal and/or soundness grounds, although there are 35 ‘support’ representations. The main issues raised are objections to the town centre policies and thresholds for retail impact assessments set out; objections to the ‘employment use first’ principle for rural building conversions; the objections to having a policy on minimum internal space standards for new residential dwellings; and objections that local landscape policies do not accord with the NPPF.

Following assessment of these representations, it is concluded that none of the representations raise ‘soundness’ concerns that necessitate any changes prior to submission. It is asserted that the Plan is ‘sound’ and should now be submitted to the Government for independent examination in mid-April 2014, alongside all key supporting and evidence base documents.
The Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan as it sets out development boundaries for settlements across the district and allocations for new sites to meet future development requirements to 2026.

The Pre-Submission representations period on the document took place in November and December 2013, with 331 representations made. The majority of the representations (273) made raise objections to the document on legal and/or soundness grounds, although there are a number of ‘support’ representations. The issues raised vary from basic objections to the fundamental strategy and approach taken in preparing the document (particularly asserted sustainability appraisal failings) through to objections to the allocation (or non-allocation) of individual sites. Other representations seek specific changes to the details of individual policies/allocations and/or point out factual and/or typographical errors.

Following assessment of these representations, it is concluded that none of the representations raise ‘soundness’ concerns that necessitate any changes prior to submission. It is asserted that the Plan is ‘sound’ and should now be submitted to the Government for independent examination in mid-April 2014, alongside all key supporting and evidence base documents.

The Wymondham Area Action Plan is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan as it sets out the development boundary for Wymondham and allocations for new sites to meet future development requirements to 2026, alongside some ‘Wymondham-only’ policies.

The Pre-Submission representations period on the document took place in November and December 2013, with 132 representations made. 63 representations raise objections to the document on legal and/or soundness grounds, although there are 69 ‘support’ representations. The issues raised vary from basic objections to the fundamental strategy and approach taken in preparing the document (particularly asserted sustainability appraisal failings) through to objections to the allocation (or non-allocation) of individual sites. Other representations seek specific changes to the details of individual policies/allocations and/or point out factual and/or typographical errors.

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8. New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan;
   (report attached – page 49)
   (please note that Appendix C is available to print on-line only)
   http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/default.aspx

   This report gives an overview and update on the New Anglia Local Enterprise
   Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and gives an explanation as to how
   this plan sits alongside other sub-regional and local District plans and strategies
   for economic growth. The report explains how South Norfolk Council has fed in
   to these documents and how these fit with the priorities outlined by South
   Norfolk Members and suggests that Cabinet endorse the approach and strategic
   direction of both the SEP and Norfolk Growth Prospectus (NGP).

9. SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-17;
   (report attached – page 68)

   This report recommends to Cabinet a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for SNC. It
   also asks Cabinet to approve work on some of the key concepts that are being
   developed to take forward the Strategy and to endorse the use of resources to
   support the development of the agenda.

10. Asset Management;
    (report attached – page 89)

    The Asset Management Plan and Programme 2011/14 and the Tree Management
    Strategy has been rewritten to reflect the changes in legislation and directorate
    planning. It will ensure a corporate, strategic and forward thinking approach to
    asset management is adopted.

11. Cabinet Core Agenda;
    (attached – page 130)

12. Exclusion of the Public and Press;

    To exclude the public and the press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local
    Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves
    the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of
    Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

13. Land at Chestnut Road, Pulham St Mary;
    (report attached – page 131)

    (NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local
    Government Act 1972)

    Land at Chestnut Road, Pulham St Mary proposed revision to planning application
South Norfolk Council Local Plan: Development Management Policies Document:
Submission of Document for Examination

Planning Policy Manager

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1. Background

1.1. The Development Management Policies are an important part of the Council’s Local Plan as they will be used in all decisions on planning applications. They present the Council with the opportunity to frame policies that will deliver the Council’s aims and objectives for the district’s future. It will therefore influence
the type and quality of future homes and other new development in South Norfolk, conserving heritage assets and the countryside whilst helping to deliver the strategy and objectives for growth set out in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS).

1.2. The JCS was adopted in March 2011, with amendments adopted in January 2014; it sets the context for the Development Management Policies. The JCS includes policies covering such topics as: housing delivery (including affordable housing thresholds); promoting good design; setting environmental performance requirements for new developments, supporting economic growth and commercial development, and settlement and retail centre hierarchies to distribute growth.

1.3. Five Local Plan documents are currently in preparation as part of the emerging South Norfolk Local Plan. These are:

- the Development Management Policies Document (the subject of this report), which sets out a range of policies against which future planning applications will be assessed;
- the Wymondham Area Action Plan and Long Stratton Area Action Plan, which make site specific allocations as well as containing other policies to guide the delivery of infrastructure, facilities and protect the key attributes and characteristics of these settlements;
- the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document;
- the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Document, which will allocate specific sites and identify broad areas to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in South Norfolk district.

1.4. In addition, the adopted JCS and the adopted Cringleford Neighbourhood Plan also forms part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk. Until each emerging Local Plan document is adopted by the Council, relevant parts of the 2003 South Norfolk Local Plan will remain extant and also a part of the South Norfolk Development Plan.

1.5. The Pre-Submission Cabinet and Council paper of 13 September 2013 describes the background and all the previous stages of the production of the Development Management Policies Document, and they are therefore not repeated at length in this report.

1.6. The Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document and the Wymondham Area Action Plan are being prepared to the same timetable as the Development Management Policies Document, and the Submission iterations of these documents are also being considered at the same Cabinet and Council meetings.
2. Current Position and Issues

2.1. The Pre-Submission representations period on the Development Management Policies Document ran from 1 November to 13 December 2013 with 140 representations received. Of these, 35 are either supportive or sought minor clarifications, with 105 being objections on one of more of the ‘tests of soundness’ and/or that the Development Management Policies Document is not legally compliant. Copies of the full representations made are available to view on request from the Planning Policy team, and paper copies will be available during the Cabinet and Council meetings for consultation. Summaries of representations (and responses to those representations) are included as part of the Consultation Statement (Appendices 9-11). They are also available to view on the website at http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/dmpolicies.

2.2. The main issues raised can be summarised into a number of different categories (see the Consultation Statement, Appendices 9-11, for a summary of the main issues raised). The first main issue relates to the town centre policies and thresholds for retail impact assessments, with objectors questioning why thresholds should be lower than set out in the NPPF. Objections have also been received on the reduction in size of the Diss primary shopping area.

2.3. A second issue raised is objections to policy DM 2.1, Employment and Business Development. Clarifications/amendments are sought on several points, and one representation asserts that the employment needs of the district have not been assessed recently enough to be up-to-date.

2.4. A third issue which has raised a number of objections has been the policy on housing quality (Policy DM 3.1), in particular the requirement to have regard to the Council’s internal residential space standards. A number of developers and agents have commented that such a policy is unnecessary and damaging, and that internal space standards should be left to ‘the market’ to determine; it is asserted that there is a continuing demand for smaller (and, therefore, cheaper) homes.

2.5. A number of representations take issue with the use of local landscape policies (such as the Strategic Gap policy, DM 4.8, and the Landscape Setting of Norwich policy, DM 4.7), claiming that they are unnecessary and not supported by appropriate evidence. Three representations assert that the Strategic Gap delineation between Hethersett and Wymondham should be altered, and one representation requests that the extent of the Southern Bypass Landscape Protection Zone at Cringleford should be reduced.

2.6. Other representations may be generally supportive, but seek a particular change to the policy or allocation. Such representations have to be badged as “objections” in order for them to be considered by the Inspector, but are normally less significant than the types of objection as outlined above.

Next stage
2.7. It is important to note that at examination the Inspector starts from the presumption that the Local Plan Document as submitted is 'sound'. The Inspector can only make changes to the Local Plan Document which are necessary to make it 'sound' (and then only if specifically requested to do so by the Council); he/she cannot (and will not) make any changes which will make the document 'more sound'. In essence, this means that for any representors’ objections to lead to a change to the Local Plan Document at Examination, it can only be on the grounds that without such a change the Local Plan Document would be 'unsound'.

2.8. Any objections on the grounds of legal conformity cannot, however, be remedied through modifications. If the Inspector finds a Local Plan Document has not passed the legal requirement of the Duty to Co-operate, for example (as has happened to an increasing number of councils across England in recent months), this cannot be remedied and the only option is for the Local Plan Document to be withdrawn from the examination pending further work. Several representors assert that there have been legal failures in the preparation of the DM Policies Document, but the Council does not agree.

2.9. Following the close of the Pre-Submission period, there are broadly two options available to the Council. Firstly, it could be concluded that certain of the representations raise fundamental concerns such that it would be very unlikely that the Inspector would find the DM Policies Document sound (even with modifications). In this case, appropriate remedial work would be necessary, which would almost certainly need to be consulted on publicly, with representations considered, before the DM Policies Document was formally submitted. Secondly, it could be concluded that a number of changes could be made but that they do not affect the soundness of the Document and are therefore not of such significance that further public consultation would be necessary prior to submission (i.e. such changes would be considered during the examination process itself).

2.10. All Pre-Submission representations have been considered carefully, and the second course of action is recommended (i.e. do not delay submission for further work). Responses to representations (set out in the appendices to the Consultation Statement, Appendix 11 of this paper) identify where potential changes could be proposed. These potential changes would be explored further during the Examination process, alongside the need for other potential changes as the Examination progresses.

2.11. Following the Pre-Submission representations stage, the next stage is to formally submit the DM Policies Document (with all the supporting and background documents and evidence) to the Government for independent examination. This report therefore seeks Cabinet's and Council’s agreement on the contents of the Pre-Submission version of the Development Management Policies Document and key supporting documents as set out in appendices. (Other evidence base documents will be submitted alongside the main documents.)
3. **Proposal and Reasons**

3.1. It is proposed to submit the Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate for formal examination during mid-April 2014.

3.2. The Pre-Submission DM Policies DPD contains a suite of 46 policies, all of which are locally distinctive to South Norfolk, with the exception of Policy DM 1.1 (which adapts the standard NPPF policy on ensuring that development management contributes to achieving sustainable development that is required to be included in all Local Plan documents by the Planning Inspectorate).

**Evidence Base**

3.3. There is a substantial evidence base underpinning the wording of policies. Key documents include the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendices 2-7), Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix 8), the Consultation Statement, including the Council’s responses to representations made at the previous consultation stages (see Appendices 9-11) and the updated Duty to Co-operate paper (Appendix 13). The Council has also undertaken extensive work on the viability of the proposed policies, in line with the recommendations of the Harman Report (see Appendix 12). Key background and evidence base studies and information are available to view at [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp) and the complete Examination Library will be available to view on the website from the date of submission in mid-April.

**Planning Applications and Housing Land Supply**

3.4. Moving the Development Management Policies Document on a stage will enable some increased weight to be given to the policies in development management terms. More significant weight can be now be applied to a policy where no objecting representations have been received to it during the Pre-Submission stage.

**Post-submission**

3.5. From experiences elsewhere across the country, and taking into account the number and nature of objections raised to the DM Policies Document, it is considered inevitable that the Inspector will conclude that a number of changes are necessary to make the document ‘sound’. Because of this, it is considered essential that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted the power to formally request that the Inspector makes any necessary main modifications (under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) that he/she judges necessary to make the document ‘sound’.

3.6. During the Examination stage – and particularly the Hearing stage – there is frequently debate and disagreement about certain elements of a Local Plan document. If the Inspector believes that consensus can be reached between the two (or more) parties – generally, the Council and an objector – this will be strongly encouraged. Inspectors take a very dim view of local authorities who are
not able or willing to concede any ground or points whatsoever at the Hearing. In other cases, the Inspector him/herself may also conclude that a particular change is necessary, and seek the Council's agreement on this. Whilst not all such changes will necessarily be agreeable to the Council, of course, it is considered vital that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Site Allocations Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders). As noted in paragraph 2.10 above, it is highly likely that the Council will suggest a number of potential modifications itself during the Examination process as well.

**Post-Hearing stage**

3.7. Following the end of the Hearing, any non-minor modifications will need to be issued for public consultation, with any consultation responses (including, if relevant, the Council’s own responses) passed to the Inspector to be considered.

3.8. During any consultation period, the Inspector will begin writing up his/her report on the DM Policies Document so that any delay in issuing the report is kept to a minimum (in other words, the initial focus will be on those areas not the subject of further consultation). The report is likely to be issued about 10-12 weeks after the end of the Hearing (the Inspector will state the likely date at the close of the Hearing). The Examination does not cease until the Inspector issues the final report to the Council.

3.9. Should the Inspector conclude that the DM Policies Document is (with any necessary modifications) sound, the Council will then be able to adopt the document, at which point it will become a formal part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk and carry full weight for development management purposes.

**4. Other Options**

4.1. The Council could decide not to progress the DM Policies Document to adoption. However, this would lead to control of future development being much less easy to manage, because many of the current South Norfolk Local Plan policies date to 2003, and so are in need of updating. Not progressing the document would also lessen the Council’s ability to try to ensure that development is planned and delivered in the most sustainable manner, with particular reference to infrastructure.

4.2. As outlined in paragraph 3.5, Council could decide not to grant the Inspector the power to make any modifications thought necessary to make the DM Policies Document sound, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

4.3. As outlined in paragraph 3.6, Council could decide not to grant the Director of Growth & Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate modifications/amendments during the Examination stage, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.
5. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

5.1. *Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.* One of the guiding principles of the Council’s planning policy, as contained in the JCS, is to accommodate future development needs in a way that protects and retains the distinctive character of settlements in South Norfolk. This is clearly a key consideration for the Development Management Policies Document.

5.2. *Promoting a thriving local economy.* Facilitating economic development is one of the future needs identified in the JCS, and the DM Policies Document actively encourages development that will bring economic growth and prosperity through its 12 economic policies.

5.3. *Supporting communities to realise their potential.* The DM Policies Document contains a whole suite of policies aimed at improving the sustainability, desirability and liveability of South Norfolk.

6. **Implications and Risks**

6.1. *Financial.* The work associated with the production of the council’s planning policy documents is included within the current budget.

6.2. *Legal.* Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council is required to produce a Local Plan, setting out policies to guide the “how, where, and when” development will be acceptable, and allocations of land to implement the policies. The Development Management Policies Document will form an important part of the Local Plan and must be prepared in accordance with development plan regulations and the Planning and the above Act.

6.3. *Environmental.* The Sustainability Appraisal process has ensured that environmental impacts have been taken into account.

6.4. *Equalities* The DM Policies Document has been prepared with equalities considerations in mind, as required by legislation. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and will be submitted as an evidence base document.

6.5. *Risks.* Not submitting the Development Management Policies Document will leave the Council vulnerable to speculative, predatory and inappropriate planning applications for development. It will also severely limit the Council’s ability to co-ordinate development to ensure the necessary infrastructure is provided.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1. It is concluded that no Pre-Submission representations made are of such significance that remedial work (necessitating a delay in submission) is necessary. The Site Allocations Document, and supporting/background evidence, is therefore recommended to be submitted.
8. **Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to recommended that Council resolves to:


8.2. Authorise the Director of Growth and Localism to grant the Inspector the power to formally request that he/she makes any necessary main modifications under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that he/she judges necessary to make the Development Management Policies Document ‘sound’; and

8.3. Grant the Director of Growth and Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Development Management Policies Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders) during the Examination stage.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document


Appendix 3: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix A

Appendix 4: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix B

Appendix 5: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix C

Appendix 6: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix D

Appendix 7: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix E

Appendix 8: Habitats Regulations Assessment of Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document

Appendix 9: Regulation 22 (1) (c) Consultation Statement

Appendix 10: Consultation Statement - Appendix A

Appendix 11: Consultation Statement - Appendix B

Appendix 12: Plan-Wide Viability Appraisal

Appendix 13: Duty to Co-operate Paper

Appendix 14: Pre-Submission Policies Map

Appendix 15: Pre-Submission Key Diagram

Appendix 16: Town Centre Area maps for Diss, Harleston, Hethersett, Hingham, Loddon and Poringland
Appendix 17: Map showing areas of higher sensitivity to a small group of wind turbines
Appendix 18: Maps showing important local open space areas in Brooke, Diss, Hethersett, Old Costessey and Poringland
Appendix 19: Landscape Character Areas and River Valley Extents
Appendix 20: Map of the Landscape Setting of Norwich
Appendix 21: Maps of the Strategic Gap between Cringleford and Hethersett and between Wymondham and Hethersett
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Cabinet member(s): John Fuller
Ward(s) affected: All
Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Adam Nicholls 01508 533809 anicholls@s-norfolk.gov.uk

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2.9. Following the close of the Pre-Submission period, there are broadly two options available to the Council. Firstly, it could be concluded that certain of the representations raise fundamental concerns such that it would be very unlikely that the Inspector would find the DM Policies Document sound (even with modifications). In this case, appropriate remedial work would be necessary, which would almost certainly need to be consulted on publicly, with representations considered, before the DM Policies Document was formally submitted. Secondly, it could be concluded that a number of changes could be made but that they do not affect the soundness of the Document and are therefore not of such significance that further public consultation would be necessary prior to submission (i.e. such changes would be considered during the examination process itself).

2.10. All Pre-Submission representations have been considered carefully, and the second course of action is recommended (i.e. do not delay submission for further work). Responses to representations (set out in the appendices to the Consultation Statement, Appendix 11 of this paper) identify where potential changes could be proposed. These potential changes would be explored further during the Examination process, alongside the need for other potential changes as the Examination progresses.

2.11. Following the Pre-Submission representations stage, the next stage is to formally submit the DM Policies Document (with all the supporting and background documents and evidence) to the Government for independent examination. This report therefore seeks Cabinet's and Council’s agreement on the contents of the Pre-Submission version of the Development Management Policies Document and key supporting documents as set out in appendices. (Other evidence base documents will be submitted alongside the main documents.)
3. **Proposal and Reasons**

3.1. It is proposed to submit the Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate for formal examination during mid-April 2014.

3.2. The Pre-Submission DM Policies DPD contains a suite of 46 policies, all of which are locally distinctive to South Norfolk, with the exception of Policy DM 1.1 (which adapts the standard NPPF policy on ensuring that development management contributes to achieving sustainable development that is required to be included in all Local Plan documents by the Planning Inspectorate).

**Evidence Base**

3.3. There is a substantial evidence base underpinning the wording of policies. Key documents include the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendices 2-7), Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix 8), the Consultation Statement, including the Council’s responses to representations made at the previous consultation stages (see Appendices 9-11) and the updated Duty to Co-operate paper (Appendix 13). The Council has also undertaken extensive work on the viability of the proposed policies, in line with the recommendations of the Harman Report (see Appendix 12). Key background and evidence base studies and information are available to view at [http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/1952.asp) and the complete Examination Library will be available to view on the website from the date of submission in mid-April.

**Planning Applications and Housing Land Supply**

3.4. Moving the Development Management Policies Document on a stage will enable some increased weight to be given to the policies in development management terms. More significant weight can be now be applied to a policy where no objecting representations have been received to it during the Pre-Submission stage.

**Post-submission**

3.5. From experiences elsewhere across the country, and taking into account the number and nature of objections raised to the DM Policies Document, it is considered inevitable that the Inspector will conclude that a number of changes are necessary to make the document ‘sound’. Because of this, it is considered essential that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted the power to formally request that the Inspector makes any necessary main modifications (under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) that he/she judges necessary to make the document ‘sound’.

3.6. During the Examination stage – and particularly the Hearing stage – there is frequently debate and disagreement about certain elements of a Local Plan document. If the Inspector believes that consensus can be reached between the two (or more) parties – generally, the Council and an objector – this will be strongly encouraged. Inspectors take a very dim view of local authorities who are
not able or willing to concede any ground or points whatsoever at the Hearing. In other cases, the Inspector him/herself may also conclude that a particular change is necessary, and seek the Council’s agreement on this. Whilst not all such changes will necessarily be agreeable to the Council, of course, it is considered vital that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Site Allocations Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders). As noted in paragraph 2.10 above, it is highly likely that the Council will suggest a number of potential modifications itself during the Examination process as well.

Post-Hearing stage

3.7. Following the end of the Hearing, any non-minor modifications will need to be issued for public consultation, with any consultation responses (including, if relevant, the Council’s own responses) passed to the Inspector to be considered.

3.8. During any consultation period, the Inspector will begin writing up his/her report on the DM Policies Document so that any delay in issuing the report is kept to a minimum (in other words, the initial focus will be on those areas not the subject of further consultation). The report is likely to be issued about 10-12 weeks after the end of the Hearing (the Inspector will state the likely date at the close of the Hearing). The Examination does not cease until the Inspector issues the final report to the Council.

3.9. Should the Inspector conclude that the DM Policies Document is (with any necessary modifications) sound, the Council will then be able to adopt the document, at which point it will become a formal part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk and carry full weight for development management purposes.

4. Other Options

4.1. The Council could decide not to progress the DM Policies Document to adoption. However, this would lead to control of future development being much less easy to manage, because many of the current South Norfolk Local Plan policies date to 2003, and so are in need of updating. Not progressing the document would also lessen the Council’s ability to try to ensure that development is planned and delivered in the most sustainable manner, with particular reference to infrastructure.

4.2. As outlined in paragraph 3.5, Council could decide not to grant the Inspector the power to make any modifications thought necessary to make the DM Policies Document sound, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

4.3. As outlined in paragraph 3.6, Council could decide not to grant the Director of Growth & Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate modifications/amendments during the Examination stage, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.
5. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

5.1. *Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.* One of the guiding principles of the Council’s planning policy, as contained in the JCS, is to accommodate future development needs in a way that protects and retains the distinctive character of settlements in South Norfolk. This is clearly a key consideration for the Development Management Policies Document.

5.2. *Promoting a thriving local economy.* Facilitating economic development is one of the future needs identified in the JCS, and the DM Policies Document actively encourages development that will bring economic growth and prosperity through its 12 economic policies.

5.3. *Supporting communities to realise their potential.* The DM Policies Document contains a whole suite of policies aimed at improving the sustainability, desirability and liveability of South Norfolk.

6. **Implications and Risks**

6.1. *Financial.* The work associated with the production of the council’s planning policy documents is included within the current budget.

6.2. *Legal.* Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council is required to produce a Local Plan, setting out policies to guide the “how, where, and when” development will be acceptable, and allocations of land to implement the policies. The Development Management Policies Document will form an important part of the Local Plan and must be prepared in accordance with development plan regulations and the Planning and the above Act.

6.3. *Environmental.* The Sustainability Appraisal process has ensured that environmental impacts have been taken into account.

6.4. *Equalities* The DM Policies Document has been prepared with equalities considerations in mind, as required by legislation. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and will be submitted as an evidence base document.

6.5. *Risks.* Not submitting the Development Management Policies Document will leave the Council vulnerable to speculative, predatory and inappropriate planning applications for development. It will also severely limit the Council’s ability to coordinate development to ensure the necessary infrastructure is provided.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1. It is concluded that no Pre-Submission representations made are of such significance that remedial work (necessitating a delay in submission) is necessary. The Site Allocations Document, and supporting/background evidence, is therefore recommended to be submitted.
8. **Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to recommended that Council resolves to:


8.2. Authorise the Director of Growth and Localism to grant the Inspector the power to formally request that he/she makes any necessary main modifications under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that he/she judges necessary to make the Development Management Policies Document ‘sound’; and

8.3. Grant the Director of Growth and Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Development Management Policies Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders) during the Examination stage.

**Appendices**

Appendix 1: Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document
Appendix 3: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix A
Appendix 4: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix B
Appendix 5: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix C
Appendix 6: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix D
Appendix 7: Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendix E
Appendix 8: Habitats Regulations Assessment of Pre-Submission Development Management Policies Document
Appendix 9: Regulation 22 (1) (c) Consultation Statement
Appendix 10: Consultation Statement - Appendix A
Appendix 11: Consultation Statement - Appendix B
Appendix 12: Plan-Wide Viability Appraisal
Appendix 13: Duty to Co-operate Paper
Appendix 14: Pre-Submission Policies Map
Appendix 15: Pre-Submission Key Diagram
Appendix 16: Town Centre Area maps for Diss, Harleston, Hethersett, Hingham, Loddon and Poringland
Appendix 17: Map showing areas of higher sensitivity to a small group of wind turbines
Appendix 18: Maps showing important local open space areas in Brooke, Diss, Hethersett, Old Costessey and Poringland
Appendix 19: Landscape Character Areas and River Valley Extents
Appendix 20: Map of the Landscape Setting of Norwich
Appendix 21: Maps of the Strategic Gap between Cringleford and Hethersett and between Wymondham and Hethersett
South Norfolk Council Local Plan: Site Specific Policies and Allocations
Document: Submission of Document for Examination

Planning Policy Manager

The Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan as it sets out development boundaries for settlements across the district and allocations for new sites to meet future development requirements to 2026.

The Pre-Submission representations period on the document took place in November and December 2013, with 331 representations made. The majority of the representations (273) made raise objections to the document on legal and/or soundness grounds, although there are a number of ‘support’ representations. The issues raised vary from basic objections to the fundamental strategy and approach taken in preparing the document (particularly asserted sustainability appraisal failings) through to objections to the allocation (or non-allocation) of individual sites. Other representations seek specific changes to the details of individual policies/allocations and/or point out factual and/or typographical errors.

Following assessment of these representations, it is concluded that none of the representations raise ‘soundness’ concerns that necessitate any changes prior to submission. It is asserted that the Plan is ‘sound’ and should now be submitted to the Government for independent examination in mid-April 2014, alongside all key supporting and evidence base documents.

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<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
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<td>John Fuller</td>
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<th>Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Nicholls 01508 533809 <a href="mailto:anicholls@s-norfolk.gov.uk">anicholls@s-norfolk.gov.uk</a></td>
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1. Background

1.1. The Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document (the Site Allocations Document) is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan. It sets out the Council’s policies for the location of new development, including identifying development boundaries and sites for housing, employment, leisure and amenity use with appropriate policy wording. These are considered to be the best locations/sites to meet the objectives and policies of the Joint Core Strategy
(JCS) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the aims and objectives of the Council.

1.2. Five Local Plan documents are currently in preparation as part of the emerging South Norfolk Local Plan. These are:

- the Site Specific Policies and Allocations Document (the subject of this report);
- the Development Management Policies Document, which sets out a range of policies against which future planning applications will be tested;
- the Wymondham and Long Stratton Area Action Plans, which make site specific allocations as well as containing other policies to guide the delivery of infrastructure, facilities and protect the key attributes and characteristics of these settlements; and
- the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Document, which will allocate specific sites and broad areas to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in South Norfolk district.

1.3. In addition, the adopted JCS and the adopted Cringleford Neighbourhood Plan also form part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk. Until each emerging Local Plan document is adopted by the Council, relevant parts of the 2003 South Norfolk Local Plan will remain extant and part of the South Norfolk Development Plan.

1.4. The Pre-Submission Cabinet and Council paper of 13 September 2013 describes the background and all the previous stages of the production of the Site Allocations document, and they are therefore not repeated at length in this report, bar a brief summary is given below.

1.5. Policy 4 of the JCS, ‘Housing Delivery’, sets out the overall housing requirements across the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) area. For the period 2008 to 2026 the policy requires that South Norfolk makes provision for 9,000 new dwellings in the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) and between 1,040 and 1,580 dwellings in the Rural Area.

1.6. JCS Policies 9, 10 and 12 to 17 set out the housing (and other) requirements for the settlements in South Norfolk; these policies are based on the ‘settlement hierarchy’ in JCS paragraph 6.2.

1.7. As well as making new allocations of land (for housing, employment and other uses as appropriate), the Site Allocations Document (see Appendices 1-9) defines new development boundaries.

1.8. The Site Allocations Document therefore makes appropriate allocations of land and sets out development boundaries to meet the requirements of the Joint Core Strategy. These allocations were tested through several rounds of public
consultation, before ending up at the Pre-Submission representations stage in late 2013.

1.9. The Wymondham Area Action Plan and the Development Management Policies Document are being prepared to the same timetable as the Site Allocations Document, and the Submission iterations of these documents are also being considered at the same Cabinet and Council meetings.

2. Current Position and Issues

2.1. The Pre-Submission representations period on the Site Allocations Document ran from 1 November to 13 December 2013 with 331 representations received (273 of which are objections on soundness and/or legal conformity grounds). Copies of the full representations made are available to view on request from the Planning Policy team, and paper copies will be available during the Cabinet and Council meetings for consultation. Summaries of representations (and responses to those representations) are included as part of the Consultation Statement (Appendices 19-21).

2.2. The main issues raised can be summarised into a number of different categories (see the Consultation Statement, Appendices 19-21, for a summary of the main issues raised). Unsurprisingly, most of the representations are at heart seeking either the allocation of a site (or sites) which is (are) not allocated, or the non-allocation of a site which is allocated. Other representations may be supportive in principle, but seek particular changes to a policy or allocation (e.g. to increase the housing numbers or to alter the types of employment uses proposed to be allowed).

2.3. A small number of representations assert that the process which has led to the current state of the Site Allocations Document is fundamentally flawed. In particular, it is asserted that there have been failings in the sustainability appraisal process such that various ‘reasonable alternatives’ to the strategy have not been subject to Sustainability Appraisal. At heart, this relates to the way in which the distribution of the (minimum) of the 1800 dwellings in the “smaller sites in the Norwich Policy Area and possible additions to named growth locations” (JCS Policy 9) has been made. To give two examples, Landstock Estates and the Landowners Group assert that Wymondham (as a Main Town, in the second tier of the settlement hierarchy) is capable of accommodating more than the allocation of 2200 dwellings allocated to it in the Wymondham Area Action Plan, but that there was inadequate consideration of the potential for Wymondham to accommodate any of the “floating 1800” dwellings. Secondly, a number of residents of Trowse assert that there has been inadequate explanation of why a site to accommodate 150-160 dwellings (TROW 1) is allocated, when there are (they believe) other, more appropriate, sites elsewhere in the Norwich Policy Area.

2.4. Another strand of representations, generally made by landowners or developers, assert that a site (or sites) has not been allocated when it should have been. This
is commonly based on a comparison with an allocated site (or sites), with the proposer arguing that their site is ‘better’ than the allocated site, and/or an argument that the housing numbers are minima, so their site should be allocated in addition to the allocated site(s). Sustainability appraisal arguments may have been adduced to bolster the reasons for objection.

2.5. The converse of this position is a group of representations, largely (but not exclusively) made by local residents, arguing against the allocation of a particular site or sites. This is typically on the basis that the site is asserted to be inappropriate for various reasons (perhaps highways safety or impact on form and character). As in paragraph 2.4 above, asserted shortcomings in the sustainability appraisal/site assessment process have been claimed in support of some objections.

2.6. Other representations may be generally supportive, but seek a particular change to the policy or allocation. Such representations have to be badged as “objections” in order for them to be considered by the Inspector, but are normally less significant than the types of objection as outlined in paragraph 2.3 above. In a number of cases it is asserted that an allocated site can safely accommodate more dwellings than is currently allocated to it, for instance.

Next stage

2.7. It is important to note that at examination the Inspector starts from the presumption that the Local Plan Document as submitted is ‘sound’. The Inspector can only make changes to the Local Plan Document which are necessary to make it ‘sound’ (and then only if specifically requested to do so by the Council); he/she cannot (and will not) make any changes which will make the document ‘more sound’. In essence, this means that for any representors’ objections to lead to a change to the Local Plan Document at Examination, it can only be on the grounds that without such a change the Local Plan Document would be ‘unsound’.

2.8. Any objections on the grounds of legal conformity cannot, however, be remedied through modifications. If the Inspector finds a Local Plan Document has not passed the legal requirement of the Duty to Co-operate, for example (as has happened to an increasing number of councils across England in recent months), this cannot be remedied and the only option is for the Local Plan Document to be withdrawn from the examination pending further work. Whilst a number of objections assert legal or procedural failures, officers do not believe that there is any substance to such representations.

2.9. Following the close of the Pre-Submission period, there are broadly two options available to the Council. Firstly, it could be concluded that certain of the representations raise fundamental concerns such that it would be very unlikely that the Inspector would find the Site Allocations Document sound (even with modifications). In this case, appropriate remedial work would be necessary, which would almost certainly need to be consulted on publicly, with representations considered, before the Local Plan Document was formally
submitted. Secondly, it could be concluded that a number of changes could be made but that they do not affect the soundness of the Document and are therefore not of such significance that further public consultation would be necessary prior to submission (i.e. such changes would be considered during the examination process itself).

2.10. All Pre-Submission representations have been considered carefully, and the second course of action is recommended (i.e. do not delay submission for further work). Responses to representations (set out in the appendices to the Consultation Statement, Appendix 21 of this paper) identify where potential changes/improvements could be proposed. These potential changes would be explored further during the Examination process, alongside the need for other potential changes as the Examination progresses.

3. Proposal and Reasons

3.1. It is proposed to submit the Pre-Submission Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document and supporting and background documents to the Planning Inspectorate for formal examination during mid-April 2014.

3.2. In total, taking into account existing commitments (principally those sites either built since 1 April 2008, or with planning permission) approximately 4630 new dwellings are allocated (3501 in the Norwich Policy Area and 1129 in the Rural Area), exceeding the minimum figure set out in Policy 4 of the JCS. Full details are included in the Pre-Submission document itself (see Appendices 1-9), with a summary table in paragraph 7.9 of the document. The Submission Policies Map, which updates the adopted Policies (Proposals) Map, includes information in graphical format (see Appendix 24).

3.3. It is important to note that allocating above the minimum level is prudent, because although officers are confident that all allocated sites are deliverable and viable, experience shows that some may not be built out to the level anticipated and/or within the timeframe envisaged.

Evidence Base

3.4. There is a substantial evidence base underpinning the choice of sites and the wording of policies. Key documents include the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendices 10-17), Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix 18), the Consultation Statement, including the Council's responses to representations made at the previous consultation stages (see Appendices 19-21) and the updated Duty to Co-operate paper (Appendix 23). The Council has also undertaken extensive work on the viability of the proposed allocated sites, in line with the recommendations of the Harman Report (see Appendix 22). Key background and evidence base studies and information are available to view at www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/ss, and the complete Examination Library will be available to view on the website from the date of submission in mid-April.
Planning Applications and Housing Land Supply

3.5. Moving the Site Allocations Document on a stage will enable some increased weight to be given to the allocations and policies in development management terms. More significant weight can be now be applied to an allocation where no objecting representations have been received to it during the Pre-Submission stage.

Post-submission

3.6. From experiences elsewhere across the country, and taking into account the number and nature of objections raised to the Site Allocations Document, it is considered inevitable that the Inspector will conclude that a number of changes are necessary to make the document ‘sound’. Because of this, it is considered essential the Inspector is granted the power to formally request that he/she makes any necessary main modifications (under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) that he/she judges necessary to make the document ‘sound’.

3.7. During the Examination stage – and particularly the Hearing stage – there is frequently debate and disagreement about certain elements of a Local Plan document. If the Inspector believes that consensus can be reached between the two (or more) parties – generally, the Council and an objector – this will be strongly encouraged. Inspectors take a very dim view of local authorities who are not able or willing to concede any ground or points whatsoever at the Hearing. In other cases, the Inspector him/herself may also conclude that a particular change is necessary, and seek the Council’s agreement on this. Whilst not all such changes will necessarily be agreeable to the Council, of course, it is considered vital that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Site Allocations Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders). As noted in paragraph 2.10 above, it is highly likely that the Council will suggest a number of potential modifications itself during the Examination process as well.

Post-Hearing stage

3.8. Following the end of the Hearing, any non-minor modifications will need to be issued for public consultation, with any consultation responses (including, if relevant, the Council’s own responses) passed to the Inspector to be considered.

3.9. During any consultation period, the Inspector will begin writing up his/her report on the Site Allocations Plan so that any delay in issuing the report is kept to a minimum (in other words, the initial focus will be on those areas not the subject of further consultation). The report is likely to be issued about 10-12 weeks after the end of the Hearing (the Inspector will state the likely date at the close of the Hearing). The Examination does not cease until the Inspector issues the final report to the Council.

3.10. Should the Inspector conclude that the Site Allocations document is (with any necessary modifications) sound, the Council will then be able to adopt the
document, at which point it will become a formal part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk and carry full weight for development management purposes.

4. Other Options

4.1. The Council could decide not to submit the Site Allocations Document and in essence cease production. However, this would lead to future development being unplanned and uncoordinated, particularly where significant growth is required in the Norwich Policy Area. This could worsen the Council’s position in terms of housing land supply and would lessen the Council’s ability to promote development that is located, planned and delivered in the most sustainable manner.

4.2. As outlined in paragraph 3.6, Council could decide not to grant the Inspector the power to make any modifications thought necessary to make the Site Allocations Document sound, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

4.3. As outlined in paragraph 3.7, Council could decide not to grant the Director of Growth & Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate modifications/amendments during the Examination stage, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

5. Relevant Corporate Priorities

5.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in. One of the guiding principles of the JCS is to accommodate future development needs in a way that protects and retains the distinctive character of settlements in South Norfolk. This has been an important consideration in assessing and choosing the sites and policies and is reflected in the Pre-Submission Site Allocations Document.

5.2. Promoting a thriving local economy. Providing suitable and available land for economic development is one of the requirements of the JCS. The Site Allocations Document recognises this by allowing for future expansion of strategic employment locations and facilitating appropriate growth in other locations.

5.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential. The plan preparation process has allowed for residents to participate and influence the content of the Site Allocations Document. At Submission, all objections will be passed to the Inspector for consideration in the Examination stage, with those who have requested to appear in person at the Hearing able to do so.

6. Implications and Risks

6.1. Financial. The work associated with the production of the council’s planning policy documents is included within the current budget.
6.2. **Legal.** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council is required to produce a Local Plan, setting out policies to guide “how, where, and when” development will be acceptable, and the allocation of land to implement the policies. This Document will form an important part of the Local Plan and must be prepared in accordance with development plan regulations and the above Act.

6.3. **Environmental.** The Sustainability Appraisal process has ensured that environmental impacts have been taken into account.

6.4. **Equalities** The Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document has been prepared with equalities considerations in mind, as required by legislation. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and will be submitted as an evidence base document.

6.5. **Risks.** Not having an adopted Site Allocations Document will leave the Council vulnerable to speculative and predatory planning applications for development. It will also severely limit the Council’s ability to co-ordinate development to ensure the necessary infrastructure can be provided.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1. It is concluded that no Pre-Submission representations made are of such significance that remedial work (necessitating a delay in submission) is necessary. The Site Allocations Document, and supporting/background evidence, is therefore recommended to be submitted.

8. **Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to recommended that Council resolves to:

8.1. Agree the formal submission of the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document (and supporting/background information) in mid-April 2014 for independent examination in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012;

8.2. Authorise the Director of Growth and Localism to grant the Inspector the power to formally request that he/she makes any necessary main modifications under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that he/she judges necessary to make the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document ‘sound’; and

8.3. Grant the Director of Growth and Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Site Allocations Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders) during the Examination stage.
Appendices
Appendices 1-9: Pre-Submission Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document
Appendix 10: Sustainability Appraisal of Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document
Appendix 11: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix A
Appendix 12: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix B
Appendix 13: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix C
Appendix 14: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix D
Appendix 15: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix E
Appendix 16: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix F
Appendix 17: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix G
Appendix 18: Habitats Regulations Assessment of Pre-Submission Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document
Appendix 19: Regulation 22 (1) (c) Consultation Statement
Appendix 20: Consultation Statement – Appendix A
Appendix 21: Consultation Statement – Appendix B
Appendix 22: Plan-Wide Viability Appraisal
Appendix 23: Duty to Co-operate Paper
Appendix 24: Pre-Submission Policies Map
Appendix 25: Pre-Submission Key Diagram

Planning Policy Manager

The Wymondham Area Action Plan is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan as it sets out the development boundary for Wymondham and allocations for new sites to meet future development requirements to 2026, alongside some ‘Wymondham-only’ policies.

The Pre-Submission representations period on the document took place in November and December 2013, with 132 representations made. 63 representations raise objections to the document on legal and/or soundness grounds, although there are 69 ‘support’ representations. The issues raised vary from basic objections to the fundamental strategy and approach taken in preparing the document (particularly asserted sustainability appraisal failings) through to objections to the allocation (or non-allocation) of individual sites. Other representations seek specific changes to the details of individual policies/allocations and/or point out factual and/or typographical errors.

Following assessment of these representations, it is concluded that none of the representations raise ‘soundness’ concerns that necessitate any changes prior to submission. It is asserted that the Plan is ‘sound’ and should now be submitted to the Government for independent examination in mid-April 2014, alongside all key supporting and evidence base documents.

Cabinet member(s): John Fuller
Ward(s) affected: All
Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Adam Nicholls 01508 533809 anicholls@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1. The Wymondham Area Action Plan (WAAP) is an important part of the Council’s emerging Local Plan. It sets out the Council’s policies for the location of new development, including identifying development boundaries and sites for housing, employment, leisure and amenity use in the town with appropriate policy wording. These are considered to be the best locations/sites to meet the objectives and policies of the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the aims and objectives of the Council.
1.2. Five Local Plan documents are currently in preparation as part of the emerging South Norfolk Local Plan. These are:

- the Wymondham Area Action Plan (Appendix 1, the subject of this report) and Long Stratton Area Action Plan, which make site specific allocations as well as containing other policies to guide the delivery of infrastructure, facilities and protect the key attributes and characteristics of these settlements;
- the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document;
- the Development Management Policies Document, which sets out a range of policies against which future planning applications will be assessed;
- the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Document, which will allocate specific sites and identify broad areas to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in South Norfolk district.

1.3. In addition, the adopted JCS and the adopted Cringleford Neighbourhood Plan also forms part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk. Until each emerging Local Plan document is adopted by the Council, relevant parts of the 2003 South Norfolk Local Plan will remain extant and also a part of the South Norfolk Development Plan.

1.4. The Pre-Submission Cabinet and Council paper of 13 September 2013 describes the background and all the previous stages of the production of the WAAP, and they are therefore not repeated at length in this report, bar a brief summary below.

1.5. Policy 4 of the JCS, ‘Housing Delivery’, sets out the overall housing requirements across the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) area. For the period 2008 to 2026 the policy requires that South Norfolk makes provision for 9,000 new dwellings in the Norwich Policy Area (NPA).

1.6. JCS Policies 9 and 10 set out the housing (and other main) requirements for (amongst other settlements) Wymondham. Wymondham is identified as a Growth Location and allocated a minimum of 2,200 new dwellings, around 15 hectares of new employment land. Other requirements include the need to expand the town centre; create extensive levels of green infrastructure to strengthen the Tiffey Valley, the landscape setting of the town and the strategic gaps, particularly towards Hethersett; enhanced public transport and walking and cycling; and a new primary school.

1.7. For the settlements in the NPA only, Policy 9 of the JCS sets out a “smaller sites in the NPA and possible additions to named growth locations” allowance of 1,800 dwellings. JCS Paragraph 6.6 states that the smaller sites allowance “is intended to provide a balance between site sizes and locations to encourage flexibility and the shorter-term delivery of new housing”. The allowance includes any allocations which are either outside of the Growth Locations or in the Growth Locations, but above the minimum requirements. It is intended that the 1,800 dwellings should be shared amongst a range of settlements, taking into account
the settlement hierarchy. For the reasons outlined in paragraph 2.3 below, it has been concluded that Wymondham cannot accommodate more than the minimum 2,200 new dwellings allocated in the JCS, and so it cannot accommodate any of the 'smaller sites 1,800' allocation (which is divided amongst a range of settlements, as detailed in the Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document).

1.8. The WAAP therefore makes appropriate allocations of land and addresses other key elements of (such as new green infrastructure) to meet the requirements of the Joint Core Strategy. Potential allocations were tested through several rounds of public consultation, before ending up at the Pre-Submission representations stage in late 2013.

1.9. The Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document and the Development Management Policies Document are being prepared to the same timetable as the WAAP, and the Submission iterations of these documents are also being considered at the same Cabinet and Council meetings.

2. **Current Position and Issues**

2.1. The Pre-Submission representations period on the Wymondham Area Action Plan ran from 1 November to 13 December 2013 with 132 representations received. Of these, 69 are either supportive or sought minor clarifications, with 63 being objections on one of more of the 'tests of soundness' and/or that the WAAP is not legal compliant. Copies of the full representations made are available to view on request from the Planning Policy team, and paper copies will be available during the Cabinet and Council meetings for consultation. Summaries of representations (and responses to those representations) are included as part of the Consultation Statement (Appendices 14-16).

2.2. The main issues raised can be summarised into a number of different categories (see the Consultation Statement, Appendices 14-16, for a summary of the main issues raised). Unsurprisingly, most of the representations are at heart seeking either the allocation of a site (or sites) which is (are) not allocated, or the non-allocation of a site which is allocated.

2.3. The WAAP concludes that Wymondham cannot accommodate more than minimum 2,200 new homes allocated in the Joint Core Strategy. This is primarily due to the capacity constraints of Wymondham High Academy. An expansion masterplan has been agreed and is in place with Norfolk County Council Children’s Services which will allow the school to expand to take the pupils expected to arise from 2,200 new dwellings. However, due to the constraints of the site (in terms of its size and being land-locked), it cannot be expanded beyond this number. Any pupils arising above this number would therefore need to be accommodated at other high schools away from Wymondham, possibly as far away as Norwich, which would not be environmentally, socially or economically desirable, so the WAAP does not allocate significantly more than 2,200 dwellings (the actual figure is 2,270, which introduces some flexibility).
2.4. Four Wymondham landowners whose (large) sites have not been allocated for residential (or mixed-use) purposes have lodged ‘soundness’ objections to the WAAP. One argument made is that the high school capacity limit should not be used as justification for restricting growth to 2,200 new dwellings as Norfolk County Council has a legal duty to provide school places for all who want/need them, and that Wymondham, as a Main Town high in the settlement hierarchy, could (and should, in their view) accommodate growth beyond 2,200 dwellings (potentially including some of the ‘floating 1,800’ dwellings). Another argument advanced is that there are constraints to developing the allocation in south Wymondham (WYM 3, which has now received planning permission) such that the anticipated level of growth there may not occur there, so that other sites need to be considered.

2.5. However, it is significant that all the allocations in the WAAP (bar the small Friarscroft Lane site, WYM 1) are now in receipt of planning permission, following the issuing of the south Wymondham planning permission for 1,230 dwellings (and other elements) in February 2014. These permissions (some of which are under construction) total slightly more than 2,200 dwellings. In this way, there is greater certainty of deliverability of the allocated sites in the WAAP and the need for ‘reserve’ sites is considered unnecessary.

2.6. There are also a group of representations, largely (but not exclusively) made by local residents, arguing against the allocation of a particular site or sites. This is typically on the basis that the site is asserted to be inappropriate for various reasons and the allocation for 1230 dwellings in South Wymondham (WYM 3) has come under particular challenge due to perceived impacts on traffic congestion, the Lizard wildlife site and flooding underneath the railway bridge (to name but three objection grounds).

2.7. Other representations may be generally supportive, but seek a particular change to the policy or allocation. Such representations have to be badged as “objections” in order for them to be considered by the Inspector, but are normally less significant than the types of objection as outlined in paragraph 2.2 above. Another group of representations identify factual errors in the document and seek their correction (for instance, a small adjustment is sought to be made to the area of the current Wymondham Rugby Club due to the incorrect inclusion of a small piece of land).

Next stage

2.8. It is important to note that at examination the Inspector starts from the presumption that the Local Plan Document as submitted is ‘sound’. The Inspector can only make changes to the Local Plan Document which are necessary to make it ‘sound’ (and then only if specifically requested to do so by the Council); he/she cannot (and will not) make any changes which will make the document ‘more sound’. In essence, this means that for any representors’ objections to lead to a change to the Local Plan Document at Examination, it can only be on the grounds that without such a change the Local Plan Document would be ‘unsound’.
2.9. Any objections on the grounds of legal conformity cannot, however, be remedied through modifications. If the Inspector finds a Local Plan Document has not passed the legal requirement of the Duty to Co-operate, for example (as has happened to an increasing number of councils across England in recent months), this cannot be remedied and the only option is for the Local Plan Document to be withdrawn from the examination pending further work. Whilst a number of objections assert legal conformity failures, officers do not believe that there is any substance to such representations.

2.10. Following the close of the Pre-Submission period, there are broadly two options available to the Council. Firstly, it could be concluded that certain of the representations raise fundamental concerns such that it would be very unlikely that the Inspector would find the Site Allocations Document sound (even with modifications). In this case, appropriate remedial work would be necessary, which would almost certainly need to be consulted on publicly, with representations considered, before the Local Plan Document was formally submitted. Secondly, it could be concluded that a number of changes/improvements could be made but that they do not affect the soundness of the Document and are therefore not of such significance that further public consultation would be necessary prior to submission (i.e. such changes/improvements would be considered during the examination process itself).

2.11. All Pre-Submission representations have been considered carefully, and the second course of action is recommended (i.e. do not delay submission for further work). Responses to representations (set out in the appendices to the Consultation Statement, Appendix 7 of this paper) identify where potential improvements could be proposed. These potential improvements would be explored further during the Examination process, alongside the need for other potential changes as the Examination progresses.

2.12. Following the Pre-Submission representations stage, the next stage is to formally submit the WAAP (with all the supporting and background documents and evidence) to the Government for independent examination. This report therefore seeks Cabinet’s and Council’s agreement on the contents of the Pre-Submission version of the Site Allocations Document and key supporting documents as set out in appendices. (Other evidence base documents will be submitted alongside the main documents.)

3. Proposal and Reasons

3.1. It is proposed to submit the Pre-Submission Wymondham Area Action Plan and supporting and background documents to the Planning Inspectorate for formal examination during mid-April 2014.

3.2. In total, taking into account existing commitments (principally those sites either built since 1 April 2008, or with planning permission) approximately 2,270 new dwellings are allocated, along with 15 hectares of new employment land, new policies on the town centre and green infrastructure (amongst other elements). In
addition, a site for the relocation of Wymondham Rugby Club is allocated. Full details are included in the Pre-Submission document itself (see Appendix 1). The Pre-Submission Policies Map, which updates the adopted Policies (Proposals) Map, includes information in graphical format (see Appendices 19 and 20).

3.3. It is important to note that allocating above the minimum level is prudent, because although officers are confident that all allocated sites are deliverable and viable (the more so in the WAAP, because all sites bar one already have planning permission), experience shows that some may not be built out to the level anticipated and/or within the timeframe envisaged.

Evidence Base

3.4. There is a substantial evidence base underpinning the choice of sites and the wording of policies. Key documents include the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendices 2-12), Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix 13), the Consultation Statement, including the Council’s responses to representations made at the previous consultation stages (see Appendices 14-16) and the updated Duty to Co-operate paper (Appendix 18). The Council has also undertaken extensive work on the viability of the proposed allocated sites, in line with the recommendations of the Harman Report (see Appendix 17). Key background and evidence base studies and information are available to view at www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/wymondham, and the complete Examination Library will be available to view on the website from the date of submission in mid-April.

Planning Applications and Housing Land Supply

3.5. Moving the WAAP on a stage will enable some increased weight to be given to the allocations and policies in development management terms. More significant weight can be now be applied to an allocation where no objecting representations have been received to it during the Pre-Submission stage.

Post-submission

3.6. From experiences elsewhere across the country, and taking into account the number and nature of objections raised to the WAAP, it is considered inevitable that the Inspector will conclude that a number of changes are necessary to make the document ‘sound’. Because of this, it is considered essential that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted the power to formally request that the Inspector makes any necessary main modifications (under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) that he/she judges necessary to make the document ‘sound’.

3.7. During the Examination stage – and particularly the Hearing stage – there is frequently debate and disagreement about certain elements of a Local Plan document. If the Inspector believes that consensus can be reached between the two (or more) parties – generally, the Council and an objector – this will be strongly encouraged. Inspectors take a very dim view of local authorities who are not able or willing to concede any ground or points whatsoever at the Hearing. In other cases, the Inspector him/herself may also conclude that a particular change
is necessary, and seek the Council’s agreement on this. Whilst not all such changes will necessarily be agreeable to the Council, of course, it is considered vital that the Director of Growth and Localism is granted delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the WAAP (in consultation with the Group Leaders). As noted in paragraph 2.10 above, it is highly likely that the Council will suggest a number of potential modifications itself during the Examination process as well.

**Post-Hearing stage**

3.8. Following the end of the Hearing, any non-minor modifications will need to be issued for public consultation, with any consultation responses (including, if relevant, the Council’s own responses) passed to the Inspector to be considered.

3.9. During any consultation period, the Inspector will begin writing up his/her report on the WAAP so that any delay in issuing the report is kept to a minimum (in other words, the initial focus will be on those areas not the subject of further consultation). The report is likely to be issued about 10-12 weeks after the end of the Hearing (the Inspector will state the likely date at the close of the Hearing). The Examination does not cease until the Inspector issues the final report to the Council.

3.10. Should the Inspector conclude that the WAAP is (with any necessary modifications) sound, the Council will then be able to adopt the document, at which point it will become a formal part of the Development Plan for South Norfolk and carry full weight for development management purposes.

**4. Other Options**

4.1. The Council could decide not to submit the WAAP and in essence cease production. However, this would lead to future development being unplanned and uncoordinated. This could worsen the Council’s position in terms of housing land supply and would lessen the Council’s ability to promote development that is located, planned and delivered in the most sustainable manner, a matter of particular importance in Wymondham given its constraints.

4.2. As outlined in paragraph 3.6, Council could decide not to grant the Inspector the power to make any modifications thought necessary to make the WAAP sound, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

4.3. As outlined in paragraph 3.7, Council could decide not to grant the Director of Growth & Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate modifications/amendments during the Examination stage, but for the reasons highlighted this is strongly advised against by officers.

**5. Relevant Corporate Priorities**

5.1. *Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.* One of the guiding principles of the JCS is to accommodate future development needs in a way that
protects and retains the distinctive character of settlements in South Norfolk. This has been an important consideration in assessing and choosing the sites and policies and is reflected in the Pre-Submission WAAP.

5.2. **Promoting a thriving local economy.** Providing suitable and available land for economic development is one of the requirements of the JCS. The WAAP recognises this by allowing for future expansion of strategic employment locations and facilitating appropriate growth in other locations.

5.3. **Supporting communities to realise their potential.** The plan preparation process has allowed for residents to participate and influence the content of the WAP. At Submission, all objections will be passed to the Inspector for consideration in the Examination stage, with those who have requested to appear in person at the Hearing able to do so.

6. **Implications and Risks**

6.1. **Financial.** The work associated with the production of the council’s planning policy documents is included within the current budget.

6.2. **Legal.** Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council is required to produce a Local Plan, setting out policies to guide “how, where, and when” development will be acceptable, and the allocation of land to implement the policies. The WAAP will form an important part of the Local Plan and must be prepared in accordance with development plan regulations and the above Act.

6.3. **Environmental.** The Sustainability Appraisal process has ensured that environmental impacts have been taken into account.

6.4. **Equalities** The WAAP has been prepared with equalities considerations in mind, as required by legislation. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and will be submitted as an evidence base document.

6.5. **Risks.** Not having an adopted WAAP will leave the Council vulnerable to speculative and predatory planning applications for development. It will also severely limit the Council’s ability to co-ordinate development to ensure the necessary infrastructure can be provided.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1. It is concluded that no Pre-Submission representations made are of such significance that remedial work (necessitating a delay in submission) is necessary. The WAAP, and supporting/background evidence, is therefore recommended to be submitted.

8. **Recommendations**

Cabinet is asked to recommend that Council resolves to:
8.1. Agree the formal submission of the Wymondham Area Action Plan (and supporting/background information) in mid-April 2014 for independent examination in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012;

8.2. Authorise the Director of Growth and Localism to grant the Inspector the power to formally request that he/she makes any necessary main modifications under Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act that he/she judges necessary to make the Wymondham Area Action Plan 'sound'; and

8.3. Grant the Director of Growth and Localism delegated powers to propose and/or agree appropriate amendments/modifications to the Site Allocations Document (in consultation with the Group Leaders) during the Examination stage.

Appendices
Appendix 1: Pre-Submission Wymondham Area Action Plan
Appendix 2: Sustainability Appraisal of Wymondham Area Action Plan
Appendix 3: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix A
Appendix 4: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix B
Appendix 5: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix C
Appendix 6: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix D
Appendix 7: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix E
Appendix 8: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix F
Appendix 9: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix G
Appendix 10: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix H
Appendix 11: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix I
Appendix 12: Sustainability Appraisal – Appendix J
Appendix 13: Habitats Regulations Assessment of Pre-Submission Wymondham Area Action Plan
Appendix 14: Regulation 22 (1) (c) Consultation Statement
Appendix 15: Consultation Statement – Appendix A
Appendix 16: Consultation Statement – Appendix B
Appendix 17: Plan-Wide Viability Appraisal
Appendix 18: Duty to Co-operate Paper
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan

This report gives an overview and update on the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and gives an explanation as to how this plan sits alongside other sub-regional and local District plans and strategies for economic growth. The report explains how South Norfolk Council has fed in to these documents and how these fit with the priorities outlined by South Norfolk Members and suggests that Cabinet endorse the approach and strategic direction of both the SEP and Norfolk Growth Prospectus (NGP).

Cabinet member(s):  
John Fuller

Ward(s) affected:  
All Wards

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail:  
Tim Horspole, 01508 533806  
thorspole@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Background and Overview**

1.1. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were created by government as public/private partnerships between business, local authorities and academia to drive local growth. New Anglia LEP (NALEP) is the partnership for Norfolk and Suffolk and covers both counties in their entirety.

1.2. In October 2012, the government published its response to Lord Heseltine’s report *No Stone Unturned: in pursuit of growth*. A core proposition of the report was a decentralised approach to Economic Growth, empowering LEPs to drive forward growth in their local areas working effectively with partners (including local authorities).

1.3. In response to this report, government have committed to negotiate a Growth Deal with each LEP in the country where they can seek freedoms, flexibilities and influence over resources from government as well as a share of the Local Growth Fund to deliver agreed priorities.

1.4. In order to receive this enhanced freedom and financial resource, LEPs have been asked to set out a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), an ambitious, multi-year strategy that identifies priorities (in terms of key sectors, growth locations, infrastructure, housing, skills and EU and SIF (Structural Investment Funding) funding, enterprise and innovation support) and interventions that will deliver a step change in growth. The Growth Deal will last for six years and will give
access to a Local Growth Fund, worth £2bn nationally, which is designed to contribute to financing economic growth priorities. The Fund is not new money – it is made up from existing Government funding streams. Most of the money is capital for transport, housing and further education infrastructure.

1.5. Norfolk Chief Executives and Norfolk Leaders agreed during the summer that Norfolk’s input into the SEP would be coordinated by the Norfolk Growth Group (a similar model to that of Suffolk), comprising District Council and County Council Chief Executives/Directors/Heads of Service and the New Anglia LEP Programme Director. Sandra Dinneen (South Norfolk Council Chief Executive) has acted as the Chair of this Board. It was also agreed that a Norfolk Growth Prospectus (NGP) would be used to frame Norfolk’s contribution to NALEP’s SEP and outline the priorities for Norfolk as a whole and this too would be led by the Norfolk Growth Board.

1.6. Whilst the prospectus originally set out to run in tandem with the SEP, this scope has been refined with the Norfolk Growth Prospectus now to act as a more promotional document for the area, outlining the key strengths and opportunities for Norfolk, identifying key growth locations, growth sectors and initiatives delivering a step change in growth. An implementation plan will also sit alongside the NGP’s high level aims, also providing the Norfolk delivery plan for the SEP. The NGP will be developed once the final SEP is submitted to government on the 31st March.

1.7. Neither the SEP nor the NGP compromises District strategies, priorities and plans, but rather seeks to bring together the key deliverers of step-changes in growth from both a New Anglia and Norfolk perspective respectively. Both documents also link to the Greater Norwich City Deal which seeks to create 300 new businesses and 3,000 high value jobs across the LEP area by 2015 (an update was presented to Cabinet on the City Deal on the 10th February and can be reviewed here). Appendix A outlines how these different strategies and documents link together and feed into one another.

1.8. South Norfolk Council has played an active role in feeding in to the priorities of both the SEP and the NGP to ensure that the interests of South Norfolk residents and businesses are reflected; through the Chief Executives role as Chair of the Norfolk Growth Board, officer membership of the Norfolk Economic Development Officer group, submissions for initiatives and key growth locations for the Norfolk Growth Prospectus and through consultation responses to the SEP itself.

1.9. The first draft of the SEP for New Anglia was submitted to government on the 19th December 2013 and following this the draft report was opened up for consultation in January 2014.

1.10. The Executive Summary of the most recent version of the SEP which will be considered by the NALEP board on the 21st March 2014 can be found in Appendix B, the full report can be found in Appendix C on our website.

2. SEP Overview

2.1. The Strategic Economic Plan outlines significant infrastructure projects, skills programmes, housing projects and targeted business support in key growth sectors and locations which will deliver significant growth in jobs, housing and GVA in the New Anglia area (Norfolk and Suffolk).
2.2. All District Councils and both County Councils in Norfolk and Suffolk were given the opportunity to comment on the first draft of the SEP before it was submitted to government and in January the final draft of the SEP was opened up for wider consultation.

2.3. South Norfolk Council outlined the following key points in its formal consultation response on the draft SEP:

- It made the case for the A140 and Long Stratton by-pass as a key growth location delivering significant planned growth joining the two counties together.
- It outlined corrections in terms of housing growth and employment land in South Norfolk.
- It identified where South Norfolk assets should be reflected.
- It emphasised the need to be clear about how the private sector had been engaged with shaping proposals
- It proposed that the document needed to be clearer on what growth outlined would be the result of additional interventions
- It highlighted where the role of District Councils could be better emphasised
- It indicated that the plan needed to sell more clearly what makes the New Anglia area different and the opportunities it presents and make a clearer case on the offers and asks.

2.4. The LEP received consultation responses from a wider range of organisations from individual businesses, business representative groups, all colleges and universities, all local authorities and the voluntary sector. The final submission in March will also reflect feedback from government on the initial draft.

2.5. The LEP, along with support from local authority and private sector colleagues has now completed the final version of the SEP to be reviewed by the LEP Board on the 21st March before submission to government on the 31st March. The executive summary can be found in Appendix B and the full report can be found online in Appendix C.

2.6. The SEP recognises a number of key priorities for South Norfolk which have the potential to deliver a step change in growth including growth areas (e.g. A11 corridor, Wymondham and Long Stratton), sectors (e.g. Advanced manufacturing/engineering, Agri-tech and Life Sciences), assets (e.g. Norwich Research Park, Hethel Science and Technology Park, Longwater, Easton College, the Royal Norfolk Showground, food manufacturing businesses like Frank Dale Foods and the proposed Food Hub, many of which have already benefited from LEP funding), key infrastructure (including the Long Stratton by-pass, the Thick-thorn A11 roundabout, Longwater A1074, Wymondham subway link and Hethel and Wymondham sustainable transport). With the SEP recognising these South Norfolk areas and assets as central to delivering growth for New Anglia area as whole, we open opportunity for the area to benefit from additional resources to drive the delivery of this proposed growth. This doesn't however mean if an area or asset is not highlighted in the SEP that it will not benefit from support interventions or be eligible for funding, but will instead sit at the Norfolk Growth Prospectus or District Strategy level.
3. **Norfolk Growth Prospectus Overview**

3.1. The Norfolk Growth Prospectus (NGP) will outline Norfolk level interventions which will deliver a significant step-change in growth for the wider Norfolk economy. The Prospectus will set out the ambitious growth plans for Norfolk outlining our strengths and areas for growth, providing a focus for inward investment detailing key priorities and high level interventions.

3.2. Key sectors identified in terms of the NGP include: Energy, including low carbon; advanced manufacturing/engineering; food and agri-tech, life sciences, ICT and digital creative whilst key growth locations include: the A11 corridor; Norwich City Centre; South West Norwich Quadrant (including Bowthorpe, Cringleford, Hethersett, Easton and Costessey); North East Norwich Quadrant; King’s Lynn (town)/Downham Market Growth (A10) Corridor; Great Yarmouth (town), including the port/Enterprise Zone; and the Fakenham/Wells Corridor.

3.3. The NGP will not replace District Councils’ strategies and development plans. Rather, it will bring together only those high level priorities that will produce a step change in growth (especially higher value jobs), with a focus on removing barriers to growth, especially in the areas of infrastructure, enterprise and skills.

4. **Economic Development Strategy for South Norfolk**

4.1. Economic Development is seen as central priority for the Council ensuring we deliver growth to the area, supporting businesses to grow and residents to thrive. The Economic Strategy for South Norfolk which is due for renewal in 2014 outlines four key themes and related objectives, namely (1) Business Support and Infrastructure (*creating an economic climate that supports and enables business to develop and grow*) (2) Growth sectors and strategic locations (*encouraging development in key business sectors at strategic locations in South Norfolk*) (3) skills and aspirations (*raising the skill levels and aspirations of local people, particularly young people*) (4) Market Towns, rural economy and tourism (*revitalising market towns and the rural economy*).

4.2. Economic Development is central to the way we operate at South Norfolk Council, and is seen as the responsibility of teams from across the Council including Housing, Planning Policy, Environmental Services, Business Rates and the Property teams. The Directorate Plans for 2014/15 have been approved by Cabinet and outline the key activities to be undertaken over the coming year to deliver growth for the District. Key activities include:

- Working with local businesses, both those established and emerging, providing support, identifying opportunities and aiding them in attracting inward investment opportunities.
- Providing the Enterprise Norfolk advisory service to help start-up and existing businesses in the District connect and grow.
- Supporting the continuing development of tourism as a key sector of the local economy by working with and influencing Visit Norwich and Visit Waveney Valley, using events hosted by SNC and the TICs and Tourist Information Points to promote and ensure the maximum benefits for South Norfolk’s key assets, increasing visitor spend in our market towns.
- Delivering high value jobs for South Norfolk residents by supporting the continued development of the Norwich Research Park as a world-leading centre for research excellence

- Ensuring the A11 corridor is a successful enterprise zone which seize on the opportunities of the duelling of the road, supporting growth in business (including Hethel engineering), infrastructure, housing and employment for the benefit of South Norfolk residents.

- Through the Market Towns Initiative (MTI) we are working with South Norfolk's market towns as key deliverers of economic growth, strengthening their economic and social vibrancy delivering a programme of events to increase footfall and spend so that they are: vibrant and full of vitality; distinct communities; self-sufficient; strong shopping and service centres; destinations of choice for social and cultural activity; demonstrably more economically active with sustainable business partnerships aimed at driving further growth. The full Market Towns offer which was reviewed by Cabinet in December 2014 can be found here.

- Working alongside partners on an on-going basis and as opportunities arise we will strategically support enablers of growth in the district including: enhanced infrastructure (Better Broadband, A47, A11); skills (working with local institutions and the LEP-wide skills programme); innovation and enterprise; housing development.

- Ensuring that South Norfolk's interests and assets are promoted and used to shape the regional and national economic development agenda to maximise economic opportunities for the district by working in partnership

5. **Funding**

5.1. The below outlines the available funding pots to support the interventions outlined in both the Strategic Economic Plan and Norfolk Growth Prospectus.

5.2. **Local Growth Fund (LGF).** The main purpose of the SEP is to provide the basis for negotiating a ‘Growth Deal’ with Government, which gives access to a share of the £2bn LGF. The LGF comes into force in April 2015, with an element allocated to the local area, but a further element bid for competitively.

5.3. For the first year, the Fund is virtually all capital, largely coming from the Department for Transport (DfT). While the LGF is described by Government as being unringfenced; in practice DfT will expect the funds they put into the pot to emerge in the Plan in the form of transport and infrastructure-related projects. This is therefore the approach that New Anglia is taking. The table below summarises the funding bid for in the initial 19 December submission, for the six years from 2015/16 to 2020/21:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six-year transport programme</td>
<td>£265m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital skills investment</td>
<td>£72m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise and innovation offer</td>
<td>£46.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU structural and investment strategy (match funding of)</td>
<td>£30m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4. **EU Structural and Investment Fund (SIF).** Government is devolving EU funds for the EU programme period 2014-20 down to LEPs. In practice, Government is still retaining control of their management, but LEPs are being given notional allocations, based on population and are able to recommend how the funds should be allocated across a range of EU thematic spending priorities.

5.5. New Anglia’s share is £81m over the seven year period. The Fund is roughly half ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) and half ESF (European Social Fund). ERDF funds contribute to economic growth, particularly low carbon, while ESF targets education, skills and employment:

5.6. A key priority for the Norfolk Growth Prospectus will be to ensure that Norfolk draws down as much of the SIF as possible and the Prospectus will be updated regularly to reflect priorities.

5.7. **Business Rates.** Norfolk Leaders entered into a formal agreement to create a £790,000 Joint Investment Fund from Business Rates revenues (with £300,000 retained to cover fluctuations in business rates achieved, giving a net investment fund of £490,000), on the basis of the following principles:

   a) To make strategic investments designed to support Norfolk priorities within the Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan and support Norfolk’s Economic Growth Strategy.

   b) Priority will be given to schemes which:

   - Lever funding from LEP growth and European funds
   - Support projects which will lead to:
     - Job creation
     - Further business rates growth
     - Housing growth
     - Improved skills and qualifications
     - New business creation/expansion

   c) Schemes should be ready to start on site and have all relevant permissions, licences, land ownership arrangements in place.

5.8. In due course, both the SEP and the NGP will describe how this Joint Investment Fund will be used to deliver growth for Norfolk

5.9. **Other funds** to support the SEP and the NGP may come from a variety of sources, such as the private sector, local authorities, other EU funds and other Government funds, such as the Growing Places Fund, being administered by the LEP.

5.10. The Greater Norwich City Deal provides an £80 million borrowing capacity at the Public Works Loans Board at a preferential rate. This funding will be available to developers and the greater Norwich authorities to deliver infrastructure to deliver growth. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will also be a major contributor to funding infrastructure.
6. Next Steps

6.1. The following time scales are outlined for New Anglia’s Strategic Economic Plan:
- 31 March 2014: New Anglia submits final version of Strategic Economic Plan
- April 2014: Government starts assessing plans and negotiating with LEPs—advice given to ministers by June
- July 2014: Single Local Growth Fund offers made to LEPs
- April 2015: Growth Deals implemented

6.2. The Norfolk Growth Prospectus time scales will sit a month behind the SEPs in order to ensure all key selling propositions for Norfolk, from government negotiations to July, are reflected in the final prospectus.

6.3. The South Norfolk Council Economic Strategy is due to be renewed in 2014 and it is recommend that Cabinet outlines the scope for this during the summer, once the final New Anglia SEP and NGP has been agreed.

7. Relevant Corporate Priorities

7.1. Enhancing our quality of life and the environment we live in.
7.2. Promoting a thriving local economy.
7.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

8. Implications and Risks

8.1. Legal: Norfolk Leaders signed a formal legal agreement committing a proportion of the Business Rates to support the delivery of economic activity in the SEP.

8.2. Environmental: The LEP’s ‘Green Pathfinder’ status is a key feature of the SEP and the market for low carbon environmental goods and services is a key sector for development in both Norfolk and the wider New Anglia area.

8.3. Risks: It is important that South Norfolk is seen to be engaging effectively with the formation of the SEP and the NGP in order to benefit from the opportunities for the District these provide.

9. Conclusion

9.1. Economic development and growth are central to the priorities set out by Members for South Norfolk to support businesses to flourish and residents to thrive. South Norfolk Council has its own Economic Strategy which outlines the key strategic priorities for the District.

9.2. As part of the government’s agenda to devolve more powers to Local Enterprise Partnerships as key conduits for public/private partnerships between business, local authorities and academia to drive local growth, LEPs have been asked to outline a Strategic Economic Plan for New Anglia which captures key priorities for the area as a whole which will deliver significant growth for Norfolk and Suffolk.

9.3. Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives have proposed that a Norfolk Growth Prospectus be outlined for Norfolk, setting out the key strengths of the area along with the potential for growth, outlining key sectors, growth locations and high level interventions, acting as ‘selling’ document for the strengths and potential of the area.
9.4. Both reports link to other key initiatives and there are a number of funding pots from which the delivery of these plans will come from.

9.5. There are a number of key South Norfolk assets reflected in both the SEP and NGP and the interests of the District have been fed into the strategies through a number of channels.

9.6. However, any key South Norfolk areas that are not captured, and more central to the growth of the local South Norfolk Economy, such as market towns and tourism are reflected at a District Strategy level. It is proposed to members that the strategy be reviewed in Q2 once the SEP and NGP have been finalised in order to ensure that the three documents link clearly together.

10. Recommendations

10.1. Cabinet is asked to note the progress on development of the New Anglia Strategic Economic Plan and Norfolk Growth Prospectus.

10.2. Cabinet is asked to note and endorse the strategic direction of NALEP’s Strategic Economic plan.

10.3. Cabinet is asked to note and endorse the strategic direction of the Norfolk Growth Prospectus.

10.4. Cabinet is asked to approve the refresh of the South Norfolk Council Economic Strategy in Quarter 2 2014/15 once the final Growth Prospectus and SEP have been agreed.
SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-17

This report recommends to Cabinet a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for SNC. It also asks Cabinet to approve work on some of the key concepts that are being developed to take forward the Strategy and to endorse the use of resources to support the development of the agenda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Councillor Yvonne Bendle</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact Officer, telephone number, and e-mail: Martyn Swann 01508 533694 mswann@s-norfolk.gov.uk

1. **Background**
   1.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2013 introduced new arrangements for health and social care on 1st April 2013. These changes are included in the attached proposed Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Appendix A), but for ease of reference are:
   - The abolishing of Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities
   - The transfer of NHS delivery and planning functions to the NHS Commissioning Board and Local Commissioning Groups
   - Upper tier councils becoming responsible for appointing a Director of Public Health and establishing a Health and Wellbeing Board and a Local Healthwatch
   - Health and Wellbeing Boards becoming responsible for undertaking Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA), and publishing a local Health and Wellbeing (HWB) Strategy and reviewing Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) plans to ensure they reflect the needs and priorities identified in the HWB Strategy
   - A statutory duty on upper tier authorities to “take steps to improve the health of their local populations”

2. **Current Position and Issues**
   2.1. In terms of the current position within the above context:
   - A Norfolk HWB Board became operational on 1st April 2103
   - A Norfolk HWB Strategy is nearing completion and will be considered by the HWB Board in April 2014.
The CCGs are also operational – the South Norfolk CCG covers the whole of the South Norfolk District and a substantial part of the Breckland District and it has produced a prospectus for 2013/14

Services are commissioned via the Integrated Health and Social Care team that is jointly funded by Norfolk County Council and the NHS.

SNC has established Member and Officer level responsibilities for the coordination of the HWB agenda and has been engaged extensively in the shaping of the emerging Norfolk HWB Strategy.

SNC and the South Norfolk CCG have held a joint workshop to further develop partnerships and to understand potential areas for joint working; similarly the South Norfolk CCG has held a stakeholder workshop meeting which SNC attended.

SNC Members have been engaged pro-actively with the developing HWB agenda particularly through the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Health, and through the work of the Housing and Public Health Policy Committee who have considered and recommend the proposed strategy being submitted to Cabinet.

The emerging overarching goals of the Norfolk HWB Strategy are to drive integration, reduce inequalities, and prevent unhealthy lifestyles and problems. These goals will be progressed through the three priorities of Early Life (0-5), Obesity and Dementia.

The South Norfolk CCG priorities focus on frail older people, planned care and tackling variation, emergency and urgent care, mental health, and women and children (through tackling childhood obesity).

Proposal and Reasons

The proposed SNC HWB Strategy sets out a HWB vision for South Norfolk:

South Norfolk residents have the best possible health and wellbeing, living their lives in decent homes, in better health and with support from the community.

This strategy is backed by three strategic outcomes that will help SNC work in close collaboration with HWB partners:

Younger people securing the best chances in life through health and wellbeing

Older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind

Residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost health and social services.

These strategic priorities are based on customer/strategic needs, the potential offer to the HWB agenda that SNC is able to make, and a consideration of how SNC makes best use of its relevant services and good practice to deliver HWB outcomes and new business opportunities.

The strategy proposes a list of actions that can be undertaken to support the outcomes being sought. However, it is appropriate to a highlight a number of key concepts that are being developed to show significant early progress and ambition on the implementation of the strategy:
• Integrated Early Interventions initiative
• Excess Winter Deaths initiative
• Safe at Home initiative
• Fit for Business, Fit for Life (a general wellbeing project delivered in the workplace).

3.5. These specific projects being developed can make a major contribution to the health and wellbeing agenda and give a clear indication of the offer that SNC is able to make. These include Fit for Business, Fit for Life which makes a clear offer to businesses in terms of the health of their workforce and their long term health and wellbeing and has been shaped in liaison with Public Health England; an Excess Winter Death project which has been developed in collaboration with Norfolk Public Health; an Early Interventions project which utilises the increase the Handyperson Service offer to help more people achieve an outcome of independent living in their own home; and the Early Help/Early Intervention work to ensure SNC provides the best possible services for families that enable them to take ownership of their own journey in a “No decision about me without me” approach.

3.6. It is proposed that Cabinet adopts the proposed SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy as recommended by Housing and Public Health Policy Committee – set out in Appendix A.

3.7. The health and wellbeing agenda is continuing to evolve, so the proposed strategy is an early document that outlines a potential positioning of SNC to be a provider of services within the developing agenda.

3.8. By adopting a strategy, SNC is able to share a set of agreed priorities with partners and to use this as a basis for joint working with them. It also allows SNC to be clear of its priority outcomes and for employees to use this framework so that their work areas can be developed with a health and wellbeing focus. A strategy also assists SNC in positioning itself with partners on resourcing issues – for example the creation of the Norfolk Better Care Fund from April 2014 includes Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) funding that is currently allocated to District Councils directly and it is important that SNC and partners utilise this funding appropriately and that SNC exerts maximum influence on the agenda and responds with the most appropriate and financially viable products.

3.9. A strategy also allows SNC to use its resources in an outcome focused way so the impact of resources is understand in terms of the customer impact and whether customer relationships on a more transformational basis are required – whereby more focused support is available to customers in higher need with additional and different approaches to help them achieve the best possible health and wellbeing, living their lives in decent homes, in better health and with support from the community.

4. Other Options

4.1. The production of a strategy offers a proactive approach to the HWB agenda. The alternative course of action would be to deliver a reactive approach to HWB. However, the policy and funding context is constantly shifting as the HWB agenda develops and it is vital that SNC is at the table to exert maximum influence on the agenda. The agenda also supports all of the SNC corporate priorities and there would be significant missed opportunity in maximising
outcomes from these priorities without a clear approach to the HWB agenda. The production of an action plan without a strategic context would not allow us to show to partners and customers the Offer SNC is able to make. Therefore it is not proposed to respond reactively.

5. **Relevant Corporate Priorities**

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. Financial: through joint working with partners, the proposed health and wellbeing strategy places SNC in an opportunity-ready position to maximise projects and associated potential income as well as minimise risks to future income – this effectively means a strengthening of SNC’s role as provider as part of a commercialisation agenda and could be seen, for example, in terms of leisure services and housing services and employment and training. In addition, a range of staff functions contribute positively to the health and wellbeing agenda – for example work that avoids/delays the need for acute health care, targeted work with young people and families, the planning policy framework and the offer around leisure and activities.

6.2. Equalities: the strategy makes a significant positive difference in terms of equalities – especially to older and vulnerable customers, customers who are disabled, and young people hoping to have better health and wellbeing outcomes throughout their lives. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

6.3. Risks: if not at the heart of discussions on the health and wellbeing agenda, SNC could limit its influence of the agenda and miss out on resources and that will help maximise outcomes for customers and income opportunities.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1. The proposed SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out a vision, strategic outcomes and priority actions for SNC on the HWB agenda, and how staff resources could be used to develop new opportunities that provide better outcomes for residents. The agenda provides a great opportunity for SNC to secure strong benefit for South Norfolk residents and to re-model and instigate work to deliver the strategic outcomes proposed whilst supporting new business opportunities and SNC’s corporate priorities.

7.2. Local authorities and other public sector organisations have faced challenging times to match reduced funding with increasing demand, and South Norfolk has been successful in matching these; and the organisation is placed strongly to drive services to deliver increased outcomes and business opportunities.

7.3. Cabinet is asked to adopt the proposed SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy as part of a programme of organisational change allowing SNC to work on an increased thematic basis. This move allows SNC to capture a broader range of its activities in support of the health and wellbeing agenda.
8. **Recommendations**

8.1. **Cabinet is recommended to approve:**

- The direction of travel described in this report on the health and wellbeing agenda and officers is authorised to pursue the early projects identified in this report.
- The proposed SNC Health and Wellbeing Strategy attached as Appendix A to this report and the new approach to working with partners and customers being proposed.
Health & Wellbeing Strategy
‘Working with you, working for you’
2014–17
This is South Norfolk Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It sets out SNC’s response to the current health and wellbeing and public health agendas, and how we will lead, instigate and deliver change to maximise our contribution to health and wellbeing outcomes.

As a District Council, SNC has a strong offer to make on health and wellbeing – we provide a vast range of services, we are well connected with local communities and our customers, and we have a strong track record in securing outcomes from partnership working. We have also spent considerable time working with key partners on health and wellbeing – such as the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Norfolk County Council – and have sought out the very best practice.

It is through this knowledge and experience; we have formulated a Health and Wellbeing Strategy that allows our partners to understand our role and where we believe we can make key differences to local residents and to other organisations delivering services. We are looking to work closely with our partners on our priority outcomes.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the production of this strategy. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the positive contribution made by SNC’s Housing and Public Health Policy Committee.

Health and Wellbeing is of huge importance to the customers we serve and the partners with whom we work. It is up to us all to step up to the challenge of delivering lasting and cost-effective improvements.

Councillor Yvonne Bendle
1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for South Norfolk Council (SNC). The document has been produced by South Norfolk Council in collaboration with the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (SN CCG).

The vision for this strategy is:

**South Norfolk residents have the best possible health and wellbeing, living their lives in decent homes, in better health and with support from the community.**

South Norfolk Council has a significant role to make in the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, health improvement and health protection and if this role is fully maximised can reap enormous benefits to the local community and our partner organisations. SNC is well connected at local level with its customers and partners and its strong capacity for leadership, multi-agency working, innovation and delivery is well recognised.

Within this context, the Strategy seeks to develop new ways of delivering a range of local services to help improve public health and health and wellbeing outcomes for South Norfolk residents – our research and early successes show that we can reduce the demand on the health and social care budgets through changing the emphasis of services from reactive to proactive, working with communities and targeting early intervention initiatives where they have maximum impact on both specific local health issues. The strategy will be supported by an annual action plan although the key early proposals and actions are identified within the strategy.

The focus for this strategy will be on both the health and social care related factors that influence health and wellbeing and also the important underlying determinants of health. It is also about recognising that health and wellbeing is about more than providing support to those most in need – that is, accepting that early interventions are mandatory so that in the longer term residents can enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost public health services. Public health is clearly a strong part of health and wellbeing.

Informed by evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), the health profile from Public Health England and a range of other intelligence that includes discussions with key strategic partners, we have identified the delivery of the following three outcomes, with related priorities, as key to achieving our vision.

**Outcome 1: Younger people securing the best chances in life through health and wellbeing**
**Outcome 2: Older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind**
**Outcome 3: South Norfolk residents enjoy health and wellbeing & avoid/delay demand on higher cost health and social care services**

This strategy sets out to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults in South Norfolk. The strategy recognises how important the underlying wider determinants of health and wellbeing are in ensuring a healthy South Norfolk and provides a focus on the health and social care related factors that influence people’s health and wellbeing.
2. SUMMARY OF SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL’S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

Vision
South Norfolk residents realise their potential and live fulfilling lives in decent homes, in better health and in strong communities

Outcomes
Younger people securing the best chances in life through health and wellbeing
Older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind
Residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost health and social care services.

Priorities
- Reduce child poverty
- Reduce childhood obesity
- Promote evidenced based Safe at Home support as an alternative to admission to hospital or social care
- Promote support for residents with Dementia
- Increase targeted advice and practical support to reduce the incidence of excess winter deaths and fuel poverty
- Work with significant employers to promote health benefits in the workplace
- Embed health and wellbeing considerations into growth considerations
3. WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Our Vision:

South Norfolk residents have the best possible health and wellbeing, living their lives in decent homes, in better health and with support from the community.

Our Strategic Outcomes:

Informed by key evidence from the JSNA, the South Norfolk Health Profile and other intelligence and joint working, we have prioritised the delivery of three outcomes to achieve our vision:

1. Younger people securing the best chances in life through health and wellbeing
2. Older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind
3. Residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost health and social care services.

The above Outcomes will be strongly supported by a wider corporate work around influencing the developing Health and Wellbeing Agenda for the benefit of local communities:

South Norfolk influences the Health & Wellbeing, NHS and Social Care Outcomes that will make the most difference to the lives of local people.

The ‘pyramid’ diagram on the previous page captures our approach, including our eight priorities to deliver these outcomes; partnership working and joint commissioning of services are key to delivery, as are the principles of prevention and early intervention, ‘think family’ and ensuring choice and control for our residents.

Our approach to health improvement & protection

- Wider determinants – economic development and business support, housing, advice and support, community safety
- Health improvement – smoking cessation, alcohol and substance misuse, healthy eating and physical activity
- Health protection – health protection powers, food safety, air quality, contaminated land, private water supplies, noise control, pest control

While this strategy focuses predominantly on the health and social care related factors that influence health and wellbeing South Norfolk Council also delivers a diverse range of front line services that provide essential early interventions that protect communities and provide local intelligence to inform the health improvement and health protection elements of the wider health and wellbeing agenda.

These front-line service actions will be coordinated through the Council’s Corporate Plan and Directorate Business plans and because we recognise that partnership working is essential to make sure that we achieve the best possible outcomes for everyone who lives or works in South Norfolk steps will be taken to ensure effective and consistent engagement with local residents, statutory, voluntary, community and commercial organisations all of whom have an important role to play in the delivery of the wider health and wellbeing agenda.
4. CONTEXT

National Context

In 2010, the Marmot Review, Fair society; healthy lives was published which set out the evidence demonstrating relationships between health, distribution of health and social and economic conditions. The government’s 2011 public health white paper welcomed the review and placed health inequalities at the centre of its public health aims.

The transfer of public health from the NHS to local government and Public Health England (PHE) has been a significant extension of local powers and duties; it now represents an opportunity to change the focus from treating sickness to actively promoting health and wellbeing.

The costs of poor health on a range of service providers has led to an increase in reactive solutions in a range of general public health-related services, the rising demand for these services has then placed individuals at increased risk of falling off a universal pathway and needing intense support to get back onto it.

In a time of national austerity and the need to secure reductions to the public purse, there is a clear necessity to consider services that secure longer term savings and delivery efficiency in the short and medium terms, but without reducing services, and where possible improving services for customers – this will mitigate against the potential "ticking time bomb" of demographic changes and public health risks.

Local Context

On 1st April 2013 the Health and Social Care Act introduced new arrangements for health and social care, namely:

- Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities being abolished
- NHS planning and delivery functions being transferred to the NHS Commissioning Board and Local Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Upper tier councils becoming responsible for appointing a Director of Public Health and establishing a Health and Wellbeing Board and Local Health watch
- Health and Wellbeing Boards becoming responsible for undertaking a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA); and publishing a local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and reviewing CCG commissioning plans to ensure they reflect the needs and priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- A statutory duty on upper tier authorities to “take steps to improve the health of their local populations”

Since then:

- Norfolk has in place a Health and Wellbeing Board which became operational on 1st April
- A Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2014-17 is nearing completion
- Norfolk County Council coordinates its Health and Wellbeing arrangements through its Partnerships, Policy and Performance Team
- The Commissioning Groups are also operational; South Norfolk CCG covers the whole of the South Norfolk District and a substantial part of the Breckland District.
- The SN CCG has produced a prospectus for 2013/14
- Services are commissioned via the Integrated Community Health and Social Care team that is funded jointly by the NHS and the County Council
- South Norfolk Council has established member and officer level responsibilities for the coordination of the public health agenda and has been engaged extensively in the shaping of the health and wellbeing strategy formulation.
- South Norfolk Council and the SN CCG have held a joint workshop to further develop partnerships and to understand priority areas where they can work together
5. KEY PARTNERS WHO PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE HEALTH & WELLBEING AGENDA AND THEIR PRIORITIES

**South Norfolk Council Priorities**
SNC’s vision is to improve the quality of life in South Norfolk, for now and future generations, to make it one of the best places to live and work in the District.

- 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 business-like, efficient and customer aware

**South Norfolk CCG Priorities**
- Frail older people – Integrating health and social care, and integrated pathways of care; case management
- Planned care and tackling variation – Redesigning elective care pathways, reviewing thresholds for surgical intervention, prescribing practice
- Emergency and Urgent care – Reforming the urgent care system; avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions
- Mental health – Improving the management of dementia, improving access to psychological therapies
- Women and children – Tackling childhood obesity

**Norfolk County Council – Health & Wellbeing Board/Strategy Priorities**

**Overarching Goals**
- Drive Integration
- Reduce Inequalities
- Prevent Health Lifestyles and Prevent Problems

These will be progressed through three priorities
- Early Life (0-5)
- Obesity
- Dementia
6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES FOR SOUTH NORFOLK

Outcome One: Younger people securing the best chances in life through health and wellbeing

Introduction
Although Norfolk’s older population is growing at a faster rate, the numbers of children and young people are expected to rise steadily over the next 20 years. Giving every child the best start in life was highlighted in The Marmot Review of Health Inequalities Fair Society, Healthy Lives as the highest priority recommendation for reducing health inequalities; it called for ‘a second revolution in early years’. Further, the challenges for all young people, particularly around jobs and developing skills and lifestyles and behaviours that will impact longer term on their health and wellbeing are key to future demand for services and health and wellbeing.

Why is this important for South Norfolk?
Poor health that begins in early life will impact on an individual for the rest of their life reducing life expectancy and also quality of life in later years: Information from Norfolk Insights confirms that:

- In South Norfolk 2,800 children (11.4%) live in poverty. This compares with 17.8% in Norfolk and 20.65 nationally.
- Of the 530 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Norfolk, it is estimated that 179 have a higher proportion of children living in poverty than the Norfolk average of 17.8%; in South Norfolk, the worst areas are in parts of the Old Costessey, Diss, Harleston and Cromwells wards.
- Child poverty as a percentage of the populations is higher in Old Costessey, Diss and Harleston and Cromwells.
- Over half the population are of working age, and there are higher numbers of children and older people across SN as a whole.
  - During 2009/10, the survey showed results significantly higher than the county average in three wards in South Norfolk. The highest overall rates in South Norfolk are for Scole and Ditchingham and Brome wards with 66.7% and 63.6% respectively of Year R and Year 6 boys being overweight or obese and girls in Year 6 in the Bunwell area with an obesity prevalence of 50% (compared with the Norfolk average of 16.8%).
- In Year 6, 16% of children are classed as obese – although this is better than the England average it is still a significant issue and is there is a higher concentration (20% +) in some areas, including Gillingham and Thurlton (over 27%).
- The level of smoking in teenage pregnancy is worse than the England average.

What we want to see
We want all children to realise their full potential, and will help them from an early age to be self-sufficient and have a network of support that will enable them to live independent and healthy lives. We want targeted services aimed at young people and families so that many of the wider determinants of health such as employment, community safety, child poverty and housing can be addressed through early intervention. We believe we have a clear role to make through our services, and these can be adapted to meet need – for example our leisure services can target particular audiences.

Our two priorities to ensure every child has the best start in life:

1. Reduce child poverty
2. Reduce childhood obesity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1: Reduce child poverty</th>
<th>What we Plan to do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address child poverty through increasing economic resilience within families</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with the Top 20 companies in South Norfolk to grow apprenticeships and target opportunities at those families with children in poverty, not already being targeted by the “troubled Families” initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work with Norfolk County Council Adult Education programme aimed at preparing 16-19 year olds for work. Adult Education will work with these young people over a 10-week period to get them close to being “work ready”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliver a SNC offer to work with local businesses to take these young people on a 10-week traineeship (2 days per week) which would include £400-£500 compensation payment from Adult Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>We could also offer a similar compensation scheme to fund similar “traineeships” with the Top 20 companies for people over 21 not covered by the Adult Education scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting the reduction of youth unemployment and improving sustainable community youth provision.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 2: Reduce childhood obesity</th>
<th>What we Plan to do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting healthy eating and food safety initiatives in the District to ensure on-going and longer term health benefits and to tackle the issues around obesity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Launch a new GP Taster Session programme for accessing Leisure Services in South Norfolk focusing on younger obese children (and their families).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconfigure the activities available in our leisure centres to increase the focus on general activity rather than sport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabling young people in the district to take up and develop new sporting pursuits through a series of taster sessions aimed at grass roots level</td>
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Outcome Two: Older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind

Introduction
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. There are a number of specific health issues that particularly affect older people including falls, diabetes and dementia; the level of excess winter deaths is also higher than the Norfolk average. All issues have a considerable impact on individuals involving reduced life quality, increased admissions to hospital and greater use of the social care system.

Why is this important for South Norfolk?
- The overwhelming evidence around public health in South Norfolk highlights a growing older population (especially over 75s) with significantly increased health risks for specific groups
- The net costs of providing hospital care and residential care compared to independent living are highly wide ranging as the following research example (2010) shows based on annual average costs uplifted by 13% for inflation.
- 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.
- Life expectancy is 3.8 years lower for men in the most deprived areas of South Norfolk than in the least deprived.
- Adult obesity is at its highest levels in Diss/Roydon, Old Costessey, New Costessey, Scole, Dickleburgh, and Bressingham and Burston.
- Emergency hospital admissions for coronary heart disease vary significantly from the best performing in Cringleford/Easton to the higher incidence in Harlestone, Beck Vale, Abbey, Northfields and Old and New Costessey.
- Hospital admissions for fractures are at their highest in Forehoe, Loddon, Henstead, Costessey, Diss/Roydon and Humbleyard.
- Estimates predict that by 2020 as the proportion of older people in the population rises many as 3,100 people in South Norfolk will have dementia.

What we want to see
We want preventative work to encourage active lifestyles throughout life promoting good health and wellbeing generally and into old age. We want vulnerable and older people to live in their own homes with dignity rather than in costly health and social care alternatives

Our three priorities to ensure older people live independently in their own homes with peace of mind:
3. Promote evidenced based Safe at Home support as an alternative to admission to hospital or social care, and develop Good Neighbour Schemes
4. Promote support for residents with Dementia
5. Increase target advice and practical support to reduce the incidence of excess winter deaths
| Priority 3: Support evidenced based alternatives to admissions to hospital | A project working with significant local employers to promote health benefits in the work place that will include use of leisure centres. This work will focus on active lifestyles, healthy eating, no smoking initiatives and alcohol issues with an outcome of reducing sickness and absenteeism and promoting whole life health and wellbeing in order to reduce demand on services in older age. Work with professionals working in health, social care to identify older people in the community who through known risk factors have an increased likelihood of having a fall. Provide a home screening/ modification service Safe at Home would which would a) target the removal of falls hazards and b) assist people to return home from hospital. |
| Priority 4: Promote support for residents with Dementia | Liaise with local communities to assist them to support people with dementia to stay engaged in their community and to take part in day-to-day activities such as shopping, visiting the bank and meeting with friends. Provide targeted help for residents with dementia including handrails, signposting, extra lighting and for example gas detectors and water-level alerts. Plan for an older population through supported housing schemes that are dementia friendly. |
| Priority 5: Increase target advice and practical support to reduce the incidence of excess winter deaths | Target future homes insulation, energy efficiency and fuel switching initiatives to those areas of the district where the rate of excess winter deaths is above the national average. Sign post residents in need to benefits and other support available. Liaise with other agencies to improve the referral system for high risk residents and improving the identification of at-risk residents through staff who undertake home visits. Improve the way we communicate with customers across all media improve South Norfolk Council’s online presence and services. |
Outcome Three: Residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost health and social care services.

Introduction
We recognise that we need to work with those customers most in need, but we also recognise there needs to be a general offer to local residents as managing future health and wellbeing and access to services is highly important – SNC can make a very strong contribution in this context. Health and wellbeing needs to be promoted throughout life to reap longer term benefits both for residents and in managing and providing services.

Why is this important for South Norfolk?
- There is a high incidence of Diabetes, COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease i.e. chronic bronchitis or emphysema), CHD (Coronary Heart Disease), Dementia, Depression, Stroke, Cancer (skin and breast) and Hip Fracture.
- The Public Health England (2013) has stated that monitoring and preventing early deaths from cancer, particularly by targeting risk factors and lowering excess winter deaths in the east of the district are priorities in South Norfolk.
- Health improvement issues need to be tackled including adult and childhood obesity, smoking, alcohol consumption, and teenage pregnancy
- Diabetes information is not available beneath district level – however, across South Norfolk 5% of the population registered with GP practices aged 17 and over have diabetes. This ranks South Norfolk 6th out of the 7 districts in the county where 1st is worst.

What we want to see
We want health and wellbeing factors to be high on the agenda for everyone in South Norfolk and to see a culture of empowerment for local residents and businesses in embracing health and wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. We want to ensure SNC services maximise their offer to the wider determinants of health, health promotion and health protection.

Our two priorities that will help residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost public health services are:

6. Work with significant employers to promote health benefits in the work place
7. Embed health and wellbeing considerations into growth considerations

Wider work: South Norfolk influences the Health and Wellbeing, NHS and Social Care Outcomes that will make the most difference to the lives of local people.

We acknowledge and support the good work that is already being undertaken and believe that our distinct role and position at a hub from which spokes to a wide range of partners extend enables us to engage with other agencies on the ‘Integration’ agenda in a way that can bring significant added value making ‘great things’ happen to produce improved outcomes for residents and savings for the public purse. Accordingly, all the above outcomes will be strongly supported by a wider corporate work around influencing the developing Health and Wellbeing Agenda for the benefit of local communities:

What we want to see

We want South Norfolk Council to be playing a full and positive role in the health and wellbeing agenda by:

- Working closely with the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group on shared outcomes
- Proactively working to support the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Reconfiguring SNC services to support health and wellbeing outcomes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Three: Residents of South Norfolk enjoy increased health and wellbeing and avoid or delay demand on higher cost health and social care services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What we Plan to do</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority 6. Work with significant employers to promote health benefits in the work place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with local employers to promote health benefits in the work place that will include use of SNC Leisure Centres. This work will cover active lifestyles, health eating, no smoking initiatives and alcohol issues to reduce sickness and absenteeism and promote health and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver a pilot HONOR award to promote healthy food options on food business menus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that future growth is health and wellbeing-proofed through the development management process and opportunities are created through areas such as green space, play areas, design and amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the health and wellbeing of South Norfolk residents through a series of health intervention techniques that will target specific populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering a good quality leisure service that benefits the residents and improves the sustainability of the centres with projects/enhancements will be scoped to improve service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencing partners to prioritise community safety/cohesion issues that matter to our communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority 7. Embed health and wellbeing considerations into growth considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a South Norfolk (District) Health and Wellbeing Forum that will oversee the health and wellbeing strategy, will feed into the Health and Wellbeing Board and public health at Norfolk County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the formation of a South Norfolk Locality Group that will meet four times per year and be co-terminus with the boundaries of the SN CCG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain a needs assessment toolkit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing health intelligence and data about 'at risk' populations within communities – better interaction between services at District / County / CCG level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work effectively with the Operational Partnership Team to support the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider work: South Norfolk influences the Health and Wellbeing, NHS and Social Care Outcomes that will make the most difference to the lives of local people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. WHAT NEXT?

Delivering the outcomes

SNC’s approach to health and wellbeing acknowledges that most residents are on a positive health and wellbeing journey through life but recognises that at certain stages of life and for particular individuals’ targeted support is sometimes required to help people stay on that positive journey. The figure below describes the determinants of the health and wellbeing of our communities in South Norfolk and demonstrates our commitment to innovative delivery through multi-agency partnerships. The evidence based priorities are a response to the risk and long term effects of not providing enough support in early years, and the net effect in older age of residents not having maximised their health and wellbeing opportunities. All services and opportunities will be delivered through strong community engagement and partnership working.

Operational Delivery Model

The figure below shows SNC’s Operational Delivery Model which highlights potential to work proactively and reactively. An emphasis on both behavioural and environmental improvements is chosen to highlight a culture that encourages personal responsibility where possible.
8. THE ROLE OF SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Possible SNC role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reduce child poverty                                          | • Economic Development and Business Support  
• Advice and Support (Housing and Benefits)  
• Localism  
• Through multi-agency work and projects we can provide early interventions e.g. the Operational Partnership teams, and in future delivering and coordinating Hubs |
| Reduce childhood obesity                                      | • Coordination of projects through Leisure Services or within communities  
• Health Improvement  
• Leisure  
• Localism |
| Promote evidenced based Safe at Home support as an alternative to admission to hospital or social care | • Service Delivery – includes with customers at risk – such as Handyperson scheme, Care and Repair Services, affordable warmth etc…  
• Wide range of home improvements |
| Promote support for residents with Dementia                  | • Enabling affordable housing  
• Commissioning support at home  
• Work with Registered Providers and Support Providers |
| Increase target advice and practical support to reduce the incidence of excess winter deaths and fuel poverty | • Target work of Energy Team  
• Inward investment and accessing funding  
• Green Deal and Big Switch  
• Advice and Support |
| Work with significant employers to promote health benefits in the work place | • Leisure Membership  
• Environmental Services – health and safety, food safety, licensing  
• Health Improvement  
• Health protection |
| Embed health and wellbeing considerations into growth considerations | • Planning Policy and Development Management  
• Green space, design, amenity spaces, play areas  
• Antisocial Behaviour  
• Partnerships  
• Leisure and health improvement initiatives |
| Working closely with the South Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group on shared outcomes | • Partnership working and analysis  
• Funding opportunities  
• Linking spend to CCG and HWB priorities |
| Proactively working to support the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board | • Engagement with and involvement of partners  
• Ensuring Drive and Delivery |
| Reconfiguring SNC services to support health and wellbeing outcomes | • Economic Development, Housing, Advice and Support, Community Safety, Localism, Leisure |
9. MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

This implementation of this strategy will be overseen by the Council’s Housing and Public Health Policy Committee and the action plan will be revised annually. A South Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board will bring together key partners to monitor progress, devise solutions to meet priorities and share intelligence. New activities will be incorporated into future Directorate Business Plans and individual initiatives will have a delivery plan which will set out a programme of activities and progress against each one.
Asset Management

Head of Asset Management

The Asset Management Plan and Programme 2011/14 and the Tree Management Strategy has been rewritten to reflect the changes in legislation and directorate planning. It will ensure a corporate, strategic and forward thinking approach to asset management is adopted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabinet member(s):</th>
<th>Ward(s) affected:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renata Garfoot 01508 533749</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:rgarfoot@s-norfolk.gov.uk">rgarfoot@s-norfolk.gov.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Background

1.1. The current Asset Management Plan (AMP) 2013/17 had been refreshed and updated from previous plans. It set out how the Council will:

1.1.1. Manage its land and property assets
1.1.2. Undertake a strategic approach to asset management
1.1.3. Deliver value for money
1.1.4. Deliver strategic priorities

1.2. The Asset Management Group (AMG) comprising of officers and members are responsible for managing, developing policy and strategy for Council assets included in the AMP. There are a number of strategies included in the plan such as the Land and Property Asset Strategy, Investment Strategy and Disposal Strategy.

1.3. The Plan also included a delivery programme, action plan and maintenance priorities for the Councils land and property assets.

1.4. The Council’s Tree Management Strategy (TMS) was adopted in 2010 and was written to ensure the Council can meet its obligations in terms of tree management safety, whilst sustaining a healthy tree stock. The objectives of the strategy are to:
1.4.1. Identify and adopt a standard framework for managing and maintenance of council tree stock.
1.4.2. Reduce risk to residential, officers and visitors from hazardous trees
1.4.3. Ensure efficient use of resources
1.4.4. Control and monitor maintenance of trees including those protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and growing within conservation areas.
1.4.5. Ensure trees continue to enhance the character of the district, provide value and benefits to the community and ecological/wildlife systems.

1.5. Since the strategy was adopted, annual tree surveys and associated remedial works have been undertaken across the Councils estate.

2. Review of Last Year - Summary
2.1. Leisure Centre enhancement programme was agreed by Cabinet and a Project Manager has since been appointed to deliver this on time, within budget and to the required standard. The Council is also seeking to acquire the freehold of the Long Stratton Leisure Centre.
2.2. A Public Convenience improvement programme has commenced that will see Council owned facilities in the district improved with modern, DDA compliant, direct access cubicles, which are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2014. The first phase will commence at Harleston and Loddon.
2.3. Sewage Treatment Improvement Programme is close to completion. The programme started with 68 works requiring refurbishment or replacement. During the last 12 months 15 works have been adopted by Anglian Water and 2 have been transferred to Saffron Housing resulting in 3 sewage works remaining in the programme. These are anticipated to be transferred during 2014/15.
2.4. Land at was acquired Bawburgh for a Gypsy and Travellers transit site. Construction works commenced December 2013 and is due to be finished around Easter.
2.5. Development in an EU complaint procurement in progress underway to form a Joint Venture Company to undertaken property development with assets within and outside of the Councils ownership. This vehicle will deliver development both residential and commercial development.

3. Current Position and Issues
3.1. Whilst the Councils Corporate Priorities as described in paragraph 5, remain the same, there have been a number of changes that have occurred and
opportunities that have come available since the documents were written. These are:

3.1.1. Directorate Business Planning documents developed for the 2014/15 period. Key issues driving AMP are the leisure enhancements programme, land acquisition to support Ketteringham Depot expansion, Property Development, Market Town’s initiative including Public Conveniences improvements and the Early Help Hub.

3.1.2. Energy Act 2011 states that from April 2018 it will be unlawful to rent our residential or business premises that do not reach a minimum energy efficiency standard (anticipated to be at EPC rating E). Premises of this rating or below will need investment to bring up to the required level and therefore the Council will need to consider the impact of this on any assets it owns that may fall into this category.

3.1.3. DCLG and the transparency code. In addition to existing requirements the statutory code will now also require councils to publish local authorities’ property assets, to help drive better efficiency.

3.1.4. Construction 2025 is a joint strategy which sets out how industry and Government will work together to put Britain at the forefront of global construction over the coming years. The aim is to lower costs, create faster delivery, lower emissions and improve exports. This may impact on the Council’s property company.

3.1.5. Permitted development rights which provides for certain types of minor changes to property without needing to apply for planning permission.

3.1.6. Help to buy scheme has been developed to assist all purchasers of new homes from April 2013 until the end of March 2016 and has been extended to second hand homes. This scheme provides for an equity loan of between 10 – 20% of the purchase price from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

3.2. An informal workshop was held with the Finance, Resources, Audit and Governance committee to develop the AMP and TMS documents and to ensure that they meet the Council’s current priorities/objectives, reflecting service requirements and legislation. This workshop provided useful feedback.

3.3. As part of this process the AMG have also reviewed both documents and have highlighted their key aims and objectives for assets over the period of the AMP.

4. Proposal and Reasons

4.1. The reason for the revised AMP and TMS is to ensure a corporate, strategic and forward thinking approach to asset management is adopted. Good asset management is crucial to providing:

4.1.1. High quality and cost effective services.
4.1.2. Safe and well maintained assets which meet the needs of service users

4.1.3. Revenue income to support the Council’s day to day operational service expenditure

4.1.4. Assets which deliver the Council’s priorities.

4.2. The TMS has undergone amendments to reflect:

4.2.1. Assessment of trees in relation to nearby properties and the risk of structural damage

4.2.2. Current working practices around informal inspections which are undertaken when requested

4.2.3. Frequency of surveys is determined by the arborist depending on their survey findings

5. Other Options

5.1. An alternative option would be to continue with the existing strategy, however this would not meet the Council directorate business planning priorities, service needs and reflect current practices.

6. Relevant Corporate Priorities

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

6.2. Promoting a thriving local economy.

6.3. Supporting communities to realise their potential.

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

7. Implications and Risks

7.1. With an investment portfolio there are financial implications and risks associated with property management, rent collection and maintenance. Proactive asset management is required to ensure rents are maximised to produce a return on investment.

7.2. A 5 year planned maintenance programme is in place to highlight any substantial repairs and to inform budget setting and the Capital Programme. Key maintenance priorities will be published in the plan.

7.3. A Capital Programme has been established to highlight proposed capital spend over a 3 year period. Where proposed maintenance priorities are funded by capital, these items will be subject to comprehensive business case with risk and cost benefit analysis, which will require approval to justify the proposed level of investment.

7.4. The land and property assets maybe impacted by environmental factors and these will be managed on an individual basis. Environmental factors that affect property can include biodiversity, carbon reduction and pollution.
7.5. Asset Management will take into consideration The Equalities Act.

7.6. By using this AMP and the TMS, the AMG can proactively manage risks associated with assets and seek to mitigate and minimise, where possible. There are links with these documents and the Corporate Risk Register.

7.7. There is a risk that the AMP, maintenance priorities, delivery programme and action plan are not delivered. Factors such as financial/staff resources, changes in legislation and the economic climate can all impact on delivery. The AMG will meet quarterly to provide a strategic corporate approach and drive forward the delivery of this plan.

8. Conclusion

8.1. The Council’s land and property portfolio is a large physical resource that is key in the Council’s operation performance and service delivery. To be successful, the approach to asset management must be integrated, sustainable and risk based seeking to deliver optimal use of assets. Therefore both the TMS with its objectives and AMP and its governance arrangements are therefore critical to ensure a corporate, strategic and forward thinking approach is adopted.

9. Recommendations

9.1. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the draft Asset Management Plan 2014/17 and the Tree Management Strategy 2014.
South Norfolk Council

Asset Management Plan and Programme

2014/2017
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<td>Objectives and Aims for Operational Assets 2013/14</td>
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<td>Investment Assets</td>
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<td>Objectives and Aims for Investment Assets 2013/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Property Strategy</td>
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<td>Community Assets</td>
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<td>Objectives and Aims for Community Assets 2013/14</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong> Guiding Principles</td>
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<td>Land and Property Asset Strategy</td>
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<td>Governance - The Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG)</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong> Appendix</td>
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<td>Review of Last Year</td>
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<td>Land and Property Maintenance Priorities</td>
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<td>Delivery Programme and Action Plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Foreword

The Asset Management Plan (AMP) is the Council’s corporate land and property strategy that sets out how the Council approaches all aspects of asset management.

The Council’s land and property portfolio is a large physical resource that is key in operational performance and service delivery. To be successful, the approach to asset management must be integrated, sustainable and risk based seeking to deliver optimal use of assets.

The plan aims to:

- Set strategic direction by identifying the Council’s future asset management requirements
- Focus on having an effective integrated approach to the delivery of the Council’s aims and objectives, reducing duplication wherever possible
- Be entrepreneurial and promote innovation and forward thinking in asset management to maximise asset values, income and benefits
- Make the best use of land and property resources to maximise their contribution to service delivery
- Ensure there is a balanced sustainable portfolio which meets financial and corporate objectives

Corporate Plan and Priorities

Assets will be managed to enable the delivery of the Council’s Corporate and Directorate Business Plans, and the achievement of its Corporate Priorities. These plans detail how the services will deliver the Council’s priorities, aims and objectives over the year. Activities from these plans have been incorporated into the AMP and can be found in the Delivery Programme and Action Plan.

The 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.

This plan has strong links to the following Council documents:

- Capital Strategy 2014/17
- Capital Programme 2015/16
- Economic Development Strategy 2011-14
- Carbon Management Plan 2009
- Corporate Risk Register
- Directorate Business Plans 2014/15
- Tree Management Strategy 2010 (2014 Strategy to be approved in connection with this AMP)
The Council holds a variety of land and property within its portfolio, for many different purposes and services. The assets can be divided into 3 asset classes, which each have their own objectives and priorities:

- **Operational Assets**
  These assets are held for the use of the Council to either deliver a direct service such as hostel accommodation, leisure centres and public toilets or assets that support service delivery such as South Norfolk House Council Offices and waste services at Ketteringham Depot.

  These assets are held to enable the Council to deliver high quality cost effective services. They should be equal or exceed service requirements in terms of its location, capacity, accessibility and condition. It is important that these assets have the flexibility to meet current and future needs. These assets are not primarily held for the purpose of income return and/or capital growth.

- **Investment Assets**
  These assets are solely held for the purpose of generating a rental income such as business centres and industrial premises and/or capital appreciation which would include land for redevelopment. These assets may also support economic growth through providing quality accommodation at affordable rents. The redevelopment of land will also support the local economy by providing homes, infrastructure and jobs.

- **Community Assets**
  These assets are held by the Council for perpetuity. They play a vital role in the community and enable the Council to deliver social well-being, cultural, recreational or sporting interests in the community. Whilst both land and property can be classed as community assets, due to the rural nature of the district the council community assets are amenity land such as play areas and common land.
PART 1

EXISTING PORTFOLIO OF PROPERTY ASSETS
Operational Assets

South Norfolk Council has a range of operational assets. These are defined as assets which are held, occupied, used or consumed by the council to either support services or provide direct service delivery. These may either support a statutory or discretionary responsibility. The Council's operational assets are not held to generate an income.

The Council should ensure that it has sufficient assets to fulfil its service delivery requirements and that the assets are maintained correctly for their intended use. These assets should be used efficiently by introducing new working practices to maximise space utilisation and improve productivity, aiming to reduce operational running costs, energy costs and a reduction in carbon emissions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Asset Value</th>
<th>Maintenance Budget 2013/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk House</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£3,198,230</td>
<td>£64,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketteringham Depot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£159,321</td>
<td>£20,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Parks</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>£2,386,182</td>
<td>£30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary accommodation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>£1,264,036</td>
<td>£24,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Centres</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£8,413,256</td>
<td>£127,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Toilets</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>£479,338</td>
<td>£14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td><strong>£12,702,133</strong></td>
<td><strong>£280,871</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The asset valuations figures above are from the most recent valuation obtained. Asset valuations are undertaken on a 5 year rolling programme. South Norfolk House, Wymondham Leisure Centre and investment assets are however valued annually. These valuations are based on valuations conducted in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Account and RICS Red Book.*
Objectives and Aims for Operational Assets 2014/15

- **Investment in Leisure Centres**
  Investment in the leisure centre enhancement programme was agreed at Cabinet in December 2013.

  The initial work that will be undertaken will see improvements/facility enhancements made to Wymondham Leisure Centre and Diss Swim and Fitness Centre. Subsequent phases will look at a separate sports/fitness facility in Diss to meet the demand for exercise provision. An enhancement programme for Long Stratton Leisure Centre will run concurrently as soon as the freehold has been transferred to the Council. The key outcomes are to protect the capital value of the centres, improve public health, cost reductions and increased use and income generation.

- **Ketteringham Depot expansion and drainage resolution**
  The waste services team has “outgrown” its depot at Ketteringham and it is anticipated that there will be further demand for waste services in the future due to the housing growth in the area. The Council is negotiating to acquire additional land that maybe suitable to meet this growth and resolve existing site constraints. If the acquisition is not successful or proposed scheme is not viable an alternative site or additional land will need to be sourced.

- **Public Conveniences**
  The Council has 7 public toilets across the district, which are at varying levels of condition. An improvement programme has been implemented with the proposal to install modern direct access facilities that are available 24 hour a day, are DDA complaint and will reduce energy consumption. At Loddon it is proposed to install shower facilities at The Staithe. This programme may also give opportunity for any redundant facilities to be converted to commercial accommodation subject to planning consent.

- **Capital Budget**
  There are a number of capital projects which will be undertaken over more than one financial year, and Cabinet will be requested in June, as part of the year end process, to allow the carry forward of any remaining budget on those projects from 2013/14 to 2014/15. £1,580,731 has been allocated in the Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2016/17 for investment into operational assets. Capital schemes require detailed business plans to demonstrate ongoing savings, additional income generation or service enhancements.
Investment Assets

The investment portfolio holds a variety of good quality assets of a range of property types and sizes in key locations in and around the district. These assets are held primarily to generate investment returns or have future potential for redevelopment and may unlock future regeneration opportunities.

The Councils investment portfolio is valued at £5.4 million, which produces an income from rents in order to fund service expenditure. The average rate of return during at January 2013 was 6.6% gross, calculated on the value as at 31/12/13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Property</th>
<th>Asset Value 31/03/2013</th>
<th>Asset Value 31/12/2013</th>
<th>Forecasted Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£’000</td>
<td>£’000</td>
<td>£’000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayton Road, Wymondham</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>1,376</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loddon Business Centre</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wymondham Town Council</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Lane Hut</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketteringham Depot</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties in Wymondham</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties in Diss</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties in Harleston</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,739</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,739</strong></td>
<td><strong>379</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.60%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported to Cabinet on 10th February 2014 – Capital and Treasury Report Q3 (April to December 2013)

The rate of return on investment properties shown, is based on gross income before any operational management costs are taken into consideration

*Based on valuations conducted in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Account and RICS Red Book. The rate of return is based on gross income before any operational management cost.
Where the asset is held to provide a return the strategy is to charge market rents, maximise rental income, minimise voids and minimise management costs to ensure the best return is achieved. The minimum target return is 5% net of revenue costs. Opportunities are taken to increase returns and improve the investment value wherever possible.

Key Objectives and Aims for Investment Assets 2014/15

- **Residential and commercial development**
  The Council owns land for development and is seeking to obtain planning consent on these sites. Development of phase 1 of the Poringland scheme will commence during April with phase 2 being undertaken once a development partner has been procured (by end of 2014). It is proposed to work with this partner to develop the remaining phases at Poringland, develop other Council owned sites and to seek to develop in other areas including strategic employment locations.

- **Residential and commercial property investment portfolio**
  There has been a shift of focus from acquisition of commercial assets to increasing the portfolio through the development and retention of both residential and commercial property. The Council may still consider suitable investment acquisition opportunities as they arise both within and outside the district if clear benefits can be demonstrated.

- **Maximise Revenue Income**
  It is a priority of the team to maximise the income of the investment portfolio through minimising voids, timely rent reviews and hiring of conference and meeting room facilities.

- **Generating Capital Income**
  It is anticipated that capital income will be generated from the sale of residential property developed on the Council’s scheme at Poringland and other developments from 2015/16 onwards.

The Council is also seeking to dispose of any assets considered to be underutilised or surplus to requirements.
Investment Property Strategy

In recent years the Council has invested capital into increasing its property investment portfolio. The principle aim for this portfolio is to provide a return on capital. The strategy around Investment Property will:

- Help to improve the Council’s financial position maximising returns on investment
- Improve the economic outlook and climate of the district to make it more attractive to other investors and increase job opportunities
- Invest in and facilitate developments that may not otherwise happen
- Promote economic development and prosperity in key sectors

Commercial Return

The Council will acquire properties, which are well located to attract good quality tenants, provide relocation and expansion opportunities for existing businesses and to provide affordable opportunities for start-up businesses. Commercial return can be generated using the following methods:

- Rental Yield - To gain an income (rent) from the property being let. Assets held for this reason should be held as a long-term investment and revenue generated can be reinvested.

- Capital Appreciation - To realise the rise in the value of the asset based on a rise in the property market or through proactive management.

- Profit - This can be achieved through acquiring investments at below market value and/or by adding value to an asset, for example by renovating, redevelopment and/or change of use.

Regeneration opportunities

The Council will investigate opportunities to acquire assets or invest in residential, commercial and public realm regeneration schemes that provide a strategic opportunity to enhance the local community and to develop sustainable built environments where people wish to work and live.

Work in partnership

The Council will consider opportunities for collaborative working with public and private partners, such as housing providers and developers, to facilitate development and investment, through sharing of expertise, funding and assets. Such opportunities may include land swaps/exchanges, joint ventures, and development agreements.

Investing outside the district

The district is predominantly rural, which limits the number of opportunities available for commercial investment. Neighbouring districts may offer additional opportunities and these will be considered.
Community Assets

These are assets that are held in perpetuity, which have no determinable useful life and may have restrictions in their disposal such as public open space, commons and cemeteries. These assets have a community benefit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Maintenance Budget 2013/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commons and Parish Lands</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>288.429</td>
<td>£12,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside sites</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>102.626</td>
<td>£12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity land</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>73.604</td>
<td>£46,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.756</td>
<td>£7,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>148.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>468.415</strong></td>
<td><strong>£79,449</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As at 1st April 2013

Objectives and Aims for Community Assets 2013/14

- **Adoption of a South Norfolk Country Park**
  The Council is anticipating the adoption of a country park in Costessey. Future management options appraisal including the production of a 10 year management plan and establishing the opportunity to generate income from events and other sources are to be considered.

- **Transfer of assets to Parish Councils and Community Groups**
  This will be undertaken either through Community Right to Bid and transfers of amenity land and other assets for community benefit to Parish and Town Councils.
PART 2

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ASSET MANAGEMENT DELIVERY
Land and Property Asset Strategy

Property and land assets have a crucial role in enabling the Council to deliver its corporate priorities and achieve financial and service returns. It is therefore essential to make the best and most efficient use of the portfolio and ensure it is “fit for purpose”.

Assets are treated as a corporate resource, albeit they are designated as being in portfolio related groups to ensure focused management and maximum value can be achieved.

Aims
- Assets are aligned with the aims and objectives of the Council
- Asset meet the current and future needs of service users, officers, members and the public
- Challenging property use to identify unsuitable surplus assets and rationalise the portfolio
- Improve user satisfaction, health & safety, accessibility and environmental performance of assets
- Awareness of sustainability and running costs for the life of the assets
- Cost effective and timely acquisition to maintain service delivery

Assessing the property portfolio can help identify issues on how the building impacts on officers, productivity and customer experience. A review will lead to one of the following outcomes:

**Suitable:** Performing well and fully supporting the needs of officers in delivering services and effectively supporting the users of the service.

**Not completely suitable but can be improved:** Assets which generally meet property users and service delivery requirements. It may require minor investment above routine expenditure to maximise service delivery and user experience.

**Not completely suitable and cannot be improved:** Not performing well and showing major issues. It impacts on the performance of officers and/or delivery of services and does not effectively support users.

**Not suitable:** Not performing well or satisfactory with a detrimental impact on service delivery and property users. Major investment or replacement required.

Land review an disposal programme

In 2013 a review of the Councils land holdings commenced. Its aim was to identify underutilised land assets as part of this strategy. The outcome of this review will result in a disposal programme which will generate a capital receipt and ensure the remaining land portfolio is fit for purpose.
Land and Property Acquisition Strategy

The Council will acquire assets where it can demonstrate:

- There is a service delivery need or opportunity to improve service delivery
- An investment return can be generated
- The addition of value to existing assets
- There is a strategic benefit that may provide future opportunity and wealth to the South Norfolk community.
- A contribution to the maintenance of a balanced non-operational investment property portfolio.

Whilst previous acquisitions have been within the district, due to the rural nature of the area this can limit opportunities and therefore acquisitions may be considered on the outskirts if considered appropriate.

Both land, residential and commercial property may be acquired through the Council’s Property Development Company for investment. These assets will be acquired for investment purposes and will seek to enhance its value through obtaining planning consent and/or generating an income from either rents received or capital appreciation.

All acquisitions will be assessed through a robust business case and with particular reference to the costs, benefits, impacts and risks of the property and how it relates to the Council’s corporate objectives.

Before acquiring assets for operational use, consideration should be taken to review if other suitable under-utilised assets are held, which could accommodate the service requirement.

In all cases where the value of the property to be acquired is over £50,000 an independent valuation will be obtained by a member of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors to ensure that the transaction represents good value.

The Council has the authority to acquire property within its district by way of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO). This enables the Council to acquire land or property that would be used to carry out a function, which is in the public interest. The law relating to CPO is complex and detailed statutory procedure must be followed. The amount paid for land or property acquired under a CPO will be in accordance with the Act.

Amenity land is acquired by the Council in relation to Planning Contributions through S106. Where possible the Council will directly transfer these assets to Parish Councils for asset management at a local level.

Acquisitions and disposals will, under the Rules of Financial Governance require consultation with and agreement of the Head of Finance. In all cases, be supported by a financial appraisal providing all the financial and budgetary implications. The Head of Asset Management and either the Deputy Chief Executive or Head of Finance, along with Corporate Management Group and/or Cabinet can approve acquisitions or disposals subject to a maximum value.
Land and Property Disposal Strategy

Whilst the Council has no statutory obligation to disposal of assets (other than the Right to Buy”), it will do so at its own discretion and in when in the best interests of the Council. Assets may be identified for disposal where they:

- Provide a strategic or financial benefit to the Council
- Does not meet service requirements
- Is underperforming or not fit for purpose
- Community benefit

Requests are received from community groups or private individuals to acquire land and property assets. The Council has the legal power to dispose of its assets and will seek to secure the best price reasonably obtainable. This may result in the asset being marketed on the open market and the notification to other potential interested parties as part of the disposal process. Assets may be retained by the Council if the property market is poor and values low and put to alternative uses, or assets may be used for community improvement projects.

A disposal at less than its market value can be undertaken with statutory consent to do so. Specific consent is not needed where a council can demonstrate the land sale will help to secure the improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the local area, and the undervalue is only up to £2m less than market value. In some instances assets may be transferred at nil consideration if community benefits can be demonstrated.

If land is classified as Public Open Space, the Council will be required to dispose of the land following the statutory procedure required by S123 (2A) Local Government Act 1972. This procedure will require the Council to advertise its intention to dispose of the land and consider any objections received.

The land may be subject to S23 of the Land Compensation Act 1961 and the Council may be required to pay compensation to reflect the increase in value if planning consent is granted.

There may be existing restrictive covenants relating to the assets and the Council may place restrictions on the disposed of assets which may preclude the change of use or development. Legal rights, easements and way leaves may also impact on the disposal.

The Council may seek to enhance the value of the asset prior to sale, such as by obtaining planning consent. Where the proposal is to change the use of amenity land (for example to garden) planning consent may be required and planning policy will need to be addressed. The Council’s Local Plan policy LEI8 Loss of recreational or amenity land reflects the requirement to preserve amenity land for the community.

The Council has a governance framework regarding disposal of assets which requires consultation and agreement with the Head of Asset Management and either
the Deputy Chief Executive or Head of Finance. Higher value disposals will also require consent of the Corporate Management Team and or Cabinet.

The Head of Asset Management shall determine the most appropriate method of disposal. This method should require the open invitation of competitive bids, (whether by auction or by advertisement), unless an alternative method of disposal would be appropriate. Examples of possible exceptions are as follows:

- Sale to a sitting tenant
- Sale of an access which would enable a purchaser to release development value locked up in other property
- Sale to an adjoining owner or sale of a part-interest in a property where amalgamation of interests could enable substantial “marriage value” to be realised.
- Sale to a public body, provided that such sale is within the General Order (Statutory power), or receives Secretary of State consent.

In all such cases where the value of the property to be disposed of is over £50,000 an independent valuation will be obtained by a member of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

In some cases the cost of the disposal (marketing, legal and surveyors fees etc) may be higher than the offer proposed and the Council may seek to charge the purchaser an administration fee to cover the cost of its legal and surveying fees.

The Council may refuse the disposal of assets for example where land is used by others or where there are rights of way or if there are any environmental losses that may impact on both the natural or built environments.

The Council periodically reviews its assets and in 2013 undertook a review of land assets. This considered the lands suitability, fitness for purpose, delivery of services, planning considerations, development potential and relationship with neighbouring land and property. Possible alternative uses for both short term and long term potential were considered. A priority action plan is being developed for a land disposal programme.
Governance - The Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG)

There is a need to have a strategic corporate approach and direction to the Council’s asset management. Whilst the Corporate Asset Management Group does not have any executive decision making powers, there is a requirement for a core cross service group to act as the corporate steering group to ensure:

- An integrated and corporate approach to the use, management, and acquisition of assets is achieved to support the Council’s corporate and directorate business plans,
- Assets make a positive contribution to the improved delivery of local public services
- Underutilised and under performing assets are identified to ensure the asset base is fit for purpose and to establish opportunities for re-use, investment, regeneration or disposal
- Efficiency savings are identified and secured through strategic management of assets

The membership of the Group comprises:

- Head of Asset Management (Chair)
- Managers of assets from each Directorate
- Property Team and Facilities Team Leads
- Portfolio Holder

The group will meet quarterly.

Terms of Reference

- To challenge and review the provision, use and performance of the Council’s assets in order to ensure their effective use secures best value.
- To support the Head of Asset Management in developing the approaches and systems which enable the delivery and monitoring of the Asset Management Plan, inform its review and facilitate the better strategic management of the Council’s assets.
- To ensure there is an integrated corporate approach to asset management and ensure its inclusion in Directorate Business Plans.
- To review the prioritised pre-planned maintenance programme.
- To consider rationalisation, refurbishment, reuse and investment of the portfolio to deliver efficiency savings.
- To act impartially to assess project benefits and to prioritise between projects where there is competing resource ensuring all projects are consistent with relevant Council priorities and strategies.
- To ensure good project and budget management within all asset projects.
- To ensure there are clear corporate objectives for holding property, identifying surplus property for disposal or alternative use.
- To support the Environmental Strategy and climate change obligations to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions.
- Maximise revenue opportunities.
- To identify, manage and monitor risks and risk reduction.
Community Right to Bid

The Localism Act 2011 created a community right to bid, which gives communities the right to identify buildings or other land they believe to be of importance to community social well-being and have social interests, such as recreational, cultural and sporting interests. These assets are known as assets of community value.

The Council will hold a register of assets that have been nominated by a voluntary or community body and assessed as being assets of community value. If the owner of an asset on this list wishes to dispose of an asset, the community are notified to allow them to make a bid. The list will be maintained and published by the Communities Team.

Asset Transfers

The Government has issued guidance on how to develop asset ownership within the third (voluntary) sector. The Asset Transfer Unit helps to empower local people and organisations to regenerate under used land and property assets to help deliver long term social, economic and environmental benefits.

The Council has undertaken a number of asset transfers to Parish Councils in the past which has resulted in further community benefits.

Local people are often best placed to manage community facilities. They already make extensive use of these assets, have extensive local knowledge and pride in their local area. By managing community facilities it can empower local communities and can bring opportunities for greater independence, financial sustainability and create lasting change in local neighbourhoods.

Partnerships

The Council investigates shared services opportunities, joint working and collaboration with others to develop a long-term strategic approach to assets management.

The Norwich Fringe Partnership works with the Council to manage key natural open spaces and amenity land. The Council also has support from Parish Councils, community groups and trusts in managing amenity land.

Volunteers

Volunteers have supported the Council in asset management by undertake a number of tasks across commons and countryside sites, from enhancing or restoring habitats, maintaining infrastructure and building small structures (bridges, kissing gates).
PART 3
APPENDIX
Review of Last Year 2013/14

Budgets

Budgets for 2014/15 had a small increase to cover a rise in utility costs, with maintenance budgets remaining similar as the previous year which were fully utilised.

Operational Assets

Capital expenditure at South Norfolk House resulted in the visitor and compound car park was resurfaced during the summer, due to its poor condition. A roof access system was installed to allow for safe access to the roof for maintenance purposes. The generator was also replaced so that adequate back-up systems are in place if power failure occurs. Capital expenditure on ceiling replacement (lower hex) which was scheduled for 13/14 is to be deferred to 14/15.

Ketteringham Depot which facilitates the Council’s waste service has had general maintenance over the year. Capital expenditure has been limited during the past year, as this is being held over for the depot expansion, subject to land being acquired.

Car parking in the district have undergone some minor works as part of the annual maintenance programme.

Leisure Centre enhancement programme has been agreed by Cabinet and the works shall be rolled out during the period of this plan. The Council is also seeking to acquire the freehold of Long Stratton Leisure Centre.

The Council has acquired land that is being developed for a Gypsy and Travellers Transit site. The site is due to be open for use Spring 2014.

The Council has agreed a public conveniences improvement programme with an anticipated completion of December 2014. Structural issues are to be investigated at Diss as part of a feasibility study.

Non-operational Assets – The Investment Portfolio

The investment portfolio has seen some changes, with new leases signed at Harleston Industrial Estate and Vinces Road in Diss, and a lease termination at Long Stratton. The Council’s business centres in Diss and Loddon have experienced the usual tenant fluidity, reflecting the “easy in, easy out” flexible terms offered at the centres. Minor building works have been undertaken to maximise rental demand and value.

Rent reviews have been undertaken during the course of the year which has seen nominal or no increase which reflects the current market.
The Council has 85* commercial investment properties with 92% of these being let and as at 21 January 2014. Although the portfolio has actually increased by one property (57 Norwich Road), this reported figure is reduced from that reported in the previous version of this document due to a change in the way the portfolio is calculated and following amalgamation of units where they are let to a single tenant. Vacant properties are marketed in a variety of ways to maximise exposure to potential tenants, including newspapers/magazines, websites and using local experienced commercial agents.

*Excluding garden licences, agricultural land, parking plots, access licences and development sites

The Council is seeking a joint venture partner with which to form a vehicle through which to undertake future property development and investment activities. Although the Council has development sites within its current portfolio, it is looking for additional opportunities and a partner that provides access to suitable opportunity sites is required.

An EU compliant procurement is in progress, with a view to identifying a preferred partner and establishing the joint venture vehicle by the end of 2014 with trading commencing early in 2015. It is likely that the first development undertaken by the new joint venture will be phase two at the Council’s development in Poringland.

**Community Assets**

A programme of tree inspections and remedial works were undertaken to ensure the trees are maintained in a safe condition as practically possible during the year. Surveys also reflect any detrimental impact to nearby property. These works are funded through service revenue budgets and the Asset Management Plan budget.

The Council continues to work with Parish Council’s, volunteers and schools at some of its Commons and Countryside sites and has undertaken litter picks, scrub clearance and hedge planting.

**Acquisitions**

The Council acquired the following assets in 2013/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burdock Close, Wymondham</td>
<td>Amenity Land</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Disposals

The Council disposed/transfered of the following assets 2013/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Rd, Aldeby</td>
<td>Sewage Works</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Common, Bunwell</td>
<td>Pumping Station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Road, Fritton</td>
<td>Sewage Works</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Road, Kirby Kane</td>
<td>Pumping Station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Road, Topcroft</td>
<td>Land for affordable home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land, Harts Farm, Wymondham</td>
<td>Land for development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£976,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Mile Terrace, Haddiscoe</td>
<td>Sewage works</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorpe Road, Haddiscoe</td>
<td>Pumping Station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penny’s Green, Wreningham</td>
<td>Pumping Station</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As at Feb 2014

## Surplus and underused assets identified:

Sewage improvement programme surplus land/former sewage works
Land assets identified through the disposal review
Redevelopment Opportunities

Property Development Company
The Council is seeking to find a development partner and has commenced a competitive dialogue procurement process. It is envisaged that this will be a long term partnership of 25 years whereby both parties invest cash, development opportunities and development costs.

Cygnet House, Long Stratton - Residential and Commercial B1 Office Use development

The planning application for mixed use redevelopment 50 residential units and up to 800 square metres of office space is scheduled to be considered by Development Control committee, April 2014. If successful, the next stage is to obtained reserved matters so that this site can be developed through the development company.

Shotesham Road, Poringland - Residential and Commercial B1 Office Use development.

A public consultation event was held as part of the preparation for a reserved matters planning application, which was submitted in February 2014. The spine road has been constructed and enabling works are due to commence prior to construction of phase 1 during 2014/15.

Chestnuts, Pulham St Mary - Residential development

A revised planning application is due to be submitted shortly for a scheme of 6 market bungalows and 2 affordable bungalows. The application will be submitted with the adjoining land owner.

Park Road, Diss - Commercial development and Friarscroft, Wymondham - Affordable Housing, Market Housing and wildlife area.

It is anticipated that these sites will be developed by the Council’s Property Development Company once established.

Harts Farm, Wymondham - Residential development

The site was marketed during 2013 for sale with the benefit of planning consent. It has since been disposed of on the open market and the capital proceeds are to be reinvested by Norfolk County Council in the local schools.

Norwich Road, Wymondham - Change of use and extension to dwelling and new dwelling

The property which gained planning consent for change of use to a dwelling has been refurbished and is available to let.
Land and Property Maintenance Priorities

Below are the proposed maintenance priorities that may be either funded by revenue or capital budgets. In terms of capital expenditure these items will be subject to comprehensive business case with risk and cost benefit analysis, which will require approval to justify the proposed level of investment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance Priorities</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Norfolk House</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car park resurface (main car park)</td>
<td>£300,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air conditioning replacement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet replacement (upper hex and extension)</td>
<td>£210,000</td>
<td>15/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceiling replacement (lower and upper hex)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpet replacement (lower hex)</td>
<td>£TBC</td>
<td>16/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) replacement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ketteringham Depot</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major works at the depot will be dependent on the outcome of the land acquisition and depot expansion</td>
<td>£1,050,000</td>
<td>13/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure Centres</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1 – improvements</td>
<td>£1,190,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2- improvements</td>
<td>£1,464,000</td>
<td>15/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3- improvements</td>
<td>£632,000</td>
<td>17/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Maintenance Priorities</td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>Timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loddon Business Centre</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish toilets</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve entrance area</td>
<td>£3,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New carpet to rear corridor</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bin storage</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diss Business Centre</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace windows and external doors to annex</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refurbish toilets in main building</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overflow car park</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment Properties</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for alterations as tenant inducements</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Car Parks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Street - resurfacing</td>
<td>£40,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Chapel, Diss - resurfacing</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>15/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Street, Diss – resurfacing</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>16/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Road, Diss - resurfacing</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>16/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Toilets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement programme</td>
<td>£350,000</td>
<td>14/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commons and Countryside Sites</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works as per Management Plans</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Street Lights</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling programme of street lights replacements</td>
<td>£15,000</td>
<td>14/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delivery Programme and Action Plan
Below is the proposed delivery programme and action plan with anticipated timings. These actions are subject to the relevant approval which may result in the requirement for a comprehensive business case with risk and benefit analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Programme and Action Plan</th>
<th>Timings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Norfolk House</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual review of Business Continuity Plan</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full implementation of corporate scanning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Back scanning project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formalise room booking and charging mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Removal of temperature refrigerant R22</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ketteringham Depot</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquire adjacent land for expansion subject to constraints being resolved and Cabinet approval</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remediation</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning consent for depot extension and construction</td>
<td>2014/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leisure Centres</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement works to Wymondham</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancement works to Diss</td>
<td>2015/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire additional premises in Diss for a separate gym facility</td>
<td>2013/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquisition of Long Stratton Leisure Centre</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement works to Long Stratton Leisure Centre</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review assets in relation to the Energy Act 2011 and the minimum energy efficiency requirements</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Toilets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement programme phase 1 and 2 completed</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>2015/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acquisitions</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Investment Portfolio</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire suitable land and property assets to improve the investment portfolio</td>
<td>2014/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disposals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surplus Land</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispose of land within the surplus land programme</td>
<td>2013/14 Q1 – Q4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delivery Programme and Action Plan | Timings

### Land Assets

**South Norfolk Country Park**
Undertake future options appraisal and produce a 10 year management plan | 2014/15

**Community Asset Transfer of Common Land**
Finalise the transfer of Roydon Fen
Undertake opportunities for transferring assets | 2014/15

**Trees**
Undertake rolling programme of tree inspection, associated remedial works and new planting | 2014/15

### Redevelopment

Development company procured and established | 2014/15

**Diss Park Road Regeneration**
Establish opportunities for redevelopment
Consider opportunities for Diss assets | 2015/16

**Shotesham Road, Poringland**
Reserved matters obtained
Construction of phase 1 business units
Construction of phase 1 residential units
Construction of phase 2 business units
Construction of phase 2 residential units | 2014/17

**Cygnet House, Long Stratton**
Planning application determined
Scheme designed
Reserved matters application submitted | 2013/16

**Friarscroft Rd, Wymondham**
Review site for residential development | 2015/16

**The Chestnuts, Pulham St**
Consider disposal or development of site | 2013/14

### Asset Management

**Assets Mapping**
DCLG requirement for transparency and assets to be mapped | 2014/15

**Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC)**
Energy efficiency scheme review | 2014/15

**5 Year Maintenance**
Annual update of the 5 year maintenance programme | 2014/15
1. Introduction

The Council has a large tree stock located across its portfolio such as amenity land, countryside sites, commons and car parks as landscaping to the land and buildings. The sites that hold the majority of our tree stocks are very popular and they represent a major contribution to the community, reduce carbon emission and have benefits to natural ecosystems.

There has been wide concern over tree management safety and the risks associated with trees particularly causing harm, injury or death to residents, officers and visitors to the district. The management of trees should be a proportionate and balanced approach between the benefits the trees provide and the risk they pose.

This strategy has been developed to ensure the council can meet its obligations in terms of tree management safety, whilst sustaining a healthy tree stock.

2. Objectives

The objective of the strategy is to:

- Identify and adopt a standard framework for managing and maintenance of Council tree stock.
- Reduce risk to the residents, officers, visitors, buildings and structures from hazardous trees.
- Ensure efficient use of resources.
- Control and monitor maintenance of trees including those protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO’s) and growing within conservation areas.
- Ensure trees continue to enhance the character of the district, provide value and benefits to the community and ecological/wildlife systems.
- Replanting of trees where there is a requirement under TPO or conservation area and where there is a need. Care should be taken to ensure that the trees planted are suitable for the location they are planted in.

3. Tree Stock

The majority of trees situated on land the Councils own are affected by human activities, such as amenity areas, commons, countryside sites etc. The Council has in the region of 700 acres of land that fall within this category.

The council’s trees are located on the following sites:

- Amenity land and play spaces
- Commons, countryside sites and other land which the Council is responsible for
- Car parks, roads and footpaths
- Operational land and buildings
- Non-operational investment properties
4. Special requirements

There are a number of formal restrictions regarding trees and these are detailed below.

4.1. Tree Preservation Orders

The Council has a number of trees within its stock that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

A TPO is a legal form of control that applies to specific trees and woodlands. TPOs are usually used to protect trees that are visually significant and can be seen from a public place. TPOs are usually served when trees are under threat of being cut down or being damaged.

It is an offence to cut down, prune, or damage a tree that is protected by a TPO without obtaining correct authorisation (though some exceptions apply) and therefore prior to any maintenance works being undertaken permission must be obtained via the Council’s Landscape Officer.

4.2. Conservation Areas

A number of the Council’s trees are located within Conversation Areas.

A Conservation Area is one of special architectural or historic interest. Trees often make an important contribution to the appearance of Conservation Areas and so are given special protection. Works to trees in Conservation Area usually require a formal ‘notice of intention’ before being undertaken. Whilst the Council is not required to give itself this formal notice, it is advised that the Council’s Landscape Officer be informed of all works to be undertaken.

4.3. Hedgerows

The Council has a number of hedges that are subject to the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. These Regulations prevent the removal of ‘important’ hedgerows, but do not restrict appropriate management works.

If the Council wishes to remove a hedgerow that is subject to the Regulations, it must follow the procedures set out in the Regulations via the Landscape Officer.

4.4. High Hedges

Although here are no general restrictions on how high you can grow your hedge, a High Hedge’ is defined by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as a barrier to light or access as is formed wholly or predominantly by a line of two or more evergreen or semi-evergreen trees or shrubs and rises to a height of more than 2 metres above ground level.
But, for these purposes, a line of evergreens or semi-evergreens is not to be regarded as forming a barrier to light or access if gaps significantly affect its overall effect as such a barrier at heights of more than 2 metres above ground level. The rules that govern the height of boundary walls and fences do not apply to hedges.

The hedge does not have to comprise wholly evergreen or semi-evergreen trees or shrubs to fall within the definition. The Act applies to hedges that are predominantly evergreen or semi-evergreen.

The two metre height is not the maximum height a hedge can be under this legislation. It is in fact the minimum height at which the council can make an assessment of a hedge under this Act.

While common law rights entitle neighbours to cut overhanging branches back to the boundary line (unless other legal restrictions, such as a tree preservation order, apply), they cannot reduce the height of a hedge unless the owner agrees.

The Act does not:

- require all hedges to be cut down to a height of two metres
- require the hedge to be cut lower than two metres from the ground
- guarantee access to uninterrupted light
- include Beech and Hornbeam hedges

The council may be affected by high hedges as owners of hedges or by neighbouring property.

### 4.5. Planning Conditions

Local planning authorities can incorporate planning conditions to require new planting as part of new developments.

Such conditions must be complied with and be taken in to consideration whilst undertaking remedial works to the Council’s tree stock.

### 4.6. Biodiversity

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) created a duty for local authorities to conserve biodiversity. The Councils vision is to continue to protect and enhance our natural environment and its biodiversity.

Before any work is carried out an assessment should be undertaken to clarify if this is likely to affect any protected or priority species. This assessment should be undertaken by the Councils advisor or a suitably qualified external Contractor. This will be based on current advice from Natural England, or any other relevant organisation. It is an offence to injure, kill or capture a species protected under
British Law or a European Protected Species (EPS), furthermore, it is illegal to
disturb the nest of any wild birds or roosts for any bats.

4.7. Covenants

There may be legal covenants that restrict the planting and removal of trees and
hedges. Covenants must be adhered to and could include:

- Maintenance arrangements that apply to boundaries or screens, including the
  responsibilities of neighbours on either side of the boundary;
- Place limits on the size or type of hedge, which may subsequently be planted.

Tree Register and Assessment

1. Introduction

For the council to meet its tree management objectives there is a need for:

- A risk based approach.
- Inspections carried out by suitably trained arborist.
- An effective documented record system
- A mechanism for reporting incidents that are likely to affect the health of a tree,
  together with a record of the action taken

2. Risk

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) states the real risk of serious harm from trees is
extremely low, however it is not possible to achieve zero risk. The level of risk is in
proportion to the number of people and presence of valuable property that could be
harmed or damaged in the event of tree failure.

Damage to buildings and other land including roads, car parks and foot paths can be
significant through a tree falling and affecting the structure through to root damage
causing subsidence and heave.

These risks can be reduced by:

- Directing people, cars etc. away from the area.
- Deter people from informally parking under trees
- Re-locating equipment such as play equipment, seats, information boards etc.
- Re-routing paths and tracks
- Use signs to warn of the risks
- Deter access by allowing brambles, grass shrubs to grow
- Managing the sites with regular surveys of the sites by qualified arborists and
  formative pruning which will benefit the health of the trees
It is impossible to eliminate all risks and adequate insurance should be in place for any eventualities.

3. Assessments and Surveys

Trees are subject to decline, collapse, damage and as trees deteriorate they are likely to shed branches or fall and the potential to cause harm increases. Decaying trees can provide valuable habitat for wildlife, therefore, only where there is a clear risk to life or property should remedial action be taken.

Risk based approach assesses the areas of land that hold trees according to levels of use and therefore determining what risks are associated. The most commonly used areas are prioritised and therefore ensuring a cost effective approach to tree management.

Zoning is undertaken according to the level of risk associated with:

- Level of Use and Number of visitors
- Proximity of neighbouring property
- Tree species
- Tree age
- Tree height
- Availability of access (Proximity to Rights of Way, Desire Lines etc)
- Purpose of area (recreation, wildlife, car park)

This approach will determine the frequency and level of the inspection.

High risk areas that are used by many people every day including:

- Highways and foot paths
- Car parks
- Amenity and play areas

Medium risk areas are not intensively used by the public.

Low risk areas that are only lightly used such as farmland and areas of other sites that are away from Rights of Way or desire lines.

4. Inspection of trees

The purpose of the inspection is to identify the routine maintenance requirements and to maintain the trees in as safe as condition as practically possible.

Inspections can be undertaken on the following basis:
4.1. Informal Inspections

During an informal inspection the condition of trees would be noticed as an officer passes by. It would not be necessary to record these inspections/actions. These inspections would be undertaken by people who do not necessarily have specialist knowledge of trees, but are familiar with the location/property, and who would be aware of the potential hazard if a tree became unstable. This type of inspection could be undertaken by grounds maintenance team, car park inspectors, leisure centre managers, property managers and caretakers or reported by the council’s volunteer Tree Wardens. If there is a concern over the condition of a tree this should be reported to the Property Team, who will arrange for an officer, who has general tree knowledge, and the ability to recognise obvious visible signs of serious ill health, structural problems that if cause tree failure could result in serious harm. This inspection could be undertaken by either the Maintenance Surveyor or external contractor.

Medium risk trees would be those with the potential to cause serious harm in the near future, but which is not imminent and can be reasonable managed at an acceptable level. Action will be needed when the inspections identify trees posing as risks in the near future.

4.2. Detailed inspections

Detailed inspections are carried out on all the Council’s sites. Visual inspections are by a suitably qualified arborist. In some cases further detailed investigation may be required involving root, crown or other procedures if decay and defects are suspected and these would be undertaken by a specialist in this particular field.

The Council may seek to obtain additional advice/surveys such as ecological or structural as part of the detailed inspection process.

If trees are identified as high risk with imminent risk of serious harm and consequence, appropriate action will be taken.

Important trees that are retained for heritage, habitat or visual amenity reasons, but which may pose a significant risk, a specialist detailed inspection will be required to manage them without serious loss of quality.

Healthy trees are liable to windblow or to suffer severe structural failure due to adverse weather conditions, and it must be recognised that trees are living organisms which often contain faults, and which respond dynamically to their immediate environment. It would be unreasonable to attempt to remove all faults or potentially faulty trees within a public area as these faults may remain static for years, develop only very slowly, or heal as is often the case. What is important in these circumstances is that faults or potential faults should be identified and regularly monitored so that an accurate record of their condition is maintained. In this way informed decisions can be made. To fulfil this requirement properly, trees that need additional monitoring should be inspected as per the recommendations of the arborist.
4.3. Tree Root inspections

The root system and soil around the roots acts as a structural counter balance for the above ground part of the tree. Tree roots can cause issues particularly after long periods of dry weather and affect the infrastructure around them. This may be visibly identified by cracking and unevenness to footpaths, highways, car parks and buildings.

Inspections should also include a visual assessment of the area around the tree to highlight any root damage to the ground surface within this the immediate area. Any such damage may require a programme of remedial action. A barrier to prevent access to this area may be required to be erected until the remedial works have been undertaken to prevent Health and Safety issues.

5. Recording Information

An inventory of sites will be maintained by the Property Team.

Trees that appear sound during informal and formal inspections will not require a documented record of their condition. However we will record when the site was inspected.

Trees that are included in the surveys and remedial works will be retained for 7 years.

6. Remedial Works and Maintenance.

Remedial action should be specified by a competent person (such as an Arborist or Officers with appropriate expertise). Trees in higher risk areas which show signs of obvious collapse or are hazardous should be dealt with immediately using the best advice available.

Council will undertake works:

- To assist with the growth and development of young trees.
- To remove hazards or the potential of hazards to ensure the safety of public and property.
- Prevent or minimise the effects of a tree on the structure of a property
- Which preserve trees with significant local natural, history or ecological value.
- If a tree is causing significant detrimental effect or causing a serious nuisance to neighbouring property, such as:
  - Root and branch encroachment
  - Structural, subsidence or heave damage

The council will not undertake works to tree that it considers are causing a relatively minor nuisance such as:

- Casting shade unless covered under the High Hedges legislation
- Seed and leaf litter or honeydew deposits
- Droppings from roosting and perching birds
• TV reception interference
• Trees that are considered too large by complainant
• Noise

7. Standards of work

In accordance with current British Standards BS3998 and industry codes of practice relating to tree maintenance and other works affecting trees a Tree Felling licence from the Forestry Commission and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may be required when undertaking certain works.

8. Legislation

Health and Safety at Work Act


The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)


Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999

Forestry Act 1967

Occupiers Liability Act 1984

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003