Cabinet

Monday 12 September 2016

9.00 am, Colman and Cavell Rooms
South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

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

Contact Claire White on 01508 533669 or democracy@s-norfolk.gov.uk
Members of the Cabinet

John Fuller (Chairman)  The Economy and External Affairs

Mr M Edney (Vice Chairman)  Finance and Resources

Mrs Y Bendle  Wellbeing and Early Intervention

Mr C Hudson  Stronger Communities and Leisure

Mr L Hornby  Regulation and Public Safety

Mrs K Mason Billig  Environment and Recycling

Group Meetings

Conservatives – 8.00 am, Cabinet Office

Liberal Democrats – 8.15 am, Blomefield Room

This meeting may be filmed, recorded or photographed by the public; however anyone who wishes to do so must inform the chairman and ensure it is done in a non-disruptive and public manner. Please review the Council’s guidance on filming and recording meetings available in the meeting room.
1. To report apologies for absence;

2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, "by reason of special circumstances" (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency;

3. To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members; (please see guidance – page 4)

4. To confirm the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on Monday 18 July 2016; (attached – page 5)


6. Off Street Car Parking Proposal ITEM DEFERRED

7. 100% Business Rates Retention and Needs and Redistribution- South Norfolk Council Consultation Responses (report attached – page 40)

8. Cabinet Core Agenda; (attached – page 64)
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

Members are asked to declare any interests they have in the meeting. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates.

- In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote on the matter.
- If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed.
- If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting.
- Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.
- In any case, members have the right to remove themselves from the meeting or the voting if they consider, in the circumstances, it is appropriate to do so.

Should Members have any concerns relating to interests they have, they are encouraged to contact the Monitoring Officer (or Deputy) or another member of the Democratic Services Team in advance of the meeting.
CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 18 July 2016 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors M Edney (Chairman for the meeting) Y Bendle, L Hornby, C Hudson, K Mason Billig

Apologies: Councillor J Fuller

Non-Appointed: Councillors D Bills, M Gray and T Palmer

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Business Development (D Lorimer), the Director of Growth and Localism (T Horspole), the Director of Community Services (P Boyce), the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Governance and Business Manager (L Mickleborough), the Projects and Performance Manager (A Mewes) and the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard).

2473 CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS – SOUTH NORFOLK ON SHOW

The Chairman referred to the South Norfolk On Show event, that had taken place the previous day. The event had been a huge success, with over 6,500 visitors, and Cabinet expressed its thanks to all staff involved. Cllr C Hudson added that the event was an excellent example of the Council working with local communities, and underpinned everything that was good about South Norfolk.
MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on Monday 13 June and Thursday 30 June 2016, were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

PERFORMANCE, RISKS AND REVENUE BUDGET POSITION REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, the Projects and Performance Manager, and the Senior Governance Officer, which detailed the Council’s performance against strategic measures, risk position and the financial position at the end of the first quarter for 2016/17, and sought approval for other consequential matters.

The new style report, with an integrated and corporate priority based approach, was welcomed by members.

The Projects and Performance Manager summarised the report, explaining that overall the performance, finance and risk management of the Council, remained positive during Quarter 1. He explained that 24 performance measures had met or exceeded target, with only 1 measure not meeting its stretch target. He drew attention to one new risk that had been added to the Strategic Risk register, relating to the Norfolk and Suffolk Devolution Deal and members also noted the positive variance on the revenue budget of £587K and the £0.8m spend on capital, against a budget of £1.2m.

The Projects and Performance Manager drew attention to a number of areas of exceptional performance, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of the report. With reference to LI 263, ‘the Number of Missed Bins per 100,000 collections’, he explained that this indicator had failed to hit the stretched target due to the significant changes to the service back in June. This dip in performance had been expected, and the number of missed bins was already reducing. Members noted that it had been estimated that half the number of missed bins reported during the quarter had been as a result of customer error.

Members’ attention was drawn to MI 1041, ‘the number of Housing Benefit Claimants and Council Tax Support claimants moving into Work’, which was currently being baselined to determine a target. The Projects and Performance Manager informed members that officers felt that this measure was no longer appropriate due to the significant drop in the number of people claiming Job
Seekers Allowance in South Norfolk. Members noted that officers would propose a replacement measure in the next quarterly report to Cabinet.

Discussion followed regarding the recommendation to delegate the Council’s debt enforcement service to Breckland District Council. The Accountancy Manager explained that this would result in Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP), (of which Breckland District Council was a member), providing the service. ARP had exceeded the success of Breckland’s previous arrangements, resulting in higher levels of income and fewer complaints. Members noted that currently a private company was employed to carry out the Council’s debt enforcement action.

Referring to the performance measures in her portfolio, Cllr K Mason Billig explained that the number of missed bins in its worse week was still only 0.78% of all those collected, and she was pleased that the number of missed bins was already reducing.

Concerning the cost of waste collection per household, she explained that the increase in costs had also been as result of route optimisation, and that she expected these costs to stabilise. Turning to recycling rates, she explained that unfortunately rejected materials from the kerbside bin recycling service continued to impact on performance, but the Council was continuing to work with its partners to educate residents and cut down on the level of rejected materials.

Cllr Y Bendle praised those staff working in areas under her portfolio and made particular reference to LI 323, ‘the Increase in the Number of Vulnerable People Supported to Maintain Independence in their Own Homes’. Members noted that 601 people had been supported during the first quarter, which was an increase of 13% on the same quarter the previous year. She advised members that David Bensley, the new “Handy Person” had commenced working for the Council on 1 July, and that it was hoped that through working with partners, a debt advisory officer would soon be appointed to work out on site in the community. In response to a query from Cllr T Palmer, Cllr Bendle assured members that the Council was very aware of the good work carried out by the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABs), and she encouraged both the CABs and the Council to work in partnership, alongside the Early Help Hub.

Cllr L Hornby expressed his satisfaction with performance within his portfolio, referring in particular to the time taken to determine planning applications and the performance of CNC Building Control.

Referring to the income at the Wymondham Leisure Centre, Cllr C Hudson advised that it would take time for the full benefits of the changes to be realised, and was confident that income projections would be achieved within a year. He urged members to support the recommendation to enter in to a lease with Norfolk County Council for land for a new All-Weather Pitch, next to the Long Stratton Leisure Centre, this being the first phase in the improvements to leisure provision in Long Stratton.
It was

The Decision

RESOLVED:

a) To note the 2016/17 performance for the first quarter and the combined efforts across the Directorates to deliver the Vision of the Council.

b) To note the current position with regard to risks and to accept the actions to support risk mitigation.

c) To note the capital and revenue position and the reason for the variances on the General Fund.

d) In accordance with Section 9EA of Local Government Act 2000 and regulations 4 and 5 of the Local Authorities (arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012, to approve the delegation of the debt enforcement service to Breckland Council, as outlined in paragraph 2.3.3 of the report.

e) To agree that the Council enters into a lease for land next to Long Stratton Leisure Centre in order to build the 3G All-Weather pitch as outlined in paragraph 3.5 of the report.

f) To agree that the Council lend £55,000 to Big Sky Property Management Ltd and purchase share capital of £100,000 in Big Sky Ventures Ltd for it to buy the same amount of share capital in Big Sky Property Management Ltd, as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that processes are in place to improve performance, that the management of risks is sound.
To ensure that appropriate revenue budgets and reserves, and the capital programme are in place and are aligned to the Council’s priorities.

Other Options Considered

None
The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing Access and Standards Manager, which proposed a number of changes to the Council’s Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme.

Cllr Y Bendle explained that the current scheme had been in operation for four years and had been successful, however, small amendments were required to ensure that the policy remained fit for purpose, met the needs of people in South Norfolk, and was compliant with recent Government guidance.

The Director of Community Services advised members of the proposed changes to the Home Options Policy (outlined at Appendix 2 of the report), and guided members through two scenarios which demonstrated how the amendments to the scheme would work in practice.

Members welcomed the changes to the policy and scheme.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the proposed policy changes to South Norfolk Council’s Housing Allocations Policy and Scheme, as summarised in paragraph 3.2 and detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the policy and scheme meets the needs of the people of South Norfolk, and is compliant with Government guidance.
The Subject of the Decision

Members noted that following the changes agreed at the Council’s AGM on 23 May 2016, the Policy Committees had taken on the work of the current Task and Finish Groups, originally set up by Council in June 2015. It was therefore considered appropriate to disband these Task Groups.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree that the following Task Groups be disbanded:
- Broadband, Growth and Infrastructure
- Leisure and Community Facilities
- Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan

The Reasons for the Decision

The task groups are no longer required

Other Options Considered

None
Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

(The meeting concluded at 9.35 a.m.)

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Chairman
Greater Norwich Joint Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan: 2017/18-2021/22

Cabinet Member: Cllr John Fuller, Economy and External Affairs

CONTACT
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1. **Introduction**

1.1 Key pieces of infrastructure are required to support the planned level and distribution of growth set out in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS), such as new or expanded schools, road junction improvements and green infrastructure improvements, with some of the funding coming from the pooled CIL pot. The Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP), which is updated regularly, sets out and describes the infrastructure listed in the JCS.

1.2 In previous years, each Greater Norwich district has prepared an Annual (Infrastructure) Business Plan, or Annual Growth Programme (AGP), and the annual Growth Programme combined the contents of the three Business Plans. For the 2017/18 period onwards, however, it is been resolved to prepare a single Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) covering the whole of the three districts, for which pooled funding support from the Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF) will be sought. The IIP will also include infrastructure funding priorities for the subsequent four years to 2021/22 (i.e. it will be a five-year investment plan).

1.3 The (Greater Norwich) Joint Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (September 2016, Appendix 1) therefore sets out the priorities for infrastructure spending for 2017/18 and the subsequent four years. Projects of particular relevance in the IIP to South Norfolk include the Norwich Northern Distributor Road, the Long Stratton bypass, the Long Stratton Sports Hub (all of which were agreed in last year’s Infrastructure Investment Plan and so which do no need specific re-agreement) and various community and green infrastructure projects in South Norfolk.

1.4 The pooling of South Norfolk’s 2016/17 CIL payments to the shared pot; the agreement in principle to use pooled CIL in future years to help ensure the delivery of Norwich Area Transportation Strategy projects, particularly the Norwich Northern Distributor Road and the Long Stratton bypass; and agreement for seeking £500,000 from the pooled CIL pot to contribute to the Long Stratton Sports Hub project were all agreed in principle by Cabinet and Council in 2015 (in relation to the 2016/17 Infrastructure Investment Plan) and so therefore do not need to be agreed specifically again this year. However, for the avoidance of any doubt, Cabinet and Council are being recommended to confirm the principle of pooling CIL payments with the other Greater Norwich partners for future years.

1.5 The IIP proposes that a sum be set aside for maintenance costs of some infrastructure projects. However, there is a key question to be resolved about whether CIL funding should be used for maintenance costs, and it is recommended that this element of the IIP is not agreed. This matter is discussed in more detail in paragraphs 2.7, 3.4 and 4.1.
2. Background

2.1 The adopted Joint Core Strategy (JCS) identifies key infrastructure required to support the planned level and distribution of growth. The JCS has been developed with infrastructure delivery in mind and has an accompanying Implementation/Infrastructure Framework. The three local planning authorities have subsequently prepared a delivery plan, the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP), which sets out and describes the infrastructure listed in the JCS and which is regularly updated (the most recent iteration was published in July 2016; see Appendix 2 for the weblink). The Annual Business Plans for each district and the combined annual Growth Programme are key parts of the GNIP process.

2.2 In previous years, the individual district Infrastructure Business Plans set out annually a programme for infrastructure which would help deliver the growth set out in the JCS and the Greater Norwich City Deal. In July 2015, Cabinet and Council agreed the 2016/17 South Norfolk Business Plan (see Appendix 3 for the weblink); this was subsequently incorporated into the Greater Norwich Growth Programme for 2016/17, which was agreed by the Greater Norwich Growth Board (G Ngb) in October 2015.

2.3 Delivery of the strategic programme of infrastructure is vital to keep the planned housing and jobs growth on track and Broadland District, Norwich City and South Norfolk Councils have agreed to pool CIL contributions to assist in delivery of the programme as part of the GNGB Joint Working Agreement. The programme supports the key aims of the Greater Norwich City Deal, which has Infrastructure as one of its three strands.

2.4 CIL was introduced from 1 May 2014 in South Norfolk. Whilst a number of major planning permissions granted pre-CIL are still being delivered (with infrastructure being delivered through Section 106 agreements), every CIL-triggering development since 1 May 2014 has contributed to the pooled CIL pot, and so more CIL-funded infrastructure projects for South Norfolk are being sought for 2017/18 (and beyond) than in previous years.

2.5 Three projects – the Norwich Northern Distributor Road, the Long Stratton bypass, and agreement for seeking £500,000 from the pooled CIL pot to contribute to the Long Stratton Sports Hub project – were all agreed in principle by Cabinet and Council in 2015 (in relation to the 2016/17 Infrastructure Investment Plan) and so therefore do not need to be agreed specifically again this year.
2.6 At their meeting on 24 March 2016, the GNGB sought a longer-term strategic partnership for infrastructure funding priorities, and so this (and future) Infrastructure Investment Plans (IIPs) will include projected infrastructure funding priorities for the next five-year period (so to 2021/22 in the case of this IIP, which is attached as Appendix 1).

2.7 A fund of a maximum of £300,000 is proposed to support maintenance of a number of 2017/18 infrastructure projects over 10 years (see Table 1 of the IIP). Whilst all infrastructure projects will, to a greater or lesser extent, require some maintenance over time, it is questionable whether CIL monies should be used to fund such maintenance. The reason for this is that every CIL pound spent on maintenance cannot be spent on other infrastructure projects, so potentially desirable infrastructure projects would not be able to secure CIL funding. Other options for providing/funding/delivering maintenance can be available.

2.8 At Broadland District Council’s Cabinet meeting on 30 August 2016, at which they considered the IIP, their Cabinet resolved that all but one aspects of the IIP were acceptable, the exception being that the inclusion of a maintenance sum in its current form is not acceptable. Norwich City Council's Cabinet/Council will consider the IIP later in September.

**Update on projects with an element of CIL funding/borrowing in the current 2016/17 Annual Growth Programme for South Norfolk**

2.9 Councillors will doubtless be aware that construction work on the **Norwich Northern Distributor Road** is well underway. It is hoped that the road will be fully open in early 2018. Councillors will recall the previous commitments made by all the Greater Norwich authorities to support this project with up to £40m of local investment.

2.10 Pre-application discussions with the potential developers of the allocated 1800 dwellings and **Long Stratton bypass and Hempnall Crossroads improvements** and the Highway Authority have continued, with some useful progress made. It is hoped that pre-application public consultation will take place by the end of 2016.

2.11 Good progress has been made on the development of the **Long Stratton Sports Hub**. Consent was granted in May 2016 for the creation of a new Artificial Grass Pitch at Long Stratton Leisure Centre on land that will be leased to the Council from Norfolk County Council, and this project has attracted a funding grant of £216,000 from the Premier League and Football Association Facilities Fund. The 12-week construction period started in August 2016, with the facility expected to be ready for use by Long Stratton High School and by the local community in November 2016. Long Stratton Parish Council has also gained consent for the
construction of a new pavilion at their Manor Road Playing Fields and project professionals are in the process of being appointed and funding options are being explored. Options for the redevelopment of Long Stratton Leisure Centre are being developed and it is expected that these will be discussed with councillors in late 2016. Discussions with Long Stratton High School regarding additional improvements to the facilities, including the swimming pool, are ongoing.

2.12 The Colney to Bowthorpe river crossing project is largely in Norwich City (and is being led by the City Council) but also includes land in South Norfolk, and aims to deliver a crossing of the River Yare and footpath improvements. This will enable improved access from Bowthorpe and Threescore to the Norwich Research Park and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. In relation to the main element in South Norfolk – a bridge crossing the River Yare – there has been considerable work on the design of the bridge, with local residents being consulted during the process over recent months. Pre-application discussions have taken place with South Norfolk Council (as LPA) and it is hoped that a planning application will be submitted in autumn 2016. Work has also been progressing on the elements of the project in Norwich City.

3. Proposals

3.1 The Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (Appendix 1) describes the background and development of the IIP, updates on some major infrastructure projects previously approved for delivery, the proposed 2017/18 Annual Growth Programme (AGP), and (in Table 1) the Proposed Five-Year IIP. This information is therefore not repeated in this covering report, except to mention that a cash reserve of roughly £3m is proposed to be built up over the next three years, equal to one annual (part) repayment of the £50m which has been agreed to be borrowed to support the delivery of the Northern Distributor Road and the Long Stratton bypass.

3.2 At their meetings in June and July 2015, Cabinet and Council agreed to the principle of pooling CIL payments for 2016/17 to help ensure delivery of the Greater Norwich Growth Programme, and (as stated in paragraph 2.3 above) the principle of pooling CIL has also been agreed as part of the GNGB Joint Working Agreement. However, for the avoidance of doubt, Cabinet and Council are asked to confirm that CIL payments received in 2017-18 and in future years will be pooled with those from other Greater Norwich authorities to help the delivery of key infrastructure across Greater Norwich.

3.3 Appendix A of the Five-Year IIP includes details of the projects proposed as the 2017/18 AGP.
3.4 As mentioned above in paragraphs 2.7, the IIP proposes allowing maintenance expenditure of a maximum of £300,000 over 10 years (i.e. £30,000 per year). Similarly to Broadland DC’s Cabinet, it is recommended that this element of the IIP is not acceptable to the Council, as it would mean that fewer infrastructure projects overall could be delivered.

4. Risks and implications arising

4.1 For some of the South Norfolk projects proposed in the 2017/18 AGP, further work to refine the precise details and costs of the projects (including any maintenance costs, and to whom those maintenance costs will fall) will be required. In general, although it is allowable under the legislation, there is a principle to consider about whether CIL money should be spent on maintenance of new infrastructure (as discussed in paragraph 2.7). Any such costs should be kept to an absolute minimum (i.e. the design of new infrastructure should be planned to incur maintenance costs which are as low as possible). It is also worth noting that the Council is currently reviewing its approach to the future adoption and maintenance of open spaces and infrastructure, due in part to the need to reduce the ongoing legacy costs of such maintenance, and held a public consultation on the Draft Community Assets Strategy in summer 2016. The Community Assets Strategy is scheduled to be tabled for adoption at Cabinet in autumn 2016.

4.2 In 2015, the Government commissioned a national review of the operation of CIL by the Community Infrastructure Levy Review Panel (of which Cllr John Fuller is a member). The Panel submitted its (at present, confidential) report to Government in May 2016. It seems probable that there will be some further changes to the CIL regime, although until the Government issues its response to the review and any resulting policy/legislative amendments, it is unknown what these changes could be. There is a risk that some changes might have the effect of reducing future CIL income to the Council, and the implications of any CIL regime changes will obviously be kept under review.

4.3 Whilst delivery of some of the projects proposed in the 2017/18 AGP will have environmental impacts, these will be more positive than negative (such as new tree-planting, and protecting of wildlife sites). Most of the schemes are likely to require (or already have, or be related to a scheme that already has) planning permission, the achievement of which will require/or have required the environmental effects to be considered.
4.4 The Five-Year IIP and 2017/18 AGP will not have any negative impact on disadvantaged groups, and some of the proposals will have positive impacts (e.g. new/improved footpaths may open up areas for greater accessibility).

4.5 It is not considered that the Five-Year IIP will have any impact on crime and disorder.

5. Other options

5.1 Cabinet and Council could choose not to agree the list of South Norfolk projects proposed for inclusion in the 2017/18 AGP. However, these have been selected after considerable thought and discussion by officers (on a competitive basis) and are believed to offer the best balance of projects for South Norfolk.

5.2 With the exception of the matter of maintenance (discussed above), it is not considered appropriate for Cabinet and Council to pass opinions on the projects proposed in Broadland and Norwich in the 2017/18 AGP (in previous years only South Norfolk projects were considered by Cabinet and Council), although projects in all areas will need to be considered by the GNGB at their meeting in October 2016.

6. Recommendation

6.1 Cabinet is asked to recommend that Council resolves to:

- Agree, with the exception of the proposed 10-year maintenance fund of £300,000, the Joint Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (Appendix 1) in general, and the 2017/18 projects proposed for South Norfolk in particular, for consideration by the October meeting of the Greater Norwich Growth Board, with the first year of the Infrastructure Investment Plan to be considered as the Annual Growth Programme for 2017/18; and
- Agree to pool CIL payments for 2017/18 and future years beyond this to help ensure the delivery of the Greater Norwich Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan.
Appendices

1 Greater Norwich Five-Year Infrastructure Investment Plan (2017/18-2021/22)
3 Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (July 2016) – see http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/delivery/greater-norwich-infrastructure-plan/
Introduction

This Infrastructure Investment Plan sets out the projects for which pooled funding support from the Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF) is sought through the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) during 2017/18 to support the delivery of planned growth. It also projects the infrastructure funding priorities for the subsequent four years to 2021/22. The schemes it identifies are those considered to be a priority for delivery to assist in achieving our economic and growth targets as set out in the Joint Core Strategy and the Greater Norwich City Deal. One of the key strands of our City Deal was the delivery of a programme of infrastructure facilitated by a pooled funding arrangement between the Authorities.

This Infrastructure Investment Plan incorporates the updated position on infrastructure delivery since the preparation of the 2016/17 Annual Growth Programme (AGP) which was agreed by District Councils in November and December 2015 and by Norfolk County Council, as the Accountable Body, in February 2016. Also included are revised Community Infrastructure Levy income projections, updates on infrastructure development and programming from previous AGPs and planned preparatory work for infrastructure schemes in future years.

Development of the Infrastructure Investment Plan

As part of developing the 2017/18 AGP the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP) has been updated. The GNIP identifies infrastructure projects to 2026 and is used as the basis for identifying schemes for delivery in 2017/18 and projecting future infrastructure priorities over the subsequent period to 2021/22. The updated GNIP reflects progress made on infrastructure delivery and current knowledge of the timing of planned development schemes.

By including projected infrastructure funding priorities to 2021/22, this Infrastructure Investment Plan provides the longer term strategic partnership context that the GNGB sought at its 24 March 2016 meeting.

The first year of this Infrastructure Investment Plan should be considered as the proposed AGP for 2017/18. Thus approval of this plan will commit IIF funding to those projects identified for delivery in 2017/18. Projects in subsequent years will be confirmed through annual updates to the Infrastructure Investment Plan.

District Councils will consider the Infrastructure Investment Plan in August and September 2016. The GNGB will consider the Infrastructure Investment Plan at its meeting in October 2016. Only if substantial changes are proposed by the GNGB will a further resolution from the District Council’s be required to confirm the approval of the Infrastructure Investment Plan and 2017/18 AGP.

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1 http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/delivery/greater-norwich-infrastructure-plan/
As the Accountable Body for the GNGB, Norfolk County Council’s Policy and Resources Committee will include the 2017/18 AGP into its capital programme in early 2017 as in previous years.

The Infrastructure Investment Plan process is illustrated in Figure 1, below.

**Fig. 1 – Infrastructure Investment Plan Development Process**

**Project Updates**

Updates for projects already approved for delivery are included at Appendix B.

**Proposed 2017/18 Annual Growth Programme (AGP)**

For the year 2017/18 Greater Norwich partners have identified 17 schemes totalling £1.639m as priorities to receive IIF support. In addition to this the proposal includes an allocation of £2m to be held in the IIF for the purposes of delivering the Children’s Services’ capital programme and £966,000 as a cash reserve to be built up over the next three years equalling one year’s loan repayment. Finally, £300,000 is sought from the IIF to support a 10 year maintenance programme, in exceptional circumstances, for some capital projects promoted for delivery in 2017/18.
NATS including the NDR and Long Stratton Bypass

The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) programme identifies future investment in the six BRT corridors to link major growth locations, measures in the city centre and measures to aid public transport, walking and cycling, as well as the NDR and the Long Stratton Bypass.

The NDR has received a significant funding contribution from Central Government and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and the Long Stratton bypass will have significant developer contributions but both schemes needed additional funding. It is likely that the other NATS projects will be primarily funded from other sources (for instance £11m Local Growth Funding has already been secured for NATS through the Growth Deal and in excess of £12m secured for cycle improvements to 2020) although funding sources for longer term projects are yet to be secured.

The 2015/16 AGP agreed to the use of IIF funding to top up other funding to help deliver the NATS programme over the period 2015/16 to 2019/20. It has not been necessary to draw down IIF funding in 2015/16 and as such the Infrastructure Delivery Board have agreed to re-profile the previously agreed allocation to 2016/17.

The 2016/17 AGP agreed to use IIF funding in future years to ensure the delivery of NATS measures, including particularly the NDR and Long Stratton bypass, in order to provide delivery certainty. Construction of the NDR has now begun and borrowing to support its delivery will take place during the financial year of 2016/17.

Work continues to determine the order, timing and detail of other NATS priorities and in securing funding from mainstream sources and other bidding opportunities as they arise. Projects currently being considered as part of the updated and refresh the NATS Implementation Plan include:

- A1067 corridor BRT
- A140 corridor BRT
- B1172/B1008 cycle link
- Inner Ring Road Junctions
- St Stephens/Red Lion Street Public Realm
- Castle Meadow Public Realm
- Tombland
- Longwater link

Local Growth Deal funding will be sought to help fund the refreshed and updated NATS Implementation Plan. It is likely that there will be further requests for funding from the IIF after the currently agreed programme ends in 2019/20.
**Education**

The education capital programme is significant over the Plan period with 16 new primary schools planned across the Greater Norwich area and 1 new high school planned in the North East Growth Triangle. In addition 12 schools require extending to support planned growth. Details of the requirements of growth on education provision can be found in the GNIP.

Schools prioritised to receive funding from the IIF include:
- Extensions at Blofield, Little Plumstead and Easton Primary Schools;
- Extension at Hethersett High School;
- New primary schools at Hellesdon, two at Beeston Park, Central Norwich, Cringleford, Long Stratton; and
- New High School in the North East Growth Triangle.

Work will continue to determine the order, timing and detail of education priorities. This work will be overseen by Norfolk County Council’s Children’s Services’ Capital Priorities Group. The Group will also keep under review funding availability. The current view of the Group is that Government allocations of Basic Need for school projects will be insufficient to cover delivery costs of Norfolk’s schools capital growth programme over the next ten years and that all options for covering this affordability gap will need to be examined. The Group’s view is that an annual allocation of funding from the IIF would reduce uncertainty and allow the affordability gap in the Greater Norwich area to be better understood. Based on the projected CIL income figures the Infrastructure Investment Plan gives a commitment to an annual £2m allocation to support the delivery of the Children’s Services’ capital programme. As part of the annual review of the Infrastructure Investment Plan, these forecasts will be updated and if CIL income varies significantly from projected figures, the allocation will need to be reviewed by all parties concerned.

A major mitigation of financial risk/uncertainty for the largest scheme within the education infrastructure programme, the new high school in the North East Growth Triangle, would be for a borrowing arrangement to be put in place to ensure delivery certainty when required to support growth.

**Green infrastructure**

A programme of strategic projects is proposed by the Green Infrastructure Programme Team over the next five years. The total value of project proposed can be found in Table 1. Details of projects seeking IIF support in 2017/18 can be found in Appendix A.

**Community**

A number of strategic community projects are proposed through the Infrastructure Investment Plan. These include library improvements, open space, community facilities, play space and sports facilities identified through the strategic review of sports facilities and playing pitches which reported in 2015. The total value of projects proposed can be found in Table 1. Details of projects seeking IIF support in 2017/18 can be found in Appendix A.

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² Projects in the early development stages are not yet included.
The Diamond Centre in Sprowston was awarded a loan of £1m in the 2016/17 AGP subject to exploration and finalisation of borrowing terms. While this exploration has begun the loan arrangement is yet to be finalised. In the currently proposed Infrastructure Investment Plan while the capital expenditure is included during 2016/17, the repayment will only be included when the details are known.

Maintenance

It is important that the future ongoing maintenance of projects funded through the IIF is considered at the outset and forms an integral part of the project appraisal process. It is vital that investment in infrastructure by the IIF is only made where there is adequate provision for maintenance so the infrastructure does not deteriorate. The expectation will be that every effort will be made to minimise the future maintenance requirements through detailed design and to find alternative means of dealing with the maintenance element.

There are a variety of sources of funding for maintenance depending on the nature of the project and its location. Funding for maintenance may come from mainstream budgets, S106 contributions or other funding sources. The responsibility for maintenance of infrastructure will generally fall to District and County Councils, however voluntary groups, private landowners or in the case of Broadland and South Norfolk districts, Parish Councils may take on the maintenance responsibility.

The CIL (Amendment) Regulations 2012 set out that CIL can be used for “The provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure.”

The Infrastructure Delivery Board and S151 officers consider that it may be appropriate to use the IIF to fund the maintenance of capital projects in exceptional circumstances. It is proposed that projects requiring maintenance funding will be assessed on a case by case basis but will only be considered when it is demonstrated that:

- There is no alternative source of funding;
- it can be evidenced that maintenance costs have been minimised; and
- Projects are strategic and provide wider benefits across the Greater Norwich area.

Use of the IIF for any maintenance element will be for a maximum of 10 years. After the 10 year period alternative means of maintaining the infrastructure will need to be found.

The Infrastructure Investment Plan proposes an in principle allocation of a maximum of £300,000 for 2017/18 to contribute to the 10 year maintenance programme for a small number of capital projects funded in 2017/18 (i.e. £30,000 per annum total). Use of this fund for the maintenance of projects will be considered where there is specific justification and subject to a detailed assessment of each project in meeting the requirements outlined above.
Cash Reserve

The 2016/17 AGP agreed to borrow £50m at PWLB project rate to support the delivery of both the Northern Distributor Road and the Long Stratton Bypass. The Infrastructure Investment Plan proposes that a cash reserve equal to one annual repayment be built up over 3 years from 2017/18. This equates to £966,000 per annum.

Table 1 – Proposed Five Year Infrastructure Investment Plan

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Full details of projects included in the Infrastructure Investment Plan can be found at Appendix C.

³ A number of transport projects are included in the previously agreed AGPs
APPENDIX A – 2017/18 AGP Project Details

Broadland

Broadland Way - Green Lane North to Plumstead Road - £150,000
This section extends from Green Lane North and will tie in to the Brook Farm development and extend east of Thorpe End up to Plumstead Road, a distance of just over 1km. The route will predominantly follow the western edge of the Bittern Railway Line. At the southern point, the route will link to the existing cycleway at the north end of Dussindale. From Plumstead Road, the section heading north will be delivered through the NDR construction.

Strumpshaw Pit Circular Walk - £35,000
There is potential to expand the dog walking capabilities of Strumpshaw Pit, which is owned by Norfolk County Council. This could be achieved through additional parking, which would increase the distance that dog walkers travel. In addition, cycle rack provision will provide for other users. The existing site includes a circular walk around a closed landfill site with various wildflowers growing and it is commonly used by dog walkers, but is not fully accessible.

Wroxham Library self-access improvements - £43,000 (£120,000 sought across the Greater Norwich area towards 3 library projects)
This project will introduce both public customer toilets and self-service technology that enables people to use the library outside the current opening times. The technology allows the library service to automatically control and monitor building access, self-service kiosks, public access computers, lighting, alarms, public announcements and customer safety. Each library will be able to have increased opening hours, making access to the library more convenient for current and new customers without an increase in staff costs. This is a great opportunity for libraries to be accessible and relevant to more people.

Norwich

Riverside walk: Fye Bridge to Whitefriars - £160,000
This project aims to complete a key stretch of the riverside walk in the city centre, between Fye Bridge and Whitefriars Bridge on the north side of the river. This requires acquisition of a strip of land to the rear of 40 Fishergate and creation of a short stretch of riverside walk here, linking with existing riverside walk on either side, and the creation of a stretch of riverside walk on land safeguarded for this purpose to the rear of the Bridge’s Court development. Completion of these short stretches of walkway will complete a continuous link between the two bridges, part of which has already been delivered through new development.

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The 2016/17 AGP agreed in principle to fund the River Wensum Parkway project in 2017/18. Since this decision was made the River Wensum Strategy Partnership have received the outcome of the strategy work and re-prioritised the project for future delivery.
Barn Road Gateway - £40,000
This is part of a programme of projects being developed through the Marriott’s Way Implementation & Delivery plan, which have been informed by the public and stakeholder consultation that took place in 2015. The aims of the project are to improve the gateway to Marriott’s Way with signage, paving and removal of vegetation to improve legibility and raise the quality of this important entrance.

Sloughbottom Park - Andersons Meadow section improvements - £250,000
Also part of the Marriott’s Way Implementation and Delivery plan, this project involves enhancing a particularly poor section of the route to encourage greater use. Works would include path widening, providing street lighting, improving an adjacent storm drain (in partnership with Anglian Water, Natural England, and the Environment Agency), vegetation management, tree planting, and drainage improvements.

Riverside walk accessibility improvements - £200,000
A package of accessibility improvements to the Riverside Walk, to enable its use by all, including access measures on and adjacent to the walk, and improved signage linking the river with the city centre and other key attractors. It is proposed that the project is implemented in phases, with the development of a branding and identity for the whole Riverside Walk in the first phase, followed by physical improvements to the Riverside Walk in the city centre (i.e. downstream of New Mills) in phase 2. Funding for further accessibility improvements to the Riverside Walk upstream of New Mills will be sought in future CIL bidding rounds.

Castle Gardens - £150,000 (approved in principle last year)
Comprehensive restoration of Castle Gardens and improvements to Castle Green to complement the planned revamp of the interior exhibition spaces within the Castle. Rather than press ahead with an independent HLF bid, NCC are partnering the Museums service and their multimillion pound HLF bid with a view to incorporating the external enhancements as part of the project. Improving connectivity to the castle (signage/interpretation) from the city centre and the quality of the external environment to encourage use of the adjacent public realm will help the bid fulfil one of its aims to increase visitor numbers.

Football Pitch Improvements - £100,000
Football pitch improvement works at Eaton Park, Sloughbottom Park, Britannia Barracks and Fountain Ground including drainage improvements, improved grass species and improved goal facilities through the provision of new posts, nets and additional ground sockets. This will permit moving the pitches annually to prevent excessive wear, improving the playability of the pitches and increasing capacity.

Plumstead Road Library self-access improvements and car parking - £85,000 (£120,000 sought across the Greater Norwich area towards 3 library projects)
This project will introduce self-service technology that enables people to use the library outside the current opening times. The technology allows the library service to

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5 Marriotts Way Phase 3 was approved in principle for delivery in 2017/18. The Marriotts Way Strategy Group have re-prioritised delivery and have put forward projects as laid out here.
automatically control and monitor building access, self-service kiosks, public access computers, lighting, alarms, public announcements and customer safety. Each library will be able to have increased opening hours, making access to the library more convenient for current and new customers without an increase in staff costs. This is a great opportunity for libraries to be accessible and relevant to more people. The proposal is to also provide car and bike parking (including disabled parking) for customers using Plumstead Road Library although this is a secondary priority.

South Norfolk

Protection/enhancement of the Lizard and Silfield Nature Reserve, Wymondham - £40,000
To protect and enhance the Lizard and Silfield Nature Reserve by the creation of alternative green infrastructure routes (such as new permissive footpaths) for recreational access. The project will identify and agree new routes, which will be developed as appropriate. Necessary infrastructure such as stiles, fencing, signage/way marking, hedgerow planting/restoration and interpretation/localised publicity will be provided to encourage and manage use of the network.

Improved Connectivity - Costessey Circular Walks - £6,000
The project is part of the Marriotts Way Improvement and Delivery Plan, specifically aimed at improving public access to Marriott’s Way from surrounding residential areas in Costessey, through one or two additional (permissive) footpath/s, which would allow new signage and promotion of circular walks in Costessey based on Marriott’s Way. There is no requirement for surface improvement on the additional permissive paths, which measure approximately 200m and 180m (and are approximately 3m wide). In order to bring forward the permissive path/s, the landowner would require stock-proof fencing along approximately 180m of his land which borders Marriotts Way. A new gate would be needed at each end of the permissive path/s, and signage to promote their use.

Cranleford N & N Strategic Connections - £58,000
Green infrastructure projects of various types to link N&N Hospital, Yare Valley Walk in Cranleford, and possibly along A47 corridor: A) a footpath between N&N hospital walk and application to the west of Newfound Farm (around 365m); B) habitat connections between N&N hospital tree belt and boundary treatment for application to the west of Newfound Farm; C) a footpath through Cranleford Wood (around 600m); D) improvement to CWS in Cranleford (details to be confirmed). This would supplement GI to be delivered by permission 2013/1494 and likely to be delivered by application 2013/1793, shown as a green dashed line on the map.

Long Stratton Sports Hub – £500,000 (approved in principle last year)
The project aims to bring together a number of facility-providing partners (South Norfolk Council, Long Stratton High School and Long Stratton Parish Council) to improve the sport and leisure facility stock in the village to support significant housing growth. It will create a new sport and leisure ‘Hub’ across three adjacent sites and provide new and enhanced facilities that are fit for purpose and better suited to the current and future facility needs of local residents. Management will be shared across the three sites, resulting in economies of scale and efficiencies in
service delivery. On completion, the following new or improved facilities would be available for school and community use.

Planning permission was granted in April 2016 for the creation of a new Artificial Grass Pitch at Long Stratton Leisure Centre. This project has attracted a grant of £216k of funding from the Premier League and Football Association Facilities Fund. The 12-week construction period is due to start on site in August 2016, with the facility ready for use by Long Stratton High School and by the local community in November 2016. Long Stratton Parish Council have also gained consent for the construction of a new pavilion at their Manor Road Playing Fields and project professionals are in the process of being appointed and funding options are being explored. Options for the redevelopment of Long Stratton Leisure Centre are being developed and it is expected that these will come before Members in late 2016. Discussions with Long Stratton High School regarding additional improvements to the facilities, including the swimming pool, are on-going.

**Hales cricket and bowls clubhouse improvements - £30,000**

There is a need for a replacement pavilion to serve Loddon and Hales Cricket Club and Hales Bowls Club on their shared site on Green Road, just of the A146, to the south-east of Loddon. The latter had been forced to relocate to the current venue as a result of housing development on their previous site off the Yarmouth Road in Hales. The proposed new pavilion will give both clubs a permanent home in spaces that meet their respective needs, allowing to develop and grow participation across a range of ages.

**Wymondham: New sports improvements (artificial grass pitch for football/rugby) - £250,000**

Ketts Park in Wymondham has been identified as being a location that would be suitable for a sports hub, the provision of which can ensure that there are economies of scale in outdoor sports delivery and that clubs can benefit from shared and jointly managed facilities, so it is proposed to provide a new full-size, floodlit artificial grass pitch (AGP) on the site which would take advantage of existing infrastructure. With tennis also being available on the Ketts Park site the argument for creating one of these hubs is strengthened and significant gains in sporting participation could be achieved. With the expected growth in demand for pitches in Wymondham due to the forthcoming housing, the carrying capacity of a full-size AGP will help to ensure that the quality of existing natural turf pitches (whose drainage will be improved as part of this project) is not compromised in future.

**Diss Library self-access improvements - £25,000 (£120,000 sought across the Greater Norwich area towards 3 library projects)**

This project will introduce self-service technology that enables people to use the library outside the current opening times. The technology allows the library service to automatically control and monitor building access, self-service kiosks, public access computers, lighting, alarms, public announcements and customer safety. Each library will be able to have increased opening hours, making access to the library more convenient for current and new customers without an increase in staff costs. This is a great opportunity for libraries to be accessible and relevant to more people.
APPENDIX B – Project Updates

Broadland

Early Delivery of Public Access to Harrison’s Plantation, The Breck and Boar Plantation – Norfolk County Council’s Natural Environment Team delivered a completed Woodland Management Plan in June 2015. This woodland management plan focused on Harrison’s Plantation and the Breck. Further work relating to Boar Plantation has been deferred. Initial works to ensure that Harrison’s Plantation and the Breck were suitable for public access were undertaken between August 2015 and January 2016. With the agreement of the current landowner, Persimmon Homes, the woods, now referred to as Harrison’s Wood, were opened to the public in May 2016. At the time of writing, work to complete the formal transfer of land into public ownership is ongoing.

BRT Rackheath to City Centre (Salhouse Road / Gurney Road) including Cycling – A project brief for scheme development has been agreed with Norfolk County Council, initial feasibility design work is being undertaken during 2016/17.

Total scheme costs are currently forecast to be in the region of £5M. An initial £400k of LGF funding for scheme delivery in 2016/17 was identified within the 2015/16 GNGB Growth Programme. This funding is now expected to be redirected to support the delivery of a junction and link road spur on Broadland owned land adjacent Plumstead Road to enable the completion of a road link between Salhouse Road and Plumstead Road, thereby reducing potential levels of traffic on Salhouse Road resulting from localised development which will support BRT on Salhouse Road / Gurney Road).

Whilst additional contributions for transport schemes along the Salhouse Road corridor may be secured as site specific mitigation from emerging nearby development proposals, it is likely that additional funds will be needed to fully implement bus and cycling proposals along this route. The need for additional CIL funding will be considered in subsequent investment plans.

Salhouse Road Walk / Cycle Route (including connections to Norwich City Centre via Mousehold Heath) – Project formed part of the larger programme of cycling improvements between the N&N Hospital and Salhouse Road, via Norwich City Centre and Mousehold Heath. The project itself comprised improved crossing facilities of Woodside Road and Salhouse Road for cyclists and pedestrians and a cycle path through Harrison’s Plantation providing links to the Racecourse PH and Eastgate Place Development.

The programme has now been re-prioritised with Harrisons Plantation Woodland Park now forming the termination of the cycling improvements. These improvements were completed during 2015/16.

The cycle path scheme through Harrison’s Plantation has now been deferred to be delivered through the S106 related to the White House Farm development. The current expectations are that this could be delivered as early as 2017/18.
**North-East Norwich Link Road** – The north-east Norwich link road between Broadland Business Park and Norwich Airport Industrial Estate will be predominately delivered through the development of permitted or proposed allocation sites in north-east Norwich.

Phase I of the Wroxham Road to Salhouse Road section of the route is now complete and work is expected to commence on Phase II during 2017/18. A detailed scheme for the Broadland Business Park to Plumstead Road section is currently under consideration by Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council. It is currently forecast that construction of this element will be begun in 2017/18.

Local Infrastructure Fund (LIF) bids have been accepted in principle by the GNGB to support delivery of further elements of the link road between Buxton Road and North Walsham Road and phase I of the link road east of North Walsham Road.

Further detailed proposals for the link road will be considered as part of future planning applications. In order to ensure the timely and well-ordered delivery of the link road it may be necessary to support the delivery of some elements of the road through other funding sources.

**St Faiths Rd to Airport Transport Link** – Feasibility and scheme development has been begun with initial traffic surveys completed by Mouchel in June 2016.

The link is expected to be partially delivery through the development of the permitted development site north of Repton Avenue. However, in order to complete the link additional funds will be required. In total £1m of LIF funding has been allocated to this project split equally between 2016/17 and 2017/18 to enable the construction of the link. The delivery of some element of the link will be subject to construction being begun on related highway infrastructure through the permitted development site in a timely fashion.

**North Walsham Road Core Bus Route and Blue Pedalway Cycling** – Scheme development work was deferred from 2014/15 and is now programmed to take place in 2016/17.

The scheme development work will identify a scheme for the enhanced cycling facilities along Spixworth Road and North Walsham Road, for which £500k of funding was secured through the second round of DfT City Cycle Ambition Grant funding. The cycle improvement works are programmed to be delivered during 2017/18.

**Blue Pedalway - Chartwell Road – St Clements Hill – Spixworth Road Improved Cycle Crossing Facilities and associated works** - £120k of CIL funding was transferred to this scheme in the 2016/17 AGP from a previous commitment for a toucan crossing and associated work at School Lane / Chartwell Road / Denton Road. This transferred funding forms part of the match funding associated with the second round of DfT City Cycle Ambition Grant funding for improvements along the Blue Pedalway between Sprowston and Cringleford via Norwich City Centre. The overall cost of this scheme is forecast to be £400k.

The details of the scheme are currently being developed by the Transport for Norwich Team and on-site works are planned to be begun, and completed, in 2017/18.
Neighbourhood Cycle Enhancements Along Former Route of Blue Pedalway – School Lane / Chartwell Road / Denton Road – Toucan Crossing and associated works – £120k of funding for the implementation of this scheme in 2015/16 was identified in the 2015/16 GNGB Growth Programme. This was reallocated to improve crossing facilities of the outer ring road at St Clements Hill / Chartwell Road / Spixworth Road as part of the delivery of cycling improvements enabled by the second round of DfT City Cycle Ambition Grant funding, see above.

Notwithstanding the above a further grant of £120 was made in the 2016/17 AGP for the School Lane/ Chartwell Road/ Denton Road scheme on the basis that, enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists in this location remain an important local infrastructure priority. Subsequent scheme development work has however identified that an appropriate improvement cannot be delivered within this budget. The Infrastructure Delivery Board has agreed that this grant be reallocated to the North Walsham Road corridor to bolster the enhancements to be delivered through the DfT City Cycle Ambition Grant funding.

Improved Cycle Crossing of Cannerby Lane / Wroxham Road / Cozens Hardy Road – Scheme development deferred and its rescheduled commencement date is pending.

Broadland Way (Thorpe St Andrew to Wroxham Cycle and Pedestrian facilities) – Feasibility / scheme development was undertaken during 2015/16. A bid is included in the 2017/18 AGP for £150k to deliver a section of the scheme between Plumstead Road and Green Lane.

Broadland Business Park Rail Halt – The potential for a station at the Business Park has been investigated as part of a larger study for the Bittern Line. The Study has now completed and has concluded that the business case for improving the Bittern Line is sufficiently strong as to justify further work and research. Now that an evidence base has been gathered on the needs and feasibility, discussions are beginning with partner organisations, including the rail industry, on the merits of a Bittern Line Improvements Project Board. If agreed, the likely first task of the Project Board would be to commission a further study, for ‘Option Selection’ in accordance with stage 3 of Network Rail’s Governance for Railway Investment Process (GRIP).

North East Norwich Growth Triangle Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Norfolk County Council’s Natural Environment Team delivered the feasibility study as proposed during 2015/16. This study will be used to inform future priorities for green infrastructure investment and as the basis of future negotiations with developers on planning applications.

East Broadland Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Norfolk County Council’s Natural Environment Team delivered the feasibility study as proposed during 2015/16. This study will be used to inform future priorities for green infrastructure investment and as the basis of future negotiations with developers on planning applications.

North-West Forest and Heath Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan – Norfolk County Council’s Natural Environment Team were formerly engaged to produce a feasibility study during 2015/16. This work has, however, now been deferred and a new contract is expected to be let to complete the work 2017/18.
Thorpe Ridge: Protection and Enhancement of Woodlands and Provision of Public Access
Norfolk County Council’s Natural Environment Team were formerly engaged to produce a feasibility study during 2015/16. This work has, however, now been deferred and a new contract is expected to be let to complete the work 2017/18.

Norwich

Wensum Riverside Walk – The development of a revised layout and design for the Oasis site adjacent to Fye Bridge on the River Wensum. In partnership with key stakeholders to enhance the site to maximize its use, linkages and potential for access to the river. Project completed.

Earlham Millennium Green – Complete refurbishment of pedestrian routes through Millennium Green. Project completed.

Marriotts Way – Improvements to Marriott’s Way within the urban area to encourage commuting by bicycle and on-foot. Phases 1 and 2 completed.

Heathgate – Pink Pedalway – The construction of a 3m wide lit cycling and walking path between Heathgate and Gurney Road at the junction with Britannia Road. The project provides a missing link between Heathgate and Gurney Road in order to provide a more direct and strategic route on the Pink Pedalway (NE Growth Triangle / Heartsease to N Norwich Research Park). Project complete.

Golden Ball Street/Westlegate
- Phase 1 works completed
- Phase 2 works including those on Westlegate are continuing. Temporary access from Westlegate has now switch to from the St Stephens Plain direction so that work on the upper part of Westlegate can continue
- Work is currently underway at St Stephens Plain, the security CCTV has been relocated and this has allowed the traffic lane to be moved over to the other side of the new refuge islands
- The temporary pedestrian crossing has been relocated from Golden Ball Street to All Saints Street; it will remain in operation until early 2017

Eaton Interchange – Draft brief issued to create a bus rapid transit interchange in Eaton with the following features:
- Printed and electronic travel information;
- Size and layout that adequately accommodates the numbers of expected bus passengers and provides sufficient cover from the elements;
- Good accessibility for all users;
- Cycle parking;
- Reduce delays and difficulties turning left in the centre of Eaton for inbound buses;
- Reduce the visual blight of highway clutter in the centre of Eaton in line with the conservation area appraisal; and
- Provide space for comfortable and safe two way cycling on the cycle track adjacent to slip road between the centre of Eaton and Newmarket Road to the south of the A11.
Carrow Bridge to Deal Ground riverside path – Delivery of a short section of cycle / footway on north bank of the River Wensum will provide a key ‘missing link’ in the route between Norwich city centre / rail station and Whitlingham Country Park. The project is part of overarching vision to improve links between Norwich City centre and Whitlingham Country Park, alongside a new bridge across the River Wensum, to be delivered through development of Deal / Utilities site. It forms part of the vital connection to allow the development of the Deal Ground and utilities site. Funding will supplement £250K of existing Sustrans money.

Colney River Crossing (NRP to Threescore) – see below

South Norfolk

The following projects were identified in the 2015/16 and/or 2016/17 South Norfolk Annual Infrastructure Business Plan for commencement and/or delivery to 2020/21:

Norfolk & Norwich Hospital Health Wood Walks – a footpath through the tree-belt surrounding the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital – was completed in autumn 2015, and ended up coming in under budget due to good contract management by the appointed site contractor.

Long Stratton Bypass & Hempnall Crossroads – the Long Stratton Area Action Plan was adopted in May 2016, confirming the allocation of at least 1,800 homes and a corridor for the bypass. Further pre-application discussions work with the landowners/developers promoting the delivery of the bypass and the allocation of 1,800 homes in Long Stratton has taken place and a planning application(s) is expected to be lodged by the end of 2016.

A47 improvements (particularly Thickthorn junction improvements and Easton-North Tuddenham dualling) – funded and delivered by Highways England – Highways England feasibility work has been completed and the options development phase has commenced (it is expected to last until December 2016). Preferred improvement solutions will be announced in mid-2017, with the start of the statutory process in mid-2018 and construction predicted to start in 2020.

Longwater junction and Easton strategy improvements (including walking and cycling) – Improvements are required in the Longwater and Easton area of Norwich to resolve existing issues on the transport network and accommodate additional traffic arising from planned growth as set out in the adopted Joint Core Strategy for the Norwich area. After carrying various feasibility studies to address these pressures the following a number of smaller scale measures have been identified. Several have now been completed and were funded by the new retail store and housing development. Detailed design work continues for several other measures.

Assessments carried out in October 2015 concluded that both the A1074 to Longwater link Road and a second A47 bridge are effective in enabling the Longwater junction to operate satisfactorily in the future.

The assessment looked at the possibility of constructing a new link across or adjacent to the closed landfill site and concluded that it would be possible to construct an A1074 to
Longwater area link road adjacent to the Costessey landfill site by removing small amounts of the landfill material. This option is likely to cost around £10m and would be cheaper and easier to deliver than a new bridge over the A47, making it the preferred solution.

As yet no funding source for this work has been identified.

**Marriott’s Way improvements** – various improvements to Marriott’s Way (which passes through all three districts) were agreed in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 AGPs. In South Norfolk, improvements (to the value of approximately £100,000) to the cycle and footpath section between Gunton Lane and Red Bridge Lane were funded by CIL (including surface dressing improvements, surface water drainage improvements and improved directional signs). Preparatory works have been completed and re-surfacing is hoped to be carried out soon.

**Colney River Crossing (NRP to Threescore)** – a new footbridge and cycle path improvements to link Bowthorpe (Threescore) with the Norwich Research Park was awarded £401,000 in the 2016/17 Infrastructure Investment Plan mostly in Norwich, with £150,000 of this money earmarked for the South Norfolk section (principally the new bridge over the River Yare). Feasibility and design work has taken place, there has been consultation of local residents, and a planning application for the South Norfolk section is expected to be submitted in autumn 2016.

**Other Norwich Area Transportation Scheme Projects** – various A11 and A140 Corridor South Norfolk NATS projects (as part of a four-year programme running from 2015-19) were agreed as part of the 2015/16 Growth Programme, with LGF money secured. Scheme design of the Roundhouse Way Bus Interchange and the Cycle Link Extension Hethersett-Wymondham has taken place and is ongoing. Little work has taken place on the B1172 bus/cycle enhancements and Bus Priority Harford A47 junction to date, but it is expected that work will commence in 2016/17.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Project/Scheme Description</th>
<th>Total Estimated Scheme Cost (£,000)</th>
<th>Funding secured</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>Funding need</th>
<th>Funding profile (2017/18)</th>
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<td>Long Stratton New (commissioned) 420 Primary</td>
<td>6,400</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,400 1,280</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Castle Gardens</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>S106, CIL, HLF</td>
<td>150 75 75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Long Stratton Sports Hub</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>1,145 Various inc CIL</td>
<td>500 500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Football Pitch Improvements</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>100 25 25 25 25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Hales cricket and bowls clubhouse improvements</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>130 CIL</td>
<td>30 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Wymondham: New sports improvements (artificial grass pitch for football/rugby)</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>250 250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Hewett School swimming pool modernisation</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>199 199</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Thorpe St Andrew New Sports Hall</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>1,900 S106/CIL</td>
<td>800 800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Courts and Yards of Norwich</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>300 150</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Great Plumstead Open Space / Community Orchard</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>25 25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Brook &amp; Laurel Farm Community Building</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100 S106/CIL</td>
<td>400 400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Strategic play (including 5 projects)</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>430 78 67 78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Land South of Salhouse Road Community Building</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>S106/CIL 500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>North Sprowston &amp; Old Catton Community Space including library</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>S106/CIL 2,400</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Rackheath Community Building</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>S106/CIL</td>
<td>500 500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>Aylsham Library self access improvement and parking</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Elmstead Road Library self access improvement and parking</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>85 85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Diss Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>S106/CIL</td>
<td>25 24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Library contribution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>120</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Harleston Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Norfolk</td>
<td>Costessey Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadland</td>
<td>St Williams Way Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Earlham Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 35</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>Mile Cross Library self access improvement</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>35 35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>2,992</td>
<td>578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
100% Business Rates Retention and Needs and Redistribution- South Norfolk Council Consultation Responses

Report of the Director of Business Development
Cabinet Member: Cllr. John Fuller, Leader of the Council

CONTACT
Debbie Lorimer 01508 533981
Dlorimer@s-norfolk.gov.uk
1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been submitted to Cabinet to review and approve the draft South Norfolk Council responses to the government’s consultations on 100% business rates retention. The consultations are, ‘Self-sufficient local government: 100% business rates retention’ and ‘Business rates reform: call for evidence on needs and redistribution’. Both consultations close on the 26th September.

1.2 The results of the changes to 100% business rates retention and the review of needs and redistribution are likely to have a significant impact on the Council’s level of income and the income streams from which this funding comes. Cabinet are therefore asked to review the proposed response to the consultations and suggest any changes or additions, before recommending it to be submitted.

2. Background

2.1 Government has outlined that by the end of this Parliament, local government will retain 100% business rates raised locally. The initiative forms a fiscal part of central governments wider policies around increased devolution. The government estimates that 100% business rates retention will give local councils an additional £12.5 billion of revenue, although some sources dispute that the total quantum is likely to be around £5-8 billion. In order to account for the additional revenue, some government funding grants (e.g. the Revenue Support Grant) will be phased out, and some additional responsibilities will be devolved to local authorities.

2.2 As part of the 2016/17 Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced a Fair Funding Review of councils’ relative needs and resources and a call for evidence has been published alongside the 100% business rates consultation to look at this. The needs formulae for local government have not been reviewed for over a decade. Many councils have therefore called for this to be reviewed in order to account for changing demographic pressures. The Fair Funding review will also look at what the needs assessment formula should look like for a more financially independent local government sector.
3. Current Position/Findings

3.1 The Current System - the national picture

3.1.1 The move to 100% business rates retention builds on the current system, in which the local government sector as a whole retains 50% of locally collected business rates. That system was introduced in April 2013. Before then, all business rate income collected by councils formed a single, national pot, which was then distributed by government to councils in the form of formula grant. Through the Local Government Finance Act 2012, and regulations that followed, the Government gave local authorities the power to keep half of business rates growth income in their area by splitting business rate revenue into the ‘local share’ and the ‘central share’.

3.1.2 Within the current system, individual councils keep a proportion of business rates they collect as part of their baseline funding together with up to 50% of growth in their business rate receipts arising from new or expanding businesses. Local authorities that pay tariffs are also liable to pay a levy of up to half of this type of growth. The money raised from this levy is then used to fund a safety net system.

3.2 The Current System - How it works in South Norfolk

3.2.1 South Norfolk Council collects more business rates than the government say we need (our baseline funding level), so we have to pay a “tariff” to fund those who collect less than they need (such as County Councils who receive this as a “top-up”). For example in 2014/15 and 2015/16 South Norfolk collected approximately £28m and after the effect of the top-up and levy was able to retain income as in Table 1.

3.2.2 The below outlines the Councils income from business rates since the system was introduced three years ago:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>£000s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>3,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/15</td>
<td>3,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>2,912</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.3 Since April 2014 South Norfolk along with Norfolk County, Broadland, Breckland, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, and North Norfolk councils have operated a business rates pool (Norwich City Council later joined the pool from April 2015). By forming this pooled
arrangement the pooled authorities are treated as one whole for the purpose of calculating any levy that may be payable on growth
the consequence of which is that more money is retained locally in Norfolk (rather than going to central government) and is then
made available to fund economic development projects as directed by the Norfolk Growth Group. In this way across the pooled
authorities £2.4m was made available for economic development projects that would otherwise have gone to central government
(South Norfolk contributed £481k towards this total).

3.3 Timetable for reform
The government are consulting on their proposals regarding 100% business rates retention and the Fair Funding Review over the
summer with both consultations closing on the 26th September. The below outlines the government’s timetable for reform:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2016</td>
<td>Consultation on the approach to 100% business rates retention. Responses due by 26 September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 2016</td>
<td>We expect that Government will undertake a more technical consultation on specific workings of the reformed system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 2017</td>
<td>As announced in the Queen’s Speech, Government will introduce legislation in this Parliamentary session to provide the framework for these reforms. We expect the legislation to be introduced later in the Parliamentary session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>Piloting of the approach to 100% business rates retention to begin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By end of the Parliament</td>
<td>Implementation of 100% business rates retention across local government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Proposals

4.1 In Appendix A you can read South Norfolk Council’s full draft response to the government’s ‘Self-sufficient local government: 100% business rates retention’ consultation.

4.2 The response outlines that the following key principles should be the basis the 100% business rates retention scheme:

- be fair, transparent and evidence based
• enable real and lasting self-sufficiency for local government (in the medium and long term) and form part of the wider financial transformation of the local government sector.

• at its core incentivise, support and stimulate economic and housing growth

• not act as a short-term measure to fill the adult social care funding gap. Instead a greater focus on preventative services is needed and more sustainable local government revenue streams established.

• adequately account for the additional costs of sparsity and rurality and ensure that cities do not retain an unfair share of national resources

• with regard to additional responsibilities clarity is needed on the total quantum of the 100% business rates retention, before additional responsibilities are agreed.

• additional responsibilities through the business rates system should meet the following criteria: be cost neutral for local authorities in the short, medium and long-term; future cost growth profile should match growth in wider economy, which determines business rates growth - functions should not be devolved where the growth in demand is likely to out-strip the rate of growth of business rates; functions should be devolved which local government can influence the administration of and produce the most positive local outcome; additional responsibilities should be devolved that have a degree of 'place' and be linked to economic growth.

• ensure national safeguards are installed to manage the additional risk for local authorities following 100% retention

• give local flexibilities to retain business rates (or a proportion) over a wider geographical areas if this better meets local needs.

• should resolve the outstanding issue of appeals and ensure a fair and efficient system which ensures stability and sustainability for services

• reflect the changing and future way businesses will be run e.g. increased homeworking, internet businesses etc.

4.3 In Appendix B you can read South Norfolk Council’s full draft response to the government’s ‘Business rates reform: call for evidence on needs and redistribution’ consultation.

4.4 The response outlines the following key principles for the new funding formula:
• Transparent, simple and fair,
• Evidence based- and be based on up to date data and future demographic projections
• Be based on population as this is a good proxy for need (as adjusted for deprivation, rurality etc).
• Address issues of inequality but at the same time ensure incentives for growth remain
• Be responsive to local priorities, flexible and sustainable
• Ensure stability for local authorities for the long-term i.e. ensuring fiscal neutrality for local authorities or manageable risk over the medium and long term, not just on day one.
• Account for the additional costs of sparsity and rurality and ensure that cities do not retain an unfair share of national resources
• Ensure that a meaningful proportion of available funding is directed towards growth and associated incentives for the long-term.
• Whilst we acknowledge the challenge posed by the growing gap in adult social care funding, the local retention of business rates should not be used to conveniently fill this gap as a short-term measure. Instead a focus on prevention is needed, to ensure that interventions can be made earlier both to improve outcomes and make savings for upstream services. As such, funding for prevention services must be considered as part of the needs assessment. A 2015 King’s Fund report outlined the key role that district councils play in the delivery of prevention services.
• Support districts and county areas through the representative bodies of the District Council’s Network and County Councils Network to agree a fair formula for the split in district/county areas.
• Provide freedoms and flexibilities for local/regional pooling arrangements
• Have infrequent (but planned) resets in order to help smooth out changes in the local tax base, making more predictable and stable funding stream.

4.5 To date, SNC has not had sight of the full District Councils’ Networks draft response or the full Local Government Association’s draft response. Once these are received it may be worthwhile updating the Council’s response to reflect any key points raised.

5. Risks and implications arising

5.1 Finance- The changes proposed in the consultation documents are likely to lead to changes in income levels for the council, increased financial self-sufficiency and additional responsibilities. Once more details are known as to the exact impact of the proposals, officers will outline the overall financial impact and update Cabinet. Mitigations for the impact of any changes will be
SNC’s drive to create new income streams through its commercial ventures. SNC will also be able to increase its income by supporting new business growth.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Cabinet are asked to note the potential financial implications of the consultations for the authority.
6.2 Cabinet are asked to review the proposed draft South Norfolk Council consultation responses and recommend them for submission.
6.3 Cabinet are asked to delegate authority to the Director of Business Development to make any reasonable amendments to the consultation responses following receipt of the District Councils’ Network and Local Government Association’s draft response in order to reflect any key points.
Self-sufficient local government: 100% Business Rates Retention – South Norfolk Consultation Response

South Norfolk Council is a District Council forming part of the Greater Norwich area. Covering the fringes of Norwich and the wider rural area, South Norfolk lies on the border between Norfolk and Suffolk.

South Norfolk covers 350 square miles and is home to nearly 130,000 people, around 58,000 homes and 5,000 businesses.

Summary

South Norfolk Council (SNC) would propose the following key principles should be the basis for the 100% business rates retention scheme:

- be **fair**, **transparent** and **evidence based**
- **enable real and lasting self-sufficiency for local government** (in the medium and long term) and **form part of the wider financial transformation** of the local government sector.
- at its core **incentivise, support and stimulate economic and housing growth**
- **not act as a short-term measure to fill the adult social care funding gap.** Instead a greater focus on preventative services is needed and more sustainable local government revenue streams established.
- **adequately account for the additional costs of sparsity and rurality** and ensure that cities do not retain an unfair share of national resources
- with regard to additional responsibilities **clarity is needed on the total quantum** of the 100% business rates retention, before additional responsibilities are agreed.
- **additional responsibilities** through the business rates system should meet the following criteria: **be cost neutral** for local authorities in the short, medium and long-term; **future cost growth profile should match growth in wider economy**, which determines business rates growth - functions should not be devolved where the growth in demand is likely to out-strip the rate of growth of business rates; functions should be devolved which **local government can influence the administration of and produce the most positive local outcome**; additional responsibilities should be devolved that have a **degree of 'place’** and be **linked to economic growth**.
- ensure **national safeguards** are installed to **manage the additional risk** for local authorities following 100% retention
- give **local flexibilities to retain business rates (or a proportion) over a wider geographical areas** if this better meets local needs.
should resolve the outstanding issue of appeals and ensure a fair and efficient system which ensures stability and sustainability for services. reflect the changing and future way businesses will be run e.g. increased homeworking, internet businesses etc.

Consultation Response

Question 1: Which of these identified grants / responsibilities do you think are the best candidates to be funded from retained business rates? and

Question 2: Are there other grants / responsibilities that you consider should be devolved instead of or alongside those identified above?

Local government needs to be clear on the additional quantum being devolved to local government through the 100% retention of business rates before it commits to additional responsibilities. Whilst the government’s current estimates outlined in the consultation show that this will be around £12.5 billion (whilst recognising potential fluctuations in the system), estimates by other organisations are showing a potential quantum of between £5-8 billion.

Once the quantum is clarified South Norfolk Council would like to see the following criteria applied to determining additional responsibilities:

- Additional responsibilities should be cost neutral for local authorities in the short, medium and long-term. A clear and transparent methodology should be used to demonstrate this.
- Future cost growth profile should match growth in wider economy, which determines business rates growth (i.e. ‘liability matching’ and ‘divergence’). Functions should not be devolved where the growth in demand is likely to outstrip the rate of growth of business rates or be turbulent as to destabilise the system.
- Functions should be devolved which local government can influence the administration of (ring fenced services do not provide this flexibility) and produce the most positive local outcome.
- Additional responsibilities should be devolved that have a degree of ‘place’
- Additional responsibilities should have regard to those functions that have been carved-out in devolved areas (e.g. bus franchising) and have a number of functions which are automatically devolved to areas.
- Additional responsibilities should be linked to economic growth.

With regard to the additional responsibilities outlined in the consultation document, South Norfolk Council would suggest the following:

- Attendance Allowance- Attendance Allowance in its current guise should not be devolved as an additional responsibility to local government as local authorities will be unable to influence its delivery and improve outcomes through its administration. In addition to this, demand is likely to increase and not be adequately funded through the 100% business rates retention system.
- Rural Services Delivery Grant- It is important that the Rural Services Delivery Grant does not become dampened if this is devolved to local areas.
- Local Council Tax Support Administration Subsidy and Housing Benefit Pensioner Administration- South Norfolk Council would welcome the opportunity for more local freedoms and flexibilities with regard to local council tax support and housing benefit pensioner administration.
With regards to additional responsibilities not outlined within the consultation, South Norfolk Council would suggest the following:
- Skills - additional responsibilities around skills delivery should be devolved to local authorities to drive regional economic growth and support local authorities to ensure local skills match the need of local businesses.

**Question 3: Do you have any views on the range of associated budgets that could be pooled at the Combined Authority level?**

South Norfolk Councils would propose that pooling should not be limited to Combined Authority level. For example clusters of districts covering functional economic areas may be a suitable level at which to pool a proportion of locally retained business rates. South Norfolk Council already pools part of its business rates growth with the other districts and county council in Norfolk which is used to support the delivery of regional economic growth initiatives.

In addition to those budgets proposed in the consultation to be pooled, South Norfolk Council would suggest that skills funding should be devolved in order to drive economic growth.

**Question 4: Do you have views on whether some or all of the commitments in existing and future deals could be funded through retained business rates?**

South Norfolk Council would suggest that we would not want commitments in existing and future deals to be funded through business rates as this would mean this would reduce the available quantum for all local authorities.

**Question 5: Do you agree that we should continue with the new burdens doctrine post-2020?**

Yes, we agree that the new burdens doctrine should continue to apply post 2020. If there are extra burdens placed on local authorities by central government this should be accompanied by new money, and the calculation of the new burdens needs to be transparent.

**Question 6: Do you agree that we should fix reset periods for the system?**

We are concerned that as currently envisaged the effect of a reset is to totally wipe out the gain from growth that the local authority has helped to deliver in the local economy. We do recognise that those authorities that have experienced negative growth should at some time be able to start off again with a fresh slate.

If there have to be resets within the system we would strongly favour the model of partial resets which would strengthen the growth incentive, allowing some growth (we would suggest at least 50%) to continue beyond each reset. To give greater stability and predictability we would also advocate that the partial resets should take place every 10 years rather than every 5 years as set out in option c) as this frequency does little to strengthen the growth incentive.
This would also lessen the game playing that would inevitably occur as a reset nears, to try and ensure that growth in rates was delivered just after a reset to avoid any longer term benefits of the growth being wiped out by a full reset.

**Question 7: What is the right balance in the system between rewarding growth and redistributing to meet changing need?**

South Norfolk Council believes that driving economic growth should be at the heart of the local retention of business rates.

The allocation of growth monies **must not** be confused with the debate about needs funding. If through the consideration of ‘needs’ it is decided that a new approach is merited to reflect where the real needs of citizens are today (and into the future) then that is a different issue compared to how we should incentivise and reward for business rate growth.

The Council is therefore keen to ensure that 100% business rates retention system is not used as short-term measure to meet changing need, e.g. addressing the Adult Social Care funding gap. Instead, South Norfolk Council wants to see more longer terms solutions developed to fund such growing demand services outside of the business rates funding.

With regard to incentivising growth, it is important to note that the current business rates system often discourages growth, for example through the current top up and tariff system (most Districts are tariff authorities) and subsequent impacts on the baseline which often positively discourage investments such as Town Centre Regeneration. The new system therefore needs to address these current flaws and ensure that growth is promoted into the medium term.

**Question 8: Having regard to the balance between rewarding growth and protecting authorities with declining resources, how would you like to see a partial reset work?**

South Norfolk Council welcomes the proposal for a partial reset and would welcome further modelling over the course of the pilots in order to determine the impact of different approaches to partial re-sets.

**Question 9: Is the current system of tariffs and top-ups the right one for redistribution between local authorities?**

The council accepts that top-up and tariffs will need to maintained in the new business rates system although some adjustments will need to be made to the existing system.

**Question 10: Should we continue to adjust retained incomes for individual local authorities to cancel out the effect of future revaluations?**

Where local authorities have invested in their local areas and seen the levels of rents commanded for commercial premises locally rise as a result, the local authority should see some reward for this rather than it just be wiped out at a revaluation.
We would also suggest that the multiplier level should not be adjusted nationally on revaluation to make it revenue neutral, nor should there be a national transitional relief scheme – instead local authorities should be given the power to respond locally to protect businesses from excessive rises as appropriate.

**Question 11: Should Mayoral Combined Authority areas have the opportunity to be given additional powers and incentives, as set out above?**

Whilst the Council welcomes the opportunity for additional powers and incentives for those areas with Mayoral Combined Authorities, South Norfolk Council would also advocate that additional powers and incentives (for example the infrastructure levy) should also be available to other groupings of councils, for example clusters of districts.

**Question 12: What has your experience been of the tier splits under the current 50% rates retention scheme? What changes would you want to see under 100% rates retention system?**

The experience of South Norfolk Council of the tier split under the rates retention scheme is that we do feel that it appropriately rewards District and County Councils. The responsibility for growth is felt to lie most strongly with District Councils.

We welcome the collaboration between the District Councils’ Network and County Councils’ Network to identify a joint solution to this issue.

We feel that there is a misconception that there is an 80:20 split whereas in fact, because of the levy, there is in reality a 40:40:20 split of the local share under the existing rates retention scheme.

For each extra £1 of business rate growth it is in fact currently shared out as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Govt central share</th>
<th>District retained element of local share</th>
<th>Levy paid by District to Govt or to Pool (in a pooled area)</th>
<th>County retained element of local share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="50p coin" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="10p coin" /></td>
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Where a district is achieving growth in its rates this is subject to a 50% levy and under our current pooling arrangements within Norfolk that levy is pooled and
spent on Economic Development projects across the County. Economic Development is of course a statutory duty of County Councils.

We only pool with other Norfolk authorities so that the money raised in the form of the levy can be reinvested locally not because of any other factors. With the removal of such a levy under 100% rates retention it must be appreciated that the incentive to pool together will be largely lost, particularly where an authority is confident of achieving net growth.

100% retention of business rates should not be used as the way to plug the adult social care gap as this is a short-term solution, instead the new business rate retention scheme needs to balance funding unmet pressures such as adult social care whilst also ensuring the need to support and incentivise growth in our economies. The emphasis needs to be on growth.

The adult social care gap is best funded through the precept on Council Tax as the spending pressures are more linked to population than to business growth.

Where there is additional money available to local authorities under 100% local rate retention this should first and foremost be used to fund the safety net rather than immediately being linked to additional responsibilities.

**Question 13: Do you consider that fire funding should be removed from the business rates retention scheme and what might be the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?**

As Police do not currently participate in the business rates scheme, it makes sense for fire services to be removed from the scheme if they are moved to come under Police and Crime Commissioners. Neither fire nor police could be said to contribute significantly to economic growth which makes it harder to justify funding these services from business rates and giving them a share in the proceeds of economic growth as there is little they can do to influence this and the effect would be to reduce the business rates funding available to incentivise local authorities.

We believe that fire services should be funded from Council Tax and general taxation.

We recognise that local authorities will have to take on further responsibilities to offset the gain in NNDR funding that will receive if no fire services are to be funded from business rates in future.

**Question 14: What are your views on how we could further incentivise growth under a 100% retention scheme? Are there additional incentives for growth that we should consider?**

South Norfolk Council is supportive of government continuing to fund relief for enterprise zones.

The council has a number of propositions for how the scheme could further incentivise growth including:
- Give local authorities more freedoms and flexibilities regarding their ability to design their own local business rates relief schemes in order to more effectively meet local business needs
- Local flexibilities for state aid would also be beneficial to drive local and regional business growth.

The New Homes Bonus scheme has also acted as a powerful incentive to deliver increased housing growth across the country. Whilst South Norfolk Council recognises there is a balance to made with regard to the reforms of the system South Norfolk Council is keen to see the continuation of the scheme which shows communities the benefits of growth and is a well understood growth incentive by residents, elected members and local authorities.

**Question 15: Would it be helpful to move some of the ‘riskier’ hereditaments off local lists? If so, what type of hereditaments should be moved?**

South Norfolk Council would propose, rather than moving some of the ‘riskier’ hereditaments off local lists which would mean that, whilst local authorities would be protected from some of the risks, he would not benefit directly from the growth of a key business asset and their region. Therefore, South Norfolk Council would instead propose that a national insurance scheme be established to act as a safety net for any authorities whose major business rates payers came into difficulties.

In addition to this, instances where money is simple passed from one public sector body to another in relation to business rates should be minimised or eradicated, with local government fully compensated for this. Recent examples of the NHS Trusts looking for charitable status is a case in point.

**Question 16: Would you support the idea of introducing area level lists in Combined Authority areas? If so, what type of properties could sit on these lists, and how should income be used? Could this approach work for other authorities?**

We would not support this idea as we believe that a national insurance scheme would be a better vehicle for pooling risks associated with particular types of property (see Question 17).

**Question 17: At what level should risk associated with successful business rates appeals be managed? Do you have a preference for local, area (including Combined Authority), or national level (across all local authorities) management as set out in the options above?**

Any scheme that pools risk at a lower than national level is still subject to shocks that disproportionately affect some regions more than others. For example, an economic shock in the steel industry would affect some regions significantly and leave others unaffected, which would create demand for some national intervention to even out the effects.
We therefore prefer a national scheme that would identify those losses that could not reasonably have been managed at a lower level or are above a certain threshold as a proportion of Council income. As there is no levy to provide funding, these losses could be covered from NNDR funds from the central list.

**Question 18: What would help your local authority better manage risks associated with successful business rates appeals?**

We think that if the move is made to revaluations every three years the valuations on which the rates charge is based will always be that much more up to date, and less likely to be disputed. That together with the new proposed Check, Challenge, Appeal process will reduce the number of appeals and go some way towards hopefully speeding up resolution of claims. We remain of the view that a modest charge should be introduced to lodge an appeal to help discourage some spurious appeals and help finance staff to deal with appeals.

We subscribe to the principle put forward on more than one occasion by Local Government Association that those who had the benefit of the money from a higher rating assessment (i.e. central Government before April 2013) should bear the cost of the adjustment relating to settlement of an appeal to the extent that it affects charges prior to April 2013.

It should simply not be accepted that the VOA will divert resources that would otherwise deal with settlement of appeals as soon as work is required on a revaluation as this will result a less adequate service being provided to ratepayers and local authorities. There should be dedicated resource that remains on dealing with appeals as a priority until they are all resolved.

Outstanding appeals have a detrimental impact on long-term planning for local authorities. The sheer volume of appeals that have been outstanding from April 2013 to date, mean that local authorities have had to put aside millions of pounds to provide for the potential cost of losses on appeal. This money could have been used much more productively to support economic growth.

When significant appeals are settled the combination of in-year reduction and backdated reductions for previous years can result in major in-year fluctuations in revenue for the local authority overall.

**Question 19: Would pooling risk, including a pool-area safety net, be attractive to local authorities?**

If the pool was at a national level then we would agree it would be attractive, but not if it was at a lower level. As per our response to Question 17, our view is that a national scheme would be the appropriate scale for pooling risk due to the differential impacts of economic change on different regions.

**Question 20: What level of income protection should a system aim to provide? Should this be nationally set, or defined at area levels?**

Our view is that this should aim to be at least as generous as the present scheme, protecting Councils whose income drops by more than 7.5% against their baseline income. This would be funded from central list income as part of
pooling risk nationally. There may need to be some funding from tariff authorities to ensure the scheme is self-financing. As a national scheme, the protection level should be set nationally.

**Question 21: What are your views on which authority should be able to reduce the multiplier and how the costs should be met?**

We are of the view that whichever authority (County or District) were to make the decision to reduce the multiplier should bear the full costs of doing so, unless it has formally been agreed that it is a joint decision.

We are concerned that the use of this power to attract business to an area may simply be a race to the bottom. What would be a much more practical approach would be to give local authorities full control to vary all rate relief schemes and exemptions from unoccupied rates.

**Question 22: What are your views on the interaction between the power to reduce the multiplier and the local discount powers?**

Full freedom should be given to local authorities to vary all rate relief schemes and exemptions from unoccupied rates. This power could provide much greater targeted assistance to meet local needs free from existing constraints.

The power should include the ability to increase or decrease the multiplier either across the board, for specified geographical areas or for certain business sectors.

Reducing the multiplier across a local authority area is a much blunter tool.

**Question 23: What are your views on increasing the multiplier after a reduction?**

After a reduction local authorities should be able to increase the multiplier back up to the prevailing national level in one step. Any constraints on the ability to do so would mean that it is much less likely that the power to reduce the multiplier would be used.

Local authorities need to be trusted to make balanced and informed decisions that are right for businesses in their local area.

**Question 24: Do you have views on the above issues or on any other aspects of the power to reduce the multiplier?**

The decision of the mayor could have a significant impact but they would be well placed to set the scale so we would be in favour of the mayor in combined authorities determining the scale for reducing the multiplier.

With regard to safeguarding neighbouring authorities we do not consider that any safeguards should be put in place to limit the impact of decisions in in neighbouring areas.

**Question 25: What are your views on what flexibility levying authorities should have to set a rateable value threshold for the levy?**
As different parts of the country could have different average rateable values, our view is that decisions on this threshold should be devolved and it should be set by levying authorities. Small businesses would attract full relief under current policy anyway, so this would set an effective national minimum threshold below which levying authorities would not go as it would not raise any additional funds.

**Question 26: What are your views on how the infrastructure levy should interact with existing BRS powers?**

We believe that both the infrastructure levy and the business rate supplement powers should be capable of being in operation at the same time or that each could operate separately. Where both operate concurrently the infrastructure levy should be applied to increase the charge first.

**Question 27: What are your views on the process for obtaining approval for a levy from the LEP?**

We believe that all LEPs representing businesses that would pay the proposed levy should be asked for their approval. It would help if the boundaries of LEPs or Combined Authorities could be adjusted in future to make them co-terminous. Approval should be sought from the LEP Board which might choose to consult with businesses informally, but a wider formal approval process, e.g. through voting, would be expensive and impractical.

**Question 28: What are your views on arrangements for the duration and review of levies?**

It is our view that the duration and review periods should be specified locally when seeking approval and should be agreed locally to match local needs, in line with the principles of devolution.

**Question 29: What are your views on how infrastructure should be defined for the purposes of the levy?**

Whilst South Norfolk Council welcomes the simplicity created by using the same definition for Infrastructure as in the Community Infrastructure Levy, it would propose that it might be beneficial to widen the remit what this funding can be spent on, e.g. to economic growth initiatives (e.g. skills, housing) more widely, to ensure that local authorities/combined authorities have the freedoms and flexibilities to fund those initiatives that will have the biggest impact on the regional/local economy.

**Question 30: What are your views on charging multiple levies, or using a single levy to fund multiple infrastructure projects?**

The Council would advocate that a single levy be used, rather than multiple levies to ensure the scheme remains as simple as possible. Nonetheless, any calculations to determine the level of levies should be transparent.

**Question 31: Do you have views on the above issues or on any other aspects of the power to introduce an infrastructure levy?**
South Norfolk Council would raise the following points:

- Extend the power to raise an infrastructure levy beyond Combined Authority Mayors: South Norfolk Council would support this and would suggest this power should be made available to other clusters of authorities including clusters of districts.
- Extend the business consultation requirements more widely: The council would propose the administration of extending the consultation requirements beyond LEPs would be too complex and time confusing.
- Discount power for Business Improvement Districts (BIDS): The council is keen to ensure that both the reliefs granted through the Business Improvement Districts and Enterprise Zones are funded by central government.
- Amend the definition of infrastructure: as outlined in our answer to question 29, South Norfolk Council would advocate extending the definition of the infrastructure levy to extends to an initiative to promote economic development (e.g. skills and housing).

**Question 32: Do you have any views on how to increase certainty and strengthen local accountability for councils in setting their budgets?**

Certainty would be enhanced through longer term decision making, for example, having longer periods between system resets, not every five years. Reducing uncertainty from appeals by, for example, reducing the backdating of appeals in line with 3 yearly revaluations, could help.

Certainty will be improved by the government committing to the long term future of the New Homes Bonus and ensuring that it remains sufficient to incentivise house building and growth properly.

Accountability would be improved if Councils were given complete flexibility to see fees and charges locally.

**Question 33: Do you have views on where the balance between national and local accountability should fall, and how best to minimise any overlaps in accountability?**

We believe that in line with devolution, there should be fewer national obligations from central government on local authorities. Where central government makes changes that have unintended consequences, for example introducing academy schools that can claim charitable relief, then local government should be compensated for these adverse effects. Where there are local issues at individual authorities, regional partners within the local government community should be the first port of call to help them. National government should still retain the power to intervene as a last resort only when local government collectively has been unable to resolve the issues itself.

**Question 34: Do you have views on whether the requirement to prepare a Collection Fund Account should remain in the new system?**
Yes, as there still needs to be a mechanism to split income across different authorities in multi-tier areas, although these should be simplified as much as possible, to aid transparency.

There are several important issues that need to be considered, including:
- The way in which risks associated with appeals are dealt with in the Collection Fund.
- Differences between the accounting and timing of safety net and levy payments in the General Fund and the Collection Fund.
- Accounting for section 31 grants (paid in compensation for temporary changes to reliefs) in the Collection Fund, rather than the General Fund.

**Question 35: Do you have views on how the calculation of a balanced budget may be altered to be better aligned with the way local authorities run their business?**

Local government should still be required to set a balanced budget, but should align this more to how a business would set its budget. Showing net expenditure figures is insufficiently transparent. Income should be shown first at a gross level and expenditure should then be shown gross, before netting off to allow calculation of Council Tax. This will make clearer local authorities progress to becoming financial self-sufficient.

**Question 36: Do you have views on how the Business Rates data collection activities may be altered to collect and record information in a more timely and transparent manner?**

The content of the NNDR1 and NNDR3 returns should be fully reviewed by Government with a view to reducing the reporting burden on local authorities. This should be done by discontinuing collection of some aspects while avoiding collection of new data as this would result in additional costs for local authorities from software suppliers.

There will still be a need to produce estimates in advance and to summarise for other interested parties what has happened.

The ‘grey’ areas that take a lot of work in these data collection activities are the requirements to provide an estimate for the potential losses on appeal, the provision for bad debts and the forecast for growth in the charge (i.e. new properties) so anything that reduces workload here would be helpful.

The new data collection approach should link to accounting arrangements, rather than requiring two different systems; any changes must not impose additional burdens on councils.
South Norfolk Council is a District Council forming part of the Greater Norwich area. Covering the fringes of Norwich and the wider rural area, South Norfolk lies on the border between Norfolk and Suffolk.

South Norfolk covers 350 square miles and is home to nearly 130,000 people, around 58,000 homes and 5,000 businesses.

**Consultation Response**

1. **What is your view on the balance between simple and complex funding formulae?**

South Norfolk Council (SNC) would propose that the new funding formula should meet the following criteria and be:
- Transparent, simple and fair,
- Evidence based- and be based on up to date data and future demographic projections
- Be based on population as this is a good proxy for need (as adjusted for deprivation, rurality etc).
- Address issues of inequality but at the same time ensure incentives for growth remain
- Be responsive to local priorities, flexible and sustainable
- Ensure stability for local authorities for the long-term i.e. ensuring fiscal neutrality for local authorities or manageable risk over the medium and long term, not just on day one.
- Account for the additional costs of sparsity and rurality and ensure that cities do not retain an unfair share of national resources
- Ensure that a meaningful proportion of available funding is directed towards growth and associated incentives for the long-term.
- Whilst we acknowledge the challenge posed by the growing gap in adult social care funding, the local retention of business rates should not be used to conveniently fill this gap as a short-term measure. Instead a focus on prevention is needed, to ensure that interventions can be made earlier both to improve outcomes and make savings for upstream services. As such, funding for prevention services must be considered as part of the needs assessment. A [2015 King’s Fund report](#) outlined the key role that district councils play in the delivery of prevention services.
- Support districts and county areas through the representative bodies of the District Council’s Network and County Councils Network to agree a fair formula for the split in district/county areas.
- Provide freedoms and flexibilities for local/regional pooling arrangements
- Have infrequent (but planned) resets in order to help smooth out changes in the local tax base, making more predictable and stable funding stream.

2. **Are there particular services for which a more detailed formula approach is needed, and – if so – what are these services?**

The Council would propose the following services need a more detailed formula approach in order to ensure the correct resources are received to meet service need in local areas:
- Education
- Adult Social Care
- Children’s Services
- Services in rural areas which lead to higher costs
- Transport services
- Highways/roads maintenance

3. **Should expenditure based regression continue to be used to assess councils’ funding needs?**

We would propose that regression based indicators are not a reliable or appropriate indicator of need as previous patterns in spending may not necessarily be representative of the actual need to spend of local authorities. For example, an authority may spend more than another, not because their area has a greater need, but because they are less efficient. We therefore propose that demography, deprivation etc are much more relevant measures by which to assess need.

4. **What other measures besides councils’ spending on services should we consider as a measure of their need to spend?**

South Norfolk Council would propose the following measures need to considered as part of an authority’s spending need:

- Rurality and Sparsity- any future system must have a solid basis for dealing with sparsity and rural related issues. Rural authorities were allocated additional funding in 2013-14, most of which was damped away. There is a strong case for rural authorities to receive funding for the additional need that has been assessed. We would ask that government continue to fund a share of any growth in reliefs in rural areas.
- Demographic/Population- the needs assessment must give due regard to current and future population numbers and associated issues. The current formula has moved away from this which is not welcome. Population has always been taken as a good proxy for need (as adjusted for deprivation, rurality etc).
- Deprivation- there needs to be some rebalancing in the system to ensure that those areas with the highest deprivation and least opportunity to grow are not adversely affected. This could be direct support from Government (investment) or help in providing targeted reliefs to attract new businesses. However this should not be at the expense of incentivising and delivering growth.
- Growth- a meaningful proportion of available funding should be directed towards growth and associated incentives for the long-term.
5. What other statistical techniques besides those mentioned above should be considered for arriving at the formulae for distributing funding?

We do not suggest other specific techniques, but any technique or formula used should be open and transparent and easy to verify and check.

Stakeholders outside of the department should have full access to be able to check the formulae so that they can make properly informed comments on changes and proposals and provide costed alternatives.

6. What other considerations should we keep in mind when measuring the relative need of authorities?

The total needs of local authorities and their residents should be considered first before assessing relative needs. It would be very helpful to have an assessment of the total need of authorities spend to deliver fully all their statutory obligations and their roles in place-shaping and promoting economic growth. It may be that the total income of local authorities may have to increase over time to match the total need. Without this assessment, debates over relative need of particular types of authority, e.g. those with social care responsibilities, may simply be hiding an unquantified shortfall in how the total need for particular services is being funded.

Whatever measures of relative need are used, they must not create any perverse incentives. They should be clear and transparent and not open to gaming or manipulation.

The top-up and tariff system should continue but needs to incentivise growth. This means that resets should be infrequent, certainly not every 5 years, and that local authorities should be able to keep some of the gains from growth at each reset, with the balance used to address relative need.

Dampening effects previously introduced in the formula can have a massive impact and move local authorities further away from having their relative needs addressed. Dampening should therefore be removed wherever possible.

Any redistribution mechanisms must be future-proofed given the expectation that the system would include long term fixed-period resets.

7. What is your view on how we should take into account the growth in local taxes since 2013-14?

Councils should continue to have an incentive to deliver growth, so must be able to keep some of the gains over time, e.g. when resets occur. We think that Councils should be able to retain around 50% of the growth in local taxes
since 2013/14. The balance should be used to fund those Councils that currently have lower potential for growth.

8. Should we allow significant step-changes in local authorities’ funding following the new needs assessment?
   No, since an immediate step-change for funding following the new needs assessment would be financially destabilising for some authorities.

9. If not, what are your views on how we should transition to a new distribution of funding?
   Our view is that there should be a transition period over a number of years which allows local authorities to retain some of the gains from growth that they have made since the last major change in 2013/14 (see response to Question 7). It might be appropriate to set the transition period for a length that allows local authorities enough time to generate sufficient growth to make up for the gains that are taken away from them under the new funding arrangements. Nevertheless, there will need to be a firm time limit set on the transition period, so that local authorities have the certainty of knowing when it will end.

   To provide greater certainty, there should be continuing rolling four year settlements for local government beyond the period of the present parliament.

10. What are your views on a local government finance system that assessed need and distributed funding at a larger geographical areas than the current system – for example, at the Combined Authority level?
   South Norfolk Council would advocate local freedoms and flexibilities so that areas can choose to have needs assessed and funding distributed across larger geographical areas (e.g. combined authorities) if there is consensus regionally for such a model. We would proposed that whilst a national formula for assessing needs and distributing funding should be set, larger geographical areas should have a scale by which they can vary this in order to more accurately reflect local need.

   If this model were pursued, appropriate checks and balances would need to be established to ensure the local authorities were not adversely affected and all authorities were able to revert to the national formula if required.

11. How should we arrive at the composition of these areas if we were to introduce such a system?
   It would be possible to do this at Combined Authority level, although our view is that these areas should be linked to functional economic areas, not necessarily traditional county boundaries, in order to incentivise growth appropriately.
12. What other considerations would we need to keep in mind if we were to introduce such a system?

As outlined in Question 10, appropriate checks and balances would be needed to ensure no local authorities were significantly adversely affected and all authorities were able to revert back to the national formula if required. It might be helpful for an area to pilot this model, before it was rolled out across the country.

13. What behaviours should the reformed local government finance system incentivise?

South Norfolk Council would propose the following behaviours should be incentivised:

- Growth
- Collaboration
- Investing in earlier intervention/prevention
- Better outcomes
- More local decision making
- Entrepreneurialism e.g. local authorities generating income

14. How can we build these incentives into the assessment of councils’ funding needs?

With regards to desired behaviours we have outlined above we would propose the following incentives:

- Entrepreneurialism- a bonus/reward could be given for those authorities generating a certain level of income.
- Early intervention- those councils investing more in early intervention to be a given a bonus to recognise the longer term savings being made for upstream services.
- Growth- although the council recognises that government wishes to reform the New Homes Bonus scheme, incentives such as this act as a powerful incentive for growth and clearly demonstrate to local residents, businesses and councillors the benefits of local housing growth.
### CABINET CORE AGENDA 2016

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Key decisions are those which result in income, expenditure or savings with a gross full year effect of £100,000 or 10% of the Council’s net portfolio budget whichever is the greater which has not been included in the relevant portfolio budget, or are significant (e.g. in environmental, physical, social or economic) in terms of its effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.