



Interim Submission

Local Government Reorganisation in Norfolk

Introduction

We welcome the Government's intention to explore local government reorganisation alongside the devolution of further powers and funding to Mayoral Combined Authorities.

We are keen to seize this opportunity for local government reorganisation to make a difference to the people of Norfolk, by:

- Reducing duplication, which will save money that can be reinvested in services.
- Ending confusion and improving accountability, by having one council per area.
- Joining up services, which helps to support effective work with partner organisations.

A local government system designed in the 1970s needs updating, to meet continually changing aspirations, expectations and needs, and changes to technology and service delivery.

Norfolk residents have a strong sense of belonging, to their county and to their neighbourhood – whether they live in the city of Norwich, large towns like Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, market towns like Cromer, Thetford, and Wymondham or our rich variety of small towns, villages and hamlets, and coastal communities.

Our residents deserve a modernised, efficient and effective system of local government that can meet current and future challenges and support sustainable and inclusive growth, working closely with the proposed new Norfolk and Suffolk Mayoral Combined County Authority.

Norfolk is unique – it's history, it's culture and it's environment. This means that residents have a strong inherent sense of being a proud part of a great county.

Norfolk is a county that boasts the best of all worlds. It has an outstanding natural environment, with beautiful coastlines, rolling countryside, rivers, big skies and wide-open spaces. At the same time, it harnesses entrepreneurial spirit and innovation and is leading the way in the agri-tech and clean energy sectors, as well as in cutting edge research.

Moving forward, we would wish to protect and respect the heritage and history of this county – keeping the proud mayoral and civic traditions alive. This includes those in Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn, Thetford and Norfolk as a whole, including lord mayors, high sheriffs, sheriffs, freemen, coats of arms, and more.

The geography of Norfolk is distinctive, a mosaic of market towns anchored by two large towns and the city. Norfolk's population is an estimated 931,000.¹

¹ <https://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/>

Norfolk benefits from a well-defined, co-terminus local system, within its existing geography:

- a single functional economic area
- one county council
- one Office of Police & Crime Commissioner
- one Constabulary
- one Fire and Rescue Service
- one Coronial jurisdiction
- one Integrated Care System (plus Waveney).

This co-terminosity meets one of government's key policy objectives, as stated in the English Devolution White Paper.

These organisations benefit from a coordinated approach and whole-county strategic leadership to ensure vulnerable children and adults, schools, families, communities and businesses are fully supported through improved integration and join up, from strategy through to delivery, across whole places and into individual spaces and homes.

Our Design Principles

We have taken the following approach in considering our response to government:

Any model should:

- enable **the best possible service quality and outcomes for Norfolk's communities**
- deliver **the greatest level of efficiency** to enable the **maximum amount of resource available to reinvest in key services**
- deliver **value for money** for the taxpayer by being **efficient and effective**
- provide **clear and straightforward routes for communities** to access and interact with our services
- enable the **views of local people** to be heard
- deliver **clearer local accountability** for local people
- reflect the very distinct 'human geography'** of an interconnected county
- enable opportunities for **service improvement** to be harnessed
- maximise opportunities to be coterminous with other public agencies (notably health) to help **drive wider efficiencies through whole system integration** as well as supporting the Government mission led agenda
- minimise complexity, risk and disruption**, during the challenging implementation process
- seek to **respect the historic and cultural fabric of Norfolk**
- provide **clarity in democratic representation**
- ensure hyper local representation** for example through the use of Town and Parish Councils, or local boards

We recognise that a new unitary model for the county would bring together county and district colleagues to work together in a new way. Any new model will require collective development work, involving all workforces, to create a vision, values and culture that enables everyone to feel part of the new organisation(s), ensuring colleagues can work together effectively to deliver excellent services for the people of Norfolk.

a) identify any barriers or challenges where further clarity or support would be helpful.

Criteria: A structural change as large as Local Government Reorganisation needs to have clear guiderails to allow all partners to plan and develop their proposals. Looking at the national picture, there are several proposals that put forward models well below the 500,000-population threshold, or that require significant changes to administrative boundaries. We would seek to adhere to the principles set out in Minister McMahon's invitation, including around the minimum population figure and the use of existing district boundaries as building blocks. We believe these are sensible criteria and will help to reduce the risk and cost in the delivery and implementation phase. We seek reassurance that any variation from these will be minor so as not to layer unnecessary complexity, risk and cost onto an already stretched sector.

Policy Reform: Government across its' missions are introducing welcome policy reform. We would want such reforms, alongside Local Government Reorganisation, to be maximised to their full advantage. Such examples are the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, which will place new duties on Children's Services authorities, and the Adult Social Care Review. Both will rely on whole system change, with statutory partners, meaning co-terminosity will be an essential ingredient.

We would seek a model that would allow the most efficient, timely and least disruptive absorption of such policy reform, including those of police, probation, fire and health services – and those of Strategic Authorities - to align and avoid unintended consequences.

Process: We are conscious that Government will need to consider a number of proposals from different areas across the country and we want to support this being a robust and efficient process. Whilst the guiding criteria are clearly set out in the letter of 5 February, it would be helpful to better understand the assessment process that Government intends to follow so that we can structure our proposal to support this.

Norfolk County Council would particularly like Government to consider whether the Treasury Green Book assessment methodology will be used in analysing bids. This is a well-established (tried and tested) approach that provides a firm basis for evaluation.

Protection of civic and ceremonial arrangements: NCC is clear that under any model the existing civic and ceremonial arrangements should be protected, for example the long-established historic mayoralties in the city and boroughs. We would ask that MHCLG provides reassurance that such protections will be put in place as part of the statutory instrument.

b) identify the likely options for the size and boundaries of new councils that will offer the best structures for delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services across the area, along with indicative efficiency saving opportunities.

The recent English Devolution White Paper, as well as the conditions in which local government has had to operate for the past few years, has accelerated the debate about local government reorganisation in England. In recent years that has been a trend of favouring proposals for unitary authorities serving populations of between c. 400,000 and 800,000 people, the most recent examples of which are Somerset and North Yorkshire.

It appears that relatively little attention has been paid to the role of scale, and specifically, a detailed understanding of the costs, risks and challenges of disaggregation during the local government reorganisation process, and the impact it has on good governance, sustainable service delivery, capacity to support government ambitions for reform and more accountable leadership at a local and strategic level.

Norfolk County Council (NCC) is clear that it will be evidence based and insight-led; our solution needs to be right for Norfolk. The development and appraisal of options builds on the above design principles as well as the criteria outlined in the Minister McMahon's written statement, published on 5 February 2025, on how proposals for unitary models should look.

Our ongoing analysis to underpin the most appropriate proposal for Norfolk is informed by a number of local drivers for change:

Place

- A joined-up development team approach – to help deliver much needed homes, infrastructure and development.
- Critical mass and scale, to enable successful negotiation with government and developers to address key local challenges.
- Close working with the Mayor to unlock potential housing sites, and make more effective use of the council's own land stock.

Health and wellbeing

- Consistency between the way in which health and social care services are shaped, delivered and managed.
- Managing Norfolk's care market in a sustainable way.
- Continued system transformation across health and care services.
- Managing demand for health and social care services in a consistent way.

Economy

- Supporting the delivery of Norfolk's Local Growth Plan, already endorsed by all local authorities, working with the new Mayoral Strategic Authority.
- Developing opportunities to further the progress made in partnership working.
- Joining up of leisure, cultural and tourism activities.
- A single point of access for businesses around environmental health, trading standards and business development.

Indicative Analysis

In 2020, PricewaterHouseCoopers (PwC) published a report² on the costs and benefits of local government reorganisation, referenced by government in the English Devolution White Paper.

As part of updated national financial modelling undertaken by PwC³, a high-level analysis of the costs and benefits of different unitary scenarios for Norfolk has also been provided by the County Councils Network (CCN) to inform our interim submission. The national level report explains the approach to the modelling undertaken.

Initial indicative analysis on the benefits, and implementation costs of different models of unitaries, provides an approximate high-level view of the net annual benefit of reorganising from a two-tier system to a one, two or three unitary council model, which ranges from c£30m to c£10m for one or two unitaries, and a net annual cost for three unitaries.

The work undertaken also shows that disaggregation costs rise as the number of councils increases, and could reduce considerably the levels of benefits to be achieved over a five-year period.

	One unitary	Two unitaries	Three unitaries
Annual benefit	£29m	£23m	£19m
Annual disaggregation cost	£0m	-£14m	-£22m
Recurring net annual benefit	£29m	£9m	-£3m
One-off transition costs	-£19m	-£26m	-£32m
Net total benefit after 5 years	c£120m	c£20m	-c£50m
Payback period	Less than 1 year	3 years	No payback

All these areas and estimates are subject to more detailed analysis, and we will seek to validate assumptions through the full business case process.

² <https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/PwC-Evaluating-the-importance-of-scale-in-proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation.pdf>

³ [Updated financial analysis: evaluating the importance of scale in proposals for local government reorganisation - County Councils Network](#)

Our initial assessment shows: -

- The amount of revenue savings possible to achieve, for investment in local priorities, is linked to the number of authorities, with the smallest number of authorities providing the highest level of saving.
- A model with more than two councils in the Norfolk geography, would have challenges in terms of savings, tax base, or the ability to sustain financial shocks. A unitary Council based around the 'City boundaries' of Norwich would be at the expense of the other communities in Norfolk.
- The level of cost and risk associated with transition to any new arrangements increases with the number of authorities, with a single unitary authority providing significantly less disruption, cost and risk, with the opportunity to utilise the county council as a 'continuing authority'.
- In addition to the benefits diminishing with each additional unitary council created, each disaggregation will add additional cost, notably in a duplication in staffing teams and management structures, and particularly, in statutory roles and other hard-to-recruit for roles. Services such as education, social care, libraries, museums, and highways services benefit from being able to leverage in highly skilled and specialist staff across a wide geography.
- Effectively representing local communities and ensuring that they are able to influence and have their voice heard will be a challenge for all options, and there will be a need to build stronger and more robust community leadership and representation models in all options, and with services delivered in neighbourhoods and places that make sense to all of Norfolk's communities.
- Strong and effective relationships with key partners is crucial to delivery of outcomes across sectors and systems, therefore the operational boundaries of these partners cannot be ignored.
- NCC has looked at several models of splitting the county into two authorities. Further work will need to be undertaken to look at how this would be feasible and not introduce any risk into the system. NCC would want to understand the risks, including around:
 - Impact on protecting children and adults from significant harm
 - Demand placed on partners for major services (i.e. health and education)
 - Tax take and financial sustainability
 - How coterminous they are with other bodies.

We will be exploring these points in further detail as part of developing a detailed proposal. This work will have a number of key strands, including: -

- A robust, evidence and insight led assessment of data and intelligence.

- Engagement with key service delivery partners across the public and VCSE sectors to assess options, including risks and opportunities.
- Engagement with local partners, including town and parish councils, to harness thinking and opportunities to strengthen democratic representation and neighbourhood approaches.
- Engagement with stakeholders, including residents, our workforce and businesses, to ensure a wide range of views and needs are taken into account and used to inform the development of proposals.

c) include indicative costs and arrangements in relation to any options including planning for future service transformation opportunities.

NCC has worked with a number of unitary authorities to understand what the cost of transition could be. As referenced above, early analysis on the potential cost and benefit of local government reorganisation, has provided some approximate high-level transition and implementation costs associated with the options outlined above.

As a system, a single or two unitary structure would deliver savings in the following areas:

- A reduction in management overheads and the removal of duplicated functions.
- Where there is duplication in systems (notably IT systems and processes) we would look for savings within five years.
- Where there are duplications in third party spend, contractual arrangements, savings could be made (as contracts expire and are reprocured) securing economies of scale from large contracts on universal service delivery models, such as waste, street-scene, but also facilities management, systems rationalisation etc.

These three core areas would help to fund the transformation journey. As a broad principle, NCC would seek to work with colleagues from across the Public Sector to deliver the change, rather than rely solely on external consultants.

Examples of efficiencies and service transformations would include:

- Prevention and early help – joined-up improved local offer through closer links between public health, leisure service, open spaces, community support, local partnerships, youth and early years services.

- Tackling the Government's priorities around homelessness, worklessness, and housing.
- Deeper integration between social care and health at a neighbourhood level.
- Streamlined services for environmental health, trading standards, licensing, planning, waste, housing and business engagement.
- Integration of key data, insights and analytics, including predictive analytics to inform and shape county-wide strategic planning and drive local delivery.

d) include early views as to the councillor numbers that will ensure both effective democratic representation for all parts of the area, and also effective governance and decision-making arrangements which will balance the unique needs of your cities, towns, rural and coastal areas, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England guidance.

Any new unitary authority will require a model for local engagement that builds on past and current successes, and is underpinned by a set of common principles, which can be applied flexibly to the specific needs of individual communities. In considering options for effective governance and decision-making, we are looking at:

- Subsidiarity, with delivery at the most appropriate geography to meet the needs of residents and communities
- How to enable decisions to be taken at the lowest possible level
- Governance that is transparent, simple, supports collaboration
- Using existing partnerships and commissioned services wherever possible to ensure the most appropriate, effective and efficient delivery
- Building in local knowledge and experience to any model recognising that "one size doesn't fit all"
- Focusing on where the public sector as a whole adds most value and builds local capacity so that individuals and communities can be self-supporting

Democratic responsibility for service delivery:

The Norfolk (Electoral Changes) Order 2021 was made on 1 November 2021, and the new divisional boundaries were due to be implemented for elections on 1 May 2025. The postponement of the elections has delayed this implementation, but the new boundaries provide recognised effective electoral equality across the 84 divisions. In practice, this means the current divisional boundaries provide a sound basis for whichever model is decided upon by the Secretary of State and would enable the quick delivery of LGR.

It will be important for the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCE) to undertake a review of ward and councillor numbers, which would ensure thorough consultation and engagement at every level. The LGBCE would seek submissions on numbers from relevant stakeholders as part of that consultation; at this point we

would suggest the number of councillors could be between 100 and 140, but further work is needed on this as part of the business case process.

A key principle of any structure should be political oversight, accountability and direction of any resources that are spent in an area. This is particularly critical for services such as social care, where there are serious implications of not having the correct oversight (and evidenced in several serious case reviews). In a two or three unitary model it is essential that all Councillors in any new council(s) have direct responsibility, oversight and control for key and high spending services (including highways and waste), being able to enact the policies and resources they need for their local area. This clear accountability mitigates against a centrally provided service for social care, education, highways or waste delivered over two or three unitary authorities.

Norfolk's currently benefits from a well-performing Children's Service. A Trust model would introduce a further level of risk around safeguarding and would break the democratic oversight needed by members. Set up as a way to improve the performance of failing authorities, since 2020 only one children's trust has been established (Bradford) while other authorities have brought previous trusts back in-house (Doncaster, Worcestershire). Children's Trusts "can be costly to implement and take time to establish"⁴, and lack democratic oversight. Options around a trust to provide services for adults' and children's services are not seen as a safe, sensible or deliverable option.

Local Engagement:

In order to ensure effective governance and local decision making, we envisage that there would be an increased role for parish and town councils in delivering a model of neighbourhood empowerment. We also recognise that any model will need to provide effective neighbourhood empowerment for the unparished urban areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, while simultaneously taking steps to preserve the historic and ceremonial traditions of Norfolk's principal city and towns.

Norfolk County Council already has a number of successful local community partnerships delivering improvements and interventions at a neighbourhood level across the county, driven by local community need, such as our Highways Parish Partnership Scheme, our Local Member Fund, our Road Safety Community Fund, our Highway Rangers locality approach, and others.

Thematic, strategic and system wide partnerships drawing together community and local, public and voluntary sector leaders to work together on critical challenges affecting wider areas will be key, for example building on arrangements already in place, including:-

- Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance
- Empowering Communities Partnership with the VCSE sector
- Community Safety Partnership
- Childrens and Young People Strategic Alliance

⁴https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66e83818e4b40ed591881b88/Commissioner_s_report_on_children_s_services_in_Tameside_Metropolitan_Borough_Council.pdf

- Norfolk Children's Safeguarding Partnership
- Norfolk Adults Safeguarding Partnership
- Youth Justice Management Board

A new organisation would need to build upon this experience of delivering at a large scale, whilst also providing hyper-localised services.

We expect this approach to enable greater empowerment at a local level, as well as strengthened local accountability and transparency of decision making.

e) include early views on how new structures will support devolution ambitions.

NCC agrees with MHCLG that for a unitary authority to provide high quality modern public services, it must be of a sufficient size. Given the population in Norfolk, this will drive either a single or two unitary structure.

We will appraise options for new structures though the lens of which one provides the most optimal conditions to move at pace, and seize the opportunity to supercharge social and economic growth in this important period – with a focus not only on growing the local economy, but creating an economy that works for everyone, aiming to reduce income inequality and improve wages, particularly for the lowest-paid workers; and taking a whole system approach to create healthier communities, recognizing the link between economic prosperity and the overall wellbeing of the population.

Within this, size, scale and capacity to deliver against government's challenging missions is critical.

There is also the crucial opportunity to align arrangements with structures put in place as part of devolution to enable all those in the area to work collectively on service improvement and improving outcomes for Norfolk families.

f) include a summary of local engagement that has been undertaken and any views expressed, along with your further plans for wide local engagement to help shape your developing proposals.

At the moment, no formal external engagement has been undertaken around Local Government reorganisation given the short time period provided and where we are with our analysis of options. However, there has been extensive internal dialogue within our own workforce and with district colleagues, as well as work with key strategic partners, to help inform our design principles.

An engagement programme is being developed to guide the development and submission of final options. We want to ensure any engagement is meaningful, purposeful and transparent.

Public consultation was undertaken as part of the county deal devolution bid in 2023, where residents and businesses expressed the following levels of support on the following themes:

- 64 per cent support for devolving financial control to Norfolk
- 60 per cent agreed it would create a stronger voice for local business
- 65 per cent wanted to see control of adult education moved to the county council
- 55 per cent wanted housing and employment sites opened up
- 57 per cent agreed with the principles of devolution

Norfolk County Council is promoting the Government's own consultation on the current devolution proposal.

g) set out indicative costs of preparing proposals and standing up an implementation team as well as any arrangements proposed to coordinate potential capacity funding across the area.

As part of the budget setting process for 2025/26, the County Council made provision for capacity funding for organisational change. We estimate that approximately £200k - £300k will be required to support the development of proposals, which can be funded from this provision.

NCC has pulled together a central project team from across the council, including representatives of all services to provide subject matter expertise. In line with government advice, the county council has sought to keep external spend to a minimum and instead work in partnership with membership organisations such as the County Councils Network.

The council is utilising its internal Insight and Analytics team to gather and review data, to be further validated with a commissioned external partner. Furthermore, the county council is collaborating with the district, borough and city councils to share data, through a jointly accessed data portal.

As part of the data gathering exercises, teams are considering implementation plans (for a variety of different structures). Central to this design is the continuity of services, particularly for vulnerable residents.

Any new structure will be a new organisation and will need to leverage in skills from county and district colleagues. Whatever model government chooses to implement in due course, councils will collaborate to pool expertise, skills and resources to plan for and ensure a smooth transition and implementation.

h) set out any voluntary arrangements that have been agreed to keep all councils involved in discussions as this work moves forward and to help balance the decisions needed now to maintain service delivery and ensure value for money for council taxpayers, with those key decisions that will affect the future success of any new councils in the area.

Norfolk Councils already have a well-established system of partnership arrangements which include:

- Monthly formal meetings of the councils' chief executives, supported by the county council. A number of ad hoc fortnightly meetings are also scheduled for this current period.
- Bi-monthly formal meetings of all councils' leaders and chief executives supported by the county council
- Bi-monthly formal meetings of the Public Sector Leaders' Board, which includes key partners like the Norfolk Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Norfolk Constabulary, the Chair and Chief Executive of the Integrated Care Board, the chair of the Norfolk Business Board and representatives of the voluntary sector.
- Monthly briefings with Norfolk's MPs, on a number of issues affecting the county, these will also extend to devolution and local government reorganisation
- Quarterly meetings of the Norfolk Business Board, which supports the delivery of Norfolk's Local Growth Plan and includes representatives from local councils. This meeting in particular enables a strong join up between the devolution and local government reorganisation objectives and agendas.

We also recognise that town and parish councils/meetings form the 3rd tier of local government delivery, and we will engage with these community led councils at an early stage.

Findings of initial analysis of options

Option 1 - a single unitary authority

	One unitary
Annual benefit	£29m
Annual disaggregation cost	£0m
Recurring net annual benefit	£29m
One-off transition costs	-£19m
Net total benefit after 5 years	c£120m
Payback period	Less than 1 year

Given the experience, capacity and existing scale, there are clear benefits in a single unitary model, with the county council acting as a “continuing authority”.

A continuing authority at this scale is perhaps the simplest vehicle for transition to the new unitary model. It removes any disaggregation risk and provides a legal vehicle for employment for the largest number of people.

A single unitary authority would provide the highest annual revenue savings for investment in local priorities. These significant financial benefits can be achieved through efficiencies in staffing, streamlining of services, back-office functions, systems and processes, and contractual arrangements, and provide a single body (coterminous with health, fire, and police services). Whilst these savings are significant, we recognise that a number of other factors need to be taken into account in our more detailed assessment, that we will undertake during spring/summer, including the ability to drive efficiencies to deliver better outcomes through services. This model in turn may enable savings in coterminous partners who could equally simplify their structures.

Significant service efficiencies can directly improve outcomes. This includes building on arrangements already in place in Norfolk, which can enable greater consistency and strengthen some areas of statutory responsibility, for example:-

- A single education service across the county, focusing on special educational needs (SEND), delivering and developing the education system as a whole
- A single social care system across the county

Other key areas that will provide important opportunities for efficiencies as well as improved outcomes include:-

- A single planning service, to underpin strategic spatial planning, helping to turbocharge housing and regeneration across the county, in support of the devolution agenda
- A combined waste collection, recycling and disposal system
- A single highways and street scene service
- A single digital strategy for the whole of Norfolk
- More joined-up decision making on homelessness and related housing issues through integration of council services, providing better outcomes for vulnerable groups and avoiding a post-code lottery type approach.

There would be the opportunity to streamline back-office functions, allowing a greater focus on service delivery and better value for the taxpayer. Whether across finance, payroll, HR, IT, property, or procurement, a single 'service' would deliver savings.

Norfolk County Council already provides payroll services for over 150 organisations which include schools and academies, as well as the Direct Payments Support Service payrolls to over 1500 people in receipt of personal budgets.

Advisory services can also be provided at a county wide scale, for example Norfolk County Council's health, safety and wellbeing services offer health and safety advice to a number of external public sector organisations including two Norfolk district councils, schools (including academies), Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (EIFCA) and the Norfolk Association of Local Councils.

Within the existing county-wide structure, we already demonstrate that we can successfully deliver tailored services within local communities that meet the needs of local residents, whilst at the same time benefiting from the efficiencies and influence of a large body, and any suggestion of a county-wide structure being remote to residents is unfounded. For example:-

- our nationally recognised library service provides a set of core services across the county in 47 fixed locations and over 1,000 neighbourhood locations serviced regularly by mobile libraries, as well as tailored activities and interventions developed with local partners within neighbourhoods.
- our highway services deliver small local infrastructure projects that address neighbourhood road safety interventions and street scene improvements, agreed and led by local residents.
- our dedicated social care workforce is providing services tailored to individual needs, direct into people's homes.

Option 2 - two unitary authorities

	Two unitaries
Annual benefit	£23m
Annual disaggregation cost	-£14m
Recurring net annual benefit	£9m
One-off transition costs	-£26m
Net total benefit after 5 years	c£20m
Payback period	3 years

Two unitary authorities for Norfolk, defined within existing district boundaries, could deliver some of the benefits set out above - although potentially only at around 40% of the net benefit of a single unitary - and could be perceived as more 'localised' authorities. In addition, it would be difficult to make a practical argument for two unitary authorities being closer to communities than a single unitary authority, but there is an argument that it is not of sufficient size to enable it to be strategic, risking being the worst of all worlds.

Whilst contracts and commercial arrangements would not have an economy of scale, they could potentially better reflect the needs of their local area.

Two authorities could have a larger number of councillors than a single unitary, but balanced against this would be a higher cost.

The scale of reorganisation may be easier to manage within two smaller organisations. However, the disaggregation of adults' and children's social care, education and safeguarding services and functions would carry significant cost, risk and complexity.

There are a number of statutory posts that will need to be duplicated across a model with two authorities, for example the Director of Adult Services, Director of Children's Services and Head of Trading Standards. These posts require highly skilled individuals and are particularly hard to recruit, therefore doubling the number required in an area would be challenging.

As set out in the main report, a Trust model would introduce a further level of risk around safeguarding and would break the democratic oversight needed by members. With regards to people services such as adults' and children's social care, there are Care Trusts which provide integrated health and social care (i.e. Torbay), but not standalone adult social services – not least due to the duties placed on local authorities by the Care Act 2014. Norfolk's care economy is very distinct and often fragile, and shifts to untested models could present a significant risk. As noted in the main report, the few examples of Children's trusts are not similar to the situation in Norfolk, which is rated as "good" by Ofsted.

To avoid a duplication of costs, there are a number of areas where services may be better delivered at a county wide basis (such as coroners, Norfolk museums services, county archives and Norfolk pension fund). A 'shared service' approach for these areas, may help drive some efficiencies within the system - although consideration around democratic oversight, control and the need to avoid complexity would be key.

However, there remains a difficulty as to where any split would be made geographically, and how this would ensure coherent, viable and financially sustainable authorities, with parity of a sustainable tax base to address local challenges. Any split would also need to ensure that the 'natural geographies' of how our residents and businesses actually travel around the county and use services (particularly health and social care) are addressed.

Option 3 – more than 2 councils (below 350,000 population unitary authorities)

	Three unitaries
Annual benefit	£19m
Annual disaggregation cost	-£22m
Recurring net annual benefit	-£3m
One-off transition costs	-£32m
Net total benefit after 5 years	-c£50m
Payback period	No payback

Norfolk County Council is clear that a proposal of more than two unitary authorities across Norfolk, each with a population in the region of under 350,000 residents spread unevenly across the county, with different levels of growth opportunity, different levels of prosperity or deprivation and variable tax bases, would raise a number of significant challenges - requiring the costly and complex replication of a number of key and critical services. The initial analysis shows that three or more unitary councils would not save money and would actually cost more than the current structure.

NCC would note the issues many smaller unitary authorities have experienced, which has led them to become bigger, and we would support the Government's drive towards a smaller number of larger, more sustainable authorities. Financial sustainability will be key and small unitary authorities will have higher overhead costs.

Within a Norfolk geography, it is difficult to see a sustainable tax base for all three sub-optimal unitary authorities, nor does it capture how our residents and businesses operate in the county.

Considering the design principles, a sub-optimal three unitary structure could cause significant disruption and fragmentation of key people services, require the splitting of existing district boundaries, complex negotiations on existing contractual arrangements (i.e. waste collection, leisure services) and would lead to a significant duplication of management functions. All of this would increase costs, reduce ability to achieve efficiencies and create the greatest risks in terms of disaggregation and implementation.

There have been examples in the past of shared service arrangements among multiple authorities to deliver various services across the areas. However, they have faced challenges, and many have ended, due to a number of significant challenges such as financial sustainability, accountability for delivery, differences in political direction among authorities and more.

The risks and issues associated with the ability to effectively deliver the required statutory posts is more pronounced in a three, as opposed to two, unitary model, with three of each type of hard to recruit post required.

The concerns about Trust models continue, as set out in the main report and explored in more detail under two unitary authorities above, and in a three unitary model a Trust would add further risk and complexity, with three distinct authorities required to work together.

Partners already describe how the current arrangements make it difficult to engage in a coordinated way and want to see a clearer strategic voice. Too much time and energy is spent working across complex structures, building multiple relationships with multiple organisations with different goals and priorities, making it more difficult to work together. This resource could be better targeted to delivering shared outcomes. Populations below 350,000 do not fully address this existing issue and add complexity into already stretched partnership systems.

Across all options

NCC would wish to protect and respect the heritage and history of this county – keeping the proud mayoral and civic traditions alive. This includes those in Norwich, Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn, Thetford and Norfolk as a whole, including lord mayors, high sheriffs, sheriffs, freemen, coats of arms, and more.

Central to any proposal of any unitary council will be taking the opportunity to build a stronger and more robust relationship with civil society partners, harnessing the full potential to deliver better outcomes for residents. Norfolk has a strong network of over 500 town and parish councils across the county, and they will be key to this. They have a unique role in ensuring community views, at a neighbourhood level, can be heard and enabling resilient communities and local infrastructure. Parish councils provide real leverage at a neighbourhood level with significant levels of public funds.

Also key will be working more effectively with the broad and complex VCSE sector in the county, as they provide pivotal roles as part of the wider system to support the

most vulnerable as well as important community leadership roles. Bringing together the sector, with other stakeholders, will support driving people-centred services that meet local needs.

Major changes are expected in Norfolk, as part of the Government's drive for devolution and local government reform. We explain what it means.

► Devolution:

Imagine if Norfolk and Suffolk, not Westminster, could make more decisions about our future. And imagine we had millions of pounds extra, every year, to make things happen.

That's what the Government is proposing through its devolution programme.

Government powers and funding would be passed to combined authorities, led by elected mayors – like we see in Greater Manchester and other regions.



**Councillor
Kay Mason Billig**
Leader of
Norfolk County Council

“Devolution is a chance for Norfolk and Suffolk to gain powers and funding from the Government, to boost our economy and benefit our residents through better skills, transport and housing. “Please have your say and take part in the Government's consultation, so we can help to shape the best possible outcome.”

The Government proposes a Norfolk and Suffolk combined county authority, with powers over housing and regeneration, local growth, adult skills and local transport.

The authority would receive millions of pounds of funding, to make decisions based on local priorities.

Take local skills. The Government currently decides priorities for investment. Under devolution, Norfolk and Suffolk could decide and invest in the skills and training required.

The Government has launched a consultation, which takes place until 13th April, so that people in Norfolk and Suffolk can have their say on devolution.

Key questions:

- 1 What's the role of the mayor?** The mayor would be elected by voters across Norfolk and Suffolk, to lead the combined authority. This would cover big, strategic services such as housing, regeneration and local transport.
- 2 What's the advantage of having a mayor?** A mayor would give the area a greater profile with the Government, key partners and inward investors. The Norfolk and Suffolk mayor would join the Prime Minister, other mayors and national leaders of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the Council of Nations and Regions.
- 3 If this proposal is approved, when would elections take place?** The Government is proposing to hold mayoral elections in May 2026.
- 4 If the combined authority is created, which councils would become members?** Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council would be members of the authority, until they are replaced by new unitary authorities over the next couple of years.
- 5 What happens if the proposal does not proceed?** Norfolk and Suffolk would not receive additional powers and funding in 2026. The Government would “continue to work with local councils on the best devolution approach for their area”.

► You can add your views at [Norfolk and Suffolk devolution](#). Norfolk County Council will make its own submission in April.

► Local government reorganisation:



Local government reorganisation is an opportunity for Norfolk to have fewer, more efficient councils, focused on local communities.

At the moment, Norfolk is what's known as a two-tier area, with eight councils:

- a county council, which is responsible for key services such as highways and transport, adult social care and children's services
- seven district councils, which provide services such as bin collection, leisure and housing.
- The Government wants to see all eight councils replaced with fewer, unitary councils – which are responsible for all services in their area.

That presents an opportunity to:

- end confusion – people would know that one council would deliver all services in their area;
- deliver value for money – with fewer sets of senior officers, councillors and council headquarters, freeing up money to invest in services;
- join up services, to make them more effective – such as bin collection and waste disposal and enabling housing and social care to work more closely together;
- ensure strong local links, through closer working with town and parish councils.



**Councillor
Kay Mason Billig**
Leader of
Norfolk County Council

“People in Norfolk deserve to have the most cost effective and efficient form of local government, with strong links to our communities. I believe we can achieve that, by working together.

Norfolk County Council and the seven district councils were invited by the Government to submit interim proposals on 21st March and then develop detailed proposals by 26th September.

Key questions:

- 1 Who decides how many councils are created in Norfolk?** The Government, once it has considered the submissions from the current eight councils. It will use the criteria set out in the [minister's letter](#) to Norfolk's councils.
- 2 How big will any new council or councils be?** The Government says unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. For most areas, this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more, but there may be exceptions, on a case-by-case basis.
- 3 How much money could be saved through unitary councils?** A report published this month by PWC suggests having one unitary council in Norfolk would save £29 million per year, or having two would save £9.6 million. Alternatively, having more than two would actually cost more money than the current arrangement.

► You can find out more about our proposals at [Norfolk devolution](#) and we will keep you updated in future editions of **Your Norfolk** and the monthly digital bulletin, [Your Norfolk Extra](#)

English Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

Town and Parish Council Briefing
17 March 2025

Cllr Alistair Beales – Leader of the Council
Honor Howell – Assistant Director for Transformation and Change

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



1

Devolution

Devolution is the transfer of powers, functions and budgets from Whitehall into the English regions

- Transport
- Strategic infrastructure
- Strategic planning and housing numbers
- Economic development and planning
- Environment and climate change
- Skills and employment support
- Health, wellbeing and public sector reform
- Public safety

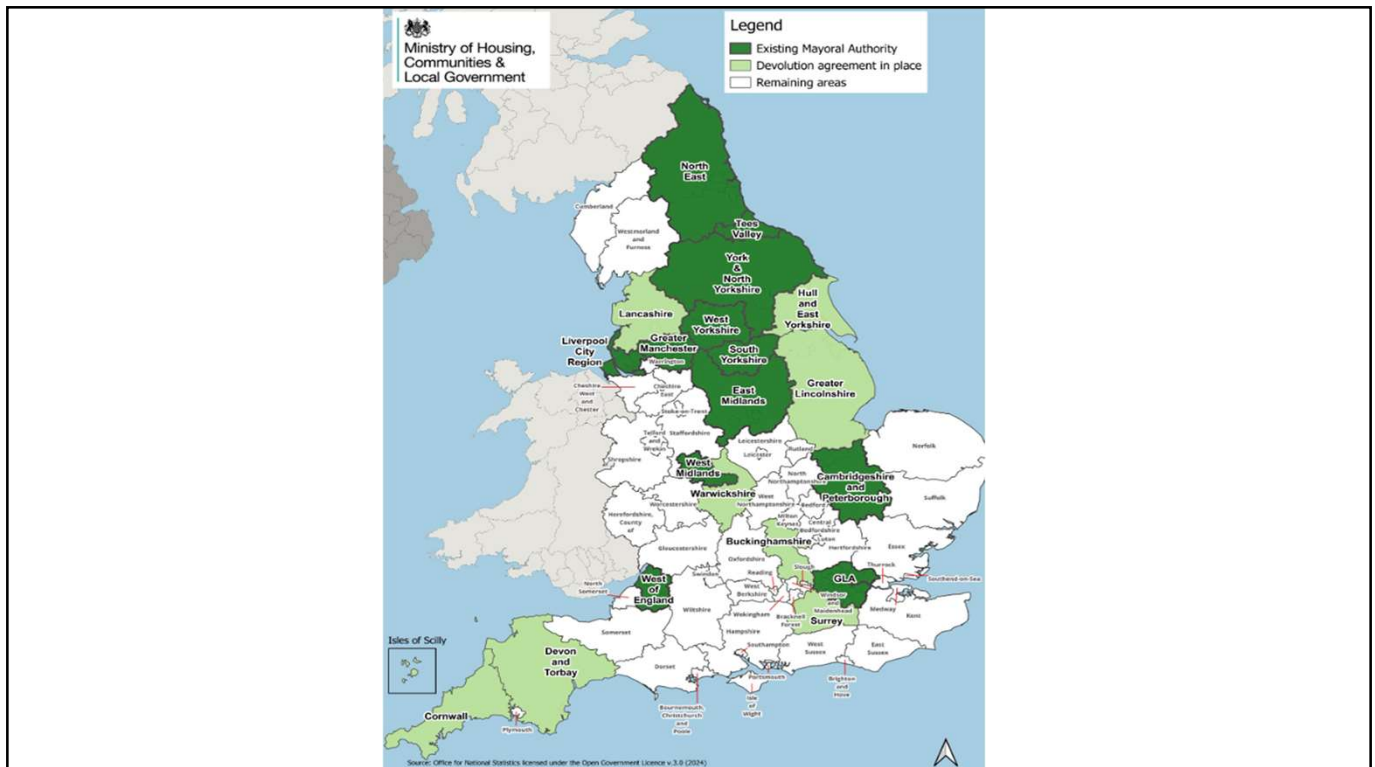
These responsibilities are discharged through the establishment of Combined Authorities

2

Devolution isn't new -

- The London Mayoralty was established in 2000
- Greater Manchester Devolution Deal agreed in 2014
- Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Teeside and West Midlands deals agreed in 2015
- Deal agreed for "West of England" – essentially Bristol and Avon in 2016
- North of Tyne deal agreed in 2017, but in 2024 expanded to become North-East Mayoralty covering all of the Northumberland, County Durham and five Tyne and Wear authorities
- West Yorkshire deal signed in 2020
- York and North Yorkshire and East Midlands (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) Mayors elected 2024
- With Conservative Government announcing that Hull and East Yorkshire and Greater Lincolnshire would each elect mayors under Devolution deals in May 2025

3



4

So, what is proposed now?

- English Devolution White Paper published on 16th December 2024 proposed that Devolution Deals would be agreed across the whole of England during the current Parliamentary term – i.e. by summer 2029.
- Proposals invited from across the whole of England based (ideally) on minimum populations of 1.5 million people with no “orphan” areas – i.e. small areas left out through not being able to agree to work in areas of scale.
- Where local agreement cannot be reached Government will agree or impose “Strategic Authorities”.
- White Paper also proposes that, whilst a separate process, the Government expects that areas where Devolution Deals are agreed will move to a unitary form of local government structures “below” the Combined Authorities.

5

What is proposed for Norfolk and Suffolk?

- White Paper invited proposals for Devolution Deals to be submitted by upper tier authorities (County Councils) by 10th January 2025
- Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils submitted a joint Expression of Interest
- The 12 District Council Leaders expressed support for the EoI recognising the opportunities which Devolution presented and that compared to those areas with Deals Norfolk and Suffolk were being “left behind”.
- 5th February – Government included Norfolk and Suffolk in its Devolution Priority Programme meaning that we are in the next phase of Devolution Deals to be taken forward.

6

What does that mean and what happens next?

- Government will work with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to “agree” a Combined Authority over the next twelve months and the terms of a Devolution Deal covering the next five years.
- New “body” to be created by end of the year and a mayoral election to be held May 2026
- At the present time no details of the discussions being held between the Government and the two county councils are known – in terms of the responsibilities the mayor will have – but it is thought that the first “deal” will focus on housing growth, transport schemes, economic growth and skills development with future consideration being given to assuming the responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners

7

Consultation Process

- Establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority across Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council
- Published 17th February – with comments invited until 13th April 2025
- <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/lggc/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation>
- Would appreciate you sharing any comments made to the consultation with the District and County Councils



8

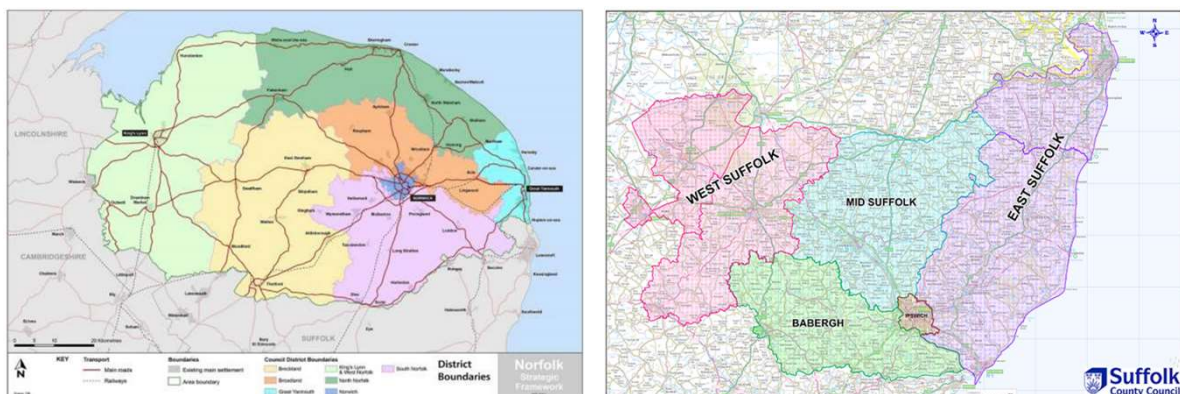
Local Government Reorganisation

- Related to Devolution and the establishment of a Combined Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk, the Government has an expectation that unitary councils will be established “below” the Combined Authority - replacing the existing 2 county councils and 12 district councils.
- The Government confirmed its position in this regard by inviting the existing County and District authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk to put forward proposals for unitary councils in response to some published criteria – which for our rural counties might be challenging

Draft Slides

9

Current Norfolk and Suffolk Districts



Draft Slides

10

Criteria for LGR

- A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.
- Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks
- Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.
- Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.
- New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.
- New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment

Draft Slides

11

Process

- Being in the Devolution Priority Programme also fires the starting gun on the local government reorganisation process....
- With initial proposals having to be submitted to Government by 21st March 2025
- And detailed Business Cases being prepared and submitted to Government by 26th September 2025
- Possibly with elections to “shadow” authorities in May 2027 and new authorities coming into being from 1st April 2028.
- Little detail provided as yet in terms of timescales or what powers and functions might pass to Town and Parish Councils.

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Initial Findings

- The District Councils in Norfolk appointed Deloitte to advise us on the development of proposals for unitary models
- Reviewed a large range of data, holding discussions with Leaders and Chief Executives
- The County Council are recommending a single county unitary
- Six of the seven districts support three unitaries, Norwich, East and West – recognising that the size of Norfolk, in terms of area and population is very large
- Three unitaries will result in smaller efficiencies but will provide greater local representation

Draft Slides

13

Issues for BCKLWN to consider

- King's Lynn is currently unparished, so we are investigating a Town Council for King's Lynn
- White Paper is clear that the transfer of assets prior to LGR is not encouraged
- Geography and sense of community and place is important
- Issues of a democratic deficit – currently there is one district councillor for 2,120 electors in West Norfolk and 1 county councillor for 8,421 electors in Norfolk
- Most rural unitary councils have an average of 1 councillor to every 3,800 / 4,500 electors, but North Yorkshire have 1 councillor to 5,373
- Norfolk is expected to have 744,000 electors in 2026 – at 4,000 electors per councillor this would mean Norfolk would have 186 councillors

Draft Slides

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Issues for Town and Parish Councils

- White Paper makes brief mention of Town and Parish Councils

“Local Government plays an essential role in convening local partners around neighbourhoods to ensure that community voices are represented and people have influence over their place and their valued community assets. We want to work with the sector to ensure that the existing structures and mechanisms for community partnership enable them to fulfil this role. **We will also work with the town and parish council sector to improve engagement between them and local authorities**”.

- View that some assets could pass from district authorities to Town and Parish Councils but little detail – play areas, public toilets...but Government has said there should be “no asset sales” before LGR.

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Issues for Town and Parish Councils

- Uncertainty in short-term around existing relationships and future issues of representation within much larger authorities.
- Uncertainty around issues of asset transfer, additional responsibilities and capacity of town and parish council sector
- Do town and parishes have any views as to “where they see themselves” in the future?
- If you have concerns you can write to your Member of Parliament or to the Minister of State, Jim McMahon at MHCLG

Draft Slides

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Upcoming Dates

- 18th March – Joint Panel Meeting
- 19th March – Cabinet (AM)
- 19th March – Cabinet (PM)
- 21st March – comments on initial or interim proposals to Government
- 26th September – full Business Case to Government

Draft Slides

17

- Questions and Discussion
- parishcouncilenquiries@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Draft Slides

18

SERVICE DELEGATION AGREEMENT

Between: THE NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

And: DOCKING PARISH COUNCIL

For: GRASS CUTTING SERVICES

Dated: 19/03/2025

Practice Director
nplaw
Norfolk County Council
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DH

1. The Delegated Service

- 1.1. Both Councils have agreed that DOCKING Parish Council will carry out the delegated service, which is as described in the service specification given in Appendix A ("the Delegated Service").

2. General Terms and Conditions

- 2.1. This Agreement will run from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 ("the Initial Term"). However, it may be terminated at an earlier date and on such date as is agreed between both parties.
- 2.2. At least 2 months notice will be required for renewal or non-renewal of this Agreement and shall be served on Norfolk County Council by . DOCKING Parish Council. Any such renewal, having first been agreed between the parties, shall be for such period as shall be determined by Norfolk County Council and under the same conditions as this Agreement subject to clause 8.
- 2.3. DOCKING Parish Council will act in place of Norfolk County Council in carrying out the Delegated Service, (a) in accordance with the service specification and the terms of this Agreement, (b) in a manner which is not likely to cause danger to any persons, and (c) in full compliance with all current health and safety laws, rules and regulations.
- 2.4. In an emergency, Norfolk County Council may itself exercise the Delegated Service. Before doing so Norfolk County Council must consult DOCKING Parish Council unless, in the reasonable opinion of Norfolk County Council, the urgency of the situation does not permit such consultation.
- 2.5. Norfolk County Council and DOCKING Parish Council will meet during the course of this Agreement and at the request of either party to review performance of the Delegated Service at a date, time and place to be agreed between the parties.

3. Enquiries and Complaints

- 3.1. DOCKING Parish Council will provide a telephone number which the public may ring for enquiries or complaints relating to the Delegated Service, which shall be available between 8.30am and 5.30pm on weekdays and shall provide facilities for out-of hours contact. Calls will be received either by an operator or an answering machine.
- 3.2. Any correspondence or complaint received by DOCKING Parish Council will be answered by them within 10 working days. Any urgent issues or emergencies, such as those affecting safety, must be responded to immediately.

4. Dispute Resolution

- 4.1. Both parties will attempt to resolve any dispute in relation to this Agreement through negotiations between their duly authorised officers or agents.
- 4.2. Failing the general obligation in clause 4.1 above, both parties will attempt to resolve the dispute through an Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) procedure, as recommended by the Centre for Dispute Resolution.
- 4.3. If the dispute is not resolved within 56 days of ADR beginning, or if either party will not participate, the dispute will be referred to arbitration. Any decision will be made by a person appointed by agreement between both parties or if no agreement can be reached, by the President of the Institute of Arbitrators, whose decision will be final and binding.

5. **Insurance**

- 5.1. Throughout the Initial Term of this Agreement or lesser period should early termination occur for any reason DOCKING. Parish Council must insure against public liability for not less than £5 million for any one claim and employers liability for not less than £5 million for any one claim, the number of claims being unlimited.

6. **Indemnity**

- 6.1. DOCKING Parish Council will indemnify Norfolk County Council in respect of the consequences of any claims against it arising as a result of the negligence or deliberate inactivity of DOCKING Parish Council or its agents in carrying out the Delegated Service. This liability to indemnify Norfolk County Council will be reduced in proportion to the extent that any claims arise from the negligence of Norfolk County Council.

7. **Payment**

- 7.1. Subject to any adjustment in line with an increase in the Retail Price Index [CHAW], Norfolk County Council will pay DOCKING Parish Council the total sum of **£2122.79** for work carried out during the Initial Term (which for the avoidance of doubt shall be an urban cut at 5697.24 square metres x £0.09315 (pence per square meter) x 4 cuts). With the agreement of the parties this may be paid pro rata in the Autumn of each financial year. Where an adjustment is made in accordance with the increase in RPI, the figure used shall be that set the December before any payment becomes due.
- 7.2. DOCKING Parish Council may:
 - (i) retain any savings provided they are used to enhance the agreed Delegated Service, and/or

- (ii) with the written agreement of Norfolk County Council use any savings to enhance any other delegated service as delegated by Norfolk County Council, and/or
- (iii) if either of the above two conditions do not apply then they shall repay to Norfolk County Council any unspent money.

7.3. A statement of expenditure will be provided by DOCKING Parish Council for review and approval by Norfolk County Council at the review referred to in clause 2.5. For the remainder of the Initial Term of the Agreement, or any extended period which may subsequently be agreed between the parties, the sum payable by Norfolk County Council to DOCKING Parish Council shall be adjusted by a percentage equivalent to the percentage rise or fall in the retail price index during the index period in question. Norfolk County Council will calculate this adjustment and notify DOCKING Parish Council in the month before the adjustment takes effect.

7.4. DOCKING Parish Council will act as the principal for VAT purposes.

8. Variation

8.1. This Agreement may be varied from time to time by agreement in writing by Norfolk County Council and DOCKING Parish Council, and a copy of such variation will be attached to this Agreement.

8.2. Norfolk County Council may vary the amount of work required to be carried out by DOCKING Parish Council, with their agreement, and if an agreement is reached, an appropriate adjustment will be made to the amount of payment.

8.3. The amount of payment may be varied following a bona fide retendering exercise if DOCKING Parish Council's costs are increased or decreased.

9. Schedule

9.1. A schedule of works in relation to the Delegated Service and plans to identify the areas where grass is to be cut are given in Appendix B and shaded green. The schedule will be updated during the term of the Agreement to enable DOCKING Parish Council to carry out the Delegated Service.

10. Guidance Notes

10.1. Guidance notes for discharging the Delegated Service are given in Appendix C.

Execution of the Agreement

This Agreement is made the 19th day of
March 2025

Signed: Martin Rose-Wells

Martin Rose-Wells
Highway Engineer
(On behalf of Norfolk County
Council)

Signed:

.....

Signed:

.....

On behalf of Parish Council, and in the presence
of:-

Signed:

.....

Clerk

Appendix A

Service Specification

1. Cutting shall be carried out in a careful and safe manner and shall be in accordance with the areas shown on the drawings and schedule.
2. The maximum finished cut height shall be 50mm and will not normally exceed 150mm before being cut.
3. Grass shall be cut right up to road signs, marker posts, lighting columns etc. by hand or strimmer. This work will be completed within the same week (7 calendar days) as the mowing is carried out. The cost of this work shall be included in the appropriate mowing rates.
4. All areas shall be cut up to 5 times per season. Flail mowers shall not be used for this cutting.
5. Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI's) will be subject to different standards. These standards will be detailed by the Engineer as necessary.
6. Linear Habitats and Licensed Verges will be subject to different standards. These standards will be detailed by the Engineer as necessary.

Appendix B
Schedule of Works and Plans

Appendix C

Guidance Notes

The Plant supplied for the Service must be licensed and insured to comply with current regulations.

Vehicles used as Plant shall be fitted with a cab mounted flashing amber light which must be operating when engaged in grass cutting. Each vehicle must also carry alternative red and yellow reflective markings in accordance with SI 1989 No 1796 (Lighting Regulations on Vehicles) and BA AU 152 (Specification for Rear Marking Plates for Vehicles) 1970 (Rev 1990), and an arrow mounted on the rear of the cutting unit (See sub-Clause 4.5).

All operatives must wear high visibility clothing to BS EN471:1994, Class 3, incorporating additional reflective materials for extra safety, boots with steel toe-caps and, where appropriate, helmets, all to be provided by the Contractor. This also applies to where plant is being delivered to work sites.

Traffic Signs

- 4.1 The Contractor shall at all times comply with Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual. 'Traffic Safety Measures for Roadworks' as appropriate (published by TSO in 2006).
- 4.2 Warning signs used shall be Class 1 retroreflective signs to Table 1 of BS EN12899 -1:2001. Triangular signs shall be minimum size 750mm and wording of supplementary plates shall be to minimum 'x' height of 62.5mm.
- 4.3 Particular requirements for single carriageways shall be:

Sign to Diagram 7001 (Road works Ahead) with supplementary plate to diagram 7001.1 with legend "Grass Cutting" to be provided and erected on both approaches to all cutting vehicles. The maximum distance between opposing signs shall be 1 mile. (Any reference to sign diagrams in these Guidance Notes relate to 'The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002' and its amendments of 2004 and 2005).
- 4.4 Road Works Ahead signs should be sited in order that all approaching drivers from either direction and road junctions shall have been adequately warned of the operation by passing at least one warning sign erected in a clear and legible position in advance of the cutting operation.
- 4.5 A Keep Left / Right sign (as appropriate) to Diagram 610 shall be provided. Sign diameter to be 600mm minimum.
- 4.6 All signs shall be maintained in a clean and legible condition.

Category	Item	street address	Last checked	Report conditions	Work required and agreed
Building	Bus Shelter	Opposite te hjunction of B1454 and B1155	31/03/2025	Clean leaves out Seat replace / repair?	
Building	Tett Turrets (not ours yet)		31/03/2025	Over grown	
Building / Land	Cage & Pound		31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Allotment pillar & plaque		31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench (Composite	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench (Composite	The green triangle - junction of Well street and B1153	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench (Composite)	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench (wooden) with plaque	in pound gardens	31/03/2025	Back slat missing (it was split	
Furniture	Bench with Plaque (composite)	B1154 towards segdeford	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench with Plaque (composite)	Middle Road	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Bench (wooden)	Oak triangle	31/03/2025	might need a second clean or further work	
Furniture	Dog Bin (red)	B1153, opposite Choseley Road	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog Bin Red	Sandy Lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog Bin Red	Pound Lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog Bin Red (to be installed)	Pound Lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog bins red (small)	Mill Lane / little lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog bins red (small)	Mill Lane / little lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Dog bins red (small)	Bradmere Lane	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Flag Pole	The green triangle - junction of Well street and B1153	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Furniture	Noiceboard	outside Spar	31/03/2025	Looking Tired and over grown	
Furniture	noticeboard Large double	The green triangle - junction of Well street and B1153	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required

		Junction of Mr Hare's access road and B1153			
Furniture	ORG entrance signage		31/03/2025	New signage required	New signage required
Furniture	Village Gate		31/03/2025	Fine	
Furniture	Village Gate		31/03/2025	Fine	
Furniture	Stocks	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Tired, require work	Clean, treat wood and clean plaque
Furniture	Village Sign	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Tired, require work	clean, renovate
Furniture	War Memorial	Churchyard	31/03/2025	clean and renovate	Clean
Land	Allotments (front entrance)		31/03/2025	Fine	
Land	Clay Pits (CL105)			No	
Land	Oak Triangle	Station Road	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Land	Tett Turrets (not ours yet)		31/03/2025	Overgrown	
Land	The Green	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Land	ORG		31/03/2025	Fine	Clearing, securing perimeter, signage, (ORG project)
Land	The Common				W3W & Pic
Land / Building	Pound Garden (and cage)		31/03/2025	Overgrown and untidy	
Pond	Bell Pond		31/03/2025	Railings need painting	
Pond	Sedgeford Road Pond	Sedge ford Road	31/03/2025	Railings	Railings to be fixed - In the pipeline with Hihways - check back in May 2025 - contact Lucy Buckingham
Pond	Stanhoe Road Pond	Stanhoe Road	31/03/2025	Not fenced whole way round	

Tree	Hare Walnut Memorial Tree	Well Street and B1454	31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Tree	Tett turrets trees (not ours yet)		31/03/2025	Overgrown	
Office	Laptop		31/03/2025	Need a new one (screen keep sblinking)	Investigate and purchase
Office	Mobile Phone		31/03/2025	need a new one - unsuitable for work and out of contract	investigaet and purchase
Office	11x lenovo tablets		31/03/2025	fine - need to get Ashley's back	
other	xmas lights 2023		06/01/2025	Fine	No action required
other	Hi vis vest x3			Fine	No action required
other	Tommy Figure			Fine	No action required
other	Union jack Flag		31/03/2025	Fine	No action required
Other	Norfolk flag		31/03/2025	not fine	Requires a new correct one
Other	flag 3		31/03/2025		
Other	VE Day Flag		to arrive		
Furniture	SAM2 Macine and posts		monthly	Fine	No action required
Furniture	SAM2 and post		monthly	fine	No action required
Other	Poppies		11/11/2025	fine	No action required
other	xmas lights 2024		06/01/2025	fine	No action required

CIP Memo

New funding cuts mean that CIPs will no longer be centrally funded and run. Therefore, the borough is offering PCs the option to pick them up if they wish. It is completely optional.

1. There is no funding available, so it would need to be added to the precept. Costs include room hire, computer, and staff for the hour.
2. Our CIP is in the Heritage Room on Wednesday Market Day, 10-12 (thanks, Sandra).

More info about CIPS

Community Information Points (CIPs) are rural venues where you can access a wide range of Council Services via the internet.

There are 7 CIPs in West Norfolk. They're located anywhere from a library, to a church, to a village shop. Most CIPs will have a volunteer on hand to help you access the internet.

Using a CIP instead of coming into our office could save you time, travel or telephone expense.

What you can do at a CIP

Using our website at a CIP you can:

- pay for Borough Council services online (for example, Council Tax, and car park season tickets)
- submit, view and comment on planning applications
- pay or appeal parking fines
- make a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support
- get information on refuse and recycling, view bin collection times, report a missed bin collection and apply for or cancel a garden waste bin
- report fly tipping, fly posting, graffiti or a nuisance
- register to vote
- tell us you're moving
- access the latest Council news

You can also use the CIP computer to:

- book theatre tickets for the Corn Exchange, Princess Theatre or Arts Centre
- search for and apply for jobs
- find information on LILY (Living independently in later life)

Specialist services

Some CIPs also offer specialist services. For example:

- at Docking CIP you can find out about family and local history
- at Feltwell a volunteer can help you use the computer
- at Heacham you can find local interest books

Free wi-Fi

You can bring your own device and use the free wi-Fi at these CIPs:

- Ringstead
- Watlington
- Docking
- Feltwell

You can find your nearest Community Information Point below by using our Find my Nearest facility, or by using the list below:

To find Community Information Points in your area, just provide us with your address by following the link 'set your location'. You will then be able to find your nearest Community Information Points.

[Set your location](#)

Community Information Points

Village	Location	Opening hours
Docking	Ripper Hall, High Street, Docking, PE31 8NG	• Wed



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities &
Local Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Email: PlanningPolicy@communities.gov.uk

<http://www.gov.uk/mhclg>

Michael Burton
Principal Planner
Borough Council of King's Lynn &
West Norfolk
michael.burton@west-norfolk.gov.uk

26th March 2025

Letter from MHCLG regarding recalculation of your 2023 Housing Delivery Test score

Dear Michael,

You previously contacted us regarding the use of census-adjusted net additions figures in the 2023 Housing Delivery Test (HDT). In your correspondence to us, you provided us with evidence that the census-adjusted net additions figure for the 2020/21 year does not reflect the on-the-ground delivery in King's Lynn & West Norfolk, and that the use of this figure has affected your HDT consequence.

Following discussions with the ONS, it has been brought to our attention that methodological changes to the way certain types of accommodation are counted, made between the 2011 and 2021 census, may have resulted in changes to total stock counts in your area.

While we continue to rely on the census dwelling count as the baseline for the net additional dwelling statistics, as it is one of the most reliable National Statistics produced and subject to intensive validation processes/address matching, we understand that use of the adjusted figure for the 2020/21 measurement year has resulted in a different HDT consequence in your area than would have been the case compared to if the non-adjusted figures were used. After investigations of the data, including the evidence you submitted to us, we believe that in this specific instance the adjusted figures are not appropriate to use in the HDT.

We are therefore able to recalculate your 2023 HDT score using non-adjusted net additions figures.

We have produced a revised score using the non-census-adjusted net additions figures for the 2020/21 measurement year. We have also reflected revisions made to 2022/23 net additions.

We are therefore able to confirm that King's Lynn & West Norfolk's revised 2023 HDT measurement is as follows:

Number of homes required			Total number of homes required	Number of homes delivered			Total number of homes delivered	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement	Housing Delivery Test: 2023 consequence
2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	1481	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	1296	87%	Action plan
358	547	576		340	340	616			

For the avoidance of doubt, this letter supersedes the measurement for your local authority area which was published on 12 December 2024. To provide clarity, you should publish this on your website.

The revised Housing Delivery Test measurement for King's Lynn & West Norfolk takes effect upon receipt of this letter, as will any consequences that apply as a result of the measurement.

The consequence shown above will remain in place until the next publication of the Housing Delivery Test measurement.

Kind regards,

Planning Policy Team

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Docking Parish Council Meeting – Minutes

Date: Monday, 3rd March 2025

Time: 19:00

Location: Docking Parish Hall

Present: Cllrs N Durrant | Vice Chair (Chair), Cllr D Wroth, Cllr K Crompton, Cllr J Flower, Cllr S Howard, Cllr A Archdale,

Minutes: A Dovey (Clerk / RFO)

Guest: Oliver Brice (Community Action Norfolk)

Members of Public: Approx 12

1. **Chair opens** meeting and welcomes public at 19:00
2. **Apologies:** Cllr L Leverett, Cllr M Lewis, Cllr A Miles, Cllr M Latter, Cllr K Kilby.
 - 2.1. Quoracy confirmed
3. **Community Action Norfolk** - Affordable Housing - Speaker: Oliver Brice - Rural Housing Enabler
 - 3.1. Discussed rural exception sites for affordable housing in local areas.
 - 3.2. Rural exception sites are affordable in perpetuity exclusively for local needs staircasing up to 80% maximum and restricted cascading.
 - 3.3. Noted the importance of demonstrating housing need via Housing Needs Survey.
 - 3.4. Confirmed Freebridge earmarked a site in Docking for 20 affordable homes.
 - 3.5. Council confirms Freebridge has begun work on existing houses.
4. **Public session**
 - 4.1. Paul Savage raised concerns about poor and unsafe parking around the school. Council confirmed further discussion is on the agenda.
5. **Declarations of Interest** in agenda items
 - 5.1. SAM2 positioning
 - 5.1.1. Cllr Archdale: Speedwatch involvement.
 - 5.1.2. Cllr Wroth: Employee of Hare.
 - 5.2. ORG
 - 5.2.1. Cllr Durrant: Family ownership of Edge Plot.
6. **February 2025 Minutes:** Approved and signed.
7. **Acton list reviewed** and additional matters noted
 - 7.1. Asda Grant closed- other funding available.
8. **Borough Councillor Cllr Sandell** updated on devolution and local community grants.
 - 8.1. Action: Ensure attendance at devolution training on 17th March.

8.2. Action: publicise £500 grant for local groups.

9. Borough Councillor Cllr Chenery's emailed weekly reports received

9.1. Cllr Chenery further updates the council need to confirm use of the £1000 fund

9.1.1. Action: Clerk to confirm £1000 with Cllr Chenery before end of March.

9.2. Noted local libraries can test electric blankets

9.3. Noted unitary authority areas will be large and reduce the personal service currently received by village areas

10. Clerk's Report received with matters to note:

10.1. Parish Precept: To be received in April and September.

10.2. Village Sign: Matt Todd confirmed for treatment and lettering.

10.2.1. Action Clerk to arrange village sign with MT

10.3. Blenheim Place Gate: Enforcement Action will take place by 25/03/25 if unresolved.

10.4. RAF Memorial has been damaged and will be restored by driver's insurance. Noted that the memorial is not owned by the PC and not insured.

10.4.1. Action: Clerk to reach out to resolve insurance needs noting preference for insurance to be by the RAF memorial group – grants available.

10.5. Dog Waste Bin: Action: Kevin Crompton to relocate bin.

10.6. Trialing e-signature through signable. Confirmed by NALC that it complies with regulations.

10.7. VE day flag approved

10.7.1. Action: Clerk to purchase VE day flag.

11. Highways Update

11.1. Muddy Footways – Highways have noted that this falls under KLWNBC, and they have enquired about their schedule.

11.1.1. Action Clerk to chase up KLWNBC cleaning pavements and roads.

11.2. Highways meeting confirmed for 5th March 2025 to discuss:

11.2.1. Speed and traffic calming measures

11.2.2. White lines and verge protection

11.2.3. Stanhoe Pond: Gully, Pond and road sludge at Stanhoe Pond

11.3. Broken Culvert – reported

11.4. Brancaster Road SAM2 Hedge maintenance – PC welcome to undertake to ensure continued SAM2 operation.

11.5. James Wild Update requested we keep him abreast of developments

12. School & School Parking Concerns

12.1. Cllr Durrant & Wroth attended a meeting with the School Head teacher and opened cordial conversations about pressing issues

12.1.1. Governors: there are 2 spaces on the board and people should apply

12.1.1.1. Action: Clerk to advertise Governors spaces

- 12.2.** Noted Flag Pole is available for school to use if required for special events – contact the clerk to arrange.
- 12.3.** Discussed ongoing concern about parking congestion during drop-off/pick-up times noting that the school cannot enforce parking and communicates regularly with parents.
- 12.4.** Noted that Day care will also need to be contacted
 - 12.4.1.** Council notes suggestion of a rolling drop off and of contacting Beat Officer
 - 12.4.1.1.** Action: Clerk to draft letter to parents for assistance with school parking
 - 12.4.1.2.** Action: Clerk to reach out to neighbouring parishes/ intake villages for assistance.
 - 12.4.1.3.** Clerk to contact Beat Officer

13. Governance

- 13.1.** External Group Membership: noted value of open communication channels with external groups that can be facilitated by cllrs if both councillor and external groups wish.
 - 13.1.1.** Cllr D Wroth to follow up with Playing Field
 - 13.1.2.** All Cllrs are Trustees of the Allotment for Exercise & Recreation Charitable Trust
 - 13.1.3.** Toad Watch Cllr Howard & Archdale are members
 - 13.1.4.** Neighbourhood plan: Cllr S Howard
- 13.2.** Devolution
 - 13.2.1.** Noted that devolution will have an unpredictable and significant impact on parishes.
 - 13.2.2.** Briefing Meeting scheduled for 17th March.
 - 13.2.3.** Clerk is posting updates on Facebook and the website as soon as we receive them.
 - 13.2.4.** Consultation survey is live and well advertised – please complete it.
- 13.3.** Resignation of Cllr Ash Miles noted with both regrets and formal appreciation thanks.
 - 13.3.1.** Action: Clerk to advertise vacancy and inform electoral services

14. Finance

- 14.1.** February 2025 Accounts balances received
- 14.2.** February reconciliations approved (signed)
- 14.3.** February 2025 upcoming payments approved (signed) (proposed AA / Seconded JF / motion carried)
 - 14.3.1.** Noted the CCP invoice is awaiting amendment to adjust for printing costs already spent on behalf of CCP
 - 14.3.2.** Action: Clerk to make payments, pending adjustment to the CCP invoice to accommodate printing expenses already paid. Adjust budget for NHP printing costs.

15. Asset and Maintenance Update

- 15.1.** Village Sign: Matt Todd confirmed for repairs. (p'ed ND / 2nded DW – motion carried)
 - 15.1.1.** Action: Clerk to liaise with Matt Todd on Village Sign
- 15.2.** War Memorial: Cllr Wroth liaised with Nick Hindell Minor cleaning required which will not qualify for funding. Estimated £2000.
 - 15.2.1.** When full project scope understood, proposal to come to council.
- 15.3.** Poppy Display: Arranged for VE Day on Lych Gate. (DW / KC) and Village Green (AA / SH)
- 15.4.** Asset Maintenance – April walk around confirmed

15.4.1. Action: Clerk to email asset list and map to Asset Management group.

15.5. ORG update

15.5.1. Dodd Fencing has provided quotes for ORG fencing and allotment fencing

15.5.1.1. Council approves fencing quotes pending additional funding for allotments

15.5.1.1.1. Action: Clerk to confirm Dodd fencing

15.5.2. Council noted non-vacation of Plot 1. Council resolves to contact tenants to confirm clearance by the date of the Fencing contractor.

15.5.2.1. Cllr Durrant declared interest and refrained from discussion except to clarify factual queries.

15.5.2.2. Action: Clerk to write to ORG Plot 1 tenants to confirm vacation of the plot ahead of fencing contractors.

16. SAM2 location

16.1. Council restated the positions on moving to hSAM2, noting the aesthetics, and queries over land ownership, the importance of safety, the prevalence of speeding and the efficacy of the SAM2 in that location.

16.2. Council resolved to move the SAM2 should Ripper Hall be amenable to hosting and to revert to council if not possible – motion carried unanimously (2 abstentions due to declared interest)

16.2.1. Action: Clerk to write to Ripper Hall (Matthew Todd) to request a pole location

17. Tett Turrets update

17.1. Council is awaiting outcome of tree ownership

17.1.1. Action: clerk to request to be copied in on correspondence and keep on the agenda to progress.

18. Delegated authority to seek funding: Council resolved to delegate authority to the clerk to apply for appropriate funding when it is seen to avoid missing deadline / undue delay. Proposed AA / Seconded DW – carried unanimously.

18.1. Action: clerk to update delegated powers register

19. Neighbourhood plan (Cllr S Howard) reports that regulation 14 is underway and the plan is up for public consultation. and has been advertised on website, Facebook ad newsletter and by the EDP

19.1. Action: Clerk to also place a link on Monk's Close Facebook.

20. Correspondence noted

20.1. Email | KLWNBC | Government rural development targets – noted

20.2. Email | KLWNBC | Local Plan approved - noted

20.3. Email | KLWNBC | Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan is approved

21. Correspondence responded

21.1. Email | Speedwatch | Sam2 management

21.1.1. Council extended Official thanks to speed watch for the SAM2 management commenting they have been 'brilliant'. Council resolved to take over management of SAM2.

21.1.2. Action Clerk to liaise with Speedwatch for SAM2 management hand over

21.1.3. Action Clerk to seek volunteer or contractor to take on management formally.

21.2. Email | Resident | Hedgerow on Fakenham Road .

- 21.2.1. Council heard that the hedgerows are being cut down to allow room for planting new ones.
- 21.3. Email | Resident | muddy dangerous foot / road-way – Docking Highstreet and Well Street
 - 21.3.1. Clerk is liaising with KLWNBC and NCC Highways to resolve
- 21.4. Email | Resident | Biodiversity Policy: Seed Bomb enquiry
 - 21.4.1. Action: clerk to Reword policy to make it clear that distributing of items will be as and when schemes . funding is available.
- 21.5. Email | Tesco | Contract end and price increase
 - 21.5.1. Council noted phone no longer fit for purpose and laptop getting shaky
 - 21.5.1.1. Action: Clerk – to research / laptop / phone options and revert to council for approval.

22. Planning

- 22.1. Noted: planning application costs have increased
- 22.2. Applications:
 - 22.2.1. 25/00230/F: Domestic Solar Panels – No objection (SH / JF 0 unan.)
 - 22.2.2. 25/00253/F & 25/00252/LB: Dining Room Extension – No objection. (SH / JF 0 unan.)
 - 22.2.3. 25/00319/F: Extension at Weathertop Station Road – No objection. (DW / JF 0 unan.)
- 22.3. Delegated decisions: none
- 22.4. Decisions noted
 - 22.4.1. 24/01992/F | Cedar Lodge, Sedgeford Road | - Variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission 23/00229/F: Proposed Front, Rear and Side Extension | Application Permitted | 4 February 2025 | Delegated Decision
 - 22.4.2. 25/00007/TREECA | Holly House, Well Street Docking King's Lynn Norfolk PE31 8LQ - T1 Cedar - Whole tree removed | Tree Application - No objection | 31 January 2025 | Delegated Decision

23. Items for next month

- 23.1. Pond signs (action: clerk to ask insurance for guidance)

24. Next Meeting Date: Monday, 7th April 2025 Time: 19:00 (18:30 – tea and biscuits_ Location: Docking Parish Hall

April 2025 Clerks Report

1. It has been a very busy month heading into a crucial period for governance,
2. Alongside general work
 - a. We have been updating the asset list and collating inspection reports
 - b. preparing for the Internal Audit, External Audit and then the AGM
 - c. Preparing for Quarterly finance report, and then the Year end reporting.
3. The Audits and AG will require close inspection of :
 - a. Our Finances
 - b. Our Policies and procedures
 - c. Agenda's and Minutes
 - d. Our Asset List.
4. The year end also requires our CIL return and VAT return.
 - a. We still do not have access to our online VAT account.

<u>Initial Date</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>responsible</u>	<u>current Status</u>	<u>Propose change to</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Jan-25	Football Club & Playing Field Committee to be invited to meeting with PC.	?	Awaiting		PF & DFC will revert after speaking with members Requested clarification on aim twith intention to re-invite if need be- J25
Jun-24	to arrange meeting wit a consultant re. woodland Trust offer.	Lewis & Kilby	deferred	deferred	Deferred till more concrete plan in place Place on Jan 25 agenda confirm with Cllr Lewis and Kilby about status (J25)
Sep-24	Clerk to purchase microphone and Zoom subscription as needed by November.	Clerk	deferred	deferred	not needed yet. So deferred till it is necessary.
Dec-24	Clerk to produce printing cost review for review at the June 2025 meeting	Clerk / the	deferred	deferred	June
Dec-24	Clerk to publish budget on website and set up on AdvantEdge	Clerk	Deferred	In progress	on website bot Edge advise to wait uti year end is completed before setting up on edge.
Mar-25	action KC to relocate dog bin	clerk	new	Awaiting update	
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action: Clerk to confirm £1000 with Cllr Chenery before end of March.	clerk	new	Compleetd	emailed list of suggestions
Mar-25	Attend devloution meeting 17th March 2025	clerk	new	Completed	Meeting cancelled and rearranegd.
Mar-25	1.1. Action: publicise £500 grant for local groups.	clerk	new	completed	on newsletter
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action Clerk to arrange village sign with MT	clerk	new	Completed	MT will do it.
Mar-25	Action: Clerk to purchase VE day flag	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action Clerk to chase up KLWNBC cleaning pavements and roads.	clerk	new	cCOMPLETE D	Problem reported online
Mar-25	1.1.1.1. Action: Clerk to advertise Governos spaces	clerk	new	Completed	in newsletter
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action: Clerk to advertise vacancy and inform electoral services	clerk	new	Completed	Deadlien for election requests - 11th April
Mar-25	14.3.2.Action: Clerk to make payments, pending adjustment to the CCP invoice to accommodate printing expenses already paid. Adjust budget for NHP printing costs.	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	15.4.1.Action: Clerk to email asset list and map to Asset Management group. 15.5.ORG update	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	Action: Clerk to confirm Dodd fencing	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	15.5.2.2.Action: Clerk to write to ORG Plot 1 tenants to confirm vacation or the plot ahead of fencing contractors.	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action: clerk to request to be copied in on correspondence and keep on the agenda to progress.	clerk	new	Completed	Tett Trrets have given me an update - to be placedon future agedna for progression
Mar-25	1.1. Action: clerk to update delegated powers register with grant funding application power	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	19.1.Action: Clerk to also place a NHP survey link on Monk's Close Facebook.	clerk	new	Completed	
Mar-25	21.1.2.Action Clerk to liaise with Speedwatch for SAM2 management hand over 21.1.3.Action Clerk to seek volunteer or contractor to take on management formally.	clerk	new	Completed	In process of organsiing a meeting - handover notes received]
Mar-25	1.1.1. Action: Clerk to reach out to resolve insurance needs noting preference for insurance to be by the RAF memorial group – grants available.	clerk	new	Ongoing	
Mar-25	12.4.1.1.Action: Clerk to draft letter to parents for assistance with school parking 12.4.1.2.Action: Clerk to reach out to neighbouring parishes/ intake villages for assistance. 12.4.1.3.Clerk to contact Beat Officer	clerk	new	Ongoing	

Mar-25	1.1.1. Action: clerk to Reword policy to make it clear that distributing of items will be as and when schemes . funding is available.	clerk	new	Ongoing	
Mar-25	1.1.1.1. Action: Clerk – to research / laptop / phone options and revert to council for approval.	clerk	new	Ongoing	
Mar-25	clerk to ask fro insurance guidance on pond signs.	clerk	new	Ongoing	
Aug-24	Open a bank account for the Trust	SB	Ongoing	Completed	Not opned but responsibility transferred to the Charity Trust
Jan-25	Clerk to ensure asset team has an easy list of assets and locations for checking, to schedule and send out reminders.	Clerk	ongoing	Completed	(on calendar and ready to go)
Jan-25	Clerk to contact Cllr Chenery and outline ideas.	Clerk	ongoing	Completed	awiting clarity on what to write
Jan-25	Clerk to locate missing dog bin and map.	Clerk	ongoing	Completed	(Thanks to Cllr Drrant)
Feb-25	Cllr Archdale to recalculate figure and Clerk to resolve rent and agreement with Mr & Mrs Edge	AA / Clerk	ongoing	Completed	Email sent to confirm council offer of £120 fo rteh full 19 minths to include til end of November 2025 No repsonse yet
Jan-25	Clerk to investigate land ownership (registry request for £24 required is approved) and to reach out to the fishing club to seek a conversation.	Clerk	ongoing	In progress	
Jun-24	Public meeting to be called re. Highways	Clerk	Ongoing	ongoing	James wilde has replied and is investigating.
Dec-24	17.11.1.Action: Clerk to collect papers from the pound, digitise and archive, as necessary.	Clerk	ongoing	Ongoing	
Jan-25	Clerk to investigate correcting the Norfolk Flag.	Clerk	ongoing	Ongoing	
Jan-25	Cllr Wroth and Crompton to investigate broken slat in bench in the Pound.	DW / KC	ongoing	Ongoing	Slat currently missing.
Jan-25	Clerk to seek valuations for assets currently unvalued.	Clerk	ongoing	Ongoing	
Jan-25	Council agrees to include trees on risk assessment and Clerk to effect.	Clerk	ongoing	Ongoing	
Jan-25	Resolve Sam2	Council	Ongoing	Ongoing	On agenda - as of Feb 25 - moved to March 25 meeting due to lack of cllrs council reolved to request a pole at Ripper halla nd revert l fthis is not possible.
Feb-25	Clerk to pursue a resolution to the mess with Hill Builders	Clerk	Ongoing	Ongoing	Contacted but no repsonse yet

Docking Parish Council – Highways Meeting Report

Date: 5th March 2024

Time: 13:00 – 16:00

Attendees:

- Martin Rose-Wells (Highways)
- Cllr Archdale
- Cllr Howard
- Clerk A. Dovey

Summary:

A walking meeting was conducted with Highways to review key problem areas within the village. Discussions covered potential solutions, and several action points were identified.

Key Discussion Points & Actions:

1. SAM2 Positioning (Village Hall & Ripper Hall)

- MRW confirmed the current location outside the Village Hall is optimal for traffic management moving left a little would also be acceptable , but not too far.
- The east end of Ripper Hall is also a good location. However, the west end has limited visibility.
- Advised that the SAM2 should be relocated every month, with a three-month gap before returning to the same position.

2. Damaged Verge Along Hare Hall Wall

- Acknowledged the significant damage and irregular shape of the road.
- Concern raised that white lines may become obscured by mud.
- Suggested the use of flexible bollards as a potential solution.
- Noted the possibility of council funding for white lines.

3. Speed Roundels (30mph Reiteration)

- Discussed the potential for adding 30mph roundels, particularly at the start of the wall, where traffic appears to pick up speed again.

1. MRW to investigate

4. Stanhoe Pond – Road cleaning Gully dredging

- MRW agreed to investigate possible solutions and repairs for the road.
- Noted the drains are clear.
- Noted that the pond itself is outside Highways' jurisdiction.

5. School Parking Issues

- Observed poor and dangerous parking practices around the school.

- Discussed potential solutions, but any major changes would require a formal safety audit (£?????).
- Noted instances of illegal parking—Clerk to contact the local beat officer with images and request a police presence.

6. Spar Parking & H-Bars

- Noted that H-bars previously existed but have since worn away and should be replaced by Highways.
 1. MRW to investigate the reinstatement of H-bars.
- Confirmed that private funding for H-bars is possible (£????).

7. Junction of ORG Access Road & Station Road

- Anticipated increased footfall as the ORG is prepared for community use.
- Noted that the access road is outside Highways' and PC jurisdiction.
- No immediate additional requirements for Station Road.
- In the case of an event (none currently planned), temporary traffic cones may be needed to prevent parking at the junction.

8. Self-Funded Traffic Camera

- Discussed the possibility of funding a traffic camera independently.
- MRW advised that there is no existing procedure for this but will inform the Parish Council if an option becomes available.

9. Broken Culvert

- MRW to investigate further.

10. Additional Issues

- As walking, additional small repairs noted and MRW to investigate.

11. Cleaning

- Noted poor cleaning along pavements and junctions
 1. Clerk to contact Borough

12. Bell Pond

- Confirmed looking at mid summer for works due to complexity of working in water, Funding has been secured so it is coming!

13. Missing Grate Cover

resolved

Next Steps:

- MRW to follow up on investigations regarding H-bars, Stanhoe Pond repairs, and the broken culvert.
- Clerk to liaise with the beat officer regarding illegal school parking.
- Parish Council to consider funding options for white lines, bollards, or a safety audit.

End of Report

Community Star Recognition nominations

McKenzie Pooley	No	Mar-25	would like to nominate McKenzie Pooley to be recognised for all he does volunteering in the village. He is an integral volunteer in the village hall helping with our cleaning; Bbq's; café and older residents Christmas afternoon tea. He also helps Matthew Todd on school breaks around the village cleaning up and leaf blowing etc. He is still in primary school. He is known to many of us and a lot of the parishioners love him.
Rita	No	Mar-25	Rita Speed watch and EVERYTHING.
Anonymous	YES	Mar-25	not only acting as a Parish Councillor and reporting on all planning applications , running the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group , delivering the Docking Exchange, involved with the Church and School , Christmas Shoe Box Charity and always there to help anyone in need
Richard Driver	No	Mar-25	Toad watch - over 800 toads rescued! I would however like to nominate Richard Driver, for arranging and running the village's first Toadwatch. He came up with the idea, having seen the large number of migrating toads killed by traffic every year. He fully researched the possibility of running a Toadwatch in the village, drawing on the practical experience of similar schemes in other Norfolk villages. He enlisted a group of willing volunteers from Docking and arranged an outside speaker to help with training. Since the start of the toads' migration each week he sends out a rota, and reports daily if shifts are or are not needed. Almost without exception he and Tina have been in Bradmere Lane and area every night in the dark and cold for the last 6 weeks or so, leading the Toadwatch, supervising the volunteers, and rescuing over 800 toads (the number is still rising). He has also been keeping statistics on the progress of the rescue to be shared with the national Toadwatch scheme. This has obviously been a huge benefit for the village's wildlife. But equally important has been the way that it has been a successful way of involving a very wide range of people from the village, of all ages. A real community activity that should continue in future years