

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting of Poringland Parish Council
Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7pm
Meeting held at Poringland Community Centre

Attendance: Ken Aldridge (Chair), Tim Boucher, Sean Curtis, David Hewer, Lisa Overton-Neal (also attending as an SNDC Councillor), and Carl Pitelen.

Also, in attendance: SNDC Councillor John Overton (arrived late), NCC Councillor Vic Thompson (arrived late), Charlotte Hummel (Clerk), and 5 members of the public.

1. To Receive and Approve Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from John Henson and Fiona Harper due to illness. SNC Nicola Fowler also gave her apologies.

2. To Receive Declarations of Interest

Carl Pitelen and Sean Curtis declared a non-pecuniary interest as employees of a supplier on the payments schedule in Item 8 – Finance.

3. To Agree Minutes of the Meeting on 14th February 2024

The minutes of the last meeting were **AGREED** and signed.

4. Presentation to Former Councillor John Overton – Item was deferred until after Item 9 due to John Overton's Late Arrival.

Ken Aldridge presented John Overton with a Recognition of Service Scroll on behalf of Poringland Parish Council and gave the following speech:

This evening, it is my honour to extend a heartfelt thank you to someone who has been a pillar of our community, John Overton.

John, your dedication and service to our parish council has left an indelible mark on our community. Your tireless efforts, whether seen or unseen, have contributed significantly to the well-being and improvement of Poringland. From the planning of community events to being the driving force in the construction of Poringland Community Centre, your work has been a testament to your commitment to public service. Your ability to listen to the concerns of residents and translate them into action has not only been admirable but has also set a high standard for those will follow.

Your 30 + years as a parish councillor may have come to an end, but the legacy of your contributions will continue to be felt for many years to come. We are all beneficiaries of your hard work, and it is only fitting that we take this moment to express our deepest appreciation.

On behalf of the parish and all its residents, we say thank you. Thank you for your unwavering commitment, your invaluable insights, and your dedication to our community.

As you enjoy taking more time with your family, know that you leave behind a grateful community and a council that is better for your service. We wish you all the best in your future pursuits and hope that you will always consider this parish a part of your extended family.

5. Matters Arising, Clerk's Report

- **Rosebery Park Transfer:** The Clerk has still awaiting confirmation from the developers regarding the outstanding issues to be rectified. Once this has been completed the clerk will inspect and bring back to council for transfer.
- **Summer Fair:** Planning including bookings for the summer fair are well underway. Events and Bookings Officer is working hard for New Sponsors. An update will be given at the next meeting in April
- **Stock Takes:** Stock takes have commenced in the Bar ready for end of year and the café will be done on Thursday 28th March. The caretakers will also be conducting stock checks of all cleaning items for the community centre.
- **Parish Works:** Caretakers are continuing to carry out various tasks highlighted within the parish. A bowser is booked w/c 18/03. This will carry out multiple jobs within the parish including clean of the play parks and cleaning the remaining paving around the community centre.

- **Memorial Plaque for the Fallen:** Ken Aldridge contacted the MOD to enquire if any service personnel had lost their lives in action since WW2. It was confirmed that no one had, so a further plaque at the memorial gardens is not required at present.
- **Grant Funding Training:** The Clerk and Assistant Clerk have been on Grant Funding Training. With the large projects in the near future and the high values that this is, it was a worthwhile course to attend and both members of staff found it highly useful.
- **Dog Bin Install on Clements Gate:** First Port have installed a dog Bin on Clements Gate without the Parish council's knowledge. There appears to be some confusion that the Parish Council would take on the maintenance and collection of the bin. The clerk is liaising with First Port over the issue.
- **Transfer of Area D from Norfolk Homes:** Transfer of two locations of Area D have been completed. The bins had not been emptied prior to transfer, South Norfolk have done this and the new bins have been added to the parish councils schedule.
- **Bank Mandates:** The clerk is still awaiting confirmation from the banks regarding the update of signatories. The office is still awaiting the forms from Santander and Fidelity, Clerk will speak with Tim Boucher to chase this up.
- **Hedge Planting on Community Land:** Another successful hedge planting session took place on the community land on Saturday 2nd March. Many thanks to Cllr Curtis, Pitelen, Henry Gowman and the volunteers that attended to carry this work out.
- **New Bus Stop Locations on Rectory Lane:** No response has been received from Highways regarding the siting of bus stops on Rectory Lane. Action the clerk has asked Cllr V Thomson if he can chase.
- **New Piping in Ditch Application:** The clerk has chased as to the timeline of approval for the new pipe installation on the community land. The clerk has also emailed Cllr Thomson for his assistance in chasing Water Management Team at NCC.
- **Hedging on Victory Avenue, and Carr Lane:** Work has been completed
- **Community Woodlands:** Cllrs Pitelen and Cllr Curtis have along with a small working party have been continuing their maintenance work within the woodlands the last meeting the group carried out wood chipping laying along the footpaths.
- **SAM2:** The clerk met with Cllr Stewart Hull from Stoke Holy Cross Parish Council regarding the SAM2 speed watch group and the PCs machine. Cllr Hull has kindly offered his service to get the software up and running on the clerk laptop so that summaries of the data can be uploaded to the council website again.

6. Adjournment for Public Participation, County and District Council Reports, and Councillors with any Pecuniary Interests

- a) District Council Reports:
 - Cllr Lisa Overton-Neal (Appendix 1)
 - Cllr Nicola Fowler (Appendix 2)
- b) County Council Report:
 - Cllr Vic Thomson (Appendix 3)
- c) Police Report/Update – PC Tom Goodrum will be holding a Street Surgery on Saturday 16th March at Poringland Library from 11.30-12.30.
- d) Public Participation – A question was raised about Poringlands Biodiversity Policy. The clerk explained that the subject had been raised at a prior meeting and that with the amount of land that the parish council is responsible for this was going to take some time to formulate.

A member of the Men's Shed spoke that it was being considered whether another building would be required on the site due to the success of the Men's and Women's Shed. This was only in its first thoughts stage, but wished to let the Parish Council know early on.

The Chair of Framingham Earl Parish Council, Dave Todd spoke about a Remembrance Day project on the Five Ways Roundabout, had been discussed with a number of user groups including the High school and Men's Shed who were keen to be involved. Framingham Earl had agreed to donate £250.00 towards the project. The idea would be presented to Full Council as an agenda item the next meeting in April where a discussion and decision could be made.

7. Planning

a) To Consider Applications Received

- i. 2024/0493: Proposal: Single storey rear extension and garage conversion (Resubmission of 2023/1828)
Location: 10 Lansdowne Drive Poringland Norfolk NR14 7XL **NO OBJECTION**
- ii. 2024/0542: Proposal: Variation of Condition 2 of 2020/1689 – Approved planning drawings are non-implementable to substitute approved drawing numbers for new submitted drawing numbers 1 & 2
Location: Land to the East of Overtons Way, Poringland. **NO COMMENT**

b) To Note Planning Decisions

- i. 2024/0260: Proposal: T1 Oak Tree - Crown reduction by reducing height from approx. 13.7m to 10.9m and reduce width from approx. 13.7m to 10.9m
Location: 2 Brooks Meadow Poringland Norfolk NR14 7TP
Approval with Conditions

8. Finance

- a) Receipts, Payments, and Bank Reconciliation up to 29th February 2024 were **NOTED**
- b) Accounts for Payment
 - i. To agree accounts for payment - **APPROVED**
 - ii. To agree the additional payments list provided - **APPROVED**
 - iii. Confirm Councillor who will approve payments – **TIM BOUCHER**
- c) The movement of money from the Cemetery Budget to Earmarked Reserves for the Cemetery Project was discussed. It was **AGREED** to move money that the cemetery had taken as income from the cemetery for 2023/24 and moved into an earmarked reserve account for the cemetery project for the newest area of the cemetery. Proposed Lisa Overton-Neal, Seconded Tim Boucher

Payee	Description	Net Total	Gross Total	VAT (reclaimable)
February '24 Staff costs,	Salaries/PAYE/Pension		£17,937.82	
Online Playgrounds	Playground Equipment - Swing Seat	£52.17	£62.60	£10.43
High Speed Training	Training	£0.40	£0.40	
The Alarm Company	Batteries	£96.10	£115.33	£19.23
Hugh Crane	Cleaning Consumables	£69.62	£83.54	£13.92
The Playground inspection company	Play Park Inspections	£510.00	£612.00	£102.00
R J Plumbing	Plumbing Repair	£60.00	£60.00	
Microshade	IT Hosting - Sept 23	£372.79	£447.35	£74.56
Microshade	IT Hosting - Aug 23	£372.79	£447.35	£74.56
Church of England	Octagon Post Office	£240.00	£240.00	
Spruce Landscapes	Grounds & Pond Maintenance - Feb & Mar 24	£1,120.83	£1,345.00	£224.17
Rijio	Coffee & Consumables	£409.14	£410.44	£1.30
Rijio	Coffee Machine Filter	£126.50	£151.80	£25.30
Office Flow	Photocopying/Printing - Jan 24	£61.45	£73.74	£12.29
R&Q Electrical Ltd	Emergency Lighting Repairs	£129.74	£155.69	£25.95
Small Ecology Ltd	Great Crested Newt Surveys	£1,040.50	£1,040.50	
Norfolk Parish Training & Support	Training Seminar	£108.00	£108.00	
Yare	Café Consumables	£259.10	£267.91	£8.81
Office Water supplies Ltd	Mains Fed water cooler Rental Mar 24 - Jun 24	£24.00	£28.80	£4.80

Norfolk Parish Training & Support	Subscription 2024/25	£545.00	£545.00	
TG Bird Tree & Garden Services Ltd	Silver Birch - Emergency	£700.00	£840.00	£140.00
Amazon for Business	Cleaning Supplies / Maintenance	£37.36	£40.05	£2.69
Yare	Café Consumables	£107.85	£112.50	£4.65
Microshade	It Hosting - Mar24	£365.80	£438.96	£73.16
Ben Burgess	Chipper Hire	£75.00	£90.00	£15.00
Online Playgrounds	Tools & Equipment	£40.35	£48.42	£8.07
Clerks and Councils Direct	Freedom Scroll - John Overton	£104.55	£125.46	£20.91
Garden Guardian	Grounds Maintenance - Feb 24	£1,180.92	£1,417.10	£236.18
Garden Guardian	Grounds Maintenance - Feb 24	£241.41	£289.69	£48.28
JR Vincent-Bunn	Hedge Cutting	£129.50	£155.40	£25.90
Total Energies	Gas - Feb 24	£2,593.47	£3,241.84	£648.37
Anglia Air Conditioning Ltd	Air con - annual service - Mar 24	£333.00	£399.60	£66.60
DDs				
BT	Mobile Phone - Feb 24	£30.04	£36.05	£6.01
South Norfolk	Annual License Fee - 24/25	£180.00	£180.00	
Total Energies	Electricity - Jan 24	£366.78	£385.12	£18.34
Total Energies	Electricity - Jan 24	£2,262.96	£2,715.55	£452.59
BNP Paribas	Coffee Machine Rental - Apr 24	£214.92	£257.90	£42.98
Staffology	Payroll Software - Jan 24	£32.00	£38.40	£6.40
Staffology	Payroll Software - Feb 24	£32.00	£38.40	£6.40
Staffology	Payroll Software - Dec 23	£32.00	£38.40	£6.40
EE	Mobile Phones - Jan 24	£51.30	£61.56	£10.26
Iris	HR Software - Jan 24	£64.00	£76.80	£12.80
Veolia	Waste Removal - May 23	£74.81	£89.77	£14.96
Total		£36,682.95	£39,712.10	£3,029.15

9. To Consider the Option to Purchase a Trailer for the Council Van

A discussion was had on the benefits of purchasing a new trailer for the caretaking staff to carry out more jobs around the parish and avoid using contractors to carry out these works. It was **AGREED** based on what was remaining in the van budget for 2023/2024 to earmark £1500.00. Delegated authority was given to the Clerk and Sean Curtis to search view and purchase, when a suitable trailer became available.

10. To Consider the Option of a Flag Pole in Poringland

Ken Aldridge asked full council to consider the option to purchase 2 flag poles for the parish. Locations would be The Community Centre and The Memorial Gardens. Council requested that Ken Aldridge to do some research on the costings and bring to a future meeting for a decision to be made.

11. To Receive an Update from:

a) Welcome Home & Memorial Playing Field Trust

Ken Aldridge informed council that Time Childcare attend the last Trustee meeting and gave an update to their attempts to find suitable places for a childcare facility with more urgency due to the poor state of the current venue. The trustees felt that the meeting had been very enlightening and that they wished it to be noted that following the church/fundraising representatives who attended a previous meeting to ask for support had not been given full transparency on their financial position and its fundraising endeavours, which

was disappointing. Ken Aldridge had subsequently been to a meeting with a number of District Councillors, trustees of the hall and Time Childcare. The outcome had given better clarification and that there was more positive news for ensuring the childcare facility could continue running with the option of using some of the garden land to place cabins on in the short term.

b) Community Land Project

The clerk gave an update on the delays in obtaining planning permission. This is now down to issues with the ecology side and licences. The clerk had a meeting with Jerene Irwin from Chaplin Farrant and Chris, the council’s ecologist and it was hopeful that a new proposal would be accepted by the Planners at SNC.

The clerk also spoke about the need to continue with funding options. The difficulty being with no planning permissions some funding options were limited at present. Lisa Overton-Neal advised that she would speak to South Norfolk Council in her capacity as a district Councillor to see if some of the larger funding options can still be applied whilst the council await permission to be granted.

12. To Consider a Request from a Resident to Metal Detect on the Community Land

A request had been made to the parish council asking for permission to use a metal detector on the Community Land. Councillors requested that the Clerk contact the resident to gain further information and report this back to full council.

13. To Receive Proposal to Close the Meeting for Item 14 Under Section 1 Paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 – Staffing

This part of the meeting closed at 8.55pm with members of the public leaving the room.

14. HR Staffing Matters

Items were discussed on the confidential document as a result of the meeting held by the HR Advisory Group. It was **AGREED** unanimously to go ahead with the recommendations outlined in the document.

It was **CONFIRMED** that the Clerk & RFO title will also include Chief Operating Officer and the Assistant Clerk will now be known as the Deputy Clerk and Finance Manager.

It was **CONFIRMED** to put an advert out for a Café Supervisor with the Clerk and HR Advisory Group given delegated authority to carry out recruitment, interviews and appointment of the position.

15. Date and Time of Next Parish Council Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Wednesday 10th April 2024 at 7pm at Poringland Community Centre unless otherwise advised.

Meeting Closed at 9.21pm

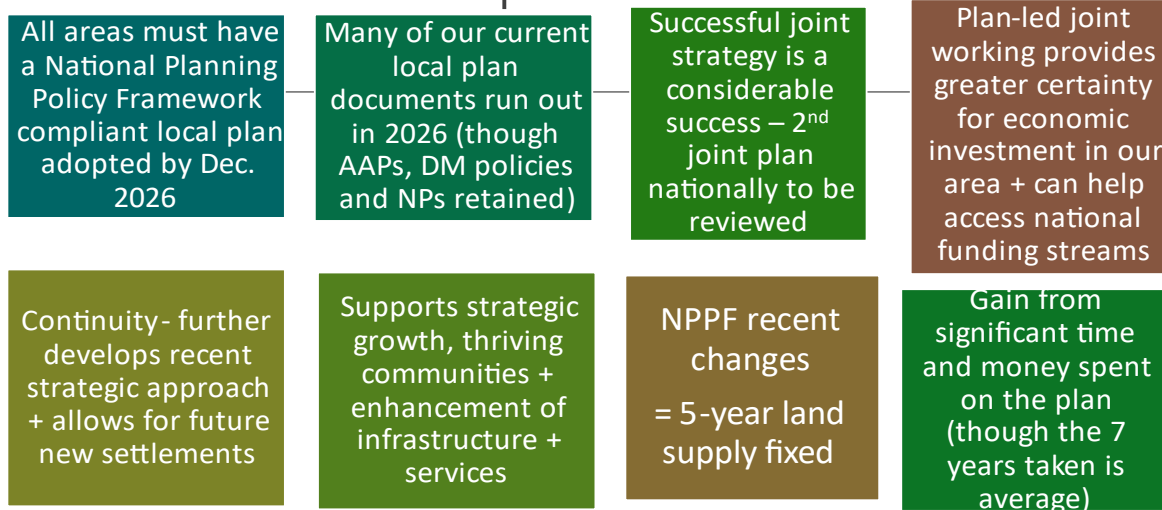
CHAIRMAN

Signed..... Dated.....

GMLP:

We received the Inspectors report on the submitted Local Plan. There were a few minor modifications to the grammar in the Plan but otherwise they were happy with it.

Benefits of adoption



Greater Norwich Local Plan

It will now go to the three Councils Cabinet and Council meetings to be agreed followed by a six week legal challenge period.

District Direct:

South Norfolk and Broadland Councils have a service in the NNUH working hard to ensure that discharges take place as soon as they can. They work with anybody who lives in the catchment area of the NNUH.

There are many social reasons why someone may need to remain in hospital after they are medically fit to go home.

Because the District Direct team can purchase goods and services immediately they can work quickly to remove impediments to discharge.

The hospital believes that referring a case to District Direct saves, on average, 8 bed days.

In the last financial year District Direct received 1400 referrals saving an estimated 11,200 bed days. This has been key in ensuring bed availability at the hospital.

We have now expanded this service so we are working in the A&E department, with the Ambulance Service and Paramedics and also at Hellesdon Hospital.

South Norfolk Litter Pick:

We are operating our usual litter picks now and are looking for schools, parish councils and community groups to get involved and organise their own litter pick. All resources and equipment will be provided by us so you can get started immediately with a chance of also winning £200.

More details on our website.

Strategic/Delivery plan:

The Strategy and Delivery Plan outlining plans, priorities, and themes. Town and Parishes, along with private and other public sector bodies are considered key partners over the next 4 years. Each Council has their own strategic plan, some elements are the same and all are supported by the One Team. If anyone wants to have a conversation around their own plans to please get in touch – corinne.lawrie@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk

Community Engagement Van (CEVAN):

The Help Hub team have a brand-new outreach vehicle, specifically built to take into our communities to deliver support services across South Norfolk and Broadland.

The van is entirely mobile and converts into an open space where a range of support services can be delivered – as well as presentations, activities, and small meetings.

The vehicle will soon begin a targeted outreach campaign across our districts, to offer support to towns and parishes which we have identified as being in need.

We would be keen to hear from you if you feel that your parish needs a particular support service.

If you have any questions about the Van, please get in touch with the Communities team.

Business Awards:

I attended the Business Awards at the beginning of March at Norwich City Football Club.

This was another fantastic event celebrating our businesses in South Norfolk and Broadland with over 300 attendees.

Lord Fuller OBE:

South Norfolk Council's Leader, John Fuller, has just become a Lord.

He will be stepping down as Leader at the Council's AGM this year.

District Councillor's Report: Nicola Fowler – March 2024 (Appendix 2)

As the weather is starting to get warmer and the days are getting longer, it seems appropriate that the Council has announced a new grant called the Play Streets grant. Modeled on an initiative that started in Bristol in 2009, Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are neighbour-led, short, road closures, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Any street is eligible provided it is not on an active bus route. More details of the grant, what it can be used for and how it can be accessed are shown below:

What are play streets?

Play streets (or 'playing out' sessions) are neighbour-led, short, road closures, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep. Any street is eligible provided it is not on an active bus route. Play streets typically allow children to play freely, without organised games or activities. In practice, this means children cycle, scoot, skate, chalk, skip, hopscotch, kick a ball around and make up games. This model was first developed by parents on one street in [Bristol in 2009](#) and has now been taken up by hundreds of street communities all over the UK.

The key features of this model are:

- Resident-led and organised
- Short, regular road closures
- Free, child-led play
- All neighbours consulted and included
- Road legally and safely closed to through traffic
- Stewarded by residents
- Car access at walking pace
- Simple, 'normal' – not a street party!

For further information and advice please visit [Play Streets](#).

To apply for a Road Closure this should be done via [Norfolk County Council](#).

To support communities in taking part in the Play Streets initiative we are offering a Play streets Grant to help with additional costs.

What is the Play Streets Grant?

The grant offers up to £75 to communities who wish to take part in the Play Streets initiative. This may be used to fund:

- Low-cost items such as games and sports equipment for children and families to use during the play streets session.
- Any promotional activities to get the event up and running.

For further information and to apply for this grant please visit our website [here](#).

Please share this with your local communities and if you have any further questions please don't hesitate to contact the [communities team](#).

County Councillor Report: Vic Thomson – March 2024 (Appendix 3)

PCC election 2nd May

Do you have ID as required

Now first past the post

County elections May 25

Cabinet to vote on £457m plan for Norfolk's Highways and Transport

Investment of £457 million in Norfolk's Highways and Transport over the next three years is set to be considered by the county council's cabinet.

The proposals, which are due to be discussed at Norfolk County Council's Cabinet at its meeting on Monday 4 March, cover investment in highways maintenance, cycling and walking schemes, traffic management and public transport infrastructure across Norfolk between now and 2027.

"More than that, this programme can give our residents confidence that the plans we're working on to improve transport in Norfolk – whether new roads such as the Long Stratton bypass or expanding and improving the bus services available across the county – are being backed by the funds they need to succeed. Whether you walk, cycle, drive or take public transport, this programme will make your experience of moving about Norfolk easier and smoother in the years to come."

Further allocations from the £10m investment in highway maintenance by Norfolk County Council are proposed, alongside £4.51m from the Network North Road Resurfacing Fund 2024/25. These works include resurfacing roads and footways, bridge maintenance and regular activities such as surface dressing.

The investment, set out over the financial year 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27, includes funding from Norfolk County Council, the Department for Transport, developer contributions such as Section 106 and CIL funds and other sources of funding. The element to be paid by Norfolk County Council in 2024/25 was approved earlier this week as part of Norfolk County Council's budget, which councillors voted on at the Full Council meeting on Tuesday 20 February.

The Capital Programme also covers work on major schemes, including the Long Stratton Bypass, Norwich Western Link and West Winch Housing Access Road.

The three-year plan follows the Government's 2023 autumn statement, which proposed funding allocations for 2024/25 through to 2026/27. The plan also includes funding from a number of other streams, including the Transforming Cities Fund and the Bus Service Improvement Funds from which Norfolk County Council has successfully secured funding.

£1m boost for 118 local highway schemes

£1m is set to be invested in 118 parish highway schemes in Norfolk, thanks to a county council initiative.

The council's parish partnership scheme invites communities to bid for cash for improvements such as vehicle activated signs, bus shelters, "trod" footpaths* and village gateways, as well as joining a Safety Camera Partnership scheme. The latest partnership schemes, for 2024/25, are set to be approved by the council's cabinet.

This year, the county council is set to provide £467,884. With match funding from parish and town councils and a contribution of £43,760 from the Safety Camera Partnership. This could bring total investment up to £1,040,586 in 118 schemes across Norfolk.

The scheme was launched in September 2011. This year, the council received 118 bids and is proposing to support all of them, including 97 bids for small highway improvements and 21 bids for installation of SAM2 – a Speed Awareness

Message mounted on a Vehicle Activated Sign, urging vehicles to reduce their speed when they travel in excess of the speed limit.

The most popular schemes that have been bid for are:

Village Gateways – 26 bids

“Trod” footpaths* – 14 bids

Bus Shelters – 10 bids

[Landline telephone digital switchover - Norfolk County Council](#)

Landline telephone digital switchover Apprenticeships

[The Apprenticeships Norfolk](#) scheme has recently hit the £1m milestone of levy transfers a year ahead of schedule. Through the scheme, 90 businesses in the county have started 180 apprenticeships, from Level 2 through to Level 7, using unspent funds in Norfolk that would otherwise be returned to HM Treasury.

The apprenticeship levy is payable by organisations whose annual wage bill is more than £3m and equates to 0.5% of the bill. But if the business has undertaken all the apprenticeships that it has capacity to deliver, it can donate up to 25% of its annual apprenticeship levy to another organisation. Levy transfers are used for new apprentice starts, new recruits and existing employees.

Donating levy funding encourages corporate social responsibility and reduces wastage of any unspent apprenticeship levy - keeping funding in Norfolk and helping people to develop their careers or try something new.

Members can signpost any businesses wanting to find out more about the scheme to the [Apprenticeships Norfolk website](#). Businesses can enquire about receiving a levy transfer, or donating their unspent levy, by completing an expression of interest form or calling 0344 800 8024.

[Director of Public Health Annual Report - Smoking and Vaping](#)

The Director of Public Health for Norfolk has released his independent annual report.

The report details findings on the County’s smoking and vaping habits along with the steps Norfolk County Council and partners are taking to achieve a smoke free generation by 2030.

Reducing rates of smoking, effective tobacco control and controlling long term vaping use and take up are some of the council’s key public health priorities and as a result, were selected as the focus for this year’s report.

Currently, around 13% of adults (99,300 people) in Norfolk smoke. Great Yarmouth has the highest adult smoking rate (around 18%, approximately 14,200 smokers) and Broadland has the lowest (around 8%, approximately 8,900 smokers). The report also shows that an estimated 44,900 children in Norfolk live in households with adults who smoke.

Smoking remains one of the biggest contributors to preventable ill health and health inequalities. It kills an estimated 1,240 people in Norfolk every year and accounts for nearly 6,000 years of life lost annually.

The costs associated with smoking in Norfolk are estimated at £872 million annually, including health and social care costs, lost productivity, and house fires.

Case studies from Norfolk highlight ways the council is working together with partners and through our [Smokefree Norfolk](#) and [Ready to Change services](#) to help people quit.

The full report is available [here](#).

[Food Savvy supporting Food Waste Action Week 18-24 March 2024](#)

Norfolk County Council’s Food Savvy team will be supporting national Food Waste Action Week, to raise awareness of food waste issues and give practical tips to help householders cut down on the amount they throw away.

Food Savvy, is a joint project between Norfolk County Council and the Suffolk Waste Partnership to help householders across Norfolk and Suffolk to make the most of their food, reduce food waste and save money. Norfolk are taking a joint approach with Suffolk to create a bigger impact to tackle food waste and to ensure that residents in both counties are receiving valuable support on this important issue.

More information can be found on their food savvy website [here](#).

[Norfolk Museums - free entry during National Lottery open week](#)

To say thank you for the £30 million raised for Good Causes every week by players, National Lottery funded venues are offering free entry, discounts and special offers throughout [National Lottery Open Week](#). This offer includes Norfolk Museums.

Just bring along a scratch card or lottery ticket for free admission to Norfolk Museums for up to six people on the dates below:

[Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery](#) - Sat 9 to Sun 17 March

[Strangers' Hall](#) - Weds 13 and Sun 17 March

[Lynn Museum](#) - Sat 9 and Sat 16 March

[Ancient House](#) - Tours on 12 March (booking essential) plus admission Fri 15 and Sat 16 March

[Museum of Norwich](#), [Time and Tide](#) and [Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse](#) - Sat 16 and Sun 17 March

[Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board - progress update](#)

Health leaders have praised the hard work and commitment of staff as NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board progresses out of national support.

They also said that the progress reflects the strong partnerships being developed within the NHS and with many other partners including colleagues in local government; voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations; and residential and domiciliary social care.

NHS England recently confirmed that the NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board is no longer in NHS oversight framework segment 4 and has been removed from the Recovery Support Programme (RSP), formerly known as “special measures. (The RSP provides a collaborative, system-focused approach for supporting providers and systems with the toughest challenges).

Key improvements across the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney include:

Key quality improvements and progress at two of the system’s providers. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn NHS Trust exited special measures in April 2022 and last February the Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust moved from a CQC rating of Inadequate to Requires Improvement.

Sustained improvement in performance in urgent and emergency care services, to include the establishment of virtual wards at all three acute trusts.

Improvements in discharge planning and patient flow, helping to reduce the length of time people stay in hospital, decreasing their need to be readmitted and improving their overall experience.

Significant and sustained improvement in ambulance response times and handovers, enabling ambulances to quickly get back on the road so they can get to the next person who needs help.

A system wide reduction in the longest waits for people who require a mental health bed, with further ongoing improvements planned.

Greater efficiencies and progress against financial plans through closer collaborative working with partners.

Further information available [here](#).

Government updates

Household Support Fund extension

A six-month extension to the Household Support Fund, which helps the most vulnerable people struggling with the cost of living, was announced in the budget. Council leaders from across the political spectrum had previously written to the Chancellor, in a letter coordinated by the LGA, calling for a continuation of the fund.

The Community Ownership Fund: Round 4 - Expressions of Interest invited

The Community Ownership Fund will shortly be publishing an updated prospectus and guidance for Round 4, the final round of the fund. This fund helps community groups buy or renovate assets that would otherwise be lost to the community.

The government has provided a new Expression of Interest form. They ask that all prospective applicants, including those that have previously submitted a successful EOI form, submit a new EOI on the updated system if they have an interest in applying. Only applicants who submitted an EOI in the new system will be informed when a bidding window is about to open and will receive the link needed to apply to the fund.

The new EOI has been simplified to give applicants a result within minutes, so they will be able to see whether their project could be suitable for COF much quicker than before.

Further information and a link to the Expression of Interest form available [here](#).

Extension of Jubilee Village Hall funding

The government is providing additional funds for the Platinum Jubilee Village Halls Fund. The original £3m capital fund to improve and modernise village hall facilities ahead of the Platinum Jubilee was announced in 2022. An additional £5m has now been allocated.

Funding for Towns Scheme – Thetford and Kings Lynn added

The Chancellor revealed in the budget that 14 more towns across England would be added to the [Long-term Plan for Towns Scheme](#). These include Thetford and Kings Lynn. Great Yarmouth was included in the list in October 2023.

They will each be required to create a 10-year delivery plan, setting out their vision for investment and regeneration, which will be developed in consultation with local people, and could benefit from up to £20m in

funding. Town boards made up of community leaders, employers, local councillors and MPs, will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this.

Public Services Productivity

HM Treasury have published a document outlining their Public Services Productivity Plan: [Seizing the Opportunity: Delivering Efficiency for the Public - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/seizing-the-opportunity-delivering-efficiency-for-the-public).

This says that Improving public sector productivity will help the government to ensure the long-term sustainability of public finances and deliver the best services for the public.

The plan has 5 main areas of focus: procurement; reducing fraud, error and tax evasion; major projects; asset management; digital transformation.

The chancellor also confirmed an additional total of £165m for local authorities towards the creation of 200 more children's social care placements to "combat profiteering" and strengthen "preventative action to reduce demand on public services"; that the Treasury will match funding of up to £45m to build children's homes placements; and that £105m would go towards creating 15 new special free schools, with locations to be confirmed by May.

DRAFT