NORWICH
City Council

Cabinet

Date: Wednesday, 29 July 2026
Time: 17:30
Venue: Mancroft room, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

Committee members:

Councillors:

Galvin (Leader)
Stutely (Deputy Leader)
Bolton
Carlo
Knight
Schmierer
Worley-Smith

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Information for members of the public

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IN TRAN
communication for all

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Agenda

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1 Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

2 Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)

3 Public questions/petitions

To receive questions / petitions from the public which have been submitted in accordance with the council's constitution.

4 Questions to cabinet members

(A copy of the questions and replies will be available on the council's website prior to the meeting)

5 Minutes

To confirm the minutes, including the exempt minutes, of the meeting held on 10 June 2026.

Minutes of Cabinet meeting held on 10 June 2026 5 - 30

6 COU/26/018 - Pavement Licensing Policy 31 - 64

To consider the Pavement Licensing Policy following public consultation.

7 CAB/26/017 - Ward Councillors Community Budget Policy 65 - 106

To consider the adoption of a Ward Councillors Community Budget Policy.

8 CAB/26/029 - Adjustments to the 2026-2027 General Fund Capital Programme 107 - 112

To consider adjustments to the 2026-2027 General Fund Capital Programme.

9 CAB/26/012 - Council Energy and Water Utilities Procurement 113 - 126

To consider the procurement for the Council's Energy and Water Utilities.

10 CAB/26/009 - Managing Assets (Non-Housing) 127 - 132

To consider the disposals outlined in the report.

11 Exclusion of the public

Consideration of exclusion of the public.

EXEMPT ITEMS:

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and the public.)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, members are asked to decide whether, in all circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Exempt Minutes of Cabinet meeting held on 10 June 2026

- This report is not for publication because it would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as in para 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

12 CAB/26/025 - Electricity Metering Operator Contract

- This report is not for publication because it would disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as in para 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

NORWICH City Council

MINUTES

Cabinet

17:30 to 18:47 **Wednesday, 10 June 2026**

Present: Councillors Galvin (Leader of the Council), Stutely (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Getting the Basics Right (Planning and Regulatory Services)), Bolton (Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment)), Carlo (Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities)), Knight (Cabinet Member for Healthier Neighbourhoods (Culture and Wellbeing)), Schmierer (Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance)) and Worley-Smith (Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice))

Apologies: None

Absent: None

In attendance Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group

1. Minute's silence

1.1 The Leader of the Council highlighted that on 16 June 2016 Jo Cox was shockingly murdered while on her way to a constituency surgery. In the days that followed, people responded not with fear, but with something Jo believed in deeply: connection. Neighbours came together, differences were set aside, and communities chose unity over division.

1.2 In her first speech to Parliament Jo said, "We are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us." The Jo Cox Foundation was set up in 2016 channelling energy and determination generated by Jo's life and tragic death into practical efforts to make change on the issues that she was passionate about.

1.3 The Leader invited Cabinet and attendees to join her in observing a minute's silence to mark the 10-year anniversary Jo Cox's murder.

1.4 A minute's silence was held.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public questions/petitions

3.1 There had been no public questions or petitions received.

4. Questions to Cabinet Members

4.1 The Leader announced that there had been five questions received from Members of the Council to be put to Cabinet Member for which notice had been given in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

4.2 The questions are summarised as follows:

4.2.1 Councillor Stonard to the Leader of the Council on Anglia Square.

4.2.2 Councillor Harper to the Leader of the Council on Local Government Reorganisation.

4.2.3 Councillor Harper to the Cabinet Member for Healthier Neighbourhoods (Culture and Wellbeing) on twinning with Kherson.

4.2.4 Councillor Jones to the Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) on Cannell Green Anti-social Behaviour

4.2.5 Councillor Harper to the Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) on road improvements in Norwich.

4.3 Full details of the question and response were available on the Council's website prior to the meeting. A revised version is attached to these minutes at Appendix A and includes a minute of any supplementary questions and responses.

5. Minutes

5.1 **RESOLVED**, to confirm the minutes, including the exempt minutes, of the meeting held on 11 March 2026.

6. CAB/26/016 – Cabinet Appointments to Outside Bodies

6.1 **RESOLVED** to note the appointments to Outside Bodies as made by the Leader as circulated, in addition Councillor Worley-Smith would be appointed to the Local Government Information Unit.

6.2 The appointments to Eastern Procurement Limited and the nplaw board would be taken in July.

7. CAB/26/003 – Corporate Performance Annual Report 2025-2026

7.1 The Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice) presented the report. He highlighted that the report was

backwards looking and detailed the Council's performance for the 2025-2026 financial year. As the new administration the Cabinet would use the performance detailed within the report as baseline figures. There were clear operational successes to note where Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were tracking on or above target. The Council had recently achieved a C1 rating from the Regulator of Social Housing which was commendable. There were a number of KPIs that were showing as red which indicated that performance improvements were required and the Cabinet would be addressing this. The Cabinet was committed to delivering housing. The cabinet member was committed to ensuring that the Council listened to customers and delivered services. The Council would be moving towards a local outcomes framework.

7.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

7.3 The Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice) moved, and the Leader of the Council seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report.

7.4 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Review progress against the *We are Norwich* community-led plan and key performance indicators for Quarter 4 and 2025-2026.

2) Approve the performance framework for 2026-2027.

3) Note that the performance will be aligned to the Government's Local Outcomes Framework from Quarter 1 of 2026-2027.

8. CAB/26/018 – Notification of Urgent Key Decision taken by the Chief Executive

8.1 This item was noted.

9. CAB/26/004 – 2025-2026 – Budget Monitoring Report – Provisional Outturn

9.1 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) presented the report. The report detailed the provisional outturn figures for 2025-2026. There was a revenue underspend on both General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), will be allocated to reserves. The underspends and overspends detailed in the report would be analysed as part of the budget setting process.

9.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

9.3 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) moved, and the Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report.

9.4 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Note the provisional £543,000 underspend on the General Fund revenue account and the £4,390,554 underspend on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

2) Note the provisional £22,254,573 underspend against the General Fund and the £16,036,135 underspend against the HRA capital programmes.

3) Note the consequential General Fund and HRA balances.

4) Note the transfers to earmarked and general reserves.

5) Delegate to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely, the approval of carry-forwards of unspent 2025-2026 capital budgets into the 2026-2027 capital programme.

6) Approve an adjustment of £666,000 to the 2026-2027 General Fund capital programme to facilitate the utilisation of Pride in Place external funding, as set out in paragraph 10 of the report.

7) Recommend to Council, the approval of adjustments of £193,000 to the General Fund and £83,000 to the HRA 2026-2027 capital programmes to enable pre-adoption works to take place to roads at the Three Score site, as set out in paragraph 11 of the report.

10. CAB/26/005 – Corporate Risk Register 2025-2026 – Quarter Four

10.1 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) presented the report, highlighting that the Corporate Risk Register for Quarter Four of 2025-2026 was in front of Cabinet for review and asks Cabinet to note the identified risk and direction of travel, with additional risks detailed in the exempt appendix. The previous quarter's risk register was reported in February 2026. Heads of Service and other risk owners had reviewed their risks as detailed in paragraph 5 of the report, reflected the Council's focus on Business as Usual (BAU) and detailed the key risks related to Local Government Reorganisation as the Council prepared to transition to a new unitary authority. There had been changes to the overall risk profile as the environment in which the Council operated remained relatively high risk due to the challenging financial environment. Following the Audit Committee there had been two recommendations, one was to add risk CORP21 (Climate Change Risk) back to the Risk Register. The Cabinet Member indicated that he was willing to accept the recommendation. The other recommendation was around the risk of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the Council's cybersecurity, he would ask officers to explore the risk before the next review of the risk register.

10.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

10.3 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) moved, and the Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report.

10.4 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Note the identified risks and the direction of travel.

2) Accept the recommendation from the Audit Committee to add risk CORP21 (Climate Change Risk) back to the Corporate Risk Register.

3) Ask officers to assess the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the Council's cybersecurity and how this needed to be taken into account for the next review of the Corporate Risk Register.

11. CAB/26/007 – Air Quality Action Plan

11.1 The Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) presented the report. He highlighted that there was no safe level of air pollution when considering public health. It particularly affected young and elderly residents and new evidence suggested there was a link between air pollution and overall health. The Royal College of Physicians had detailed that there had been a number of deaths attributed to poor air quality and reduced quality of life. The Air Quality Action Plan complied with national regulatory standards, however there was currently no national guidance on Ultrafine Particles (UFP) which meant that the Council was unable to measure and assess their impacts. The Council was taking an evidence-based approach to air quality, and the action plan was moving in the right direction and set out the steps required to improve air quality within the city. He thanked officers for their work.

11.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

11.3 The Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) moved, and the Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

11.4 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Approve the Norwich City Council Air Quality Action Plan 2026-2031.

2) Agree that the Plan is adopted and implemented, with progress reviewed annually through the Council's Annual Status Reports to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

12. COU/26/012 – Adoption of the Gambling Statement of Principles

12.1 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Getting the Basics Right (Planning and Regulatory Services) presented the report. The report asked Cabinet to recommend the adoption of the Gambling Statement of Principles to Full Council following a public consultation. The majority of gambling took place online, but this was not for the Council to regulate. The Gambling Statement of Principles ensured that premises operated responsibly to minimise the harms caused by gambling. The Cabinet Member indicated that he was willing to accept the

recommendations made by the Licensing Committee as detailed in the tabled papers. The local area profile would continue to be kept under review and the amendments strengthened protections to ensure premises were appropriately regulated.

12.2 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Getting the Basics Right (Planning and Regulatory Services) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

12.3 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Agree the updated draft Norwich City Council Gambling Statement of Principles Policy following comments received during consultation.

2) Recommend the Policy for approval by Full Council.

3) Agree the following recommendations from the Licensing Committee:

    a. Recommend the following amendments to the Policy:

        i. Expanded definition of vulnerable persons: “for the purposes of local risk assessments and licensing decisions, vulnerability may include persons experiencing homelessness, young people transitioning from care into independent living, and persons experiencing significant financial hardship or problem debt.”

        ii. Enhanced site-specific local risk assessments: “Local Risk Assessments should be site-specific and demonstrate an understanding of the immediate vicinity, including relevant pedestrian routes, nearby schools, support accommodation, community facilities and locations providing support services to vulnerable persons.”

        iii. Information exchange and local harm monitoring: “the Licensing Authority expects operators, where lawful and appropriate, to share high-level anonymised information relating to self-exclusion trends and gambling harm indicators in order to assist the Authority in understanding local gambling-related harm and informing future updates of the Local Area Profile.”

        iv. Adult Gambling Centre Signage: “The Licensing Authority expects premises to use signage and branding that accurately reflects the nature of the premises licence held. The use of the term “Casino” in Adult Gaming Centre premises is discouraged where it may mislead customers regarding the nature of the gambling facilities provided.

        v. Review of the Local Area Profile [Immediately following the statement that Local Area Profile was last updated in July

2022 add:] “The Licensing Authority will seek to review and update the Local Area Profile periodically to ensure it reflects current information relating to deprivation, safeguarding concerns, gambling-related harm, vulnerable populations and emerging local issues.

vi. References to those with mental health disorders should include reference to dementia and neurodiversity.

b. Ask Cabinet to explore further work in respect of Gambling Vulnerability Areas, potential clustering and public health led integration with a view to consider any further amendments to the Statement of Gambling Principles policy made under s349 of the Gambling Act 2005.

13. COU/26/011 – Adoption of Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 5 (Affordable Housing) Supplementary Planning Document

13.1 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Getting the Basics Right (Planning and Regulatory Services) presented the report. The Cabinet was asked to recommend that Full Council adopts the Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 5 (Affordable Housing) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following a public consultation. Amendments had been made to the SPD following the consultation and these were detailed in the tabled papers. The SPD was largely technical in nature on how Policy 5 would be implemented to secure affordable housing. The lack of affordable housing was a significant issue for Norwich. The SPD detailed how commuted sums for off-site provision would be calculated where exceptional circumstances showed that on-site provision would not be feasible, and these sums could then be used for delivery of affordable housing across the city. In future monitoring would be required to ensure that these sums were being delivered and the outcomes of viability assessments.

13.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

13.3 The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Getting the Basics Right (Planning and Regulatory Services) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

13.4 **RESOLVED** to recommend that Full Council adopts the Supplementary Planning Document as amended in the tabled papers.

14. CAB/26/010 – Extension to vehicle related nuisance Public Space Protection Order

14.1 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) presented the report. The report sought approval to extend the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for a further three years which was the maximum period before a review was required. There was support from the Council’s partners and residents for the extension of the PSPO as the

nuisance caused by vehicle related ASB impacted on residents and visitors' enjoyment of the city. While there were hotspots within the city it could take place across the city. The PSPO would assist the Police with dealing with nuisance.

14.2 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) commented that the extension of the PSPO was welcomed as it has been an issue across the city centre and it provided the right tools to help deal with the issue.

14.3 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

14.4 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Healthier Neighbourhoods (Culture and Wellbeing) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

14.5 **RESOLVED** to agree to extend the existing Vehicle Related Antisocial Behaviour Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for a further three years as set out in Appendix C to the report.

15. CAB/26/006 – Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Report

15.1 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) presented the report. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) had issued a public report into a homelessness application made in November 2024. The ombudsman had found fault in some aspects of the Council's handling of the application. Following the issuing of the report the Council was required to formally consider the report. The Ombudsman had found fault in two aspects of the Council's handling of the application which were in relation to its failure to consider whether interim accommodation should have been provided and the delay in making decisions about the case. The Ombudsman had found no fault in three other areas of the complaint as made by the complainant. Following the issuing of the report the Council had considered the lessons learnt to prevent any issues from reoccurring.

15.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

15.3 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) moved, and the Leader of the Council seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

15.4 **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report.

16. CAB/26/002 – Delegated authority to award the contract for Argyle Street Enabling works

16.1 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) presented the report. The Argyle Street development would see

the delivery of 14 new affordable homes that would be highly energy efficient, create spaces for the local communities and connections to other local spaces. The enabling contract would help to address ground issues present on site and prepare the site for the development of housing. This included the issues of subsidence that were well-known on the site. The main construction contract had previously been tendered. The enabling works package would derisk the site for construction and would be competitively tendered within the site budget.

16.2 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) commented that the site had been earmarked for the delivery of affordable housing for some times, so it was pleasing that the site was moving forward.

16.3 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

16.4 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

16.5 **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Communities and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely to award the contract for enabling works at Argyle Street at an estimated value of £980,000.

17. CAB/26/011 – Delegated authority to award the contract for the refurbishment and conservation works at St Benedict's and St Bartholomew's Tower Ruins

17.1 The Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice) presented the report. The report detailed conservation works to St Benedict's and St Bartholomew's Tower Ruins. Norwich had a rich history and a number of critical heritage assets including the tower ruins. The works would derisk the structures and prevent fabric loss by preventing structural crises, further costs in the future and the safety of Norwich's residents. The works would be delivered through the capital programme with funding set aside. The tender process would be using a restricted tender process to ensure that the proper heritage works are undertaken, once the relevant planning permissions were secured it enabled contractors to mobilise.

17.2 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) stated that St Benedict's Tower Ruins in particular required work, the works would ensure public safety in the area and allow more access to the green space once the works had completed.

17.3 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

17.4 The Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Healthier and Wellbeing

(Culture and Wellbeing) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

17.5 **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Major Projects, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (business and social justice) to award the contract for repair and conservation works to St Benedict's and St Bartholomew's Towers.

18. CAB/26/013 – Approvals for Additional Environmental Projects Funding

18.1 The Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) presented the report. He was pleased to recommend the report to Cabinet as the funding would allow for the Council to deliver further energy efficiency measures in Council housing across the city.

18.2 Councillor Harper, Leader of the Labour Group had submitted a question in advance of the meeting. Details of the question and response can be found at Appendix B.

18.3 The Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

18.4 **RESOLVED** to:

1) Recommend that Council delegates authority to the Chief finance officer (S151) in consultation with the Cabinet member for Investing Wisely, to increase the 2026-2031 HRA Capital Programme by £3.736 million, to enable additional energy efficiency retrofit upgrades in council homes, as a result of an offer of £1.8 million of additional external funding, the application of £1.8 million of HRA co-funding and the re-profiling of the programme to match existing earmarked funding.

2) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Climate and Environment in consultation with the portfolio holder for Climate and Environment to execute and/or authorise for sealing the variation of a contract for up to £3.736 million to enable the delivery of additional energy efficiency retrofit upgrades in council homes.

19. Exclusion of the public

19.1 **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the consideration of the below items of the exempt report on the grounds that they contained exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs within Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Local Government Act 1972.

20. CAB/26/015 – Mile Cross Enabling Works Contract Variation (Para 3)

20.1 (An exempt minute exists for this item).

20.2 The Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

20.3 **RESOLVED** that the recommendations were accepted as detailed in the report.

20.4 (An exempt minute exists for this item)

21. CAB/26/014 – Lion Homes (Norwich) Limited Proposed Members Voluntary Liquidation (Para 3)

21.1 (An exempt minute exists for this item).

21.2 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) moved, and the Cabinet Member for Healthier Neighbourhoods (Culture and Wellbeing) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

21.3 **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations as detailed in the report.

21.4 (An exempt minute exists for this item).

22. CAB/26/019 – To consider the Change of Contract Notice for Norwich City Services Limited (Para 3)

22.1 (An exempt minute exists for this item).

22.2 The Cabinet Member for Investing Wisely (Finance) moved, and the Cabinet Member for An Equal, Thriving, Independent City (Business and Social Justice) seconded the recommendations for the reasons set out in the report

22.3 **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations as detailed in the report.

22.4 (An exempt minute exists for this item).

CHAIR

NORWICH City Council

Cabinet

11 June 2026

Questions to cabinet members

Labour Group Questions

Question 1

Councillor Stonard to ask the leader of the council the following question:

> "The redevelopment of Anglia Square will create much needed homes and jobs and will kick start further regeneration in the area. Following years of delays, caused by private sector failure, the Labour administration took the bold and ambitious step of bringing the site into public ownership and creating an investment partnership to move the project forward rapidly. I was therefore alarmed to read in the press that demolition work has been halted since the Green Party took control and you have declined to provide an explanation. Given the Greens' previous mixture of ambivalence and hostility towards the Anglia Square project, there is concern that this situation might be a precursor to a significant and damaging delay or even the complete abandonment of the project. Can the Leader explain the situation, confirm that this vital regeneration will continue as planned, and provide a date when the demolition will resume?"

Councillor Galvin, the leader's response:

> "The redevelopment of Anglia Square remains on track to deliver hundreds of affordable homes for local people, alongside retail, leisure and community spaces.
>
> There is 'no halt' to the development, however, there are some delays which is understandable due to the very nature of a complex regeneration project such as this.
>
> Part of the reason behind the delays can be attributed to the work which must be carefully sequenced to ensure safety at every stage.
>
> It is also clear that the repeated incidents of unauthorised entry, including breaches along Magdalen Street and into partially demolished buildings have not helped.

These incidents posed serious safety risks and security risks and required a refocusing of activity to secure and clear the areas most affected.

We also want to be clear that as part of the planned demolition process, and as the structure is progressively exposed, further asbestos has been identified in the QD building through additional planned checks carried out alongside surveys.

This is now being safely removed, meaning a slight delay to the demolition of the remaining buildings.

All necessary health and safety procedures continue to be followed, as they have been throughout the demolition programme.

The timing of some demolition activity has also been affected by nesting gulls in the Pitt Street area.

However, demolition continues across other parts of the site.

I want to be crystal clear we, along with our investment partners Aviva Capital Partners, remain committed to delivering the new Anglia Square.

The only change the city will notice is in our approach.

We are absolutely committed to being open, transparent and engaging fully with the local community.

This means listening to local residents and businesses while we make sure a new Anglia Square features truly affordable homes for local people.”

Supplementary question

By way of a supplementary question Councillor Stonard asked whether the cancellation of Anglia Square Working Group meetings had been cancelled and whether this presented a risk to the grant from Homes England. In response the Leader confirmed that the Cabinet was committed to transparency, and the meetings had been cancelled for other reasons.

Question 2

Councillor Harper to ask the leader of the council the following question:

> “It is a great concern that the new Reform administration at county council has signalled its intention to try to halt local government reorganisation through a likely costly legal process. To date, the county administration has not ruled out withdrawing resources from the process in order to disrupt the transition to the new unitary authorities.
>
> Will the Leader of the Council seek formal assurances from the new leader of Norfolk County Council that resources will not be withdrawn from local government reorganisation and that county council will continue to work towards discharging its legal obligations and commit to reporting back to full council?”

Councillor Galvin, the leader's response:

> “We remain fully committed to our LGR plans. This will see us continuing to play a vital role in the creation of a new Greater Norwich City Council, along with a unitary council for the east and one for the west of the county.
>
> The case submitted to Government on behalf of the city council and five of our district councils, was accepted by the Government as the best solution for our county. It also had strong cross-party support across each of councils who championed a three-unitary solution for Norfolk.
>
> The case remains that this solution will deliver transformed services better tailored to the needs of our residents in 2028 and beyond and ensure a stronger platform for local voices and democratic representation.
>
> Work is progressing in partnership across all Norfolk authorities, in line with Government guidance and timelines.
>
> We will commit to reporting back to Members, as work progresses during this process.”

Supplementary question

As a supplementary question Councillor Harper asked whether consideration had been given to the risk register and monitoring the risk in relation to additional costs that could be caused.

Question 3

Councillor Harper to ask the cabinet member for healthier neighbourhoods (culture and wellbeing) the following question:

> "The Reform administration at Norfolk County Council has performatively removed the Ukrainian flag from the top of county hall, and is said to be exploring significant cuts to the People from Abroad resources which supports refugees in Norfolk.
>
> Norwich is a proud city of shelter and has a thriving Ukrainian community, thanks to the generosity and compassion of local people who opened their homes to people fleeing Putin's invasion. This year marks a decade as a City of Sanctuary.
>
> Norwich's Ukrainian community includes many from the Kherson region, which has been on the frontline of Russian aggression since 2022 when Russian troops invaded Ukraine.
>
> Given the ongoing conflict, will the administration commit to establishing a cross-party working group to work towards twinning with the Kherson to demonstrate our ongoing solidarity with the Ukrainian people and our opposition to Putin's invasion of Ukraine and brutal repression of minority communities?"

Councillor Knight, the cabinet member for healthier neighbourhoods (culture and wellbeing)'s response:

> Norwich has a longstanding and well-established reputation as a City of Sanctuary, and we remain proud of the compassion shown by residents in supporting those fleeing conflict, including members of the Ukrainian community. The city continues to value the contribution of all who have made Norwich their home.
>
> The Council would welcome the continued development of cultural and community links that build understanding and solidarity with international partners, including those in Ukraine. Strengthening people-to-people relationships can play a valuable role in fostering mutual support during challenging times.
>
> That said in considering proposals of this nature, it is important to acknowledge the ongoing programme of Local Government Reorganisation. As currently anticipated, Norwich City Council will not continue to exist in 2 years time, and therefore any formal commitment to establishing new twinning agreements would need to be carefully considered within that wider context and by successor authorities.
>
> We are also committed to reviewing the twinning committee to maximise its potential moving forward. In practical terms, the Twinning Committee and community networks provide an established and appropriate forum for exploring and developing international

relationships. They are well placed to consider how best to support meaningful links, including with Ukrainian communities such as those connected to Kherson, in a way that is sustainable and reflective of community interest.

Supplementary question

In response to Councillor Harper's supplementary question the Cabinet Member for Healthier Neighbourhoods (Culture and Wellbeing) confirmed that she would meeting with Ukrainian residents to understand how best the Council could show solidarity with the Ukrainian people.

Question 4

Councillor Beth Jones to ask the cabinet member for new and improved housing (housing and communities) the following question:

> “There are many areas in Norwich which are plagued by anti-social behaviour, and I am told first hand by residents that it can make residents lives a living hell and inflict great damage to their wellbeing. Recent reports show that there has been significant ASB at Cannell Green, included attempted break ins and disturbances. Can the cabinet member for housing please share the exact number of ASB related incidents reported to the council in the past month, share if the number are trending in the right direction, and give reassurance as to how she will commit to curbing Anti Social Behaviour?”

Councillor Carlo, the cabinet member for new and improved housing (housing and communities)'s response:

> We have received two reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) in Cannell Green since 1 May 2026, and this is considerably lower than previous months.
>
> The ASB team is working closely with police and other partners to resolve the issues. Meanwhile, they remain in contact with local residents to ensure they are supported and able to report any concerns they may have.

Supplementary question

As a supplementary question Councillor Beth Jones asked whether the Cabinet Member would commit to increasing CCTV to ensure that residents felt safe. In response the Cabinet Member for New and Improved Housing (Housing and Communities) confirmed that she would speaking to officers and the Police to consider what further action was required.

Question 5

Councillor Harper to ask the cabinet member for a sustainable city (climate and environment) the following question:

> “The previous Labour administration had worked hard to secure important road safety improvements from county council for communities across Norwich, including for Hall Road in Lakenham, Britannia Road in Crome, and Mile Cross Road in Mile Cross. Any number of pedestrian-involved road traffic collisions above zero is unacceptable, and Labour will push for stronger protections for pedestrians. There is now widespread speculation that these projects and other priorities for Norwich will be cancelled by the new Reform administration. Will the administration commit to seeking an urgent cross party meeting with the relevant county cabinet member to discuss this troubling development?”

Councillor Bolton, the cabinet member for a sustainable city (climate and environment)'s response:

> “We are strongly committed to advocating the importance of improvements that enable people to walk, wheel and cycle more safety and conveniently around the city. We want to see improvements made to Hall Road, Britanna Road and Mile Cross Road and for the feasibility and design work that has been undertaken by the County Council to be translated into funding commitments and implementation. I have approached the new Cabinet member at County Hall for a meeting so we can press the case for the problems in these streets to be resolved and we will strongly advocate for a continuation of these and other projects for Norwich’s residents.”

Supplementary question

By way of a supplementary question Councillor Harper asked whether the Cabinet Member would consider contacting the Cabinet Member at County Hall to reinstating a cross-party committee that would enable input from all members on highways matters within Norwich. In response the Cabinet Member for A Sustainable City (Climate and Environment) confirmed that he had requested this.

Political questions to Cabinet – Labour Group

Item	Question	Response
Item 7: Corporate Performance Annual Report 2025-2026	Q4's social rent collection performance puts NCC in the top decile for local authorities across the country, providing excellent value for money for council taxpayers. Given the significant case law that establishes that councils are stewards of public money and should take all reasonable steps to collect sums owed to them. How will the new administration maintain this performance, and fulfil its fiduciary duties to local taxpayers to safeguard public funds, especially having indicated that it intends to cease the use of debt recovery agents?	Enforcement agents are currently used mainly for council tax and business rates and in more limited circumstances for social rents and other income streams. Cases are sent to enforcement agents as a last option. If residents or businesses fall behind with payments multiple attempts are made to contact them to offer help and support and to make arrangements to help get them back on track before any referral is considered. Billing and collection methods are constantly under review to ensure we achieve a balance of support and enforcement to protect the taxpayers in Norwich whilst supporting vulnerable people and businesses trying to stay afloat. The use of enforcement agents will be reviewed in line with our collection processes as necessary. The Council had a responsibility to tax payers and was committed to its fiduciary duty. I make a personal commitment to get the best value for money. Every line in the budget has a human dimension, and financial decisions should be taken through that lens. Debt recovery agents were mainly used for Council Tax and Business. Housing cases were sent to enforcement agents as a last option. Residents were contacted to help make arrangements to get them back on track before the referral. This was currently under review to ensure there was a balance between support and enforcement and supporting vulnerable residents.
Item 9: 2025-2026 – Budget Monitoring	Following the agreement that this year's budget will operate as a dynamic model, can the Cabinet Member set out when the first formal opportunity will be for opposition groups to input into budget revisions, and	The first quarter budget monitor will be created during July with a deadline date for Septembers Cabinet. It is proposed that Cabinet will have early sight of the projected outturn in early August and then opposition groups later in the month.

Item	Question	Response
Provisional Outturn	what mechanisms will be in place to ensure those proposals are properly considered and acted upon?	There are Political Leader meetings on August the 4th and September the 1st. It is envisaged that these will be the opportunity for opposition members to consider budget revisions. All revisions to the budget will be formally presented at Cabinet meeting following the relevant governance process
Item 10: Risk Register 2025-2026 – Quarter Four	Given the risks associated with Local Government Reorganisation, including uncertainty around the timing of shadow authority elections, what assessment has this administration made of those risks, and what concrete preparations are in place to ensure Norwich is ready for a smooth and timely transition?	We are fully committed to our LGR plans, which will deliver transformed services better tailored to the needs of our residents in 2028 and beyond, and ensure a stronger platform for local voices and democratic representation. As a responsible council we of course have to consider and mitigate the risks around such a significant programme. These risks are thoroughly covered in our Corporate Risk Register. The mitigations in place include actions to effectively manage our budgets through this period, to ensure our services can continue to deliver for our communities, to ensure a smooth and timely transition to the new authorities and, crucially, to support our staff and our communities through these changes. The LGR work programme has been developed in partnership with all Norfolk Council's, and has been informed by lessons from councils that have been through LGR, our Strategic Partner and sector bodies with expertise of LGR. This expertise has helped us to design our approach with confidence. There will no doubt be challenges through this, but the careful work that has been done to set up a shared programme across all Norfolk Councils puts us in a good position to manage this change, and continue delivering for the communities we serve.

Item	Question	Response
Item 11: Air Quality Action Plan	Improving air quality in Norwich will lead to better health outcomes, help tackle climate change and create a more pleasant city environment – so we welcome continued action to make the air cleaner in our city. Norwich Green councillors previously expressed their view that steps should be taken to cover the entire of Norwich with a Smoke Control Area, placing restrictions on what residents can burn and what appliances can be used. The cabinet report accompanying the AQAP acknowledges that, in the public consultation undertaken on the draft Plan, there were “mixed views on domestic burning and smoke control, with affordability and fairness highlighted”. The AQAP itself states that “public acceptability, resource and enforcement capacity, equality and fuel poverty considerations” could be barriers to implementation. Can the cabinet member for climate and environment confirm whether introducing a citywide Smoke Control Area remains a priority for the new administration and, if so, what timeline they intend to implement this against?	There was a mixed response to the consultation on domestic burning, reflecting differing views across the city, and while consultation responses provide useful insight, they may not fully capture the experiences of all communities. For this reason, additional monitoring and evidence gathering is important to help inform future policy and targeted interventions. We are currently exploring options to expand monitoring. We have been awarded Smoke Control Area burden funding, and we are obtaining quotes for additional monitoring equipment. However, due to both capital and ongoing maintenance costs, this funding is likely to support only a small number of additional monitors (approximately 2–3 units over a three-year period). Expanding monitoring around schools and in areas with higher proportions of woodburning forms part of the AQAP. The growth of small particulate emissions from wood burning is of concern to this administration and if we are serious about protecting public health and the environment, we need to raise awareness and increase our communications in this area. The administration will take an evidence based and community focused response before considering any further measures.
Item 13: Adoption of Greater Norwich Local Plan Policy 5 (Affordable	Given the evidence base for the revised tenure split is five years old, could the Cabinet member please comment on what work is being undertaken to accelerate an updated Local Housing Market Needs Assessment to inform the emerging new Local Plan, and does the Cabinet member feel this change to the	The change to the tenure split proposed in the Affordable Housing SPD is based on the most recent evidence from the 2021 LHNA. It is acknowledged that there is a high need for social housing in Norwich.

Item	Question	Response
Housing) Supplementary Planning Document	tenure split is consistent with your manifesto commitment to extract more social housing from private developments than Labour?	Viability remains one of the most significant factors affecting affordable housing delivery and, where the level of affordable housing sought is not supported by the evidence, viability considerations may affect the level and form of affordable housing provision that can be secured. In terms of delivery, how the Council spends affordable housing commuted sums money will not be directly influenced by this SPD. The Council could choose to deliver 100% social rent schemes from the collected commuted sums with no low-cost home ownership dwellings if it wished. As we begin work on the next Greater Norwich Local Plan, I think it is important that we focus not only on policy requirements, but on outcomes. We need to understand how affordable housing delivery compares with policy expectations and whether our existing policies, viability processes and review mechanisms are delivering the homes that Norwich residents actually need. Ultimately, our objective must be to ensure that development delivers clear benefits for Norwich and its residents, including genuinely affordable homes, high quality places to live and sustainable communities. We should note, it is not possible to delay the adoption of this SPD. Due to changes to national planning regulations, the Council must adopt the new SPD by 30th June 2026 or it will no longer be possible to have an SPD on affordable housing (no new SPDs can be adopted by local authorities after this date). Delay therefore means that the Council's ability to secure off-site affordable housing would be negatively affected.

Item	Question	Response
		A Greater Norwich Local Housing Needs Assessment is likely to be commissioned in the next couple of months. It will be part of the evidence base for the new Greater Norwich Local Plan 2045 and planned for independent examination in autumn 2028.
Item 14: Extension of vehicle related nuisance Public Space Protection Order	This citywide consultation was launched by the previous Labour administration to ensure our communities have a direct voice in tackling the vehicle-related anti-social behaviour that disrupts our neighbourhoods and housing estates. The positive response to the consultation justifies the previous Labour administration's decision to push for this three-year extension. However, the data we gathered also highlighted a clear gap between initial police warning letters and final formal enforcement notices. Now that the consultation we initiated is complete, how does the new administration plan to use this data to strengthen our operational partnership with Norfolk Constabulary, ensuring the robust enforcement framework we envisioned is fully realized for our residents?	All partners recognise the importance of the PSPO as part of the package of tools and powers available to address the issue of anti-social behaviour associated with congregation of vehicles at certain hotspots in the city and county. The low level of stage two warning letters and subsequent action does indicate that the stage one warnings are having some positive deterrent effect. Norwich City Council officers will continue to share information daily with Norwich Operational Policing Team and will review CCTV footage for Britannia Road in response to reports. Evidence gathered from CCTV reviews and from Police when attending in response to calls for service will be assessed on a case by case basis for consideration of serving Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecution.
Item 15: Local Government and Social Ombudsman Report	How exactly will the cabinet member use the *Housing Highlights* dashboard to track whether the housing service is successfully implementing its duty of care and making necessary adjustments for vulnerable residents before cases escalate to the Ombudsman?	Housing Highlights is a useful tool to track key performance indicators, including monitoring the number and type of complaints received. Behind the published data is even more detailed operational dashboard which enables officers to monitor complaints each day. Since 2025 the dashboard includes a vulnerability indicator so that officers can identify which residents have a vulnerability, which may require a different response, or an escalation of an issue outside of usual target timescales. As part of my induction as a new

Item	Question	Response
		Portfolio Holder, I have already received briefings on the council's approach to tenant engagement, complaint management and performance. I will continue to monitor this as part of my regulator briefings. Whilst there is always more to do and I won't be complacent, the Regulator identified that the council had '*a good understanding of tenants' diverse needs'.* The regulator also '*gained assurance that the council addresses complaints fairly, promptly and effectively'* and had *'a more developed approach to organisational learning'.* My aim is to resolve complaints before residents feel the need to complain to the Ombudsman. However, if they do, I hope that the Ombudsman is satisfied that we have responded to the resident in a fair and appropriate way.
Item 16: Delegated authority to award the contract for Argyle Street Enabling works	Given the historical site complexities—specifically the 2015 demolition of previous housing due to severe structural subsidence risks on this 0.32-hectare allocation—the technical scope of this contract is critical to the site's future viability. Can the Cabinet Member confirm what ground investigation, compaction, and stabilisation requirements are specified to ensure soil conditions are fully mitigated before construction, and, given the use of delegated authority, what contingency (percentage and cash value) is included in this award and what formal reporting mechanism will apply if unforeseen ground conditions cause costs to exceed it before any contract variations are approved?	Given the history of the site, extensive ground investigations by Geotechnical Engineers have taken place since 2025, and the Enabling Works have been specifically designed by structural engineers to take account of the ground investigation findings. The scope of the design includes removal of existing material, to a depth of up to 3.0 meters, and backfilling in compacted layers with a granular fill (to an engineered specification), using a geotextile material between the layers and, with a programme of testing as the stabilisation work proceeds. To ensure design and works are to the highest technical quality, the designs have been developed with and reviewed by independent specialist engineers from the National House Building Council (NHBC). Subject to the design and works being in compliance with their technical standards, the

Item	Question	Response
		NHBC will issue certification for the site under the NHBC Land Quality Scheme. The contract value in the Cabinet Report is the estimated cost of the works contract calculated by the project Quantity Surveyor. This figure does not include a contingency, but the Council's overall budget for the scheme includes a 15% contingency. The cash value of this remains confidential as this is linked to a future procurement of the construction contract.
Item 17: Delegated authority to award the contract for the refurbishment	It is welcome to see investment in protecting these historic assets. Can the Cabinet Member set out what other council-owned assets have been identified as being at risk, what the forward programme is for intervention, and what level of funding is currently forecast to ensure they are maintained safely?	Thank you for the question. The Council adopted an Asset Management Framework in 2022. At the time of adoption, the council had significant asset liabilities and a high proportion of listed buildings that had seen limited historic investment. The approach to these assets varies, but broadly heritage assets fall into one of three categories. First, there are assets where transfer to the private sector offers the best route to securing their long-term future. In recent years, the Council has disposed of a number of such properties, which have subsequently been refurbished and brought back into active use. Second, the Council retains a number of 'stewardship' assets, which we hold due to their wider heritage significance rather than commercial value. These include the towers which are the subject of today's report as well as assets such as the City Wall. For these, our focus is on ensuring they are maintained safely and preserved for future generations. This is typically achieved via regular

Item	Question	Response
		responsive maintenance but occasionally there is need for greater investment and intervention as in the case of the towers. Third, there are heritage assets which lack an active use, are unlikely to be attractive to the private sector and require investment. The council has identified such assets and there is a plan for each which are at differing stages of development. In order to realise a future for these assets we are actively working with partners to bring them back into sustainable use. This approach helps unlock investment and external funding while reducing reliance on Council resources. Funding requirements vary by asset and depend on condition, heritage constraints, future use and the extent of external funding which can be leveraged. Asset specific proposals will be taken forward as business cases progress.
Item 18: Approvals for Additional Environmental Project Funding	We welcome the receipt of yet more external funding to support the decarbonisation of council homes. Can the cabinet member for a Sustainable City confirm when it is intended that the council's Council Housing Revenue Account Climate Action Plan will come forward for adoption?	The council's 'HRA Retrofit Roadmap' (which is our name for the Housing Revenue Account's Climate Action Plan) has been drafted and is currently undergoing internal consultation with relevant departments and stakeholders. Consultation with tenants, leaseholders and other external stakeholders will follow shortly after. The HRA Retrofit Roadmap is on track to be adopted in the autumn, ahead of the original December deadline set out in the Climate Responsive Norwich Programme.

NORWICH City Council

Item 6

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 29/07/2026

Report title: Review and amendment of the Pavement Licensing Policy – Post Consultation

Portfolio:	Councillor Stutely, Cabinet member for Planning and Regulatory Services
Report from:	Regulatory Services Manager
Wards:	All wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

To present the revised Pavement Licensing Policy and updated fees to cabinet for approval and onward adoption at council, following statutory consultation carried out under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that members:

a. Agree the proposed draft Norwich City Council Pavement Licence policy and updated fees following comments received during consultation, and recommend the policy for adoption by Council.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.
- An open and modern council.

This report meets the prosperous and fairer Norwich of the Norwich corporate priorities

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

The Council adopted its current policy in August 2020 and it is being renewed due to changes in legislation. The policy is unique to Norwich City Council and will therefore be required to be reviewed following the creation of the Greater Norwich Unitary Authority.

Executive Summary

This report presents the outcome of a statutory consultation and proposes the adoption of a revised Pavement Licensing Policy in line with new national legislation. The update is required following the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which makes the previously temporary pavement licensing regime permanent and introduces key changes to fees, licence duration, and enforcement powers.

Reasons for recommendations.
The recommendations are made to ensure the Council complies with updated legislation and adopts a permanent, modern pavement licensing framework. They support local businesses and economic activity while enabling full cost recovery through revised fees.
The changes also provide greater certainty and reduce administrative burden through longer licence durations, alongside stronger enforcement powers. Overall, the approach balances business needs with the protection of public safety, accessibility, and amenity, and reflects a transparent and proportionate process following consultation

Report details

Summary

1. Prior to 2020, the Highways Act 1980 solely governed the ability for businesses to place furniture on the highway which involved a 28-day consultation period. The current Pavement Licence system was introduced under the Business and Planning Act 2020 to simplify the process for businesses to place furniture – such as tables and chairs – on public pavements. Originally temporary, this system has now been made permanent through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

2. Norwich City Council is authorised to issue pavement licences, allowing specified furniture on highways (mainly footpaths and pedestrian areas). Businesses may still need other licences depending on the activities carried out in the licensed area.

3. The Council is required to set new fees and update licence conditions so that Officers can fully implement the new licensing regime. This report provides for permanent licensing fees at full cost recovery and replaces the subsidised temporary measures first introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. This report also proposes operating to the maximum period of issuing 2-year licences, rather than issuing annual licences under the former temporary provisions, unless there is a good reason to do otherwise.

5. One consultation response was received, from a resident which posed questions regarding the policy rather than suggested amendments to the policy per se. This response has been dealt with separately by officers.

6. A full list of changes to the policy are attached at Appendix A.

7. The final version of the Pavement Licensing Policy is presented for adoption at Appendix D.

Background

8. In response to the Covid pandemic lockdown provisions, temporary legislation was introduced as part of a package of reforms driven by economic factors. The Business and Planning Act 2020 created the pavement licensing regime, along with other legislative measures.

9. The Highways Act ran in parallel with the pavement licensing process, and the City Council has been issuing pavement licences to businesses to facilitate outdoor dining under these powers. Since the publication of the guidance in mid-2020, the Licensing Authority has had regard to its content but has not updated its policy.

10. The council has historically issued approximately 64 tables & chairs licences under the Highways Act.

Changes to the pavement licensing regime

11. The Levelling-up & Regeneration Act makes provision for pavement licensing regime permanent. The Act also makes several amendments to the original scheme including:
    a. Amending the fees councils can charge applicants, increasing it from £100 up to £350 for premises which already hold a pavement licence, and up to £500 for new applicants.
    b. Extending the public consultation period and council determination period from 7 days to 14 days each respectively. Therefore, the council must decide within 28 days of the application or the application is deemed approved.
    c. Extending the maximum duration of pavement licences from 1 year to 2 years. The length of the licence is still at the discretion of the local authority.
    d. Provision that pavement licences can also be amended by the local authority with the consent of the licence holder if it is considered that the conditions on the licence are not being met.
    e. Prohibiting a local authority from granting a tables and chairs licence under the old regimes, if a pavement licence is capable of being granted under the Act.
    f. Inserting a new enforcement schedule providing powers to the local authority to remove furniture if a premises is not abiding by pavement licence conditions and hours.

Consultation

14. The legislation specifies those persons and groups that the Council has a duty to consult with namely Norfolk County Council Highways and Norfolk Constabulary.

15. In addition to the statutory consultees the following were consulted with:
    a. Norwich City Council Environmental Protection Team,
    b. Norwich City Council Food and Safety Team,
    c. Norwich City Council Planning
    d. Norwich City Council Environmental Services
    e. Street Trading
    f. Inclusive Norwich
    g. Current licence holders, and
    h. The public.

16. The report and draft policy were presented to the Regulatory Committee on 4th December 2025. Comments received from this committee were considered and incorporated into the policy as part of the consultation process. (Appendix B)

Implications

Financial and resources

17. In 2024/25 the Council determined 64 pavement licence applications and recovered £6,400 in revenue income from these processes at the capped fee rate. It is important to recognise that this is not profit, as this income is used to provide the administrative process. This is a reduction from £25,600 from the previous fee rate under the Highways Act.

18. The fees for tables & chairs licence under the Highways Act
    a. £467 and £549 for a grant and 3-year renewal respectively
    b. Total income of £35,136 for renewals (3 yearly cycle)

19. The fees for a new licence and a renewal of an existing licence are set by the Act to a maximum of £500 for a new application and £350 for a renewal of a licence respectively. The council does have discretion on what to charge, up to the maximum, but it is a recommendation that the fee should be set to the maximum as proposed in the table at Appendix C to ensure full cost recovery.

20. If the fees are adopted as proposed and assuming the number of pavement licences remain consistent, the future income forecast would be £22,400 for renewals plus however many new applications are received in addition to that.

Inclusion and Diversity Implications

21. S.149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a duty on local authorities to take into account the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to encourage good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Council considered this duty when setting the fees and specifying the conditions which should be attached to the pavement licence.

22. When determining applications, the licensing authority must consider the public and highway safety of other highway users, in line with all the criteria it will take into account in determining whether or not an application should or should not be granted.

23. The statutory conditions take account of the needs of persons with mobility and visual impairments, and the Council will consider these having regard to the DfT best practice guidance as part of the application process.

    Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians - GOV.UK

Legal

24. When determining pavement licence applications, the Council must have regard to the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

25. Paragraph 2.1 of the Guidance states that to help support local businesses and give them more certainty, the expectation is that local authorities are pragmatic and will grant licences for the maximum period of 2 years, unless there are good

reasons for granting a licence for a shorter period such as plans for future changes in use of road space.

26. The Council will need to consider a number of factors, when determining whether to approve a pavement licence application. These include whether local conditions might be needed to make it possible to approve an application which would otherwise be unacceptable.

27. When setting local conditions and determining applications, the Council will also want to consider the following factors:

- Public health and safety including security – for example, any reasonable crowd management measures needed as a result of a licence being granted.
- Public amenity – will the proposed use create nuisance to neighbouring occupiers by generating anti-social behaviour, and litter.
- Accessibility – taking a proportionate approach to considering the nature of the site in relation to which the application for a licence is made, its surroundings, and its users, taking account of:
- Considerations under the no-obstruction condition including the cumulative impact of multiple licences in close proximity, in particular considering the needs of disabled people and other temporary measures in place that may be relevant to the proposal, for example, the relocation of road space. This could include pedestrianised streets and any subsequent reallocation of this space to vehicles.
- Whether there are other permanent street furniture of fixed structures in place on the footway that already reduce access and
- Other user of the space, for example if there are high levels of pedestrian or cycle movements.

28. There is no statutory appeal process for these decisions. Instead, where an application is refused then the applicant will be entitled to appeal against the refusal decision to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services. Decisions could be challenged via judicial review.

29. Delegated authority to officers - It is proposed that the following officers are given delegated authority to grant, amend, renew, reject, revoke, issue notices and take enforcement action to include but not limited to Section 6 of the Act and any other action required under the Act:

• Licensing Manager

• Regulatory Services Manager

• Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

Functions relating to pavement licences are functions of the Council, rather than the Executive, so Council will be asked to make such delegations to officers.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	An equality impact assessment has been carried out, as the adoption and monitoring of the pavement licensing provisions will have a positive impact on individuals on grounds of disability, particularly those individuals with mobility and/or visual impairment disabilities.
Health, social and economic impact	None identified
Crime and disorder	There is a potential for the use of street furniture sited outside premises to contribute to noise or antisocial behaviour issues. The police and Community Protection Team will be consulted regarding each application and their representations taken into consideration. The legislation allows for enforcement action including the revocation of a licence where a license condition is breached, including risks to public safety or anti-social behaviour or a public nuisance.
Children and adults safeguarding	None identified
Environmental impact	There is a risk of windblown litter arising from pavement licensed areas. This would be addressed in licence conditions, as a responsibility of the licence holder subject to licence review or enforcement if necessary, and it is expected that businesses will manage pavement licensed areas responsibly. The decisions sought in this report will not in themselves impact on the environment.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Compliance	Licensing responsibilities not correctly discharged.	Up to date policy framework with public consultation. Legal advice on policy and at meeting
Reputational risks to the council	Risk of challenge if non-compliant	Legal advice on policy and at meeting

Other options considered

12. There is no statutory requirement for a local authority to have a formal pavement licence policy, however, a council can choose to adopt a policy.

13. This is for the benefit of business owners as well as reassuring the general public, it is also good practice when dealing with applications by promoting effective business practice and ensuring that all decisions as to whether to grant an application or not are proportionate, consistent and transparent.

14. Fees could be adopted at a lower level than proposed, however, these would not represent full cost recovery.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

15. The Committee is recommended to:

    a) Approve the proposed draft Norwich City Council Pavement Licence policy and recommend to Council for adoption.

    b) Approve the proposed fees at the statutory maximum, that is £500 for new applications and £350 for renewal applications and recommend to Council for adoption.

Background papers:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pavement-licences-guidance/pavement-licences-guidance

Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians - GOV.UK

Appendices:

Appendix A – Summary of changes

Appendix B - Summary of changes suggested from regulatory committee

Appendix C – Breakdown of costs for pavement licensing

Appendix D – Draft Pavement Licensing Policy

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IN TRAN communication for all	If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.

Appendix A

Table of changes

Existing	Amendment	Comment
Fee cap of £100 per application	New cap of £500 for a new application and £350 for a renewal – based on cost recovery	The increase and fee cap intend to balance both local authority and business interests. This increase in fee cap is intended to allow local authorities to recover the costs of processing, monitoring and enforcing licences
Licence length of one year	Licence length two years	As set out in the updated guidance, local authorities are encouraged to grant businesses the maximum two years unless there is a good reason to do otherwise
Seven-day consultation and seven-day determination	Fourteen-day consultation and fourteen-day determination	This change has been made to reflect requests from local authorities to have a reasonable time to process applications; while balancing businesses' need for a quick determination; and the need of members of local communities, particularly those with disabilities, to have a sufficient time to comment.
Limited enforcement powers	New enforcement powers	From the commencement date, local authorities will now, with the consent of the licence-holder, be able to amend the licence in certain circumstances. Local authorities will also be able to give notice to businesses who have placed furniture on the relevant highway without the required licence. If furniture continues to be placed on the highway, in contravention of the notice, the authority may remove and store the furniture, recover the costs from the business for the removal and storage of the furniture, and refuse to return the furniture until those costs have been paid. If within three months of the notice being served, the costs are not paid, the authority can dispose of the furniture by sale or other means and retain the proceeds

Appendix B: Suggested Amendments from the Committee

Suggested Amendment	Comments
Explicit Mobility Measurements: Instead of just referencing government guidance, members suggested including specific width measurements (such as 1.5m or 2m) for clear pedestrian routes within the policy to ensure accessibility for those with mobility issues.	Amended to include the wording: '*the absolute minimum is 1000mm, but 1500mm is the recommended minimum'*
Accessibility Audits and Training: A suggestion was made to introduce compliance audits for licences lasting two years and to require applicants to confirm that staff are trained in accessibility requirements, such as maintaining clear footways.	This recommendation will be addressed through proactive 'in-term' inspections from the Licensing Enforcement Officers.
Public online access for pavement licences	The council plans to move applications and granted licenses to a digital system (similar to planning applications) allowing the public to easily view licence details and submit comments or complaints.
Smoking Area Clarity: Members requested clearer rules and definitions regarding the interface between smoking and non-smoking areas to prevent smoke from drifting.	The following conditions have been added: 20 *Licence holders should provide a minimum 2m distance between non-smoking and smoking areas, wherever possible*. 21 *Clear 'smoking' and 'non-smoking' areas, with 'no smoking' signage displayed in designated 'smoke-free' zones in accordance with Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2012*. 22 *No ash trays or similar receptacles to be provided or permitted to be left on furniture where smoke-free seating is identified.*

Environmental Recommendations: The committee suggested recommending low-carbon outdoor heating (e.g., infrared heaters) rather than gas heaters to align with environmental goals.	Wording added: *"It is recommended that low-carbon outdoor heaters are used for this purpose*."
Noise and ASB Guidance: There was a proposal to add guidance requiring licence holders to demonstrate measures for preventing noise and antisocial behaviour, such as using signage and staff monitoring.	This recommendation will be addressed through proactive 'in-term' inspections from the Licensing Enforcement Officers.

Appendix C

Breakdown of costs for pavement licensing

Activity	**Times hrs/mins**	**Comments**	**Cost (new)**	**Cost (renewal)**
Pre-application advice	00:45 (00:15)		£36.00	£12
General administration	5.00 (4:25)		£196.50	£160.5
Mileage to inspect premises and notice		Av 10 miles at 45p	£4:50	£4.50
Appeals process including inspection	2:00		£96.00	£96.00
Mileage		Av 10 miles at 45p	£4.50	£4.50
Anticipated compliance / enforcement costs including suspension and revocations	1:5 (00:45)		£72.00	£36.00
Support costs	2:00		£96.00	£96.00
TOTAL COSTS			£501	£393
Proposed fees		**Capped rates: £500 for New Apps £350 for Renewals**	**£500**	**£350**

Average officer hourly rate (with on costs) £48

NORWICH
City Council

Item 6

Pavement Licensing Policy

Title Pavement Licensing Policy

Owner Vicki Hopps

Approval level Cabinet

Version v1.0

Published date TBC

Review period as required by changes in legislation

Review date June 2031

Relevant legislation or regulation Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023

Version control			
Date	Version number	Reason	Author
November 2025	V1.0	Updated legislation	Vicki Hopps

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Introduction

This policy explains how Norwich City Council (the Council) applies the Pavement Licensing system. It tells licence holders how to obtain a licence, what conditions may apply, and how we regulate pavement licensing in the city.

The Pavement Licence system was introduced under the Business and Planning Act 2020 to simplify the process for businesses to place furniture—such as tables and chairs—on public pavements. Originally temporary, this system has now been made permanent through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Norwich City Council is authorised to issue pavement licences, allowing specified furniture on highways (mainly footpaths and pedestrian areas). Businesses may still need other licences depending on the activities carried out in the licensed area.

Scope

What is a pavement licence

A pavement licence allows a business to place temporary furniture—like tables and chairs—on the pavement outside their premises. This furniture can be used to serve food or drinks, or for customers to sit and enjoy food or drinks bought from that business.

Important Things to Know

The licence only gives permission to place furniture on the pavement.

Businesses still need to follow other rules, such as:

- Having a licence to sell alcohol.
- Having sufficient toilet facilities.
- Being registered as a food business, etc.

Planning Permission

Once a pavement licence is approved (or automatically granted), the business also gets planning permission to use the pavement space in line with the licence, for as long as the licence is valid.

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Eligible Businesses

Any business that sells food or drink for customers to eat or drink on or off the premises can apply for a pavement licence.

This includes businesses such as:

- Pubs
- Cafés
- Bars
- Restaurants
- Snack bars
- Coffee shops
- Ice cream parlours
- Or other similar types of businesses

Type of furniture permitted

A pavement licence, may allow the use of the following types of furniture such as:

- Counters or stalls for selling or serving food or non-alcoholic drinks
- Tables, counters, or shelves for placing food or drink
- Chairs, benches, or other seating
- Umbrellas, barriers, heaters, and other items used to support outdoor eating and drinking, etc.

Important Requirements

- All furniture must be removable—this means it should not be permanently fixed and must be easy to move and store away overnight.
- Furniture must be fit for purpose, designed for commercial outdoor use, and meet relevant British Standards (BS).
- It must be kept in good condition—damaged or faded items should be replaced.
- The style of furniture should be appropriate for the local area and not look out of place.

Times of Operation

Businesses can only place tables and chairs on the pavement while they are open. Even then, there are time limits:

- Friday and Saturday: between 08:00 and 23:00
- Sunday to Thursday: between 08:00 and 22:30

The Council may set shorter operating hours if needed—for example, due to local concerns or planned changes in the area.

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Application and determination of pavement licences

Applications

The following will be required to be submitted with the application:

- a completed application form
- the required fee
- a plan showing the location of the premises shown by a red line, so the application site can be clearly identified
- a clear plan showing the area of the highway the application is requesting to have licensed, with measurements clearly shown. The plan must show the positions and number of the proposed tables and chairs, together with any other items that they wish to place on the highway. The plan shall include clear measurements of, for example, pathway width/length, building width and any other fixed item in the proposed area.
- the proposed days of the week on which, and the times of day between which, it is proposed to put furniture on the highway,
- where the proposed licenced area falls wholly or partly in front of another premises, written agreement from the owner or occupier of the premises must be provided;
- photos or brochures showing the proposed type of furniture and information on potential siting of it within the area applied;
- (if applicable) reference of an existing tables and chairs licence application currently under consideration by the Council;
- evidence that the applicant has met the requirement to give notice of the application (for example photographs of the notice outside the premises and of the notice itself);
- a copy of a current certificate of insurance that covers the activity for third party and public liability risks, to a minimum value of £5 million, and
- any other evidence needed to demonstrate how the Council's local conditions, and any national conditions will be satisfied.

The Council is required by law to consult with the Highways Authority. In addition, to ensure that there are not detrimental effects to the application the Council will consult with other relevant groups of bodies, the full list is here:-

- Norfolk County Council Highways
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Inclusive Norwich
- Norwich City Council Environmental Protection Team
- Norwich City Council Food and Safety Team
- Norwich City Council Environmental Services

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- Norwich City Council Street Trading
- Norwich City Council Planning Team
- Any other relevant authority
- Residents and Councillors

Members of the public and others listed above can contact the Council to make representations, either in support of the application or to object to it.

The Council will publish details of the application on its website at www.norwich.gov.uk.

The Council must consider representations received during the public consultation period and when determining the application.

Fees

There is an application fee and a renewal fee payable every two years. Details can be found on the application form and Norwich City Council website.

Insurance

If you're applying for a pavement licence, you must have public liability insurance of at least £5 million to cover any single incident. This insurance protects against claims for injury, damage, or loss that might happen because of the furniture placed on the pavement.

Before your licence can be issued, you'll need to provide a copy of your insurance to Norwich City Council.

Litter

If you have a pavement licence, you must keep the area around your tables and chairs clean and tidy. This means:

- Rubbish and litter must be collected at least once every hour, or more often if required.
- Do not use public litter bins for business waste. All rubbish must go into your commercial (trade) waste bins.
- Clear tables as soon as possible after customers leave, to help prevent litter from being left on the pavement.

Site Notice

When you apply for a pavement licence, you must put up a notice at your premises on the same day you submit your application. This notice must:

- Be easy to see and read for people passing by, even if they're not entering your premises.

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- Be securely fixed so it stays in place for the entire public consultation period.

You also need to provide evidence to Norwich City Council that the notice has been displayed correctly.

This helps make sure the public is aware of your application and has a chance to comment.

The Site Notice must:-

- state that the application has been made and the date on which it was made;
- state the statutory provisions under which the application is made;
- state the address of the premises and name of the business;
- describe the proposed use of the furniture;
- indicate that representations relating to the application may be made to the Council during the public consultation period and when that period comes to an end;
- state the Council's website where the application and any accompanying material can be viewed during the consultation period;
- state the address to which representations should be sent during the consultation period; and
- the end date of the consultation (14 days starting the day after the application is submitted to the Council).

A template Site Notice is shown as Appendix 1.

Site Assessment

The following matters will be used by the Council and consultees in considering the suitability of the proposed application:

- whether the licenced area sought is a highway of the status where a pavement licence could be lawfully granted, i.e. a highway to which part 7A of the Highways Act 1980 applies;
- public health and safety – for example, ensuring any reasonable crowd management measures needed as a result of a licence being granted;
- crime and disorder – will the proposed use have an impact on the likelihood of crime and/or disorder occurring;
- public amenity – will the proposed use create nuisance to neighbouring occupiers by generating anti-social behaviour and litter; and
- accessibility – taking a proportionate approach to considering the nature of the site in relation to which the application for a licence is made, its surroundings and its users, taking account of:
- any other temporary measures in place that may be relevant to the proposal, for example, the reallocation of road space. This could include pedestrianised streets and any subsequent reallocation of this space to vehicles;
- whether there are other permanent street furniture or structures in place on the footway that already reduce access;

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- the impact on any neighbouring premises
- the recommended minimum footway widths and distances required for access by mobility impaired and visually impaired people as set out in Section 4.2of the DfT best practice guidance Inclusive Mobility, which states that the absolute minimum is 1000mm, but 1500mm is the recommended minimum, and
- other users of the space, for example if there are high levels of pedestrian or cycle movements.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to talk to neighbouring businesses, residents and occupiers prior to applying to the Council, and so take any issues around noise and nuisance into consideration as part of the proposal.

Determination

When you apply for a pavement licence, Norwich City Council follows a 28-day process:

- The first 14 calendar days are for public consultation, where people can give feedback on your application.
- The next 14 calendar days are for the Council to make a decision. Public holidays are not included in this timeline.

If the Council didn't make a decision within the 14-day determination period, your licence will be automatically granted. However, it will still be subject to any local conditions that were published before you submitted your application.

When considering applications, the Council will have regard to:

- the Act
- any supporting regulations
- guidance issued by the Home Office
- this Statement of Licensing Policy
- any objections made
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Equality Act 2010
- any other relevant legislation or guidance

Everyone has the right to apply for a pavement licence, and each application will be considered fairly on its own merits.

This policy does not take away anyone's right to object to an application, as long as they are allowed to do so under the law.

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When determining applications, the Council will take account of any comments or representations made by:

- Norfolk County Council Highways
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Inclusive Norwich
- Norwich City Council Environmental Protection Team
- Norwich City Council Food and Safety Team
- Norwich City Council Environmental Services
- Norwich City Council Street Trading Team
- Norwich City Council Planning Team
- Any other relevant authority
- Residents and Councillors

The Council reserves the right to consult any other body that it considers appropriate.

In considering licensing decisions the Council will be mindful of the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. Decisions will be taken with due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

If the Council determines the application before the end of the determination period, the Council can:

- grant the licence in respect of any or all of the purposes specified in the application,
- grant the licence for some or all of the part of the highway specified in the application,
- impose conditions, or
- refuse the application.

If the Council does not determine the application within the 14-day period, the application will be deemed to have been granted.

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Approval of Applications

If your application meets the Council's guidelines, it may be approved. When a licence is granted, it will include:

- Conditions you must follow.
- Specific terms, such as:
    - The days and times you're allowed to place tables and chairs outside.
    - The appearance and location of the furniture, based on your application.

The Council has a set of standard conditions that apply to all pavement licences (see Appendix 2). In some cases, extra conditions may be added if needed.

Permitted Trading Hours

Licences will allow trading during the following times:

- Friday and Saturday: 08:00 to 23:00
- Sunday to Thursday: 08:00 to 22:30

However, the Council may set shorter hours if it considers it appropriate for a particular location or situation.

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Licence Duration

Pavement licences in Norwich are usually granted for the maximum period of two years, in line with government guidance. This applies to both new applications and renewals (once an existing annual licence expires).

However, in some cases, the Council may issue a licence for a shorter period—for example, if there are plans to change how the road or pavement space will be used in the future or concerns about nuisance.

Refusal of Applications

If the site is deemed unsuitable for a Pavement licence, or if relevant representations are made which cannot be mitigated by conditions then the application may be refused.

Conditions

Norwich City Council has a set of standard conditions that apply to all pavement licences. These are listed in Appendix 2 of the Council's policy.

In some cases, the Council may require additional conditions depending on the specific location or circumstances of your application. These are decided case by case during the assessment process.

If the Council sets a local condition that covers the same issue as a national condition, the local condition will take priority—but only if there's a good reason for doing so.

However, one condition always applies and cannot be overridden:

- The statutory no-obstruction condition; which ensures that furniture placed on the pavement does not block access for pedestrians, including those with disabilities.

Enforcement

Norwich City Council works closely with other enforcement agencies to make sure all relevant laws are followed. It's important to know that blocking the highway is still an offence under the Highways Act 1980 and may be dealt with by the Highways Authority or the Police.

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Getting a pavement licence does not exempt you from other legal responsibilities. You must make sure you have all the necessary permissions in place before applying, including:

- Public liability insurance
- Health and safety compliance
- Food hygiene and safety registration
- Alcohol and entertainment licences (if applicable)

If you break a condition of your licence—whether it's set by the Council or part of national rules—the Council can:

- Issue a notice requiring you to fix the issue
- Take action themselves to resolve it
- Recover the costs from you for doing so

The Council may revoke a licence in the following circumstances:

1. For breach of condition, (whether or not a remediation notice has been issued) or
2. Where:
   i) There are risks to public health
   ii) the highway is being obstructed (other than by anything permitted by the licence);
   iii) there is anti-social behaviour or public nuisance;
   iv) it comes to light that the applicant provided false or misleading statements in their application;
   v) the applicant did not comply with the requirement to affix the notice to notify the public for the relevant period.
3. The Council may also revoke the licence where all or any part of the area of the relevant highway to which the licence relates has become unsuitable for any purpose for which the licence was granted or deemed to be granted. For example, the licensed area (or road adjacent) is no longer to be pedestrianised. The Council will give reasons where these powers are used.

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Delegation of authority

Determination of an application

After the 14-day public consultation period ends, if there are no objections or concerns, your application will be reviewed and decided by a member of the Regulatory Services Team within the next 14 days.

If there are objections or concerns, the application will still be decided by an officer from the Regulatory Services Team—but they will first consult with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

Licence Enforcement

If there are issues with how a pavement licence is being used, the Council may take action.

If the problem can be fixed, the Council may issue a remediation notice asking the licence holder to correct the issue. This decision will be made by a Council officer.

If the issue is more serious and the licence needs to be revoked, the decision will be made by an officer from the Regulatory Services Team, but only after consulting with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

Furniture Removal

If a business puts tables, chairs, or other furniture on a public pavement or pedestrian area without a valid pavement licence, the Council can issue a formal notice.

This notice will:

- Require the business to remove the furniture by a specific date.
- Instruct the business to stop placing furniture on the highway unless they apply for and are granted a licence.

This helps ensure public spaces remain safe, accessible, and properly managed.

If a business continues to place furniture on the pavement after being told to remove it, the Council may:

- Remove and store the furniture.
- Charge the business for the cost of removing and storing it.
- Refuse to return the furniture until those costs are paid.

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If the costs are not paid within 3 months, the Council can sell or dispose of the furniture, and keep the proceeds.

Appeals

There is no statutory appeal process for these decisions. Instead, where an application is refused then the applicant will be entitled to appeal against the refusal decision to the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services.

Policy review procedures

This Policy covers the Permission for Pavement Licences under the Business and Planning Act.

The Policy will be reviewed when deemed necessary by the Council or should changes occur in relevant legislation.

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Appendix 1

NORWICH
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Notice of application for a Pavement Licence Business and Planning Act 2020

I _____(*name of applicant*) do hereby give notice that on _____(*date*) I have applied to Norwich City Council for a 'Pavement Licence' at (*premises name, address & site location*)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please provide a brief description of application [*e.g. outdoor seating to the front of the premises for serving of food and drink*]):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Details of the application can be viewed online at www.norwich.gov.uk

Any person wishing to make representations to this application may do so in writing to licensing@norwich.gov.uk or Licensing, Norwich City Council, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich NR2 1NH by: _____(*end date of 7 day consultation period*)

Signed

_____

Dated _____

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Appendix 2

NORWICH City Council

Pavement Licence – Norwich City Council conditions

These are in addition to the national conditions that apply to all granted pavement licences (no obstruction, smoke free area)

The council may revoke this licence pursuant to the powers contained in section 6 of the Business and Planning Act 2020.

1 The licence holder shall indemnify the Council against any claim whatsoever, in respect of injury, damage or loss arising out of the grant of this permission other than injury, damage or loss which is attributable to the negligence of the Council.

2 The licence holder shall ensure that public liability insurance cover to the value of £5 million is in effect to cover the Pavement Licence and maintained for the duration of the licence period

3 The objects or structures shall be placed only on the licensed area shown on the plans and on no other part of the public highway.

4 The objects or structures shall be used only for the purposes specified in the licence and only in connection with the premises and will be maintained in a tidy condition.

5 The objects or structures shall be immediately removed from the public highway upon the direction of an authorised officer or police constable in uniform.

6 The objects or structures shall be placed in a position that will not hinder the clear passage of any emergency service vehicles or any vehicle engaged on the repair or maintenance of the public highway or apparatus within the public highway or any other vehicle authorised by the Council to proceed on the public highway.

7 Permission for the furniture and other objects is granted from **(time of day/month of year)** to **(time of day/month of year)** (subject to early or temporary termination under clause 14 or early termination of the licence under section 6 of the Business and Planning Act 2020).

8 No amplified music or live music shall take place on the licensed area.

9 The objects and structures permitted by this licence, shall be removed from the licensed area each day by the end of the licence period and stored securely.

10 The licence holder shall ensure that the licensed area is mainly enclosed by a barrier that is in keeping with the visual appearance of the area, not less than 800mm high and with no more than 150mm between the base rail and the ground, or other design as previously agreed in writing by the Council. Neither the barrier nor other furniture

should carry strident advertising that goes beyond the purpose of discreetly identifying that the pavement cafe is associated with a particular business.

11 The licence holder shall ensure that the licensed area is closely monitored and kept clean and tidy at all times.

12 The licence holder shall ensure that the footway or any other areas outside the licensed area must not be obstructed by patrons standing, or by the personal possessions of patrons.

13 No alteration to the highway surface shall be permitted to be carried out by the licence holder in implementing this licence

14 The Council may, by service of a notice in writing on the licence holder withdraw the licence temporarily:-

(a) in an emergency or should the Council consider the exercise of the licence is causing a substantial and unreasonable obstruction of the right of the public to pass or re-pass on the public highway,

(b) if the Council considers it to be necessary in connection with the exercise of any of its functions or the functions of any statutory undertaker or public utility,

(c) or any other reasonable cause.

15 Objects and structures must be sufficiently spaced to enable patrons to safely walk between them.

16 The cost of rectifying any damage to the highway surface or to street furniture caused by any activity connected with the Pavement Licence will be recharged to the licence holder.

17 The licence is issued to the applicant only and is not transferable.

18 Where the licensed area extends beyond the frontage of the application premises and requires consent from a third party, the licence, in as much as it relates to the area requiring the consent of the third party only, will remain in force only whilst the consent remains valid.

19 For licensed areas used for the consumption of food or drink, the licence holder shall make provision for seating where smoking or vaping is not permitted.

20 Licence holders should provide a minimum 2m distance between non-smoking and smoking areas, wherever possible.

21 Clear ‘smoking’ and ‘non-smoking’ areas, with ‘no smoking’ signage displayed in designated ‘smoke-free’ zones in accordance with Smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2012.

22 No ash trays or similar receptacles to be provided or permitted to be left on furniture where smoke-free seating is identified.

23 The licence holder shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that any furniture, items or persons associated with the use of the licence do not:-

(a) prevent traffic, other than vehicular traffic, from—

(i) entering the relevant highway at a place where such traffic could otherwise enter it (ignoring any pedestrian planning order or traffic order made in relation to the highway),

(ii) passing along the relevant highway, or

(iii) having normal access to premises adjoining the relevant highway,

(b) preventing any use of vehicles which is permitted by a pedestrian planning order or which is not prohibited by a traffic order,

(c) preventing statutory undertakers having access to any apparatus of theirs under, in, on or over the highway, or

(d) preventing the operator of an electronic communications code network having access to any electronic communications apparatus kept installed for the purposes of that network under, in, on or over the highway.

24 Any patio heaters or similar devices authorised by this licence shall not be used at any time between the 1st April and 30th September inclusive. It is recommended that low-carbon outdoor heaters are used for this purpose.

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IN TRAN communication for all

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NORWICH City Council

Item 7

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 29/07/2026

Report title: Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027

Portfolio: Councillor Knight, Cabinet member for healthier neighbourhoods (culture and wellbeing)

Report from: Executive director of communities and housing

Wards: All wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. approves the Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027, attached at Appendix A;
2. notes the Equality Impact Assessment, attached at Appendix B, and the mitigations and monitoring arrangements set out within it;
3. authorises the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Section 151 Officer where required, to make minor operational amendments to the policy, forms, guidance and assurance processes needed to implement the scheme; and
4. agrees that an implementation review is undertaken during the first year of operation, informed by proportionate feedback from funded groups, ward councillors and officers, with the policy reviewed annually thereafter, or earlier if required due to legislative, governance, audit, budget, operational or Local Government Reorganisation changes.

Policy framework
The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern Council.
- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.

This report particularly supports the following corporate priorities:

- A fairer Norwich, by supporting inclusive local activity, reducing barriers to small-scale community participation and enabling activity in neighbourhoods experiencing disadvantage.

- An open and modern Council, by establishing clear, transparent and proportionate governance for ward-based local decision-making.

- A future-proof Norwich, by strengthening community resilience, volunteering, local networks and pride in place.

The report also supports the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, neighbourhood and community enabling approaches, and the Council's commitment to reducing inequalities and supporting residents in Reducing Inequality Target Areas.

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are no direct Local Government Reorganisation implications arising from the recommendations. The policy applies to the 2026-2027 financial year and includes a first-year implementation review and provision for annual review thereafter, or earlier review if required as a result of legislative, governance, budget, audit, operational or Local Government Reorganisation changes. The scheme may also support local community resilience during a period of wider organisational and local government transition.

Executive Summary

This report seeks Cabinet approval for the Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027. The policy establishes a light-touch, proportionate and transparent framework enabling ward councillors to support small-scale community activity within their wards through locally allocated budgets.

For 2026-2027, each ward councillor will receive an allocation of £2,000, equivalent to £6,000 per ward. Across Norwich's 13 wards, this represents a total scheme budget of £78,000, funded from the budget approved by Council for this purpose. No additional budget is sought through this report.

The policy sets out the purpose, scope, eligible recipients and activity, exclusions, decision-making and approval arrangements, payment conditions, monitoring and transparency requirements, and safeguards relating to interests, pre-election periods and ward vacancies. It allows proportionate staff and running costs where directly linked to eligible community activity, provides assisted and non-digital access where needed, and includes clearer communication about payment times, pauses and delays.

Targeted engagement has been undertaken with the Council's Neighbourhood and Community Enabling Manager, Norfolk Community Foundation, Norwich Charitable Trusts, FUSE Network and the relevant Portfolio Holder. Feedback was supportive of the proposed light-touch, proportionate and community-focused approach and has informed amendments relating to eligible core costs, continuation funding, accessible application support, payment and pause communications, and the first-year review of the scheme.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix B. It identifies an overall positive equality impact, particularly in relation to socio-economic disadvantage, community participation and neighbourhood inclusion. No significant unavoidable adverse equality impacts have been identified. Risks relating to consistency, digital or form-filling barriers, accessibility and transparency are considered manageable through alternative access routes, officer assurance checks, published monitoring and the first-year implementation review.

Cabinet is recommended to approve the policy so that the scheme can be implemented lawfully, transparently and consistently across all wards. Subject to Cabinet approval, and the subsequent call-in period ending, the planned start date for the scheme is 12pm on Friday 7 August 2026.

Report details

Purpose and background

1. The Ward Councillor Community Budget Scheme provides a simple, flexible and locally responsive way for Norwich ward councillors to support small-scale community activity within their wards.

2. The scheme is intended to support practical neighbourhood-based activity, enable councillors to respond to local priorities and opportunities, encourage resident participation and community action, and strengthen local connection, wellbeing and pride in place.

3. The scheme is ward councillor-led and community-focused. It is designed to operate on a light-touch and proportionate basis, recognising the relatively small scale of funding involved.

4. The scheme is not an open application-based grant programme. Funding requests will normally be initiated or supported by ward councillors in response to identified local needs, opportunities or community ideas.

5. The policy complements, rather than replaces, the Council's wider community enabling work and existing funding programmes.

Scope and budget

6. The annual budget for the scheme will be the amount approved by Council for that purpose within the relevant financial year. The approved budget will be allocated equally across the city's 13 wards to ensure all parts of the city have a fair opportunity to support local community priorities.

7. For 2026-2027, each ward councillor will receive an allocation of £2,000, equivalent to £6,000 per ward. This provides a total city-wide scheme budget of £78,000.

8. Ward allocations may be combined where activity demonstrably benefits more than one ward, and the relevant councillors support this approach.

9. Ward allocations must be committed by 31 January each financial year unless otherwise agreed by the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture. Approved activity must take place, and funding must be spent within 12 months of approval.

10. Uncommitted balances remaining after the annual deadline will not be carried forward and will return to corporate balances at year end.

Scheme principles and eligible activity

11. The scheme will operate in line with the principles of being local and community-led, member-led and accountable, light-touch and proportionate, enabling and flexible, fair and transparent, and lawful and financially proper.

12. Funding may be provided to not-for-profit community organisations, charities, community interest companies, tenant and resident associations, friends' groups, Parent Teacher Associations, schools for non-statutory community activity, faith groups for inclusive community activity, and informal groups of at least three Norwich residents.

13. Where an informal group does not have a suitable bank account, the Council may require use of an accountable body or agree to purchase goods or services directly on the group's behalf.

14. The scheme may support small-scale, time-limited or clearly defined new, pilot or continuing activity where there is an identifiable local community benefit. This may include community events, neighbourhood clean-up or greening activity, minor equipment or materials, venue hire, volunteer expenses, insurance, start-up support for grassroots groups, small creative, cultural or wellbeing activity, consultation or engagement activity, pilot projects, and a proportionate contribution towards staff time or organisational running costs where these are directly connected to eligible community activity.

15. Recipients will be expected to explain in simple terms what need has been identified, what will be done to meet that need, who will benefit and what difference the activity will make to their lives, which ward or neighbourhood will benefit, and how the activity contributes positively to the local community.

Exclusions and safeguards

16. The policy sets out clear exclusions. The scheme will not support retrospective costs, party-political activity, campaigning or lobbying, activity which could reasonably be viewed as conferring party-political advantage, unlawful, unsafe or discriminatory activity, statutory services or routine maintenance responsibilities of public bodies, general organisational deficits, debt repayment or unrestricted core costs not clearly and proportionately linked to eligible community activity, activity primarily intended for private profit or individual benefit, alcohol, loans, gifts or direct cash payments to individuals, duplicate funding from another Council funding source, or recurring commitments which create an expectation of future annual funding.

17. Councillors involved in funding decisions must declare relevant interests in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and must not participate where required by law or Council governance arrangements.

18. The Council may pause or defer decisions during pre-election periods, ward vacancies or other periods of heightened sensitivity where necessary to protect the integrity and neutrality of the scheme. No new funding approvals will be made during formal pre-election periods. Where approvals are paused or a

request is deferred, affected ward councillors and recipients will be informed of the reason, the expected duration where known and the next steps.

19. Recipients must avoid publicity which could reasonably be perceived as conferring electoral advantage. Publicity connected with supported activity must not imply party-political ownership or endorsement.

Decision making, approvals and payment

20. Requests will normally be submitted by ward councillors using a short digital form, and councillors are encouraged to work collectively wherever possible, particularly where activity benefits multiple communities or wards. Where digital access or form-filling would otherwise present a barrier, ward councillors or relevant Council officers may help a group provide the required information by telephone, in person, by email or in paper form.

21. Officers will undertake proportionate assurance checks to confirm that the proposal falls within the scope of the scheme, sufficient budget remains available, and there are no obvious legal, financial or governance concerns.

22. Applications raising significant legal, safeguarding, subsidy control, reputational or financial concerns may be referred for additional review or declined.

23. Where ward councillors are unable to reach a shared position, where conflicts of interest arise, or where there are governance concerns preventing reliance on councillor support, the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder where appropriate, may determine the request in line with the policy.

24. Operational approval of compliant requests may be undertaken by officers authorised by the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture. The Council will aim to process complete funding requests within 10 working days from receipt of all required information.

25. Funding will normally be paid by BACS to an eligible organisation, constituted group or accountable body. Where appropriate, the Council may instead purchase goods or services directly on behalf of a community group. Once a request has been approved and all recipient acceptance, supplier or payee information and other required documentation have been received, the Council will aim to arrange payment or confirm a direct purchase within 10 working days. Councillors and recipients will be informed promptly if further information is needed or payment is likely to be delayed.

26. Recipients must agree to standard funding conditions before payment or purchase is made. Conditions will include requirements to use funding only for the agreed purpose, notify the Council of significant changes, spend the funding within 12 months unless otherwise agreed, return unspent or misapplied funding if requested, provide proportionate evidence that the activity took place, and acknowledge that an award does not create any expectation of repeat or future funding from the scheme.

Monitoring and transparency

27. Monitoring requirements will remain proportionate to the scale of funding provided. For most activity, a short email update, photographs, copies of receipts, publicity material or a summary of activity will normally be sufficient.

28. The Council will maintain a record of expenditure and publish summary information at least quarterly. This will include the ward, recipient, amount provided and a short description of the supported activity, subject to normal data protection requirements.

29. As this is a new scheme, an implementation review will be undertaken during its first year of operation. The review will draw on expenditure and monitoring information, processing and payment times, complaints or recurring operational issues, and proportionate feedback from funded groups, ward councillors and administering officers. The policy will be reviewed annually thereafter and may also be reviewed earlier if required due to legislative, governance, audit, budget, operational or Local Government Reorganisation changes.

Equality considerations

30. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix B.

31. The assessment identifies that the proposal is likely to have an overall positive equality impact, particularly in relation to socio-economic disadvantage, community participation and neighbourhood inclusion. It may support communities and groups who may find larger or more complex grant funding processes difficult to access.

32. Potential beneficiaries include community organisations, tenant and resident associations, grassroots groups, schools and Parent Teacher Associations, faith groups, volunteers, informal resident groups, people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, residents within Reducing Inequality Target Areas, older residents, disabled residents, young people, minority ethnic communities, carers and socially isolated residents.

33. No significant unavoidable adverse equality impacts have been identified. Some risks remain regarding consistency of local engagement, digital or form-filling barriers and accessibility of supported activity; however, these risks are considered low and manageable through alternative access routes, assistance from ward councillors or officers, proportionate assurance processes, guidance, transparency, monitoring and the first-year implementation review.

34. The EqIA has informed the policy by reinforcing the importance of maintaining a light-touch and accessible approach, ensuring transparency and fairness, including explicit exclusions relating to discriminatory activity, retaining proportionate but robust assurance checks, recognising the importance of RITAs and socio-economic disadvantage, and ensuring inclusive participation and accessibility are considered within supported activity. It has also informed alternative and assisted access routes and the monitoring of accessibility and underrepresentation through the first-year review.

Options available to Cabinet

35. Cabinet may approve the policy as attached at Appendix A. This is the recommended option as it provides a clear, lawful and proportionate framework to enable the scheme to operate during 2026-2027. Cabinet is recommended to approve the policy so that the scheme can be implemented lawfully, transparently and consistently across all wards. Subject to Cabinet approval, and the subsequent call-in period ending, the planned start date for the scheme is 12pm on Friday 7 August 2026.

36. Cabinet may approve the policy subject to amendments. This option is available if Cabinet wishes to change the proposed approach, although any substantive changes may require further legal, finance or equality review before implementation.

37. Cabinet may decide not to approve the policy. This is not recommended as it would delay implementation of the scheme and would leave ward-based community budget activity without the proposed governance, assurance and transparency framework.

Consultation

38. The proposal has been developed with regard to the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, We Are Norwich Community-Led Plan, knowledge of existing inequalities across Norwich, Indices of Multiple Deprivation and RITA profiles, officer experience of community enabling and neighbourhood working, and understanding of barriers often experienced by smaller grassroots organisations.

39. Targeted pre-decision engagement has been undertaken with the Council's Neighbourhood and Community Enabling Manager, Norfolk Community Foundation, Norwich Charitable Trusts, FUSE Network and the relevant Portfolio Holder. Feedback was strongly supportive of the scheme's light-touch, proportionate and community-focused approach. It highlighted the importance of allowing proportionate support for core costs and the continuation of effective community activity, clearly communicating payment times and pauses in decision-making, supporting groups facing digital or form-filling barriers, and using feedback from funded groups to improve the scheme. These points have been incorporated into the final policy.

40. As the scheme establishes an enabling framework rather than a targeted service intervention, no wider formal public consultation has been undertaken. Ward councillors will be provided with guidance and support on the operation of the scheme following approval. Operational learning and feedback will inform the first-year implementation review and subsequent annual reviews.

Implications

Financial and resources

41. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council’s stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan “We are Norwich” and budget.

42. The recommendations in this report do not seek any additional budget. The scheme will operate within the budget approved by Council for this purpose.

43. For 2026-2027, the policy provides for an allocation of £2,000 per ward councillor, equivalent to £6,000 per ward. Across the city's 13 wards, this represents a total budget of £78,000.

44. Uncommitted balances remaining after the annual deadline will not be carried forward and will return to corporate balances at year end.

45. The scheme will require proportionate officer time to administer the request process, support alternative access where required, undertake assurance checks, process payments or purchases, maintain records, publish monitoring information, gather proportionate feedback and support the first-year implementation review and subsequent annual reviews. This will be managed within existing resources, subject to ongoing review of operational demand.

46. Any purchases made directly by the Council on behalf of a community group will be managed in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal

47. The policy has been drafted to operate in accordance with relevant legislation and governance requirements including the Local Government Act 1972, Localism Act 2011, Equality Act 2010, Subsidy Control Act 2022, Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council's Constitution, Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules and relevant data protection legislation.

48. The policy includes safeguards relating to political neutrality, councillor interests, pre-election periods, unlawful or discriminatory activity, subsidy control, financial propriety, data protection and monitoring. Requests raising significant legal, safeguarding, subsidy control, reputational or financial concerns may be referred for additional review or declined.

49. No direct human rights implications have been identified at this stage.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	**Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:**
Equality and diversity	An EqIA has been completed and is attached at Appendix B. The assessment identifies an overall positive equality impact, particularly in relation to socio-economic disadvantage, community participation and neighbourhood inclusion. No significant unavoidable adverse impacts have been identified. Mitigations include clear exclusions for discriminatory activity, proportionate officer assurance, alternative and assisted access routes, transparency requirements, monitoring and a first-year implementation review.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)	The proposal applies to all wards, and all Norwich RITAs may potentially benefit. The scheme is intended to support locally identified need, community resilience and small-scale neighbourhood activity. The EqIA recognises the relevance of RITAs and recommends monitoring distribution and emerging themes where proportionate.
Health, social and economic impact	The scheme may have positive social and wellbeing impacts by supporting social connection, volunteering, inclusion, neighbourhood cohesion, local environmental quality and pride in place. It may also support small grassroots activity that contributes to wider social determinants of health.
Crime and disorder	No adverse crime and disorder impacts have been identified. Some supported activity may contribute positively to community safety, local cohesion or environmental improvements. Requests raising community safety or safeguarding concerns may be referred for additional review.
Children and adults safeguarding	The policy requires appropriate permissions and safeguarding arrangements where relevant. Activities raising safeguarding concerns may be escalated for additional review or declined. Recipients remain responsible for complying with relevant safeguarding duties and good practice.
Environmental impact	The scheme may support small-scale positive environmental activity, including neighbourhood clean-up or greening projects. Environmental impacts are expected to be low due to the scale of funding. Any activity requiring permissions, creating ongoing liabilities or raising environmental concerns may be escalated for review before approval.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Inconsistent decision-making or perceived unfairness across wards. Overall risk: medium/low.	Reputational risk and challenge from residents, councillors or community groups if decisions are perceived as inconsistent or insufficiently transparent.	Clear policy scope, principles, eligibility and exclusions; short standard request form; internal decision record; officer assurance checks; quarterly publication of spend and supported activity; first-year implementation review and annual review thereafter.
Misuse of funds, insufficient evidence or weak audit trail. Overall risk: medium/low.	Financial, audit or reputational risk if funding is not used for the approved purpose or if decisions cannot be evidenced.	Standard funding conditions; BACS payments to eligible organisations or accountable bodies where possible; option for direct Council purchase; requirement to retain evidence and provide proportionate end-of-project updates; ability to reclaim unspent or misapplied funding.
Political bias, interests or pre-election sensitivity. Overall risk: medium.	Risk that funding or publicity could be perceived as conferring party-political advantage or that councillor interests are not appropriately managed.	Explicit exclusion of party-political activity, campaigning and lobbying; councillor declarations of interest; no new approvals during formal pre-election periods; clear communication where decisions are paused or deferred; publicity must not imply party-political ownership or endorsement; escalation to the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture where concerns arise.

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Equality, accessibility or underrepresentation risks. Overall risk: low.	Some groups may be less likely to access opportunities if local engagement is not broad or if supported activity is not accessible.	EqIA completed; inclusive policy wording; exclusions for discriminatory activity; encouragement for councillors to engage broadly; assisted and non-digital access routes; officer challenge where accessibility concerns are identified; monitoring of emerging issues and underrepresentation through the first-year implementation review and annual review thereafter.
Legal, subsidy control, safeguarding or reputational concerns in individual requests. Overall risk: low/medium.	Potential non-compliance or reputational harm if higher-risk requests are approved without appropriate review.	Proportionate officer assurance checks; ability to refer higher-risk proposals for additional legal, finance, safeguarding or governance review; ability to decline requests outside scope or raising significant concerns.
Operational capacity to administer the scheme. Overall risk: low/medium.	Processing delays or inconsistent records if demand exceeds available capacity.	Light-touch process; digital request form with alternative access routes; standard internal decision record; 10 working day processing aim once complete information is received; payment target once all required documentation is complete; clear communication where delays arise; monitoring of workload, processing and payment times; proportionate recipient feedback and first-year implementation review.

Other options considered

50. Do nothing/no formal policy. This is not recommended because it would not provide a clear governance, financial assurance or transparency framework for the use of public funds.

51. Operate as a fully open application-based grant programme. This is not recommended because it would create a more complex and resource-intensive process that would be disproportionate to the scale and purpose of the funding. It would also reduce the intended flexibility and local responsiveness of the scheme.

52. Operate a fully officer-led centralised scheme. This is not recommended because it would not deliver the member-led, ward-based and locally responsive purpose of the scheme.

53. Require all recipients to be formally constituted organisations. This is not recommended because it would create unnecessary barriers for informal resident and grassroots groups. The proposed approach mitigates risk through accountable body arrangements or direct Council purchase where needed.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

54. Approval of the policy will provide a clear, proportionate and transparent framework for the Ward Councillor Community Budget Scheme during 2026-2027.

55. The recommended approach enables councillors to respond flexibly to local community priorities and opportunities while ensuring that public funds are administered lawfully, fairly and with appropriate assurance.

56. The policy supports the Council's corporate priorities by strengthening community participation, inclusion, neighbourhood connection, volunteering and local democratic engagement.

57. The EqIA indicates that the proposal is likely to have an overall positive equality impact, particularly for residents and communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and for neighbourhoods within RITAs.

58. The recommendations are therefore considered proportionate, deliverable and consistent with the Council's wider community enabling and neighbourhood working approach.

Background papers:

- We Are Norwich Community-Led Plan 2024-2029
- Norwich City Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation and Reducing Inequality Target Area profiles
- Council budget papers approving the 2026-2027 ward councillor community budget allocation

Appendices:

- Appendix A - Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027
- Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment: Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027

Contact officer: Head of Strategy, Engagement, and Culture

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NORWICH City Council

Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy

2026-2027

Ward-based funding for small community enabling projects

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1. Policy

Title	Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026-2027
Owner	Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture
Approval level	Cabinet
Version	Draft 0.3
Published date	July 2026
Review period	Annual
Review date	July 2027

Relevant legislation or regulation

This policy will operate in accordance with:

- Local Government Act 1972
- Localism Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Subsidy Control Act 2022
- Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
- Norwich City Council's Constitution
- Financial Regulations
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Relevant data protection legislation

Version control			
Date	Version number	Reason	Author
20/07/2026	1.0	Final draft following targeted stakeholder and Portfolio Holder feedback	Emma Smith

2. Purpose

2.1 The Ward Councillor Community Budget Scheme provides a simple, flexible and locally responsive way for Norwich ward councillors to support small-scale community activity within their wards.

2.2 The scheme is intended to:

a. support practical neighbourhood-based activity
b. enable councillors to respond to local priorities and opportunities
c. encourage resident participation and community action
d. strengthen local connection, wellbeing and pride in neighbourhoods.

2.3 The scheme is ward councillor-led and community-focused. It is designed to operate on a light-touch and proportionate basis, recognising the relatively small scale of funding involved.

2.4 The scheme is not an open application-based grant programme. Funding requests will normally be initiated or supported by ward councillors in response to identified local needs, opportunities or community ideas.

2.5 The scheme complements, rather than replaces, the council's wider community enabling work and existing funding programmes.

3. Scope and budget

3.1 The annual budget for the scheme will be the amount approved by Council for that purpose within the relevant financial year. The approved budget will be allocated equally across the city's 13 wards to ensure all parts of the city have a fair opportunity to support local community priorities.

3.2 For 2026-2027, each ward councillor will receive an allocation of £2,000 (£6,000 per ward).

3.3 Ward councillors are expected to work collaboratively in determining how the budget is used. Where ward councillors cannot reach agreement, the relevant Portfolio Holder for Culture and Wellbeing, or successor portfolio responsibility, may be consulted alongside the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture to support resolution.

3.4 Ward allocations may be combined where activity demonstrably benefits more than one ward, and the relevant councillors support this approach.

3.5 Ward allocations must be **committed** by 31 January each financial year unless otherwise agreed by the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture.

3.6 Approved activity must take place and funding be spent within 12 months of approval.

3.7 Uncommitted balances remaining after the annual deadline will not be carried forward and will return to corporate balances at year end.

4. Scheme principles

4.1 The scheme will operate in line with the following principles:

a. Local and community-led: supporting practical activity which responds to locally identified needs, opportunities or ideas.
b. Member-led and accountable: ward councillors are responsible for identifying and supporting appropriate activity within their wards and for exercising responsible stewardship of public funds.
c. Light-touch and proportionate: processes, assurance checks and monitoring arrangements will remain proportionate to the scale and nature of the scheme.
d. Enabling and flexible: the scheme is intended to support practical local action quickly and pragmatically wherever possible.
e. Fair and transparent: decisions and expenditure will be recorded and published openly.
f. Lawful and financially proper: the scheme will operate within the council's legal duties, governance framework and financial regulations.

5. Eligible recipients and supported activity

5.1 Funding may be provided to:

a. not-for-profit community organisations
b. charities
c. community interest companies
d. tenant and resident associations
e. friends' groups
f. Parent Teacher Associations
g. schools for non-statutory community activity
h. faith groups for inclusive community activity
i. informal groups of at least three Norwich residents.

5.2 Where an informal group does not have a suitable bank account, the council may:

a. require use of an accountable body
b. agree to purchase goods or services directly on the group's behalf.

5.3 The scheme may support small-scale, time-limited or clearly defined activity, including new, pilot or continuing activity where there is an identifiable local community benefit. This may include:

a. community events
b. neighbourhood clean-up or greening activity
c. minor equipment or materials
d. venue hire
e. volunteer expenses
f. insurance
g. start-up support for grassroots groups
h. small creative, cultural or wellbeing activity
i. consultation or engagement activity
j. pilot projects or small-scale local initiatives
k. other practical activity which helps residents work together and improve their local area.
l. a proportionate contribution towards staff time or organisational running costs where these are directly connected to the delivery or continuation of eligible community activity.

5.4 Supported organisations or groups should explain in simple terms:

a. what need has been identified
b. what will be done to meet that need
c. who will benefit and what difference the activity will make to their lives
d. which ward or neighbourhood will benefit
e. how the activity contributes positively to the local community.

5.5 Funding may contribute towards core or running costs, including an appropriate proportion of staff time, rent, utilities, insurance or similar costs, where these are reasonable, proportionate and clearly linked to the eligible community activity being supported. An award does not create any expectation of repeat or future funding from the scheme.

6. Exclusions

6.1 The scheme will not support:

a. retrospective costs
b. party-political activity, campaigning or lobbying

c. activity which could reasonably be viewed as conferring party-political advantage
d. unlawful, unsafe or discriminatory activity
e. statutory services or routine maintenance responsibilities of public bodies
f. general organisational deficits, debt repayment or unrestricted core costs that are not clearly and proportionately linked to eligible community activity
g. activity primarily intended for private profit or individual benefit
h. alcohol, loans, gifts or direct cash payments to individuals
i. projects creating ongoing liabilities for the council unless agreed in writing by the relevant service
j. duplicate funding for the same costs from another council funding source
k. repeat or recurring commitments which create an expectation that the scheme will provide future annual funding

7. Decision making and approvals

7.1 Requests will normally be submitted by a ward councillor using the council's short digital form.

7.2 Where digital access or form-filling would otherwise present a barrier, ward councillors or relevant council officers may help a group provide the required information by telephone, in person, by email or in paper form. The ward councillor must confirm and submit the final request through the council's agreed process.

7.3 Ward councillors are encouraged to work collectively wherever possible, particularly where activity benefits multiple communities or wards.

7.4 Ward councillors are expected to ensure that supported activity:
a. represents an appropriate use of public funds
b. provides identifiable community benefit
c. aligns with the purpose and principles of the scheme.

7.5 Officers will undertake proportionate assurance checks to confirm:
a. the proposal falls within the scope of the scheme
b. sufficient budget remains available
c. there are no obvious legal, financial or governance concerns.

7.6 The council will not normally undertake detailed assessment processes for small-scale requests.

7.7 Applications raising significant legal, safeguarding, subsidy control, reputational or financial concerns may be referred for additional review or declined.

7.8 Where ward councillors are unable to reach a shared position, where conflicts of interest arise, or where there are governance concerns preventing reliance on councillor support, the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder where appropriate, may determine the request in line with this policy.

7.9 Operational approval of compliant requests may be undertaken by officers authorised by the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture.

7.10 The council will aim to process complete funding requests within 10 working days from receipt of all required information. Timescales begin only once all required information has been received.

8. Payment and conditions

8.1 Funding will normally be paid by BACS to:

a. an eligible organisation
b. constituted group
c. accountable body.

8.2 Where appropriate, the council may instead purchase goods or services directly on behalf of a community group.

8.3 Recipients must agree to the council's standard funding conditions before payment or purchase is made.

8.4 Conditions will include requirements to:

a. use funding only for the agreed purpose
b. notify the council of significant changes
c. spend the funding within 12 months of approval unless otherwise agreed in writing by the council
d. funding not spent within this period may be withdrawn or reclaimed
e. return any unspent or misapplied funding if requested by the council
f. provide proportionate evidence that the activity took place.

8.5 Once a request has been approved and all recipient acceptance, supplier or payee information and other required documentation have been received, the council will aim to arrange payment or confirm a direct purchase within 10 working days. The

councillor and recipient will be informed promptly if further information is needed or if payment is likely to be delayed.

9. Monitoring and transparency

9.1 Monitoring requirements will remain proportionate to the scale of funding provided.

9.2 For most activity, a short email update, photographs, copies of receipts, publicity material or a summary of activity will normally be sufficient.

9.3 The council will maintain a record of expenditure and publish summary information at least quarterly, including:

a. Ward
b. Recipient
c. amount provided
d. short description of supported activity.

9.4 Publication will remain subject to normal data protection requirements.

9.5 Recipients should acknowledge support from Norwich City Council where reasonably practicable.

9.6 Publicity connected with supported activity must not imply party-political ownership or endorsement.

10. Interests, pre-election periods & vacancies

10.1 Councillors involved in funding decisions must declare relevant interests in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and must not participate where required by law or council governance arrangements.

10.2 The council may pause or defer decisions during pre-election periods, ward vacancies or other periods of heightened sensitivity where necessary to protect the integrity and neutrality of the scheme.

Pre-election periods

10.3 No new funding approvals will be made during formal pre-election periods.

10.4 Requests already approved before the start of the pre-election period may continue to payment and delivery.

10.5 Councillors and recipients must avoid publicity which could reasonably be perceived as conferring electoral advantage.

10.6 Where approvals are paused or an individual request is deferred under this section, affected ward councillors and recipients will be informed of the reason, the expected duration where known and the next steps. General information about the operation of the scheme will also be updated where appropriate.

Ward vacancies

10.7 A ward vacancy will not automatically suspend use of the remaining ward allocation. Where a vacancy exists, remaining ward councillors may continue to support funding requests.

10.8 Where only one councillor remains in post, or where agreement cannot be reached, the relevant Portfolio Holder for Culture and Wellbeing may be consulted alongside the Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture.

10.9 During periods of prolonged vacancy, the council may introduce temporary arrangements to ensure communities are not disadvantaged.

11. Review

11.1 This policy will be reviewed annually and may also be reviewed earlier if required due to:

a. changes in legislation
b. governance arrangements
c. audit recommendations
d. budget decisions
e. Local Government Reorganisation arrangements.
f. significant operational issues or learning arising from the scheme.

11.2 As this is a new scheme, an implementation review will be undertaken during its first year of operation.

11.3 The review will be informed by expenditure and monitoring information, processing and payment times, any complaints or recurring issues, and proportionate feedback from funded organisations and groups, ward councillors and the officers administering the scheme.

11.4 Funded organisations and groups may be invited to provide a brief, optional account of how accessible and straightforward they found the process and any improvements they would suggest.

11.5 Learning from the review may be used to make minor operational amendments in accordance with the delegated authority approved by Cabinet. Any material change to the purpose, eligibility or governance of the scheme will be taken through the appropriate decision-making process.

12. Appendices

Appendix A: Simple funding request process

12.1 The funding request process should remain short and proportionate and only require:

a. ward councillor (requester)
b. organisation or group name and contact details
c. ward or wards benefiting
d. identified community need and short description of the proposed activity
e. who will benefit and what difference the activity is expected to make
f. amount requested
g. simple breakdown of proposed spend
h. expected activity dates
i. payment details or accountable body arrangements
j. declaration confirming:
    a. the request is not party-political
    b. funding is not retrospective
    c. required permissions and safeguarding arrangements are in place where relevant.

12.2 Equivalent information may be accepted in an alternative format where digital access, literacy, language, disability or another accessibility issue would otherwise prevent a community group from participating. Assistance may be provided by the relevant ward councillor or council officer.

Appendix B: Internal decision record

12.3 A short internal decision record should include:

a. reference number
b. ward councillor (requester)
c. organisation or group name
d. ward
e. amount approved
f. remaining ward budget
g. brief description of activity
h. councillor support recorded
i. officer assurance checks completed
j. any declared interests
k. approving officer
l. approval date
m. payment route
n. publication date.

12.4 This record will provide the core audit trail for the scheme.

Appendix C: Standard funding conditions

12.5 Recipients must:

a. use funding only for the approved purpose
b. notify the council of significant changes
c. retain evidence of expenditure
d. return unspent or misapplied funding if requested
e. acknowledge council support where appropriate
f. avoid party-political branding or endorsement
g. provide a short end-of-project update if requested.
h. understand that an award does not create any expectation of repeat or future funding from the scheme.

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

NORWICH City Council

What is being assessed	Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy 2026–2027	**Status**	Updated assessment following targeted stakeholder and Portfolio Holder feedback
Officer completing this form	Emma Smith	**Officer's role**	Senior strategy officer
Team	Strategy	**Directorate**	Communities and housing
SLT sponsor	Isabel Brittain	**Role**	Section 151 officer
Date assessment commenced	23/02/2026	**Date of completion**	20/07/2026

Will the report this EqIA relates to go to Committee? *If so, which one and when?*

Yes - Cabinet, July 2026

What are the main aims or purpose of the strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service which you are considering? *(include links to project briefs, cabinet reports etc)*

Appendix A Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy PROPOSED AMENDS.docx

The Ward Councillor Community Budget Policy establishes a light-touch, proportionate and transparent framework enabling ward councillors to support small-scale community activity within their wards through locally allocated budgets.

The scheme is intended to:

- support practical neighbourhood-based activity
- enable councillors to respond flexibly to local priorities and opportunities
- encourage resident participation, volunteering and community action
- strengthen local connection, wellbeing and pride in place
- support grassroots activity which may otherwise struggle to access larger formal funding programmes.

The policy establishes:

- eligible activity and recipients
- exclusions and governance arrangements
- financial and assurance processes
- monitoring and transparency requirements
- safeguards relating to equality, governance and political neutrality.

The scheme is intentionally designed as member-led, community-focused and proportionate to the relatively small scale of funding involved. Following targeted feedback, the policy also provides alternative access routes; allows proportionate core or running costs where directly linked to eligible community activity; clarifies payment and pause communications; and includes a first-year implementation review informed by funded groups, ward councillors and officers.

How does it fit with other services and policies, and how does it support our corporate priorities?

The policy particularly aligns with several priorities within the council's "We Are Norwich" Community-Led Plan, these being:

- A Fairer Norwich through supporting inclusive local activity and reducing barriers to small-scale community participation
- An Open and Modern Council through transparent local decision-making and community engagement
- A Future-Proof Norwich by strengthening community resilience, volunteering and local networks.

The proposal also supports:

- the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

- neighbourhood and community enabling approaches
- the council's commitment to reducing inequalities and supporting community resilience
- ward-based local democratic engagement.

The policy also aligns with the council's adopted approach to:

- supporting those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- neighbourhood working
- addressing inequalities in Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)
- evidence-led and proportionate decision-making.

What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, legal etc)? *The Equality Act requires us to make this clear.*

The proposal establishes a formal governance framework for a new ward-based community budget scheme approved as part of the council's wider community enabling and neighbourhood working approach.

The policy is required to:

- ensure lawful, transparent and financially proper administration of public funds
- support consistent city-wide operation of the scheme
- provide clarity regarding eligible activity, governance and assurance arrangements
- support councillors in responding flexibly to local needs and opportunities
- ensure compliance with:
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Local Government Act 1972
  - Subsidy Control Act 2022
  - Financial Regulations
  - relevant governance and audit requirements.

Who will be affected by this strategy, policy, plan, project, contract or major change to your service? *(Please tick all that apply)*	☒ Residents ☒ Visitors ☐ Council Staff ☒ Businesses ☒ Workers

Please state any specific client group or groups (*e.g. City council tenants, visitors, people who work in the city but do not live here*):

Potential beneficiaries include:

- community organisations
- tenant and resident associations
- grassroots groups
- schools and Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs)
- faith groups
- volunteers
- informal resident groups
- people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- residents within RITAs
- older residents
- disabled residents
- young people
- minority ethnic communities
- carers
- socially isolated residents.

Which wards will be impacted by your proposal?	**Does your proposal impact any of the council's Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)?**

☒ ALL Norwich City Council wards ☐ Bowthorpe ☐ Catton Grove ☐ Crome ☐ Eaton ☐ Lakenham ☐ Mancroft	☐ Mile Cross ☐ Nelson ☐ Sewell ☐ Thorpe Hamlet ☐ Town Close ☐ University ☐ Wensum	*When specifying RITA areas, please refer to the area's profile which can be found through this link to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and consider its specific characteristics to inform this EqIA.* ☒ Catton Grove ☒ Earlham ☒ Heartsease ☒ Mid Lakenham ☒ Mile Cross ☒ North City Centre ☒ Pilling Park ☒ Vauxhall Street ☒ West Pottergate and Russell Street RITAs are particularly relevant as the scheme is intended to support locally identified need, community resilience and small-scale neighbourhood activity.

What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for who? *(include references to specific groups of people and the inequalities faced, including health inequalities)*

The policy seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- increased local participation and community involvement
- improved access to small-scale local funding
- stronger community resilience and neighbourhood connection
- increased ability for councillors to respond to local need quickly and proportionately
- support for inclusive local activities and grassroots initiatives
- improved opportunities for communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage
- increased local activity in neighbourhoods experiencing higher levels of deprivation
- support for wellbeing, volunteering, inclusion and pride in place.
- improved accessibility for people and groups who may face digital access, literacy, language, disability or form-filling barriers
- ongoing improvement informed by proportionate feedback from funded groups

The scheme may particularly benefit residents and groups who may struggle to access larger or more complex grant funding processes.

The proposal also aims to support preventative community activity which contributes positively to wider social determinants of health, including:

- social connection
- community safety
- volunteering
- local environmental quality
- wellbeing
- neighbourhood cohesion.

What evidence and data has been used for this assessment, including community engagement and consultation? *(include links to data sources, consultations etc)*

- Norwich City Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- 'We Are Norwich' Community-Led Plan
- knowledge of existing inequalities across Norwich
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and RITA profiles
- officer experience of community enabling and neighbourhood working
- understanding of barriers often experienced by smaller grassroots organisations.

The proposal has also been developed with regard to:

- socio-economic disadvantage
- accessibility
- proportionate governance
- inclusion and transparency requirements.

Targeted engagement was undertaken with the council's Community Enabling Manager, Norfolk Community Foundation, Norwich Charitable Trusts, FUSE Network and the relevant Portfolio Holder. Feedback was supportive of the light-touch, proportionate and community-focused approach. It highlighted the importance of allowing proportionate support for core costs and continuation of effective community activity, providing non-digital

and assisted access routes, clearly communicating payment times and any pauses or delays, and gathering feedback from funded groups to improve the scheme. These points have been incorporated into the policy. As the scheme establishes an enabling framework rather than a targeted service intervention, no wider formal public consultation was undertaken. Operational learning and a first-year implementation review will inform future annual reviews, including in the context of Local Government Reorganisation.

Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? *(Officer role/team/body and other organisations who deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements)*

The scheme will be implemented through:

- ward councillors
- Strategy, Engagement and Culture teams as appropriate
- relevant finance and assurance officers
- community and neighbourhood organisations
- accountable bodies where applicable.

Operational assurance checks will be undertaken by authorised officers in accordance with the policy framework. Where digital access or form-filling would otherwise present a barrier, ward councillors or relevant council officers may help a group provide the required information by telephone, in person, by email or in paper form.

Will anyone be disproportionately affected by what you are proposing, and/or will it create any benefits? *(customers, employees, groups in the wider community etc). You may refer to this template's EqIA guidance document for suggested equality considerations.*

See completed table below.

If yes, complete the relevant sections overleaf for any benefits and adverse impacts identified.

Affected group	**Key findings from analysis of data and evidence.** Identify any gaps in data here	**Level & type of impact:**	**Actions to mitigate impacts, maximise benefits or address identified gaps in data**	**By when** dd/mm/yy

A group defined by age *(please specify the age range)*	The policy may positively benefit both younger and older residents through support for inclusive community activity, volunteering, neighbourhood events and local wellbeing initiatives. Older residents and younger people may particularly benefit from reduced social isolation and increased community participation. Potential risk exists that some age groups could be unintentionally excluded if activities are not designed inclusively.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Encourage inclusive and accessible local activity. Encourage councillors to consider participation across age groups. Monitoring to identify any emerging disproportionality.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Those with physical access or mobility needs	Some supported activities may involve physical venues or outdoor spaces which could create accessibility barriers. However, the scheme creates opportunities to improve local accessibility and inclusion through small-scale community interventions.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Encourage accessible venues and inclusive event planning. Officers may challenge proposals where accessibility concerns are identified. Reasonable adjustments expected where relevant. Offer alternative ways to provide the required information where physical access or digital participation would otherwise be a barrier.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Those that identify as disabled	Disabled residents may benefit from improved access to local support, social	☒ Positive impact	☒ Low impact	Encourage accessible communication and venues.	Policy implementation

(specify disability; if multiple disabilities, please enter each on a new line	activity and neighbourhood-based initiatives. There is a potential risk that informal or lightly governed activities may not always fully consider accessibility needs without guidance.	☐ Adverse impact	☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Include equality and accessibility considerations within guidance and assurance checks. Escalate higher-risk proposals where appropriate. Provide alternative application routes and assistance where digital access or form-filling would otherwise be a barrier.	and ongoing review

Gender reassignment *(those proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone transition from one gender to another)*	No direct adverse impacts identified. The policy explicitly excludes discriminatory activity and promotes inclusive community participation.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Maintain clear exclusion of discriminatory activity. Ensure supported activity aligns with Equality Act requirements.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Marriage and civil partnership	No disproportionate impacts identified.	☐ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☐ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	N/A	N/A

Pregnancy and maternity	Community-based activity may positively support parents, carers and families through improved local support and social connection. Accessibility of venues and timing of activities may influence participation.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Encourage inclusive and family-friendly activity where appropriate.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Race/ethnicity	The scheme may positively support diverse communities, grassroots groups and locally trusted organisations. Smaller informal groups and migrant communities may benefit from the intentionally light-touch nature of the scheme. There remains some risk that communities with stronger existing networks may access opportunities more easily than less connected groups.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☐ Low impact ☒ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Encourage councillors to engage broadly across communities. Encourage inclusive communication and outreach. Monitor supported activity geographically and demographically where proportionate. Provide alternative application routes and assistance where literacy, language or digital access is a barrier.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Religion and belief *(define the religion or belief affected; if multiple beliefs, enter a new line for each defined disability)*	Faith groups are eligible where activity is inclusive and community focused. The policy excludes discriminatory activity and political promotion.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Ensure supported activity remains inclusive and community focused rather than exclusionary.	Policy implementation and ongoing review

Sex	The scheme may support activity benefiting women, men and gender-diverse residents equally. Some community safety or wellbeing activity may particularly benefit women or vulnerable residents.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Potential positive impact through support for inclusive community and wellbeing activity.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Sexual orientation	No adverse impacts identified. Potential positive impact through support for inclusive community and wellbeing activity.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Ensure supported activity remains inclusive and community focused rather than exclusionary.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Socio-economic hardship *(includes unemployment, low income, food insecurity, and difficulty accessing healthcare and education)*	This is one of the most significant equality considerations for the proposal. The policy is specifically designed to support practical local activity, particularly in communities experiencing disadvantage or limited access to funding opportunities. The light-touch nature of the scheme may reduce barriers often experienced by smaller grassroots groups and residents in deprived communities. Potential positive impact particularly within RITAs.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☐ Low impact ☒ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Encourage activity within RITAs and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Maintain proportionate and accessible processes. Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy. Publish transparent information regarding spend and distribution. Provide alternative access routes and ward councillor or officer support where needed.	Policy implementation and ongoing review

				Use the first-year review to identify any underrepresented groups or areas.	
Refugees and Migrants	Potential positive impact through support for inclusive local community activity and informal grassroots groups. Light-touch arrangements may improve accessibility for newer or less formally constituted community groups.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Ensure supported activity remains inclusive and community focused rather than exclusionary. Provide accessible communication and assistance through telephone, in-person, email or paper routes where needed.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Armed Forces *(includes those who have served or continue to serve in our Armed Forces)*	No disproportionate adverse impacts identified. Potential positive impact where local wellbeing or community activity supports veterans or Armed Forces communities.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☒ Low impact ☐ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Ensure supported activity remains inclusive and community focused rather than exclusionary.	Policy implementation and ongoing review
Other groups *(includes care leavers, carers, people sleeping rough, or any other marginalised or vulnerable group)*	Potential positive impacts for: • carers • socially isolated residents • vulnerable residents • care leavers • residents experiencing loneliness • grassroots volunteer groups.	☒ Positive impact ☐ Adverse impact	☐ Low impact ☒ Medium impact ☐ High impact	Ensure supported activity remains inclusive and community focused rather than exclusionary. Provide alternative access and practical support where digital access or form-filling would otherwise exclude participation.	Policy implementation and ongoing review

Are there any negative impacts that cannot reasonably be avoided? (*If so, on balance, describe your rationale for why it is it still appropriate to proceed with the proposal).*

No significant unavoidable adverse equality impacts have been identified at this stage.

The policy is intentionally designed to be:

- flexible
- proportionate
- inclusive
- community focused.

Some risks remain regarding consistency of local engagement, digital or form-filling barriers and accessibility of supported activity. These risks are considered low and manageable through alternative access routes, assistance from ward councillors or officers, proportionate assurance checks, guidance, published monitoring, feedback from funded groups and the first-year implementation review.

The proposal is considered likely to have an overall positive equality impact, particularly regarding socio-economic disadvantage, community participation and neighbourhood inclusion.

How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

Completion of the EqIA has reinforced the importance of:

- maintaining a light-touch and accessible approach
- ensuring transparency and fairness
- including explicit exclusions relating to discriminatory activity
- ensuring officer assurance checks remain proportionate but robust
- recognising the importance of RITAs and socio-economic disadvantage
- ensuring inclusive participation and accessibility are considered within supported activity.

The EqIA, alongside targeted stakeholder and Portfolio Holder feedback, has also informed the inclusion of:

- transparency requirements
- governance safeguards
- equality-related exclusions

- flexibility for informal groups and accountable body arrangements.
- non-digital and assisted routes where digital access, literacy, language, disability or form-filling would otherwise be a barrier
- proportionate support for core or running costs where directly linked to eligible community activity, helping avoid unnecessary barriers for grassroots groups
- clear communication about payment times and any pauses or delays
- a first-year implementation review informed by funded groups, ward councillors and administering officers

What actions have been identified going forward?

Accessible application support and a first-year implementation review have been identified. See the action plan below.

How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward? *(Include dates where possible for when you will update this EqIA accordingly.)*

The council will:

- maintain records of expenditure and supported activity
- publish quarterly summary information
- monitor emerging themes, accessibility issues and the distribution of supported activity
- monitor processing and payment times, including recurring causes of delay
- seek brief, proportionate and optional feedback from funded groups, ward councillors and administering officers
- consider whether any groups or areas appear underrepresented
- review any complaints, concerns or equality-related issues arising during operation
- undertake a first-year implementation review and review the policy annually thereafter

This EqIA will be reviewed as part of the first-year implementation review, currently expected by July 2027, and updated earlier if significant equality, accessibility or underrepresentation issues emerge.

Negative outcomes action plan: *Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take*.				
Actions identified from EqIA	**Target completion date** (dd/mm/yy)	**Responsible Officer** (role)	**Comments**	**Action complete**
Provide accessible alternatives to the digital request process and support from ward councillors or officers where digital access, literacy, language, disability or form-filling is a barrier.	Scheme launch and ongoing	Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture	Included in the policy and to be reflected in operational guidance	☐
Undertake a first-year implementation review, including proportionate feedback from funded groups and consideration of accessibility and underrepresentation, and update the EqIA where required.	July 2027	Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture	To inform the annual policy review	☐

Once complete, please email assessment to: strategy@norwich.gov.uk.

For the assessment to be final, the relevant people agreeing it must sign it off below.

Officer completing assessment	Emma Smith	**Date**	20/07/2026
Senior leadership team sponsor	Isabel Brittain	**Date**	20/07/2026
Equality lead (strategy team)	Joe Siggins	**Date**	20/07/2026

NORWICH City Council

Item 8

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 29/07/2026

Report title: Adjustment to the 2026-2027 General Fund Capital Programme

Portfolio: Councillor Bolton, Cabinet member for a sustainable city (climate and environment)

Report from: Executive director of climate and environment

Wards:

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet approves an adjustment to the 2026-2027 General Fund Capital Programme to include an additional £70,014 of external funding to support the Hellesdon Green Infrastructure project.

Policy framework

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern Council.
- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.

This report meets the climate responsive Norwich corporate priority

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

There are no Local Government Reorganisation implications resulting from this report.

Executive Summary

This report seeks urgent approval for additional external funding to be added to the 2026-2027 General Fund capital programme to facilitate the appointment of a contractor to enable the Hellesdon Green Infrastructure project to be completed.

Report details

1. The City Council's landscape team is currently managing a green infrastructure project in Hellesdon as part of the 2026-2027 General Fund capital programme. The project will create an accessible riverside path between the car park on Hellesdon Road and Marriott's Way with a new canoe launching platform and resurfacing of the car park.

2. A procurement exercise has been undertaken, and a contractor is awaiting appointment, subject to the council receiving the necessary environmental permits.

3. The existing approved budget of £153,758 is being funded by the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) Infrastructure Investment Fund but is insufficient to appoint a contractor and therefore the GNGB have agreed to provide additional funding totalling £64,199.

4. In addition, Section 106 funds totalling £5,815 have been earmarked for the project.

5. The programme timetable is tight, and the project and associated funding is at risk if the contractor is not appointed very soon. This would deprive the community of the project benefits and expose the council to the financial risk of being unable to capitalise or recover funding for the expenditure to date.

6. On 24 February 2026, Council approved to delegate to Cabinet, approval to include in the capital programme, additional capital schemes funded wholly by grant where it meets the Council's aims.

7. The addition of external funding totalling £70,014 to the General Fund Capital programme would enable the Hellesdon Green Infrastructure project to progress to completion.

Consultation

8. This project has been discussed with Inclusive Norwich, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Eagle Canoe Club as outlined below:

    a. Inclusive Norwich – The specification was enhanced following engagement, within the environmental constraints required by the Environment Agency, resulting in the path width being increased from the originally proposed 1.2m to 1.5m, disabled parking bays in Hellesdon Meadow car park and a gentler ramp gradient, which all improve accessibility.

b. Norfolk Wildlife Trust - Supportive of the scheme and the inclusive access provided to Marriott's Way leading to their urban nature reserve at Sweet Briar Marshes and in progressing the necessary permits for the planned works.

c. Eagle Canoe Club - Very supportive of the scheme and have been instrumental in the design of the canoe platform by providing comment and guidance throughout the design process.

Implications

Financial and resources

9. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan "We are Norwich" and budget.

10. The proposed addition of £70,014 to the General Fund Capital programme would be fully funded from external sources and would not impact on the council's own resources.

Legal

11. There are no adverse legal implications to the allocation of this funding. The project is being implemented on land owned by Norwich City Council. Environmental permits have been applied for and the outcome is awaited.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	**Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:**
Equality and diversity	An EQIA has been prepared and finds benefit to people with mobility restrictions resulting from the delivery of a comprehensive and compliant upgrade to the route for people with disabilities, consisting of an improved car park surface with dedicated inclusive parking spaces and an all-weather riverside path and access ramp connecting it to Marriott's Way.
Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)	It will provide better pedestrian access to green spaces in the Wensum Valley, especially Sweet Briar Marshes, thereby providing health and wellbeing benefits to residents in the Earlham RITA.
Health, social and economic impact	The impact of the scheme will be positive because it will provide access to green space and a network of walks.
Crime and disorder	It is not envisaged that this scheme presents any significant risk of creating crime and disorder.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Children and adults safeguarding	There is no reason to belief this will result in safeguarding issues.
Environmental impact	The scheme has been designed carefully to minimise construction impacts and is progressing through the Environment Agency and Natural England regulatory processes and implementation depends on satisfying their requirements. The proposed path will encourage people to undertake journeys for leisure or commuting purposes on foot rather than by car therefore reducing air pollution and carbon emissions.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Failure to allocate external funds into the capital programme that have been secured for this project.	The project will not go ahead because the mandate to spend the additional funds will not exist and there is a risk that funds already spent on the project will not be covered by the existing grant funding.	Approve the recommendation to allocate the funds into the capital programme before the window of opportunity to build the project is missed.

Other options considered

12. The alternative option would be to abandon the project and surrender the funding that has been granted to the project. This would mean that none of the project benefits would be achieved.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

13. The external funding needs to be added to the capital programme so a mandate exists to spend the money and complete the project.

Appendices:

None.

Contact officer:

Name: Ben Webster, Infrastructure Planning, Projects and Transport Manager

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Email address: benwebster@norwich.gov.uk

IN TRAN communication for all	If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.

NORWICH City Council

Item 9

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 29/07/2026

Report title: Council Energy and Water Utilities Procurement

Portfolio: Councillor Schmierer, Cabinet member for investing wisely (finance)

Report from: Executive director of climate and environment

Wards: All wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

KEY DECISION

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet approves the continued use of 100% renewable electricity, which has been purchased through the GCA framework as part of the council's electricity supply arrangements in the 2026/27 financial year in support of its Climate Responsive Norwich Programme 2026-2035 strategy and Net Zero ambitions.
2. Cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Climate and Environment, in consultation with the portfolio holders for investing wisely and a sustainable city, to award contracts (not exceeding 12-month periods) for electricity, gas, water and bulk fuels, including renewable tariffs and fuels. The delegation is requested until 31 March 2028 with an extension of up to two years if required.
3. Cabinet approves the renewal of the council's electricity and gas 12-month contracts under the Government Commercial Aggregator (GCA) frameworks, formerly Crown Commercial Services, which commenced on 1 April 2026.

Policy framework

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern Council.
- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.

This report meets the delivery of ‘A climate responsive Norwich’ and ‘A future-proof Norwich’ corporate priorities.

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

Utility services are a universal requirement for occupied assets. The contract proposed in this report will be prepared in such a way that it can be transferred to the new authority, and other mechanisms exist to facilitate the novation or termination of utility arrangements in specific assets where required.

Participation in the GCA frameworks may improve the council’s preparedness for LGR by establishing a consistent approach to the procurement and management of electricity, gas and water services across the estate.

Appropriate legal and procurement advice will be sought during the implementation and transition stages to ensure that contractual arrangements remain compliant and that suitable provisions are in place to facilitate any future organisational changes arising from LGR.

Executive Summary

1. The council has utilised a framework for procuring electricity and gas since 2024. The framework requires the council to re-contract every 12 months if it wants to continue with the framework’s utility suppliers, normally by agreeing an annual cabinet report. This report has three main elements.
    a. It recommends that cabinet delegates authority so that relevant portfolio holders and senior officers can make the decision to award contracts on an annual basis
    b. It recommends that cabinet delegates authority to procure water and bulk fuel supplies from the same framework.
    c. It recommends that delegated authority to the executive director and portfolio holders is provided until 31 March 2028 with an extension of up to two years if required. This ensures utility procurement is proactively managed up to vesting day.
2. By agreeing to the recommendations of this report, the council(s) achieve best value for money and reduce the administrative processes necessary to

maintain essential utilities supplies prior to, and beyond vesting day. The annual cost of electricity, gas and water consumption is expected to be £2.6m in the current financial year.

3. In January 2024, Cabinet approved the contract award of electricity and gas through the Government Commercial Aggregator (GCA) energy frameworks for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2026 on a 6-month contract term followed by a 12-month term. Under the framework, EDF and Total Gas and Power supply the council's electricity and gas respectively on fixed tariffs for the duration of each term, with contracts optionally renewing unless customers opt out in accordance with the contractual terms.

4. The GCA framework has delivered competitive and stable prices through aggregated public sector purchasing. Despite continued volatility in international energy markets, the framework has enabled the council to secure tariffs below those available through alternative procurement routes.

5. Given the scale of the council's utility requirements across its operational estate and housing stock, securing reliable and cost-effective supplies remains important. Accordingly, the council did not opt out of the renewal and remained within the GCA energy frameworks for the 2026/27 financial year, commencing 1st April 2026 under a new 12-month term. In addition, in line with previous Cabinet decisions and the council's Climate Responsive Norwich Programme 2026-2035 strategy, 100% renewable electricity has also been procured for the same period at an additional cost of approximately £24,000 (1% of the estimated total electricity charges for the 2026/27 financial year).

6. Therefore, this report seeks to delegate approval for the award of electricity (including associated renewable energy tariffs) and gas contracts, because the delegated authority provided under the previous Cabinet decision expired on 31 March 2026.

7. The report also proposes extending the council's use of public sector frameworks to bulk fuels - specifically heating oil where this is currently required - and water services, providing a new, more consistent, approach to utility procurement. The procurement of water through the GCA framework is expected to improve internal efficiency, strengthen the council's oversight of water consumption and associated environmental impacts and costs, and deliver additional cost savings through its rates.

8. This report takes a holistic approach to the procurement and management of the council's utilities. It is important that any awarded utility contracts deliver value for money for tenants and council assets, meet the council services' requirements, and support the council's wider environmental objectives. This must be achieved during a period when energy and water markets are becoming increasingly complex, requiring proactive management and

responsiveness by the council.

9. Accordingly, the report requests cabinet to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Climate and Environment, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member(s), to award utility contracts (not exceeding 12 months), including renewable supplies. Delegated authority is requested until 31 March 2028. To support continuity of supply and the effective management of utility services during LGR, the report also seeks authority to extend the delegation arrangements by up to two years beyond vesting day if required.

Report details

Electricity, Gas, and Bulk Fuels

10. In January 2024, Cabinet approved the procurement of electricity and gas through the Government Commercial Aggregator (GCA) energy frameworks for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2026 on a 6-month contract term followed by a 12-month term. Under the framework, EDF and Total Gas and Power supply the council’s electricity and gas respectively on fixed tariffs for the duration of each term, with contracts optionally renewing unless customers opt out in accordance with the contractual terms

11. Electricity and gas contracts support a wide range of council services and assets, including operational buildings such as City Hall and The Halls, together with housing assets, communal lighting and district heat networks. Where communal facilities are provided, energy costs are recovered through rents and service charges. Securing competitive utility prices is therefore important in protecting both council finances and residents' money.

12. Energy markets remain uncertain due to ongoing geopolitical tensions and the UK's reliance on international supply. Whilst prices have stabilised since the unprecedented increases experienced in 2022 and 2023, future market movements remain difficult to predict due to the more recent events in the Middle East.

13. When procuring energy, the council may either purchase energy directly or utilise a specialist framework. Direct procurement requires significant utility procurement expertise and active oversight over markets and doesn’t benefit from the volume of aggregated public sector procurement achieved through frameworks. In contrast, the GCA framework employs dedicated energy trading specialists who manage market risks on customers’ behalf and aggregate public sector organisations to secure competitive prices.

14. GCA operates the UK's largest public sector energy procurement service and procures approximately £50 billion of electricity and gas on behalf of public sector organisations.

15. In March 2026, EDF and Total Gas and Power published their prices for the 2026/27 financial year 12-month term fixed tariffs under the GCA frameworks. Despite continuing market uncertainty, both suppliers offered lower prices than those secured for 2025/26. Electricity prices reduced from an average of 22.0 p/kWh to 21.4 p/kWh, and gas prices reduced from an average of 3.5 p/kWh to 2.92 p/kWh.

16. Given the favourable prices secured, the proven value delivered by the framework, and the benefits of specialist market management, the council decided not to exercise its option to leave the framework and opted for contract renewal for a new 12-month term.

17. As the previous Cabinet approval only provided delegated authority up to March 2026, approval is now being sought for the 2026/27 contract renewals.

18. In addition to the renewal of electricity and gas contracts, it is proposed that the council utilises public procurement frameworks for the purchase of liquid fuels, including heating oil supplied to Normandie Tower, one of the council's general needs housing blocks. This will provide a consistent approach to utility procurement and help ensure that competitive prices are secured for the benefit of both the council and residents.

Options for Green Electricity and Liquid Fuels

19. Officers have also considered options for the purchase of renewable electricity supply through the GCA framework.

20. Suppliers can provide electricity supported by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGOs), which are administered by Ofgem and provide assurance that the amount of electricity supplied to the council has been generated from renewable sources. This reinforces consumer claims that all, or a proportion, of their electricity consumption is derived from renewable generation.

21. The council procured 100% renewable electricity during 2025/26 and, in line with previous procurement decisions and the council's wider environmental commitments, has agreed to continue this approach for 2026/27. The additional cost of purchasing renewable electricity is 0.328 p/kWh, equivalent to approximately £24,000 per year, which is 1% of the estimated total electricity charges for the 2026/27 financial year.

22. This approach aligns with the Climate Responsive Norwich Programme 2026-2035 strategy, adopted by Cabinet in January 2026, which commits to procuring and consuming 100% renewable electricity. It also supports the council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Whilst decarbonisation of the national electricity grid is continuing, as are

investigations into solar PV systems for operational buildings, the purchase of renewable electricity will assist the council in reducing the carbon impact of its operations in the interim.

23. If supplied through standard grid electricity, the council's annual electricity consumption would be associated with approximately 2,400 tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2). Procuring renewable electricity is therefore cost-effective and represents a significant carbon saving at an additional cost of around £24,000 for the 2026/27 12-month electricity contract term, equating to approximately £10 per tonne of CO_2. This compares favourably with the equivalent cost in 2024/25, when renewable electricity was estimated to cost approximately £41 per tonne of CO_2, demonstrating that the cost premium associated with renewable electricity has reduced significantly.

24. Approval is therefore sought for the award of a contract for renewable electricity associated with the 2026/27.

25. Public procurement frameworks may also provide access to lower-carbon liquid fuels, such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), which can offer substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions compared with conventional heating oil. Such fuels may provide an interim means of reducing emissions from Normandie Tower ahead of any future heating system replacement or wider decarbonisation works.

New Contract Award for Council Water Utilities

26. In addition to electricity and gas, it is proposed that the council aligns the procurement of water services through a public sector framework, specifically also through GCA. This represents a new approach to the management and procurement of water utilities and is expected to deliver operational and financial benefits.

27. The importance of effective water management is increasing as the sector faces growing pressures from climate change, population growth and significant investment requirements. These factors are expected to contribute to rising water costs over the coming years, necessitating the council to be more proactive in its water management.

28. At present, water services are generally managed on a service-by-service basis. Whilst this approach has ensured continuity of supply, it limits the benefits of aggregated purchasing, reduces visibility of consumption and makes the organisational management of water usage and costs more challenging.

29. The council has expressed an interest in the GCA ‘Water, Wastewater and Ancillary Services Framework’. Following a competitive procurement exercise

undertaken by GCA, Water Plus was appointed as the successful supplier of the framework in June 2026. Participating organisations have until October 29th 2026 to enter call-off contracts and may commence services at a time that best suits their operational requirements.

30. The minimum contractual term of a call-off contract for water supply and services from the GCA framework is 3 years, which therefore constitutes a qualifying long-term agreement under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002, and requires consultation with tenants. Assets directly operated and used by the council will be added to a contract initially, and any affected tenanted assets with water supply points will be added following consultation and in compliance with the relevant regulation in the sector. Contractual mechanisms will be available to facilitate the addition and removal of sites within the term.

31. Procuring water services through the framework is expected to provide several benefits, including improved billing and bill validation, enhanced consumption data, smart metering, leak detection and greater visibility of water usage across the estate. These measures will help the council to better manage water consumption and support future efficiency initiatives.

32. In addition to these operational benefits, the proposed arrangements are expected to reduce management charges from 8.22% under the current approach to 1.84% through the framework. Based on current expenditure, this is expected to generate annual savings of approximately £17,000 whilst also providing a more consistent and efficient approach to utility management across the council.

Delegated Authority

33. The procurement of electricity, gas, water and bulk fuels represents an ongoing operational requirement necessary to support the council's services, housing stock and wider estate. Energy and water markets are subject to volatility, regulatory change and evolving procurement frameworks. Providing delegated authority to award contracts will enable the council to respond to these changes in a timely manner and secure the most advantageous arrangements available.

34. Delegated authority will also provide flexibility in awarding electricity, gas, water and bulk fuel contracts, including associated options for renewable electricity and lower-carbon fuels where these continue to represent value for money and support the council's environmental objectives.

35. It is recommended that cabinet delegates authority to the Executive Director of Climate and Environment, in consultation with the portfolio holders for investing wisely and a sustainable city, to award contracts (not exceeding 12-month

periods) for electricity, gas, water and bulk fuels, including renewable tariffs and fuels. The delegation is requested until 31 March 2028. To support continuity of supply and the effective management of utility services during LGR, the report also seeks authority to extend these arrangements by up to two years beyond vesting day if required.

Consultation

36. Relevant service areas have been consulted across General Fund and Housing Revenue Account teams. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant resource impact concerning the procurement of energy through the current contracts, which utilise public procurement frameworks.

37. The procurement of water involves centralising supply points on a single contract and will therefore introduce new processes to finances and service areas. Service areas who currently directly pay for their respective water services and finance have been consulted on the proposed changes to procurement and will continue to be engaged with to set up new payment-recharging processes.

38. Legal advice concerning resident consultation has been sought. Given the proposed electricity and gas utility contracts have 12-month terms with optional renewals, no specific leaseholder consultation requirements have been identified (see paragraph 50).

39. However, as the minimum contractual term of a call-off contract for water supply and services from the GCA framework is 3 years, the contract therefore constitutes a qualifying long-term agreement and requires consultation with tenants. Assets directly operated and used by the council will be added to a contract initially, and any affected tenanted water supply points will be added following consultation and in compliance with the applicable regulations.

40. Tenants and leaseholders benefitting from communal energy services have limited ability to influence their choice of supplier. It is therefore important that the council continues to secure competitive prices and communicates any material impacts on service charges in a timely manner, together with information and support to help people manage these costs.

41. The proposed arrangements are intended to improve the council's management of utility costs and deliver value for money for both the council, tenants and leaseholders, who pay communal utility charges.

Implications

Financial and resources

42. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan "We are Norwich" and budget.

43. In March 2026, EDF and Total Gas and Power published their prices for the 2026/27 financial year under the GCA frameworks. Despite continuing market uncertainty, both suppliers offered lower prices than those secured for 2025/26. Electricity prices reduced from an average of 22.0 p/kWh to 21.4 p/kWh, and gas prices reduced from an average of 3.5 p/kWh to 2.92 p/kWh.

	FY 2025-26	**FY 2026-27**	**Saving**
Electricity	£1,681,538	£1,591,946	£89,592
Gas	£879,543	£732,799	£146,744
Water	£295,261	£277,849	£17,412
Total	**£2,856,342**	**£2,602,594**	**£253,748**

NB: For year versus year supplier-comparative purposes, electricity and gas costs above relate to energy charges only (the tariff charges). Electricity estimates are based on a usage of 7.7GWh. Gas estimates are based on a usage of 25.1GWh.

The estimates exclude non-energy costs, such as standing charges and network charges, which are not charged on standard tariffs and are outside the control of GCA and suppliers. Costs also exclude VAT and Climate Change Levy charges.

44. The above demonstrates that utilisation of the GCA frameworks across electricity, gas and water is expected to reduce utility expenditure by approximately £253,748, representing a saving of 8.9% in the 2026-27 financial year. The electricity costs shown above exclude the optional renewable electricity premium, which has been secured for 2026-27 at 0.328 p/kWh, equivalent to approximately £24,000 per annum, which is 1% of the estimated total electricity charges for the 2026/27 financial year.

45. Utility prices remain subject to market conditions and are influenced by a range of geopolitical factors. Whilst the current arrangements have delivered lower prices for 2026-27, continued market uncertainty means that future price movements remain difficult to predict. GCA provides regular market updates and officers will continue to monitor trends and review procurement strategies ahead of future contract renewals to ensure the council continues to secure value for money.

46. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. However, as above, the procurement of a single supplier for water services will introduce new finance processes, which has been discussed with relevant officers.

47. Utility costs are invoiced and recharged to service areas where individual budgets for utilities sit. Housing recovers a proportion of utility costs from tenants and leaseholders through service charges. No changes to this process are currently envisaged, except for the addition of new administrative arrangements to do with new contractual arrangements for water supply.

48. The table below outlines the estimated utility costs for the 2026/27 financial year. These are the total costs and include 'non-commodity' costs, for example, costs for the transmission and distribution of electricity.

Utility	**Utility Costs**	**Standing Charges**	**Distribution/Transmission Costs**
Electricity	£1,591,946	£233,309	£596,562
Gas	£732,799	£231,987	Not applicable
Heating oil	£57,745	Not applicable	Not applicable
Water	£272,831	£5,018	Not applicable
Total	**£2,655,321**	**£470,314**	**£596,562**

49. It is proposed that, going forwards the Environmental Strategy Team provides strategic oversight of council's utility contracts by working with finance, procurement and service areas responsible for managing utility services, billing and cost recovery.

Legal

50. The value of the council's utility contracts means that they are subject to the council's Contract Procedure Rules and the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023. The proposed procurement route, through call-off contracts from GCA frameworks, provides a compliant and efficient mechanism for the procurement of electricity, gas, water and bulk fuels.

51. Per section 19 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002, the purchase of renewable electricity for all council assets has been considered reasonable because of its carbon cost effectiveness, its environmental benefits, and alignment with council strategy.

52. Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002, requires consultation with leaseholders in certain circumstances relating to qualifying long-term agreements. As the proposed electricity and gas utility contracts are 12-month terms with optional renewals, no specific leaseholder consultation requirements have been identified. The council will continue to ensure that any charges to leaseholders and Housing Revenue Account tenants reflect the actual cost of service provision and comply with relevant legislation and tenancy

arrangements.

53. However, as the minimum contractual term of call-off contracts for water supply and services from the GCA framework is 3 years, it therefore constitutes a qualifying long-term agreement and requires consultation with tenants. Assets directly operated and used by the council will be added to a contract initially, and any affected tenanted water supply points will be added following consultation.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	**Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:**
Equality and diversity	There are no direct impacts on any group with a protected characteristic.
Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)	The measures set out in this report reduce the risk of utility price changes impacting the cost of living for residents, by ensuring value for money procurement of utilities for council premises including communal housing sites. These measures align with and support the council's affordable warmth policies and support the reduction of inequality across the city.
Health, social and economic impact	The measures set out in this report reduce the risk of utility price changes impacting the cost of living for residents, by ensuring value for money procurement of utilities for council premises via public sector frameworks, and delegating authority to relevant officers to enable more proactive management of utilities in response to international changes. These measures align with and support the council's affordable warmth policies.
Crime and disorder	There are no direct impacts on crime and disorder.
Children and adults safeguarding	There are no direct impacts on safeguarding.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Environmental impact	This report does not propose to increase the use of energy. However, ensuring procurement of 100% green electricity from 'clean renewable' sources aligns with the council's Climate Responsive Norwich Programme 2026-2035 and supports achievement of the council's 2030 operational net-zero target. The measures set out in this report support the council's energy and water efficiency, leading to a reduced environmental impact in addition to cost savings and value for money.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Volatility in utility markets	Increased energy and water costs and pressure on council budgets and service charges	Utilise GCA frameworks, annual contract reviews and ongoing market monitoring
Failure to secure value for money	Higher operating costs for the council and residents	Aggregated public sector purchasing and specialist procurement expertise
Lack of visibility and management of water consumption	Higher consumption, undetected leaks and avoidable costs	Framework provision of smart metering, data analysis and leak detection
Disruption to utility supplies	Impact on operational buildings, housing assets and essential services	Continuity of supply through compliant framework contracts and delegated authority
Failure to meet environmental objectives	Reduced progress towards Net Zero commitments	Procurement of renewable electricity and consideration of lower-carbon fuels
Purchase of renewable electricity deemed unreasonable per Section 19 of Landlord and Tenant Act 1985	Inability to recover costs for the purchase of renewable electricity	Purchase of renewable electricity deemed reasonable because of its cost effectiveness and other environmental benefits (Paragraph 50)
Changes arising from Local Government Reorganisation	Need to transfer or amend contractual arrangements	Use of standard contractual provisions and appropriate legal advice

Other options considered

54. The options available to the council at this stage are set out throughout this report.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

55. To secure value for money using aggregated public sector purchasing frameworks.

56. To provide continuity and resilience of utility supplies across the Council's operational and housing assets.

57. To enable the council to respond quickly to changing market conditions through delegated authority.

58. To improve the management of water consumption through enhanced data, smart metering and leak detection.

59. To support delivery of the council's Climate Responsive Norwich Programme 2026-2035 strategy and Net Zero ambitions through the continued purchase of renewable electricity.

60. To reduce overall utility expenditure.

61. To establish a consistent and efficient approach to the procurement and management of electricity, gas, water and bulk fuels across the Council.

Background papers: None

Appendices: None

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NORWICH City Council

Item 10

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 29/07/2026

Report title: **Managing Assets (Non-Housing)**

Portfolio: Councillor Worley-Smith, Cabinet Member for an equal, thriving, independent city (business and social justice)

Report from: Head of property and economic development

Wards: Mancroft

Open Public Item

Key Decision

Purpose

To consider the disposal of land outlined in the report.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the disposal of 10-14 Ber Street, Norwich, NR1 3EJ as per the details in this report.

Policy framework

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- An open and modern Council.
- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.

This report supports the aims within the community led plan of delivering excellence and being prepared for future. The proactive management of the Council's investment portfolio is essential to ensure that it delivers a viable and sustainable return to the council in order to help deliver front line services.

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

None.

Executive Summary

This report details the case for disposing of a General Fund site with Planning and Listed Building Consent which expire in November 2026 for 9 market homes. The recommendation is to dispose as the 5 other possible options for the site are not feasible.

Report details

1. 10-14 Ber Street is shown outlined in red on the plan in the Appendix. It is a 0.26-acre (0.11 ha) site held in the General Fund and does not abut any other Council owned land.

2. The site has been vacant for several years and benefits from Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent to demolish no. 10 Ber Street and construct nine dwellings (three flats and six townhouses). These consents expire in November 2026.

3. Previously there had been plans to sell the site to Lion Homes (Norwich) Limited for them to develop the site for open market housing. Since Lion Homes (Norwich) Limited is now being placed into managed voluntary liquidation there is no strategic reason for the Council to continue to hold the site in the General Fund.

4. It is recommended 10-14 Ber Street is disposed of. Alternative options are considered in the section below.

Consultation

The Portfolio holder for an equal, thriving, independent city (business and social justice) has been consulted and is content.

Implications

Financial and resources

5. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan "We are Norwich" and budget.

6. The impact on resources resulting from a disposal of this property would be a capital receipt and aligns with corporate priorities as the proactive management of the Council's investment portfolio is essential to ensure that it delivers a viable and sustainable return to the council in order to help deliver front line services.

7. The Council will manage the use of capital receipts in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy.

8. Further financial information relating to the anticipated capital receipt is provided in the exempt appendix.

Legal

9. By virtue of section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the city council has the necessary statutory powers to dispose of its land. This section also states that on a disposal, the council are under a statutory obligation to obtain the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained for the land.

10. Best consideration will typically be achieved via a competitive marketing process. In cases where there is a proposed sale to a 'special purchaser' due to the ability to realise a marriage value, these will be subject to a red book valuation to ensure that there is an uplift above market value.

11. Achieving best consideration will also ensure that the council is not caught by the subsidy control regime.

    The site is not wholly or partly used for housing and therefore section 122(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 is not considered to apply. The site identified for disposal does not include any form of open space land and therefore section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act is not considered to apply.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	**Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:**
Equality and diversity	Sale of the asset will result in the transfer of the freehold interest, but this is not anticipated to have any material equality and diversity implications.
Reducing Inequality Target Areas (RITAs)	Not applicable
Health, social and economic impact	No direct impact however it is anticipated that a new owner would deliver out the site for new housing.
Crime and disorder	As above
Children and adults safeguarding	Not applicable
Environmental impact	No direct impact

Risk management

Risk	**Consequence**	**Controls required**
Inability to dispose of the asset for the capital values identified.	Reduced capital receipts.	This will be monitored by the asset and development commissioning board who will

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Deterioration of market interest for this property type	We are unable to generate interest for the property and worsen our position.	consider options if assets fail to sell at or close to the anticipated values identified in the exempt appendix. This will be monitored by the asset and development commissioning board. There will need to be flexibility over the exact timing of disposals to guard against this and the board will also consider the best method of disposal to realise a sale and maximise a return.

Other options considered

12. Do nothing: doing nothing would result in this brownfield site remaining disused for the foreseeable future and therefore is not considered to be an option.

13. Retain site and lease to a tenant: not a viable option as 10 Ber Street is beyond the end of its useful economic life and the site is ripe for re-development.

14. Retain the site and develop ourselves as market homes: Given the absence of any wholly owned vehicle to deliver such homes this is not considered to be an option.

15. Sell to a registered provider for affordable homes: Typically viability for sites for 100% affordable housing is difficult in the current climate with many Registered Providers requiring land to be disposed at nil value in order to make developments work. This site sits in the General Fund where best consideration is required and therefore this site is unlikely to be attractive to local Registered Providers. The site has been designed with an open market sale tenure in mind and therefore the dwellings do not meet the identified housing need for affordable housing.

16. Develop out ourselves as affordable housing: The site has been designed with an open market sale tenure in mind and therefore the dwellings do not meet the identified housing need for affordable housing. In addition the council is working on a strategic pipeline of sites for development by the HRA, including Mile cross, Argyle Street and Anglia Square and therefore the capacity and resources are better utilised on these projects.

Background papers: none

Appendices:
Site plan
Exempt Appendix

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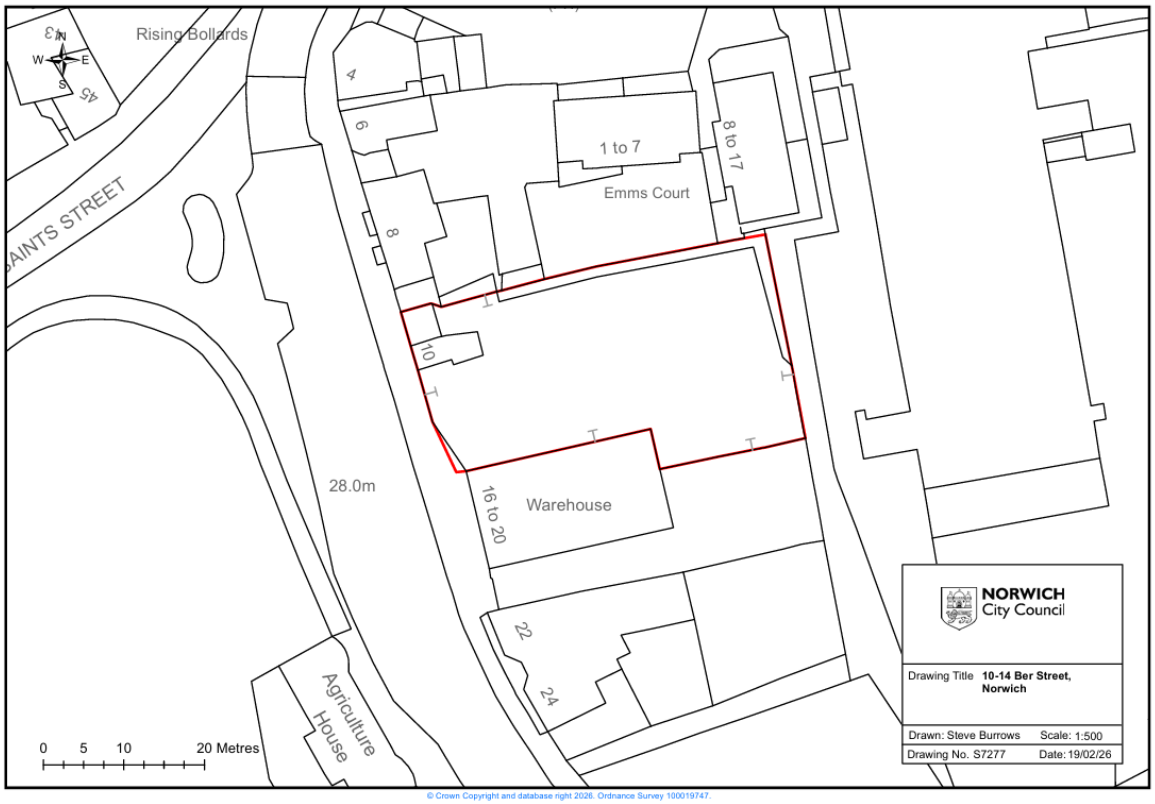
APPENDIX: Plan showing 10-14 Ber Street outlined in red