

### **Scrutiny committee**

**Date: Thursday, 17 September 2020**

**Time: 16:30**

**Venue: TBC, [Venue Address]**

#### **All group pre-meeting briefing – 15:45 (details to follow)**

This is for members only and is not part of the formal scrutiny committee meeting which will follow at 16:30. The pre-meeting is an opportunity for the committee to make final preparations before the start of the formal meeting.

#### **Committee members:**

##### **Councillors:**

Wright (Chair)  
Ryan (Vice chair)  
Carlo  
Fulton-McAlister (M)  
Giles  
Grahame  
Manning  
McCartney-Gray  
Oliver  
Osborn  
Sands (S)  
Sarmezey  
Thomas (Vi)

#### **For further information please contact:**

Committee officer: Lucy Palmer  
t: (01603) 212416  
e: [lucypalmer@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:lucypalmer@norwich.gov.uk)

Democratic services  
City Hall  
Norwich  
NR2 1NH

[www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)

#### **Information for members of the public**

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website

## Agenda

### Page nos

- 1 Apologies**  
To receive apologies for absence
- 2 Public questions/petitions**  
  
To receive questions / petitions from the public.  
  
Please note that all questions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on Monday 14 September 2020**.  
  
Petitions must be received by the committee officer detailed on the front of the agenda by **10am on Wednesday 16 September 2020**  
  
For guidance on submitting public questions or petitions please see appendix 1 of the council's constitution.
- 3 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)
- 4 Minutes** **7 - 10**  
To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2020
- 5 Scrutiny committee work programme 2020-21** **11 - 16**  
**Purpose** - To consider the scrutiny committee work programme 2020-21
- 6 Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee update** **17 - 22**  
**Purpose** - To receive an update from the committee's representative on the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 7 New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)** **23 - 62**  
**Purpose** - To consider any questions that members may have for the representatives of the LEP
- 8 Report of the scrutiny select committee for short term lets** **63 - 80**

**Purpose** - To consider the report of the select committee

Date of publication: **Wednesday, 09 September 2020**

- T** is this, the right **TIME** to review the issue and is there sufficient officer time and resource available?
- O** what would be the **OBJECTIVE** of the scrutiny?
- P** can **PERFORMANCE** in this area be improved by scrutiny input?
- I** what would be the public **INTEREST** in placing this topic onto the work programme?
- C** will any scrutiny activity on this matter contribute to the council's activities as agreed to in the **CORPORATE PLAN**?

Once the TOPIC analysis has been undertaken, a joint decision should then be reached as to whether a report to the scrutiny committee is required. If it is decided that a report is not required, the issue will not be pursued any further. However, if there are outstanding issues, these could be picked up by agreeing that a briefing email to members be sent, or other appropriate action by the relevant officer.

If it is agreed that the scrutiny request topic should be explored further by the scrutiny committee a short report should be written for a future meeting of the scrutiny committee, to be taken under the standing work programme item, so that members are able to consider if they should place the item on to the work programme. This report should outline a suggested approach if the committee was minded to take on the topic and outline the purpose using the outcome of the consideration of the topic via the TOPIC analysis. Also the report should provide an overview of the current position with regard to the topic under consideration.

By using the flowchart, it is hoped that members and officers will be aided when giving consideration to whether or not the item should be added to the scrutiny committee work programme. This should help to ensure that the scope and purpose will be covered by any future report. The outcome of this should further assist the committee and the officers working with the committee to be able to produce informed outcomes that are credible, influential with SMART recommendations.

**Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound**

## Scrutiny committee and a protocol for those attending meetings of the scrutiny committee

- All scrutiny committee meetings will be carried out in a spirit of mutual trust and respect
- Members of the scrutiny committee will not be subject to whipping arrangements by party groups
- Scrutiny committee members will work together and will attempt to achieve evidence based consensus and recommendations
- Members of the committee will take the lead in the selection of topics for scrutiny
- The scrutiny committee operates as a critical friend and offers constructive challenge to decision makers to support improved outcomes
- Invited attendees will be advised of the time, date and location of the meeting to which they are invited to give evidence
- The invited attendee will be made aware of the reasons for the invitation and of any documents and information that the committee wish them to provide
- Reasonable notice will be given to the invited attendee of **all** of the committees requirements so that these can be provided for in full at the earliest opportunity (there should be no nasty surprises at committee)
- Whenever possible it is expected that members of the scrutiny committee will share and plan questioning with the rest of the committee in advance of the meeting
- The invited attendee will be provided with copies of **all relevant** reports, papers and background information
- Practical arrangements, such as facilities for presentations will be in place. The layout of the meeting room will be appropriate
- The chair of the committee will introduce themselves to the invited attendee before evidence is given and; all those attending will be treated with courtesy and respect. The chair of the committee will make sure that all questions put to the witness are made in a clear and orderly manner





**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**16:30 -18:45**

**16 July 2020**

Present: Councillors Wright (chair), Brociek-Coulton (substitute for Cllr Ryan), Carlo, Fulton-McAlister (M), Giles, Grahame, McCartney-Gray, Oliver, Osborn, Sands (S), Sarmezey, and Thomas (Vi)

Apologies: Councillors Manning and Ryan

**1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Public questions/petitions**

There were no public questions or petitions.

**3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020.

**4. Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny sub panel appointment**

Following a vote it was:-

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Giles as the representative and Councillor Sarmezey as the substitute.

**5. Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny committee appointment**

Following a vote it was:-

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor McCartney-Gray as the representative and Councillor Oliver as the substitute.

## **6. Annual review of the scrutiny committee 2019-20**

The chair presented the report.

A member commented that it would be useful to have an indication of what had happened to the recommendations made by the scrutiny committee after the meetings. It was agreed that a scrutiny recommendations tracker document would be included in the standing work programme item going forward and a table of actions resulting from recommendations made in 2019-20 civic year would be circulated to all councillors for consideration alongside the annual review at the July meeting of full council.

Members discussed the select committees and a member said that the fly tipping and antisocial behaviour select committee should continue its work over the next civic year as the topic had been suggested by a member of the public.

**RESOLVED** to recommend the annual review of the scrutiny committee 2019-20 for approval at the next available meeting of full council, with the addition of a table of actions arising from recommendations made.

## **7. Setting of the scrutiny committee work programme 2020-21**

The chair introduced the report. He said that following discussion, members would be asked to vote on the list of suggested topics and develop a scope for the item to be considered at the September meeting of the scrutiny committee. He would invite the member who had suggested each topic to do a short presentation on it.

Councillor Osborn introduced the Safer Neighbourhoods Initiative item. He said that crime and antisocial behaviour was a big issue for residents, albeit a complex one, and council performance on it should be reviewed in order to make improvements. The strategy manager said that covid had had a huge impact on the work in this areas and if members decided to include a review of this work on the work programme, it needed to be scheduled for later in the year to allow progress to be made. A member suggested that the committee could look at how the neighbourhood teams worked in different areas and the effectiveness of their work.

Councillor Osborn introduced the Public Space Protection Order topic. He said that this was in response to a recommendation made by the scrutiny committee following its meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner in February. The police had said that public space protection orders were a useful tool which could be implemented with partners. The chair clarified that when cabinet considered the recommendations of the meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner, there were concerns that Public Space Protection Ordered could criminalise certain people and suggested that the scrutiny committee looked at this in more detail. The strategy manager said that there were two strands to this; the current Public Space Protection Order which focussed on the city centre and then the use of Public Space protection Orders generally. He suggested that if this was a topic to be taken forward, the committee should look to focus on one of these.

Councillor Osborn introduced the item on reducing waste. This topic was something that came up in comments from residents around waste collection and there could be

some scrutiny around the council's performance on reducing waste targets. He wanted to ensure that this was not a service which could collapse if there was a second peak of Coronavirus. The reduction of waste would have an environmental impact and linked to the circular economy aspect of the Covid Recovery Blueprint by turning waste into by-products.

Councillor Osborn introduced the item on car parking revenue. The council relied heavily on car park income which had been hit hard by the impact of Coronavirus. If the council was looking at reducing volumes of traffic coming into the city, there was also a need to look at different ways of raising income. Car parks took up space which could be used in a better way. There would be two strands to the work; how to reduce cars parking in the city centre and how to do this sustainably by finding other income streams to make up the revenue. The director of strategy and culture said that the committee would need to think about how this fitted in with other budget setting work which would come back to the scrutiny committee over the coming months.

Members agreed that the item on council finances could be dealt with under the usual standing budget items on the work programme.

Councillor Giles introduced the item on the economy. Local government had a unique place to be able to feed into economic policy from central government. The work of the Good Economy Commission and the Norwich City Council Economic Strategy could both be reviewed in light of the pandemic. A member commented that as the topic was quite broad, it could have a specific focus of how Norwich City Council could use its role as an anchor institution to stimulate a more sustainable economy. It was suggested that there would be an opportunity to feed into the Good Economy Commission so the committee could wait until this work had been completed.

Councillor McCartney-Gray introduced the item on enhancing community development. Norwich had developed essential groups of individuals and communities that had worked with officers during the lockdown to help those most at risk. The council should look at opportunities to support these groups going forward and to look at areas where there was less support. The strategy manager said that there was information in the Recovery Blueprint document around contacting local groups but there was a lot of very intensive work taking place in the community enabling team. Officer input and the amount of work needed around the topic should be carefully considered as the work was not at a stage to be scrutinised.

Councillor Giles introduced the social inclusion agenda item. He said that the pandemic had an impact on poverty levels and social security and adding this item to the work programme would give an opportunity to examine good practice advice from agencies such as the Norfolk Community Advice Network. There were various performance measures that could be scrutinised. A member commented that the committee would need to think about where the council could have the greatest impact around such a broad topic and practical recommendations would be needed.

Councillor McCartney-Gray introduced the item on zero rough sleeping. She said that the Pathways service was an amazing achievement but as a result of the pandemic and the end of eviction bans in September, it was an issue that needed to be looked at again. A member commented that government would be issuing further

announcements around tackling homelessness so any work undertaken by the scrutiny committee could tie into this.

The strategy manager reminded members that some of the topics they were considering were still wide ranging, ongoing pieces of work due to the pandemic, so there may be a need to refine the scope of these. The chair reminded members that top four topics would be added to the work programme to take the committee up to the end of 2020 to ensure that there was space on the work programme of issues that may arise during the year.

(Members took a fifteen minute break while the votes for each item were collated.)

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) At the September meeting of the scrutiny committee to:
  - a) receive a report from the select committee on short term lets; and
  - b) ask the scrutiny liaison officer to approach the LEP to attend the meeting to pick up the work that the committee was due to undertake in March 2020
- (2) Ask the scrutiny liaison officer to add the following items to the scrutiny committee work programme
  - a) Sustainable and inclusive economy following the impact of Covid-19
  - b) Enhancing community development following the impact of Covid-19
  - c) Maximising opportunities to achieve zero rough sleeping following Covid-19
  - d) The social inclusion agenda following Covid-19

CHAIR

**Norwich City Council**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **Item No 5**

**REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 17 September**

### **Scrutiny committee work programme 2020-21**

<b>Summary:</b>	The purpose of this report is to assist committee members in setting the work programme for the rest of the civic year 2020-21.
<b>Conclusions:</b>	<p>It is proposed that any discussion is agreed as a whole committee using 'TOPIC' criteria. This will assist members in achieving the goal of an agreed work programme that is met by consensus.</p> <p>The programme is a standing item at each committee meeting and can be adjusted as necessary.</p>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	To consider the scrutiny committee work programme 2020-21.

## Report

1. When the scrutiny committee considers which items to include on its work programme, it is useful to do so in the context of what the focus is for the council over the coming year and to look at how activity aligns to the council's corporate plan.
2. This is so that the scrutiny committee will be able to consider where and how it can add value to the work being carried out towards achievement of the council's priorities and ensure that resources are being focused effectively.
3. Although sometimes not possible to achieve, it was previously agreed that the committee should agree as few as possible substantive topics per meeting. The main reason for this is to ensure that there is enough time for the committee to effectively consider the issues and has a fair chance of reaching sound, evidence based outcomes. Ideally, one main item per meeting would be the aim.
4. Members will have the opportunity on a monthly basis to revise the work programme if and when required or due to changing events.
5. Along with this report, members have a copy of the cabinet forward agenda for consideration.
6. It is proposed that any discussion is as a whole committee using the TOPIC criteria. This will assist members in achieving the goal of an agreed work programme that is met by consensus.
7. Members are reminded that any items placed on the work programme should be considered within the council's COVID-19 recovery framework.

## Annual work programme planning grid

(updated 7 September 2020)

Date of meeting	Item
Thursday at 16.30	
<b>2020</b>	
<b>10 June</b>	Covid-19 recovery report
<b>16 July</b>	Work programme Annual scrutiny report
<b>17 September</b>	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 30 July and 3 September Report back from Short Term Lets select committee <b>Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)</b>
<b>15 October</b>	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 8 October <b>Enhancing community development following Covid-19 - Citizen Participation blueprint, Kate Price.</b>
<b>19 November</b>	Work programme <b>Maximising opportunities to achieve zero rough sleeping following Covid-19, Chris Hancock (tbc)</b>
<b>17 December</b>	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 26 November Equality information report Corporate plan and performance framework
<b>2021</b>	
<b>21 January</b>	Work programme To consider the 2021/22 budgets, medium term financial strategy and capital programme, along with capital strategy and treasury management strategy Cllr Kendrick. Hannah Simpson, Shaun Flaxman, Adam Drane
<b>4 February</b>	Work programme Further scrutiny of the budget 2021/22
<b>18 March</b>	Work programme Report back from NHOSC meeting from 4 February and 18 March.

Date of meeting and topic	Recommendations	Outcome
<p>10 June 2020</p> <p><b>Covid-19 recovery report</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Amending bullet point 2 under section 7, Climate change and the green economy' in the recovery themes and key actions summary on p31 of the report to reflect the recommendation of the Tyndall centre to reduce carbon emissions of Norwich by 13 % annually</li> <li>(2) Amending bullet point 4, under section 4 'business and the local economy' section, in the recovery themes and key actions summary on p30 of the report, from 'consider the opportunities to further promote sustainable travel in the city, building on the already well-advanced measures already in place' to 'consider the opportunities to further promote sustainable travel <i>on whole route approaches</i>, building on the already well-advanced measures already in place'</li> <li>(3) Lobbying the LGA and central government for all district councils to be given some of the powers and financial resources that the Health and Safety Executive has, to allow the city council to enforce social distancing if employers are not complying.</li> <li>(4) At section 8.4, include trade unions to the list of groups to be consulted on this document.</li> <li>(5) Redoubling efforts with Norfolk County Council to ensure social distancing measures around the city centre are in place as soon as possible.</li> <li>(6) Including further references to the impact of Covid-19 on the insurance industry regarding aviation, and families and young people, particularly in reference to education, including local universities.</li> <li>(7) Revising the Commercial Property Investment Strategy to reflect the changes in the economy due to Covid-19 and how this could drive a green economy.</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations taken to Cabinet on 10 June 2020; Response:</p> <p>Councillor Waters, leader of the council, thanked the scrutiny committee for its recommendations and said that they would be noted by cabinet and would form part of the thinking around future revisions to the blueprint as it evolved.</p>

	<p>(8) Investigating the use of purchasing powers to undertake a retrofit programme on housing as a key part of driving the economic recovery.</p> <p>(9) Looking at alternative sources of income to carparks in the city.</p> <p>(10) Looking at the experience of other local authorities which are pursuing a circular economy to take advantage of the fact that Norwich has two recycling centres in development.</p>	
<p>16 July 2020</p> <p><b>Work programme 2020-21</b></p>	<p>(1) At the September meeting of the scrutiny committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) receive a report from the select committee on short term lets; and</li> <li>b) ask the scrutiny liaison officer to approach the LEP to attend the meeting to pick up the work that the committee was due to undertake in March 2020</li> </ul> <p>(2) Ask the scrutiny liaison officer to add the following items to the scrutiny committee work programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Sustainable and inclusive economy following the impact of Covid-19</li> <li>b) Enhancing community development following the impact of Covid-19</li> <li>c) Maximising opportunities to achieve zero rough sleeping following Covid-19</li> <li>d) The social inclusion agenda following Covid-19</li> </ul>	<p>Items added to the work programme for 2020-21</p>



**Norwich City Council**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **Item No 6**

**REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 17 September**

### **Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC)**

**Summary:** Councillor Laura McCartney-Gray is the council's representative on the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will give a verbal update at the meeting.

Meetings of NHOSC took place on 30 July 2020 and on 3 September 2020.

**Conclusions:** The purpose of this report is to receive a verbal update from Scrutiny's representative on NHOSC.

**Recommendation:** To note the update of the NHOSC representative.

The forward agenda for this committee is now available and attached below.

**Contact Officers:** Emma Webster, scrutiny liaison officer  
preferred contact by e-mail  
[emmawebster@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:emmawebster@norwich.gov.uk)

## Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### ACTION REQUIRED

Members are also asked to consider the current forward work programme:-

- whether there are topics to be added or deleted, postponed or brought forward;
- to agree the briefings, scrutiny topics and dates below.

### Proposed Forward Work Programme 2020-21

<i>Meeting dates</i>	<i>Main scrutiny topics</i>	<i>Administrative business</i>
8 Oct 2020	<p><u>Ambulance response and turnaround times</u> – progress report</p> <p><u>Cancer services</u> – to examine the position in light of Covid 19, including screening services and treatment services</p> <p><u>Childhood immunisations</u> – to examine the position in light of Covid 19</p>	<p><i>Meeting to end by 1.00pm.</i></p> <p><i>Norfolk &amp; Waveney Joint Health Scrutiny Committee meeting planned to start at 2.00pm</i></p>
26 Nov 2020	<p><u>Provision of accessible health services for disabled patients / service users</u> (i.e. specifically visually impaired or hearing impaired people) – to examine practical issues of access and confidentiality</p> <p><u>Suicide prevention</u> – to examine ongoing preventative work in light of concerns about increasing suicide rates</p> <p><u>The Queen Elizabeth NHS Foundation Trust</u> – progress report</p>	
4 Feb 2021	<p><u>Vulnerable adults primary care service Norwich</u> (replacing City Reach) – progress report</p> <p><u>Children's neurodevelopmental disorders</u> (i.e. autism and other conditions) – waiting times for diagnosis</p> <p><u>Prison healthcare</u> - examination of prisoners' access to physical &amp; mental healthcare services</p>	

**NOTE: These items are provisional only. The OSC reserves the right to reschedule this draft timetable.**

## Provisional dates for later reports to the Committee 2020-21

- Spring / summer 2021      - Local actions to address health and care workforce shortages – progress update since July 2019

## Provisional dates for items in the NHOSC Briefing 2020-21

- October 2020      - Additional information requested by NHOSC during the 'Covid 19 – overview of the effects on local NHS services' agenda item on 30 July 2020 (CCG to provide briefing):-
- Staff and staffing:
    - Staff vacancies and staff absence rates across the local healthcare system.
    - Plans for supporting staff / staffing resilience during the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic.
  - Plans for future capacity of services under Covid-safe conditions:
    - Diagnostics capacity
    - Elective surgery capacity.
  - Effects of Covid 19 on people with learning disabilities and other disabilities:
    - Comparative death rate figures (*these figures may not be available yet – check with the CCG*)
  - Plans for care of patients with diabetes during the ongoing Covid 19 outbreak (details; e.g. will the plan include dietary management? Also to include the extent to which the necessary diabetes care processes are now being delivered to patients across Norfolk & Waveney)
- Primary Care – an update
- General update
    - Progress with development of the Primary Care Networks
    - GP recruitment & retention
    - Availability of appointments
  - Specific follow-ups
    - Update on primary care capacity in King's Lynn (following on from the consultation with NHOSC regarding the Fairstead practice)
    - Update on primary care provision for Oulton (following on from previous reports to GY&W Joint Health Scrutiny Committee & the proposed new build at Woods Meadow)
    - Update on primary care provision for Gorleston (following on from previous reports to GY&W Joint

Health Scrutiny Committee about the proposed development at Shrublands).

- Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership Five-Year Plan
  - Progress with implementation of new care pathways
- Community pharmacy capacity
  - Briefing on the outcome of a meeting between the Vice Chairman, NHOSC support officer, Local Pharmaceutical Committee representative and Consultant Public Health (lead for Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment) regarding concerns about:-
    - community pharmacy capacity and arrangements for provision of medicines as winter approaches
    - the extent of liaison with local planning authorities on future capacity requirements.
- Hospital patient transport services
  - Information on whether there has been a change to the ERS transport service
  - Information on how car transport services are currently operating.

February 2021 - *Depending on publication of new NICE Guidance is expected in December 2020*

ME / CFS service – steps taken by the CCG and service provider to comply with new NICE Guidance

- Summer 2021 - Merger of Norfolk and Waveney CCGs – progress briefing
- How the new CCG has maintained local focus one year on from merger
  - Extent to which various healthcare statistics etc are still available on a district or locality basis to enable understanding of local issues.

**Main Committee Members have a formal link with the following local healthcare commissioners and providers:-**

- Norfolk and Waveney CCG
- Chairman of NHOSC – Cllr Penny Carpenter  
(substitute Vice Chairman of NHOSC – Cllr Nigel Legg)

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn NHS Foundation Trust	- Sheila Young (substitute Michael Chenery of Horsburgh)
Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (mental health trust)	- David Harrison (substitute Michael Chenery of Horsburgh)
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	- Dr Nigel Legg (substitute David Harrison)
James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	- Emma Flaxman-Taylor
Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust	- Emma Spagnola

**Joint health scrutiny committee on which NHOSC Members serve:-  
Norfolk and Waveney Joint Health Scrutiny Committee**

<i>Meeting dates</i>	<i>Main scrutiny topics</i>	<i>Administrative business</i>
8 Oct 2020 pm	<u>GP out of hours services in Norfolk &amp; Waveney</u> – consultation from N&W CCG on proposed changes	<i>Meeting details currently being arranged in liaison with Suffolk CC</i>



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Customer Services on 0344 800 8020 or Text Relay on 18001 0344 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.



**Norwich City Council**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**ITEM 7**

**REPORT for meeting to be held on 17 September 2020**

**New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)**

**Summary:** The LEP will be attending the meeting of Norwich City Council's scrutiny committee to answer questions from members on behalf of themselves and their constituents. This item was postponed from scrutiny committee due to take place on 25 March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also attached to this report is the LEP's Covid-19 Economic Recovery Restart Plan which may be of interest to scrutiny members when considering this item.

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to consider their lines of questioning to the LEP.

**Contact Officer:** Adam Clark, strategy manager, tel 01603 989272

**1. Local Economic Partnerships**

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were established in 2010 as 'locally-derived business-led partnerships between the private and public sector that would drive local economic growth.' These non-statutory bodies assumed many of the responsibilities of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and have responsibility for Enterprise Zones.

There are now 38 LEPs. By 2017 they had responsibility for around £12 billion of public funding, including being the mechanism for channelling the Local Growth Fund to localities. Public funding for LEPs is directed via a local authority in the area of the LEP, which is appointed to undertake the accountable body role.

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were established in 2010 as 'locally-derived business-led partnerships between the private and public sector that would drive

local economic growth.’ These non-statutory bodies assumed many of the responsibilities of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and have responsibility for Enterprise Zones.

There are now 38 LEPs. By 2017 they had responsibility for around £12billion of public funding, including being the mechanism for channelling the Local Growth Fund to localities. Public funding for LEPs is directed via a local authority in the area of the LEP, which is appointed to undertake the accountable body role.

## **2. New Anglia LEP**

The New Anglia LEP (NALEP) was officially granted permission by ministers to form in November 2010. It covers 14 district authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk, including Norwich City Council area. The accountable body is Suffolk County Council. The NALEP board consists of 18 board members, 10 of whom are from the private sector, six from local authorities and 2 from the education sector. The Chief Operating Officer is Rosanne Wijnberg. The board is supplemented by a range of sub boards and committees, and is run operationally by a staff team, headed up by Chief Executive, Chris Starkie.

NALEP has a range of programmes and responsibilities. Ones that the committee may particularly wish to note are

- Developing and overseeing the Economic and Local Industrial strategies for the NALEP region
- Channelling funding and investment within the region, for example the £290m of Growth Fund investment, European Structural and Investment Funds, some of which is made available through open funding calls, such as the Innovative Projects Fund. LEP funding has been awarded to a number of Norwich businesses to enable expansion.
- Overseeing the Greater Norwich City Deal
- Acting as the government’s Green Economy Pathfinder Local Enterprise Partnership
- Hosting the Norwich Opportunity Area team
- NALEP are represented on the Town Deals Board by Chris Starkie

## **3. Governance and transparency**

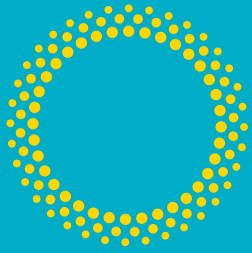
In 2017, NALEP commissioned PwC to review its governance and operations, which led to a series of recommendations. The government also initiated a review of governance and transparency of LEPs in 2017 under Mary Ney. The findings of this led to recommendations and good practice guidelines for LEPs. All recommendations from both the PwC review of NALEP and the Ney review were adopted by NALEP.

## **4. NALEP and the city council**

As well as ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the city council and NALEP, there are a number of key relationships with the city council:

- The leader of Norwich City Council, Cllr Alan Waters, is one of the 6 NALEP board members representing local government.
- The LEP has provided £50,000 from its Innovative Projects Fund for a partnership project between the city council and the UEA to support the Norwich Good Economy Commission, and also sits as a representative on the commission.
- Officers sit on a number of LEP sub-boards and committees including the inward investment group, the Economic Strategy Delivery Co-ordinating Board (ESDCB) and the Data Practitioner Group, which oversees and develops economic evidence for the LEP.
- The council is one of the districts participating in the Greater Norwich City Deal, which is overseen by the LEP
- Norwich City Council has participated in LEP-funded projects including the Growth Hub which provides enterprise support to local businesses; Norfolk and Suffolk Unlimited (inward investment and place branding campaign); MIPIM (inward investment exhibition); Norwich Aviation Academy.

:



Norfolk  
& Suffolk  
*Unlimited*



# *Covid-19 Economic Recovery Restart Plan*

# respond restart renew



## Contents

2	Foreword
4	Economic Profile
12	Our Places
20	Our Sectors
32	Restart & Renew Map

The Norfolk and Suffolk COVID recovery evidence base contains all data in this document unless otherwise stated.  
[Click to read the evidence base.](#)



## Foreword

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been profound. Tens of thousands of lives lost, lockdown restrictions which have affected our daily lives, and significant damage to our local and national economy.

This restart plan sets out the actions and interventions that are being taken by a wide range of partners, including New Anglia LEP, local authorities, business, industry councils and sector groups, VCSE organisations, colleges and universities. It demonstrates the strong local appetite and energy for getting our economy going again and helping those who have been hit hardest.

Norfolk and Suffolk has a strong record of working together across the public and private sectors to deliver sustainable growth, and the recovery plans will build on this.

The restrictions imposed to slow the spread of the virus have forced thousands of businesses to stop trading entirely. Many others have seen their income reduce sharply. Some firms have been able to adapt and are innovating and thriving. But 'business as usual' has not been possible for some time, and for many the business model has changed overnight and will never be the same again.

*This is the time for strong leadership, action and interventions.*

The immediate and severe economic and social impacts of the health response have led to an unprecedented programme of support provided by central and local government, and a huge local effort by businesses and volunteers to help mitigate the impact of the crisis on many businesses and individuals.

But it is equally clear the economy will take time to recover, and the coming months and years will be challenging for employers and employees. Many people will find their jobs changing and many young people will be entering a labour market with far fewer jobs, at least in the short term, than were available just a few months ago.

Local partners have a clear shared vision to drive low-carbon, inclusive economic growth across Norfolk and Suffolk. We have pledged to work together to transform our growing economy into one of the best places in the world to live, work, learn and succeed in business. That ambition still firmly stands.

As the UK's Clean Growth Region, we are committed to remaining at the forefront of tackling the challenges and opportunities of climate change. This will now be a greater challenge due to the global economic shock caused by Covid-19. However, new opportunities are emerging which could enable significant advances in some areas of the economy.

The wider economic and political implications of Brexit also have a significant part to play in availability of our future workforce and plans for the coming years.

We have worked together as local partners throughout the response phase, supporting businesses, communities and individuals.

This multi-partner, multi-level plan will build on that as we recognise that getting the economy back on its feet cannot be achieved by one partner alone, or by any single strand of investment or action.

We have always been most successful when we work together for the benefit of those who live in, work in, learn in and visit Norfolk and Suffolk. The actions in this plan will help lead us out of these challenging circumstances and deliver on our region's unlimited potential.



**Doug Field**  
*Chair of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership*



**Matthew Hicks**  
*Chair of the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group*



**Andrew Proctor**  
*Chair of the Norfolk Local Authorities Leaders Group*

## ***Restart and renew: a two-stage approach***

**This Restart Plan is the first of a two-stage economic recovery plan for our area.**

It will support businesses, individuals, communities, anchor institutions and further and higher education providers to start trading and living life with confidence, in an environment dominated by social distancing and economic uncertainty, as quickly and safely as possible.

### ***The Restart Plan is:***

**Short-term** – It focuses on actions for the next six months. It outlines measures to help those who lose their jobs, young people seeking work and businesses and entrepreneurs who require support, assisting the different sectors which make up our economy – especially those hit hardest by the crisis.

**Agile and evolving** – Our approach will evolve as the full impacts of the lockdown become clear. Actions will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and further measures will be developed where necessary.

**Multi-partner, multi-level** – This plan has been developed and will be delivered by range of partners. It complements local public sector recovery plans and those being developed by other institutions as well as individual businesses and sectors. Many actions will be funded from existing budgets, re-prioritising where necessary. However, we are clear that the scale of the task will require further Government investment, alongside private sector, and local funding.

We are determined to rebuild a better future for our economy, working with government and focusing on more sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In the autumn, this plan will be followed by our Renew Plan – a longer-term plan for jobs and sustainable growth which will also serve to support the Government national recovery plan.



# Projected impact: economy profile at a glance



**63,000 independent enterprises**  
88% micro, 10% small, 1.6% medium, 0.4% large



**More than 1/3 small businesses closed since the crisis began.** Of those, 1/3 are not sure whether they will ever reopen<sup>1</sup>



**831,000 total employees in Norfolk and Suffolk.** 35% are 'key workers', compared to 33% of UK employees<sup>1</sup>



**22% of Norfolk and Suffolk employees were furloughed** in May, compared to 26% of UK employees<sup>2</sup>



**1/3 small businesses** have shelved product development plans



**1/3 businesses** have less than three months of cash reserves<sup>4</sup>



**31,688 new Universal Credit claimants** in April 2020 (33% under the age of 29)



**A total of 95,077 people claimed Universal Credit in April** (a 41% increase on March, compared to a 40% increase for the UK)<sup>3</sup>



**1/4 region's exporters** have reduced/cancelled international sales<sup>3\*</sup>



**Traffic flows dropped** to 1/5 of normal levels, and may be slow to recover



**1/5 of apprentices** (~2,000 in Norfolk and Suffolk) are not expected to return once economic restrictions are relaxed

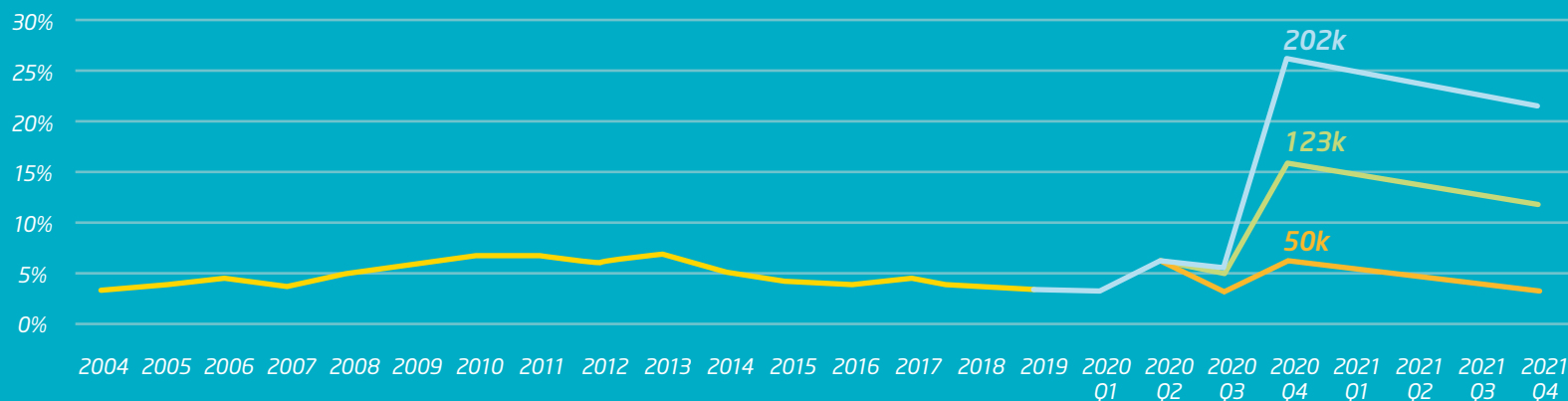


**9,394 students** will graduate from Norfolk and Suffolk's three universities in summer 2020, with most seeking employment or further training opportunities.

## Impacts on employment:

Norfolk and Suffolk: historic and projected unemployment under three scenarios

- Historic
- Best case
- Medium case
- Worst case



These figures are not derived from 'official' sources, but rather drawn from bespoke data that has been gathered as part of the New Anglia LEP's weekly business intelligence returns. The Norfolk and Suffolk COVID recovery evidence base contains all data in this document unless otherwise stated. [Click to read the evidence base.](#)  
1: ONS Key Workers Reference Tables. 2: ONS Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey, Wave 5. 3: DWP Universal Credit



# Restarting the Norfolk and Suffolk Economy

Restarting our local economy will be challenging. The scale and speed of the shutdown has never occurred before – even in wartime.

The **Restart Plan** contains an unprecedented package of measures delivered by partners locally and nationally to get businesses up and trading again, restore business, consumer and community confidence, as well as provide support to individuals made redundant and looking for work.

The Restart Plan builds on the support packages delivered by central and local government which have provided a cash lifeline for many businesses and their employees.

## Key measures include:

- ...❖ **Responding to redundancies.** We will support individuals being made redundant and help businesses looking for workers, through a new local partnership of businesses and local and national agencies.
- ...❖ **Advice and support for businesses.** We will ensure every business has access to the finance and support they need, delivered through our new alliance of local authorities, the New Anglia Growth Hub, business representative organisations and trade bodies.

- ...❖ **Youth pledge.** Every young person in Norfolk and Suffolk will have the support they need to get into high quality education, employment, training, or an apprenticeship.
- ...❖ **Transforming skills.** We will ensure every individual has access to opportunities to upskill and reskill, adapting the skills provision so that it meets the changing needs of businesses and the aspirations of individuals.
- ...❖ **Mental health and wellbeing.** We are creating a programme that provides employers and employees with the mental health and wellbeing support they need.
- ...❖ **Reimagining high streets.** Our local authorities, Business Improvement Districts and other partners are developing a range of measures to help high street businesses reopen and operate safely, to build consumer confidence and rethink the way town centres function.
- ...❖ **Visitor economy.** We will launch a proactive campaign to promote Norfolk and Suffolk as a destination to live and work with tourism, hospitality and cultural businesses to help them open safely.

- ...❖ **Digitisation.** We will launch a major campaign to support businesses to build their online presence and to improve productivity, including flexible working practices for their employees, through better use of technology.
- ...❖ **Supply chain.** We will work with local companies to capitalise on opportunities to sell more goods and services locally, with a commitment from the public and private sector to procure more locally and to support local innovation.
- ...❖ **Infrastructure.** We will submit support the construction sector through continued investment in key infrastructure and make a compelling case to Government to fund priority infrastructure schemes.
- ...❖ **Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited.** Develop a campaign to promote Norfolk and Suffolk as a place rich with investment opportunities.
- ...❖ **Safe and sustainable public transport.** As the guidance around public transport use changes we will work to support and promote safe and sustainable public transport use, to continue to improve air quality and reduce congestion.



## Business environment

**Thousands of businesses have been forced to stop trading entirely, or seen income levels reduce sharply, but there are some that are innovating and thriving. The impact across sectors varies.**

Reopening in the setting of an ongoing pandemic will be challenging with the need to implement new ways of working that adhere to social distancing and provide safety to staff and customers.

Despite these challenging times, numerous businesses have adapted their business models, adopting new practices and innovating. Many firms and public sector organisations have had to implement changes in a matter of days that might previously have taken much longer or been considered impossible.

Many have reduced carbon emissions, or increased home working or flexible working patterns, using technology differently with both customers and employees. We want to make sure the best of these adaptations continue, particularly where they reduce carbon, increase productivity and sustainability, and lead to higher-quality and better-paid jobs.

*As recovery continues, the majority of Norfolk and Suffolk businesses will need support of some kind as they restart and renew.*

This is likely to include access to finance; advice on furloughing; supporting organisations returning to work in different work spaces; staff safety; dealing with staff self-isolation; support in reshaping business plans; support in restarting businesses, particularly for start-ups; supporting the self-employed; and identifying opportunities for new products and services.



*Engineers at Panel Graphic producing face visors.*

Norfolk and Suffolk's two multi-site [Enterprise Zones](#), covering 16 commercial development sites, present an opportunity, working with local authority partners and developers, to restart economic growth in key priority urban and coastal locations.

The coming months are crucial as we help to successfully rebuild consumer and business confidence. We want to maximise the opportunities linked to new local supply chains and take the opportunity to enhance productivity and growth through new innovations.

We have created an alliance of partners from local authorities and the New Anglia Growth Hub to business representative organisations and trade bodies.

This alliance will ensure every business has access to the help and support they need.

### ***Together we have:***

- ❖ Launched an integrated business support campaign to ensure every business knows how to access the support they need to restart, renew and sustain. Thousands of businesses have already accessed this support via the New Anglia Growth Hub or their local authority.

- ❖ Launched a multi-million-pound package of local funding opportunities to support the business base, short-term response, longer-term recovery, and diversification projects.

- ❖ Provided bespoke, free and impartial advice, through the New Anglia Growth Hub, to support businesses to restart, reshape their business plans and provide a programme of online training.

- ❖ Put in place a supply chain management system which has connected hundreds of businesses supplying Personal Protective Equipment directly to the frontline workforce.

### ***Together we will:***

- ❖ Expand the package of local funding opportunities and secure additional national funding for business recovery.

- ❖ Develop a supply chain matching service. Work with local companies to capitalise on opportunities to sell more goods and services locally. Secure a commitment from the public and private sector to procure more locally, creating more resilient and inclusive regional supply chains and procurement of local products.

- ❖ Launch a peer-to-peer network in early summer, which will support SMEs to adapt their business plans, adopt new technology and provide leadership and management support which in turn will help improve productivity.

- ❖ Hold a two-day online festival of enterprise providing support for and sharing inspiring stories from the Norfolk and Suffolk small business community.

- ❖ Deliver a new cohort for the Investment Catalyst, through the [Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor](#), [InvestEast](#) and the [Low Carbon Innovation Fund](#). It will connect businesses with investors and help them access private sector funding, which can be matched with public grant schemes.

- ❖ Launch the Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited online commercial property platform in the summer, which will promote sites to help drive new enquiries for inward investors and businesses looking for new premises, helping to kick start specific locations.



## People

**The fall in business output has significant implications for employment levels. Recent forecasts suggest unemployment could be between 5%-10% in quarter 4 of 2020/21. Universal Credit applications rose by 40% between March and April and under even the most optimistic scenario around 25% of those furloughed are forecast to be made redundant at the end of the 4th quarter of 2020/21.<sup>1</sup>**

The overall impact will remain very hard to tell until the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme begins to taper off.

The impacts, in both the short and longer term, are likely to be disproportionate among the local population. People with the lowest income are most vulnerable, with a significant number of jobs at risk in occupations with relatively lower wages such as retail, tourism and food services, which are forecast to be some of the hardest hit by the economic impacts of the Covid-19 response.

*Young people may be particularly affected.*

Around 30% of employees aged under 25 work in a sector most affected by shutdown, compared with 13% of those over 25<sup>2</sup>. The Resolution Foundation estimates that those leaving education this year will be less likely than previous cohorts to have a job in three years' time, with graduates being 13% less likely and those with the fewest qualifications 37% less likely to have a job. There is evidence that apprenticeship starts this autumn could fall by as much as 50%<sup>3</sup>.

The pandemic has affected individuals in various ways, from being furloughed to being made redundant or seeing a reduction in hours and pay or their apprenticeships and education paused. Those that have continued to work from home have had to rapidly adapt to new ways of working, many whilst home schooling, and many of our large and most affected employment sectors are also those where working at home is less possible.

While many individuals and communities have acted in solidarity in response to the pandemic, with positive benefits from this community spirit, it has also had an impact on people's mental health and wellbeing. The Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector will play a significant role in supporting workplace wellbeing, with much of the support employers and employees will turn to, will turn to being provided by local charities or community groups.

The rapid changes in ways of working, including an overnight shift to online working and lower-contact methods of doing business, have highlighted the importance of an adaptable workforce. The workforce requires the opportunities and capabilities to rapidly acquire these new skills, and especially those associated with online and digital working.



*A number of firms, including construction company Morgan Sindall, have been supporting young people with virtual work experience.*

As the economy restarts and looks to rebuild, it is important that individuals are supported to identify their transferable skills to consider moving into a different sector, and that all partners promote the range of opportunities available.

Like businesses, colleges, universities and independent training providers are facing the same challenges to reopen and adapt to new ways of working, and support will be needed to assist them to continue providing the agile and responsive training that our economy requires.

### ***Together we have:***

- ...❖ Developed and promoted an [employment opportunity](#) platform helping to plug short-term gaps in essential workforce.
- ...❖ Worked with all existing programmes and projects that invest in people and have a focus on improving employment and education opportunities, to identify how they can adapt and be agile to the changing nature and demands of the workforce.

### ***Together we will:***

- ...❖ Create a redundancy support programme which builds on and brings together existing initiatives. We will work with DWP, Jobcentre Plus and professional services to ensure employers and employees are aware of and have access to available support programmes at the earliest point.
- ...❖ Develop further the employment opportunity platform, utilising existing networks to include a redundancy triage service to help connect people to new training and employment opportunities.
- ...❖ Create a programme, building on existing initiatives, that provides employers and employees with mental health and wellbeing support.
- ...❖ Accelerate the delivery of the [Youth Pledge](#) projects, providing an integrated offer that links young people to opportunities and support to help them into education, training and employment.
- ...❖ Deliver a pilot to test innovative virtual solutions for work experience placements to help the continuation of high-quality career engagement.
- ...❖ Provide co-ordinated support that schools and colleges can draw on that enables, enhances and improves careers provision across Norfolk and Suffolk. This includes working with the Careers and Enterprise Company to expand the [New Anglia Careers Hub](#) right across Norfolk and Suffolk from September.
- ...❖ Building on investments already made in digital skills infrastructure, working with our higher and further education providers to provide a range of opportunities that enables all residents to upskill throughout their lives, including developing a digital skills programme and working with industries to scale up existing initiatives.
- ...❖ Reshape existing apprenticeship projects to help stimulate the creation of quality apprenticeships and to enable those existing apprentices who have been made redundant to be connected to new opportunities, working with businesses to show them the value of apprenticeships.
- ...❖ Work with universities to put in place tailored support for students that are due to graduate this summer, to help increase their chances of securing employment or further education.



## Ideas & innovation

**The pandemic has posed huge challenges to the global economy and people's daily lives with far-reaching consequences. At the same time, this universal period of disruption has been a strong driver of creativity, collaboration and innovation that we want to build into our restart and renew activity.**

Universities, businesses and individuals are adapting quickly to reinvent presence, productivity, learning and commerce. New technologies, products and processes have been developed at pace to support the pandemic effort including rolling out of testing, tracking and tracing, and developing AI systems to support rapid vaccine development.

Many firms have rapidly pivoted business models to capitalise on new opportunities and facilitate their economic and education systems to move online.

Whilst many businesses are facing challenging times, where innovation might not be a high priority, this recent disruption demonstrates how critical it is to invest in research and development and continue to develop the tools and technologies needed for a resilient economy and healthcare system. Partnerships with universities and support for commercial development of new ideas and techniques are more important than ever.

There have been many new opportunities emerging for financing innovation, but some businesses are experiencing difficulties in accessing and understanding them. In addition, innovation is an inherently collaborative process with many new engagements not taking place during the lockdown.

### **Together we have:**

- ...❖ Launched the £2m [Growth Through Innovation Fund](#) to invest in a research and development or innovation project that supports growth and helps businesses to diversify or develop new products.

### **Together we will:**

- ...❖ Launch the Reimagine Challenge, a collaborative programme delivered through the [Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor](#) with [Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited](#). It will bring the region's brightest thinkers together to help find commercially viable solutions to some of the challenges facing our high streets and urban centres in the coming weeks and months.
- ...❖ In July, launch the New Anglia Innovation Mentoring programme, which will provide high quality advice and mentoring to businesses, ensuring they have access to the resources they need to be successful

when bidding for innovation funding, including existing and new opportunities with Innovate UK.

- ...❖ Deliver an exciting programme of Innovation Forum events, which will connect businesses and public sector partners to meet challenges and explore opportunities for cross-sector innovation, funding and business support and public sector opportunities.
- ...❖ Deliver an Innovation Marketplace. Working with partners including BT, to explore commercialisation opportunities for dormant patents. Artificial Intelligence technologies will be opened up for partnership and licensing to the region's key industries such as clean energy and manufacturing.



*Digitalisation holds a number of innovative opportunities for a wide range of businesses.*



# Infrastructure

**Places and communities are interconnected, depend on transport links, and draw on many of the same labour markets and supply chains. The pandemic has demonstrated the need for resilient and adaptable infrastructure. It has changed the way businesses and communities use services and the infrastructure needs to support these changes.**

Traffic flows dropped to a fifth of normal levels on the major road network, water and energy use shifted with a new afternoon peak and the trend for homeworking has accelerated. With many local authorities declaring climate change emergencies and more committed to low carbon growth, there is an opportunity to accelerate the transition to a greener economy, embedding these adaptations and practices.

Existing infrastructure and services need to adapt to support people to get to work and into education given the need for social distancing and advice to avoid public transport where possible. This is an opportunity to maximise environmental impact through infrastructure that provides and supports increased walking and cycling, green spaces and a shift to online services and homeworking.

Digital infrastructure and skills are going to be an integral part of the restarting and renewing of the economy, as individuals and business adapt to new ways of working and

trading. Internet service providers report traffic in fixed networks has increased significantly during weekdays, with the largest amounts of data ever transmitted. In some sectors there has been a large-scale switch to homeworking and the benefits such as cost savings have been recognised.

Some businesses have moved quickly to selling their products and services online. Working with Government to fulfil and accelerate its pledge to bring ultrafast broadband to all homes and businesses is vital to enable businesses to become more innovative and resilient as they too look to the future.

Making the case for more private and public investment, and identifying and rolling out where the complementary 5G and Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) initiatives can address any holes in coverage, will be an integral part of our recovery plan.

## **Together we have:**

- Secured £737,000 through the first phase of the Emergency Activity Travel Fund and £1.5m from the Reopening High Street Safely Fund to implement measures that will help make it easier and encourage people to choose alternatives to public transport when they need to travel, and provide consumers with a positive experience when shopping in our high streets.

- Submitted a compelling multi-million-pound bid to Government Local Growth Fund 4, following its call for capital projects which would help to stimulate the economy over the next 18 months.
- Published an infrastructure plan which sets out the connectivity infrastructure improvements that will enable productivity gains and clean growth in Norfolk and Suffolk.

## **Together we will:**

- Deliver the existing portfolio of infrastructure projects which will help support and minimise the impact of the local construction sector.
- Accelerate the delivery of integrated transport priorities that reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift, and identify the most critical transport actions to restart the economy and set up a strong and sustainable rebuild.
- Accelerate the roll-out and take-up of superfast broadband, raising business awareness of its availability and schemes like the [Gigabit Voucher](#), which enables residents and local businesses to join up and approach a supplier directly to install a gigabit-capable connection.



## Places snapshot



### Population<sup>1</sup>

Norfolk  
903,700

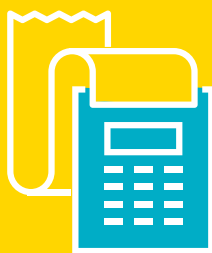
Suffolk  
758,500



### Business base<sup>2</sup>

Norfolk 88% micro,  
10% small,  
1.7% medium,  
0.3% large

Suffolk 89% micro,  
10% small,  
1.5% medium,  
0.4% large



### Workforce furloughed<sup>3</sup>

Norfolk 97,800  
(27.1%)

Suffolk 85,600  
(26.8%)



### Office property vacancy rates (Q2 2020)

Norfolk 1.8%  
(1.5% in Q4 2019)

Suffolk 2.9%  
(3% in Q4 2019)



### Small business grant payments<sup>4</sup>

Norfolk  
19,997 (£229m)

Suffolk  
12,879 (£148m)



### Universal credit claimants<sup>5</sup>

Norfolk 23,310  
(33% under  
the age of 29)

Suffolk 18,925  
(32% under  
the age of 29)



## Our place

Much of the detailed work to support communities and businesses will be led by Local Authorities, from reopening town centres to running support grants, rethinking services and supporting the most vulnerable.

Local councils in Norfolk and Suffolk have been playing a leading role in the public health response and have innovated and rapidly adapted to new ways of working. Some have already published immediate recovery plans and more will do so in the weeks ahead.

This section sets out some of the things that they will be doing that reflect the very different needs of our towns, city, rural and coastal areas.

*New social distancing signs, Stowmarket*



*The Winerack, Ipswich*



*The Forum, Norwich*



*Cyclists in Breckland*



*Great Yarmouth harbour*



*Guildhall, King's Lynn*



*Cromer Pier, North Norfolk*



*Quadram Institute, Norwich Research Park*



*Boats in Broadland*



*Sudbury*



*Felixstowe Port*



*Bury St Edmunds*



*Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk*



## Norfolk County Council

Norfolk is an ambitious county with the space and capacity to deliver substantial new growth, e.g. in our key clean energy, advanced manufacturing, agri-food and digital sectors.

Together for Norfolk (TfN), the County Council's business plan to 2025, outlines the vision for Norfolk, a place where all have the chance to contribute to and benefit from economic growth and regeneration, while protecting and enhancing our unique environment through managed development. We are achieving these aims through close working with local partners and Government.

Our challenge is to respond to the current economic conditions in the context of TfN, recognising that the extent of the impact is not yet known. However, we know that key sectors and many people are significantly affected. We are therefore developing a Norfolk Delivery Plan, which will evolve with the evidence and have a strong focus on social inclusion, as well as retaining the environmental benefits arising from the pandemic.

### Actions:

- ❖ Help as many businesses as possible to survive, and as many people as possible to stay in work or secure alternative work or training.
- ❖ Drive the identification, development and promotion of clean growth opportunities, such as the Offshore Wind Operations and Maintenance Base in Great Yarmouth.
- ❖ Create the significant Norfolk Strategic Fund to kickstart recovery projects.
- ❖ Focus on local markets and supply chains, as well as where public money is spent locally.
- ❖ Promote the county as a safe place to live, work and visit – one that is open for business.

## Suffolk County Council

Suffolk has many economic strengths with global reach, from clean energy and agri-food/tech to ports and logistics, digital/technology and beyond: all making a significant contribution to the UK economy. Its natural capital makes it a great place to live, work and visit.

The Council is working with local partners and Government to help Suffolk fulfil its economic potential sustainably, enabling as many people and places as possible to contribute and benefit, including people who are vulnerable and facing disadvantages.

The Council is committed to tackling climate change, supporting vulnerable people and enabling thriving communities. Inclusive, sustainable growth is vital. Given the social and economic impacts of the response to Covid-19, these become even more important for Suffolk's people, environment and economy.

### Actions:

- ❖ Seek opportunities for clean and inclusive growth in renewing the economy, so no one is left behind.
  - ❖ Work with partners to develop education and skills opportunities that help people reach their potential.
  - ❖ Lead by example by supporting our own staff and helping businesses support their workforce to be healthy and resilient.
  - ❖ Use our assets and work in partnership to deliver safe and appropriate homes.
  - ❖ Work with communities to help them be connected and sustainable as well as supporting the most vulnerable.
- More detail is in our [Business Plan for 2020-21](#). The Council is developing its own recovery plan and contributing to Suffolk's collaborative plans (e.g. Suffolk Growth Framework) under the resilience forum recovery arrangements. These will form the basis for longer-term strategies for reform and reset.

## Ipswich Borough Council

Ipswich is the County Town of Suffolk. The town has a diverse and innovative urban economy, while historically having high levels of inequality and low salaries.

Covid-19 has exacerbated the challenges the town faces in the retail, hospitality, tourism and culture sectors. It is unclear at the moment whether this will be temporary or permanent.

The challenge now is to revive the town, while ensuring that this happens inclusively and sustainably. Investment through the Town Deal and other funding streams will complement existing collaborative work towards a shared vision of a dynamic town.

### Actions:

- Continue work with [Ipswich Vision](#) partners – and primarily our BID, Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council – to implement physical measures and signage in the town centre to support social distancing and safety.
- Review the Ipswich Economic Strategy to identify any actions required to respond to Covid-19.
- Deliver the Town Investment Plan and bid for Town Deal funding in line with (anticipated) Government guidance.

## Norwich City Council

Norwich is the urban centre of Norfolk, driving significant regional economic and educational activity to stimulate growth and innovation, and to enrich the labour market within Norwich, across the LEP area and beyond. The city experiences high levels of inequality and low-wage workers.

The challenge is to revive the city as a thriving economic engine, despite clear supply-side challenges and demand for its strong retail, culture, hospitality and tourist sectors being suppressed temporarily or permanently (with the advent of mass homeworking and online retail), whilst ensuring that this happens inclusively and sustainably. Investment through the Town Deal and Transforming Cities will complement existing collaborative work towards our shared vision of a connected, creative, dynamic, fair and liveable city. Read the city's [Blueprint for Growth](#).

### Actions:

- Continue to work with Norwich BID, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, police and County Council to implement physical measures and signage in the city centre to support social distancing.
- Establish the Good Economy Commission as a key forum to make recommendations across the City Vision partnership to support an inclusive recovery.
- Use licensing powers to support businesses – particularly those in the hospitality sector – to vary use of outside space over the summer, while ensuring people with disabilities can continue to access and move around the city safely.
- Consider how Norwich City Council as an anchor institution can support an inclusive economy through its assets, contracts, recruitment and procurement.
- Review the Norwich Economic Strategy 2019-24 to identify any actions required to respond to Covid-19.
- Deliver the Town Investment Plan in line with Government guidance to drive economic recovery.

## Breckland District Council

In Breckland we are braced for significant economic challenges, particularly with a concentration of businesses in hard-hit sectors including manufacturing, underlying skills challenges and risks around supply chains and labour.

However, we still anticipate significant opportunities ahead. We have already created the platforms for substantial growth by leading public and private partnerships around key growth sites. These will drive forward thousands of new homes and new business opportunities in areas like Snetterton and Thetford. Now, as a result of the changes brought about by Covid-19, we will continue to lead around growth opportunities across the District, and ensure they are well-placed to support the needs of the future economy.

### Actions:

- ❖ Work with business and partners to unlock the economy safely and positively, including enabling physical changes on high streets, and supporting upskilling where necessary.
- ❖ Mobilise the whole Council in response to the economic challenge, and ensure our regulatory powers are directed at enabling survival and promoting growth.
- ❖ Follow a twin-track approach to maximising survival and job retention, whilst also enabling growth and regrowth on the principles of 'building back better' and finding opportunity to create a more inclusive Breckland economy with the skills to grow.
- ❖ Continue as Leaders of Place, establishing Town Delivery Plans and working in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure our Towns are places where residents and businesses thrive
- ❖ Inform all our actions by constant dialogue with business and partners, to track needs and issues and design business support solutions collectively.

## Great Yarmouth Borough Council

The Borough's economy is vulnerable to the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis. Three key industry sectors (based on employment numbers / GVA) have been severely impacted by movement restrictions, social distancing measures and changes in consumer spending.

Great Yarmouth has the second-largest visitor economy in Norfolk, valued at approximately £635m in 2018. Great Yarmouth's tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses faced unprecedented reductions in spending. Movement restrictions came into force just before Easter, when the season begins. Most businesses in this sector rely on income generated in the 12-week season for the whole year.

The crisis has also accelerated the decline in high street retail and the viability of the town centre. Consumer spending dramatically shifted online, exposing the vulnerabilities of high street independent shops against online competitors. Energy businesses have experienced a downturn in investment and are particularly exposed.

While devastating, the impact of the crisis has highlighted the importance of key investment projects, accelerating progress. Each programme has been rigorously challenged against the impact of Covid-19. The delivery of focused, strategic regeneration in Great Yarmouth is needed now more than ever, and at the heart of these changes are the aspirations of individuals, communities and businesses.

### Actions:

- ❖ Maximise the use of the Future High Streets and Town Deal schemes to address and respond to the underlying challenges to town centre vitality.
- ❖ Work in partnership, developing interventions supporting key sectors such as the Tourism Sector Deal.
- ❖ Develop an Offshore Operations and Maintenance base to create higher value jobs.

## Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

King's Lynn is a commercial and service hub for a large rural hinterland with a historic centre and port, and is a net importer of workers from the wider area.

In this recovery context, King's Lynn and West Norfolk's largest producing (manufacturing) and employing (retail) sectors could experience around a 50% contraction in Q2 2020 (based on OBR national projections). The area's prominent tourism sector (accommodation and food services) could be one of the worst hit (85% decline). The area's second highest employing sector (health) is one that is projected to expand rather than contract, with a 50% growth in output.

The local picture is very mixed and there are some manufacturing and construction-related businesses that are doing very well and avoiding any contraction.

### Actions:

We will seek to use recent Government funding for towns and communities, as well as short-term recovery funding opportunities, to:

- Provide people with the learning opportunities they need to progress and retrain, raising aspirations and earnings and meeting identified demand for higher skills, with a particular focus on young people's progression.

- Regenerate and repurpose the high street and brownfield land: building high-quality homes and premises for people to live and work; tackling market failure and stimulating private investment to meet new demand for premises from start-up and growing businesses.
- Increase enterprise and the number of businesses, strengthening collaboration to enable more businesses to recover, innovate and thrive.

## North Norfolk District Council

North Norfolk has a diverse economy, with many long-established food processing and manufacturing businesses. It is also heavily dependent on the visitor economy, which in 2018 comprised 29% of the District's employment, providing £511m from 9.6m trips.

Through marketing and investment in infrastructure, visitor numbers are increasing throughout the year but spring and summer still account for the majority of trips and spend. The value of staying visitors is significantly higher than day trippers, which in 2018 accounted for more than a third of tourism spend.

The visitor economy is critical to the sustainability of retail and hospitality businesses in and around the seven market and resort towns.

The District has high levels of employment among people of working age, but local wages and incomes are below England and East of England averages.

The District's population was also vulnerable to this crisis, with 33.2% aged 65 or over.<sup>1</sup>

### Actions:

- Protect the safety of customers and employees as they return to businesses in our town centres, resorts and attractions.
- Develop a campaign to: reassure local people that measures are in place to assuage public health concerns; support local businesses in their efforts to recommence trading; and promote the destination to visitors beyond this summer.
- Evaluate the opportunities, environmental gains and benefits to the rural economy of the changed patterns of movement and new ways of working, and identify investment needed to propagate this.
- Support those experiencing economic hardship as a result of impact on the local economy.

1: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/economic-growth/find-out-about-the-economy-of-north-norfolk/>

## South Norfolk Council

Due to the historical strength of the Broadland and South Norfolk economies, and the fact they are not dominated by any one sector that is particularly vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic, we are optimistic our path to economic recovery will not be as difficult as in other areas of the country.

Nevertheless, as two councils working together, we are 100% focused on the immediate stabilisation of our businesses, and we are:

1. Offering bespoke advice and support to every business who wants it, helping them to chart a course through the crisis and beyond, and importantly ensuring they retain as many employees as possible.
2. Ensuring public spaces in our market towns, villages and high streets are clean, safe and secure places to visit and shop.
3. Ensuring every part of the council is working to stabilise and then grow the economy.

---

### Actions:

❖ As part of our CONFIDENCE campaign we are widening pavements to ensure social distancing, installing hand sanitisers, providing additional cleaning and waste collections, introducing car-free zones for residents and visitors and providing advice via on-street CONFIDENCE teams.

❖ We are providing local businesses with free access to a network of experienced business mentors and advisors.

❖ We are flexing our regulatory, licencing and planning powers to support businesses to reprofile their financial position, and 'pivot' operations where necessary.

❖ We have established a single point of contact in the council to provide business support and advice, regardless of which service area they need to speak to.

Visit <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/businesses/do-business-confidence>

## Broadland District Council

Due to the historical strength of the Broadland and South Norfolk economies, and the fact they are not dominated by any one sector that is particularly vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic, we are optimistic our path to economic recovery will not be as difficult as in other areas of the country.

Nevertheless, as two councils working together, we are 100% focused on the immediate stabilisation of our businesses, and we are:

1. Offering bespoke advice and support to every business who wants it, helping them to chart a course through the crisis and beyond, and importantly ensuring they retain as many employees as possible.
2. Ensuring public spaces in our market towns, villages and high streets are clean, safe and secure places to visit and shop.
3. Ensuring every part of the council is working to stabilise and then grow the economy.

---

### Actions:

❖ As part of our CONFIDENCE campaign we are widening pavements to ensure social distancing, installing hand sanitisers, providing additional cleaning and waste collections, introducing car-free zones for residents and visitors and providing advice via on-street CONFIDENCE teams.

❖ We are providing local businesses with free access to a network of experienced business mentors and advisors.

❖ We are flexing our regulatory, licencing and planning powers to support businesses to reprofile their financial position, and 'pivot' operations where necessary.

❖ We have established a single point of contact in the council to provide business support and advice, regardless of which service area they need to speak to.

Visit <https://www.broadland.gov.uk/do-business-with-confidence>

## Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

We anticipate significant challenges in our local economy and we have set up internal collaborative processes to maximise our support for business. Together with our private and public sector partners, including the Suffolk Growth Programme Board, we are committed to facilitating new infrastructure, developing local supply chains and building our business skills base.

We will continue to develop our new Economic Strategy which will have a significant focus on restarting and renewing our local economy under our Places for Growth framework:

- ❖ Successful and Skilled Places for Growth
- ❖ Connected and Sustainable Places for Growth
- ❖ Innovative and Creative Places for Growth

### Actions:

- ❖ Help our businesses to reopen safely, ensuring our public places and spaces can support the reopening of our town centres.
- ❖ Review opportunities for more walking and cycling across our areas.
- ❖ Contribute to swifter rollout of more FTTP ultrafast broadband to our businesses.
- ❖ Develop a growth programme for fast-tracked growth of high-value sector specialisms particularly in technology and innovation.
- ❖ Accelerate new programmes of support and create better networks in our more traditional sectors, such as care and the visitor economy.

## East Suffolk Council

East Suffolk is a major economic driver with key sector strengths in clean energy, ICT, ports and logistics, agriculture and tourism.

The Council has put economic growth at the centre of its recently approved Strategic Plan, which is complemented by the East Suffolk Economic Growth Plan. We are also key partners on the Suffolk Growth Programme Board, currently reshaping the Suffolk Growth Framework, which will be a key document in setting out the Suffolk local authority approach to Covid-19 recovery.

While East Suffolk's economic strength is based on its diverse economy, the Covid-19 economic shock is having a massive impact on our visitor economy and the retail, leisure and cultural offer across our 12 principal towns. Our Town Investment Plan, revitalising town centre strategy and other plans, is being adapted in light of Covid-19 and will form part of our emerging recovery plan.

### Actions:

- ❖ Be central players in the Norfolk and Suffolk recovery plans.
- ❖ Adapt our Town Investment Plan, BID development, masterplans, and overall economic and regeneration programmes to respond to Covid-19.
- ❖ Work closely with Town Councils, Suffolk County Council and local businesses/business groups to enable safe and successful reopening of towns and resorts.
- ❖ Ensure as many small businesses as possible can access the various support grants to maximise the money going into the East Suffolk economy.
- ❖ Working collaboratively with VEA, VS and our DMO to support the recovery in our visitor economy.
- ❖ Substantially extend business engagement activity to ensure our recovery plans are informed by all sectors.

## West Suffolk Council

The West Suffolk approach for economic recovery is about our people, communities and places. It considers the impact and opportunities of societal change as a result of Covid-19 and how these might shape our future economy and businesses.

Many West Suffolk businesses have demonstrated both innovation and resilience, despite this difficult time. Through sharing examples of good business practice in our area, we will support others. Together we will explore how investing in employees and thinking locally will help create a more resilient local economy and environment for future growth. This will include apprenticeships and skills, local supply chains, technology and increasing access to infrastructure and facilities.

Our area has many strengths including the horse racing industry, a rural economy and manufacturing businesses, as well as unique market towns. It is time to rediscover and invest in our local ecosystems, while providing and lobbying for investment to support sustained local recovery and growth.

### Actions:

- ❖ Work with others to make our market towns safe. Encourage our communities and businesses to rediscover the value of their local centres and richness of our rural environments.
- ❖ Create a framework for businesses. Build on the opportunities we have seen increase during Covid-19 to invest in our people and enhance liveable, local communities.
- ❖ Creating opportunities for new investment and promoting West Suffolk and its businesses.
- ❖ Lobby and work with partners and Government for incentives and new legislation to enhance local social and physical infrastructure.
- ❖ Work with the Suffolk Growth Programme Board to reshape the Suffolk Growth Framework.



New social distancing signs, Stowmarket



New social distancing markings in Norwich city centre



## Sectors at a glance

**Economic activity will recover as lockdown is lifted, but the speed and degree is uncertain and will vary by sector.**

As we work together to support the restart and renew of the Norfolk and Suffolk economy, we will focus activity on stabilising and renewing the foundation industries recognised in the Economic Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy, including the care and VCSE sectors.

Both the restart and renew recovery plans will show our commitment to capitalising on the area's major strengths and new opportunities in clean energy, agri-food, information and communication technology and digital creative, alongside ensuring the foundation sectors get the support needed.

All our sectors will benefit from the actions set out in the Business Environment, People, Ideas and Infrastructure sections. This section builds on these and sets out sector-specific actions.

### **Agri-food**

Unprecedented demand at food retailers has put pressure on the food system in some areas, whereas the closure of the hospitality industry has created surplus in others.

### **Clean energy**

The global pandemic has affected both the supply and demand for energy.

### **ICT digital**

The lockdown has led to homeworking en masse, with people looking for new ways to work, learn, shop and socialise virtually.

### **Visitor economy**

The sector has been amongst the hardest hit, with businesses forced to stop trading just before the start of the season.

### **Health and social care**

The pandemic has pushed the health and social care sector into the front line of dealing with the crisis. Nationally, care homes have seen high Covid-19 death rates in both residents and frontline staff, reinforcing the need for Personal Protective Equipment, correct training and capital investment.

### **Voluntary**

The pandemic has negatively affected resources, income and funding of third-sector organisations and impacted their ability to meet objectives in the longer term while demands continue to increase.

### **Construction**

Major construction projects have continued throughout the pandemic but there have been delays caused by issues in the supply chain.

### **Engineering**

The manufacturing and engineering sector has played a pivotal role in the response to the pandemic, from supporting the call to produce PPE at pace to continuing a stable supply of food and drink.

### **Insurance**

The financial and insurance services has been heavily involved in the response to the impact of the pandemic, providing economic support to struggling businesses and dealing with insurance claims for lost income.

### **Life sciences**

Our world-leading life sciences sector has been supporting efforts for vaccine development and the manufacture of medical devices and diagnostics.

### **Ports**

Ports have played their role as essential and critical infrastructure during the pandemic. The lockdown period saw less traffic but with spikes in activity.

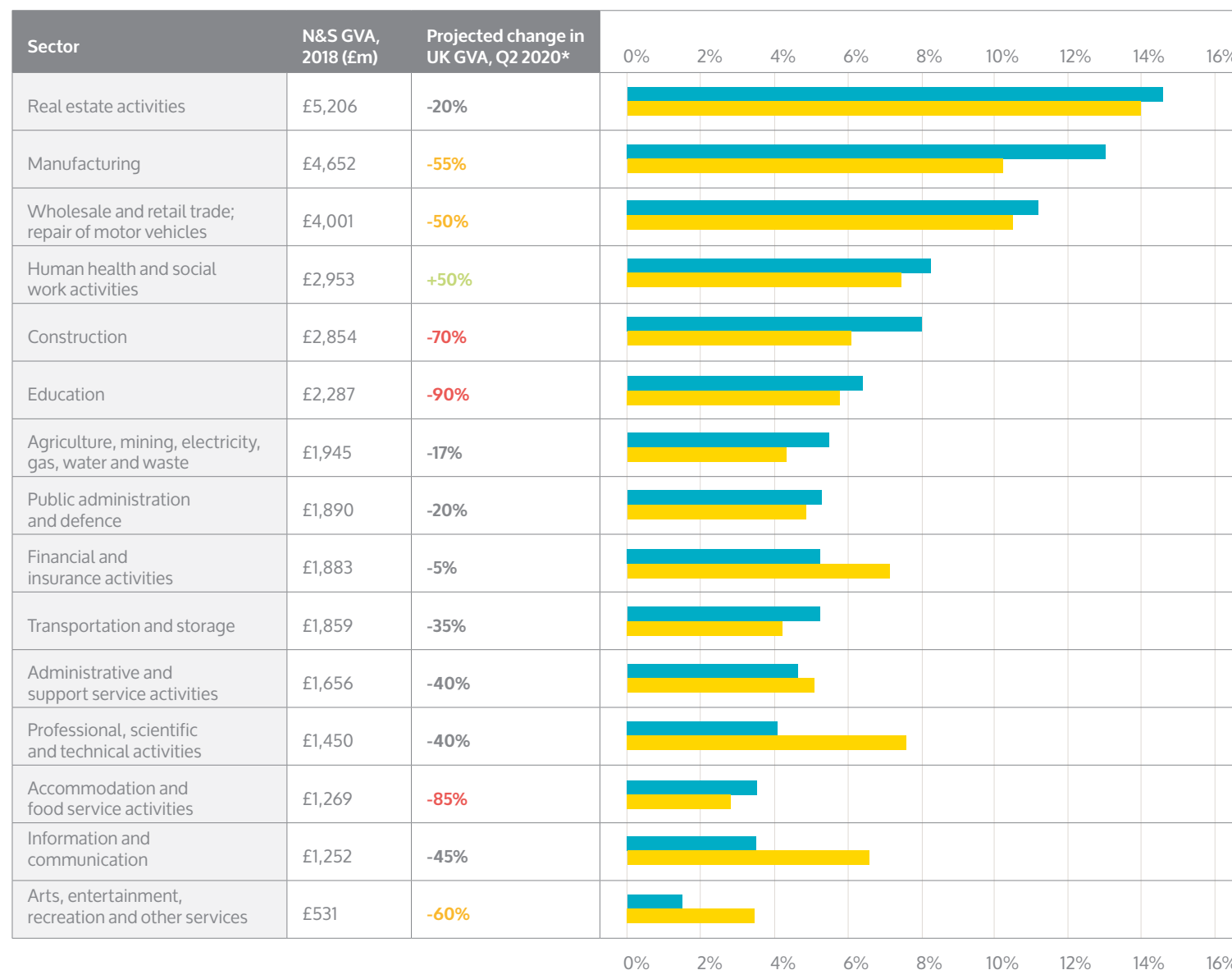
## GVA by Sector

In April 2020, the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) published estimates on projected change in GVA by sector in the second quarter 2020 (shown right).

All sectors except for Human health and social work activities are expected to contract, Education by as much as 90%. These estimates apply to the whole UK economy. They estimate that the UK's GVA will contract by 36% in the second quarter 2020.

Using the OBR's assessments and applying these projections to Norfolk and Suffolk's particular industrial mix to provide a local picture, we find that although Norfolk and Suffolk's industrial mix is different from the national picture, the projected impact on Norfolk and Suffolk's GVA in the second quarter 2020 is similar: a contraction in GVA of 35.9%.

\*The figures for GVA are calculated based on respective sector employees delivering their output, in their usual place of work. E.g. the figures for certain sectors – in particular education – will not reflect their actual activity in terms of delivering education, which has been taking place online.





## Agri-food

**Norfolk and Suffolk has the largest agri-food sector in the UK and world-leading research into plant and soil technology and agricultural systems. The impact of the pandemic on the sector has been complex and immediate. Unprecedented demand at food retailers has put pressure on the food system in some areas, whereas the closure of the hospitality industry has created surplus in others.**

Labour challenges will remain a huge concern for growers and producers, particularly post exit from the EU. Collaborative working to promote new employment opportunities in the agri-food sector has been successful in the short-term, with growers reporting positively on their workforce arrangements.

Whilst it has presented challenges for the sector, the pandemic has increased the public's interest in locally produced food. This opportunity has been welcomed by many innovative businesses who have adapted rapidly to meet demand. However, longer-term business models are needed to sustain a local food renaissance. Collaborative working to adjust supply chains after the closure of food service has been successful, but there remain strains on the food systems while pubs and restaurants are closed.

The Agri-Food Industry Council has risen to the challenge presented by Covid-19 and the impacts on the sector. This period has embedded the principles of collaboration and partnership providing an invaluable connection across the public, private and education sectors. We will seek to build on this strong foundation, developing initiatives which enable a sustainable and resilient future, in the light of climate change and the major changes arising from Brexit.

### **Sector actions:**

- ❖ By the summer, conclude a research project to examine opportunities and support businesses to exploit emerging food trends and consumer habits.
  - ❖ Identify and evidence the need for further specialised business support to complement the planned launch of the Food Innovation Centre in 2021.
- Building on our Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited sector and business location campaigns:**
- ❖ Initiate a regional branding and distribution scheme, working with marketeers and wholesalers to package local brands and strengthen local supply chains, examining different business models and demand feasibility by September.

- ❖ Launch a regional promotion drive with partners in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, outlining our significant contribution to the UK's food security and to realise the collective importance as the UK centre for high-tech, precision agriculture and sustainable food production, including robotics.
- ❖ We will continue to proactively promote agri-food job opportunities through the [employment opportunity](#) platform, and work with major employers to support them as they continue to adapt their working practices to accommodate a new workforce.



*Norfolk and Suffolk has the largest agri-food sector in the UK.*



## Clean energy

**Norfolk and Suffolk is a global exemplar for clean, low-carbon energy production, with expertise in all forms of energy generation. At the heart of the world's market for offshore wind we will continue to play a core role in the UK's transition to a zero-carbon economy.**

The global pandemic has affected both the supply and demand for energy, with one of the most visible impacts being the drop in oil and gas prices and resulting contraction of the supply chain. Businesses in the oil and gas supply chain need to be supported to diversify as part of the ongoing energy transition. With large numbers of the population restricted to their homes and much commerce paused, there has been a large drop in the demand for power, with the National Grid reporting a reduction of 10%.



*Norfolk and Suffolk is at the hub of the world's largest market for offshore wind power.*

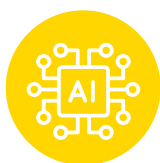
Although throughout the pandemic renewable energy, and in particular offshore wind, has remained resilient, the five-month delay to the planning process for Vattenfall's Norfolk Boreas windfarm will have impacts on businesses in the supply chain. However, with the right support, clean energy could be at the forefront of renewing the economy post-pandemic, accelerating transition to a zero-carbon economy.

The sector's ability to collaborate has been demonstrated by the work of the All Energy Industry Council, and this partnership and expertise across all energy sectors will be pivotal to the plans for recovery.

Looking ahead, Sizewell C will be one of Europe's largest engineering projects and provide significant high-quality jobs and supply chain opportunities.

### **Sector actions:**

- ❖ Deliver the Fit For Offshore Renewables supply chain readiness programme in Norfolk and Suffolk, working with the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult, announcing the first cohort by September.
- ❖ Support the progress of major energy projects in the region, developing innovative and locally targeted planning and regulatory pathways, and locally funded infrastructure responsive to environmental and community needs.
- ❖ Publish an all-energy statement on sub-sector opportunities and challenges, ensuring that the opportunity for clean growth in the region is understood nationally and internationally, adding to our Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited sector and business location campaigns.
- ❖ Work with industry to develop an all-energy capability prospectus, providing exposure to the region's supply chain companies and opportunities for those impacted to diversify into evolving markets.
- ❖ Forge relationships with world class research and innovation organisations nationally and internationally, expanding our reach to maximise on opportunities through research, technology and innovation programmes that will build on the region's ambitious sustainable clean growth agendas.
- ❖ Work with Government and other LEPs to deliver the Nuclear Sector Deal's key commitments and local ambitions, delivering a robust local supply chain for Sizewell C and building a lasting skills legacy for Norfolk and Suffolk.



## ICT and digital creative

**Underpinning the whole economy, Norfolk and Suffolk's ICT and digital creative sector has companies and expertise of international reach with significant potential to support economic recovery and resilience. The lockdown has thrown the digital sector into the spotlight as businesses transition to homeworking en masse, and people look for new ways to work, learn, shop and socialise virtually. Innovative digital businesses have been working in a variety of ways to fight the ongoing pandemic, from partnering with healthcare providers to deploying technology solutions free of charge.**

The impacts of the pandemic on the sector seem to be mostly market-dependent, with those companies who service retail, hospitality and tourism faring worse than those that offer online services.



*Norfolk and Suffolk is a hub for creative tech businesses.*

Sub-sectors such as healthtech and ed-tech have seen a major uplift as people transition to using online service and home schooling. However, there are concerns about a slowdown in private investment for start-ups as many networking events have been cancelled. This will have a further impact on the ability of Norfolk and Suffolk's businesses to access the Government's Future Fund.

The pandemic has seen pressure on companies providing ICT solutions and infrastructure as businesses transition to home working simultaneously. Creative businesses in UX design, games, animation and augmented reality have seen a surge in interest as their clients look for ways to transition to online provision and engage their customers virtually. Businesses in the creative sector may have innovative solutions to challenges faced by social distancing as we begin to reopen high streets, town centres and visitor attractions. In addition, with theatres and other indoor cultural attractions likely to be some of the last businesses to reopen, the capture, streaming and commercialisation of digital content provides a cross-sector opportunity in an emerging market.

Collectively, the Digital Tech Industry Council is providing the partnerships and industry expertise to build on our digital strengths and underpin economy recovery in Norfolk and Suffolk.

### **Sector actions:**

- ... Expand and develop the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor's Investment Catalyst which will allow businesses to secure the investment needed to scale and grow, capitalising on the new opportunities for Government funding such as Future Fund.
- ... Work with businesses in the creative industries, including the screen sector and other emerging specialisms, to ensure that the new market opportunities created during this period of disruption are fully exploited, including opportunities to support other sectors with recovery, virtual networking and developing a compelling investment offer to attract private sector investment and grow the cluster.
- ... Build on the Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited and Department for International Trade High Potential Opportunity to drive foreign direct investment into emerging capabilities including 5G, photonics and immersive technology at Adastral Park.
- ... Work with Tech East to launch a Tech 100 of top businesses in the region. Scope international virtual events for these business to attend, network at, and showcase the innovations they have developed during lockdown. This will help to expose them to new opportunities and investment.



## Visitor economy – culture and tourism

**The visitor economy is the second largest sector in Norfolk and Suffolk by employment, after health and social care. Employing 11% of the region's workforce, the sector accounts for 89,100 jobs and contains 12% of the region's businesses.**

The sector has been amongst the hardest hit, with businesses forced to stop trading just before Easter – the start of the season. Intelligence from the sector reveals the deep impact of lockdown, with high levels of redundancies and business failure projected. Businesses with large estates or overheads, such as zoos and aquariums, have been particularly affected, having to maintain operations with no income.

Continued movement restrictions and social distancing measures mean the impact is likely to be longer lasting than many other parts of the economy, with theatres and indoor cultural venues likely to be some of the last to reopen. Research shows that theatres in the region are projecting an unrecoverable gap of £10m by September 2020 and will have lost over £15m of revenue by September 2020. For festivals, all live activity for 2020 has been cancelled, causing significant financial losses across the sector and the supply chain.

As the economy begins to reopen, social distancing measures will impact on visitor capacity, hindering the ability to recover. Consumer behaviour and concerns about travelling make recovery planning challenging, as does the seasonal nature of the sector.

However, with overseas tourism (inbound and outbound) not likely to recover quickly, domestic tourism presents the best opportunity for visitors over the next year. The rural and coastal nature of the offer in Norfolk and Suffolk will be in greater demand, given their natural, cultural and heritage assets as visitors seek out alternative destinations. The sector, which is relatively fragmented, has shown extraordinary levels of collaboration and partnership through the crisis. This is a real opportunity to build back better – aiming for increased visitor numbers and spend, new technology and higher-skilled, better-paid jobs.

Culture has a unique role in placemaking, the visitor economy, inward investment, skills, health and wellbeing, and inclusive growth. The New Anglia Cultural Board will play an important role in ensuring that culture is at the heart of our economic recovery.

### **Sector actions:**

- Set up a resource hub with latest updates and advice on opening safely to support businesses concerned about health and safety issues and develop a co-ordinated approach to reopening destinations.
- Publish a short-term recovery plan in July which brings together partners from across the sector to outline the steps needed to restart the sector.

- Undertake consumer confidence research to underpin and inform future marketing campaigns and act quickly to restore confidence and boost demand.
- Work with the Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to join up marketing initiatives to promote Norfolk and Suffolk as safe destinations, including a campaign to 'Discover Unexplored England' with DMOs working together in an alliance, developing thematic trails and itineraries.
- Link up and collaborate with existing projects such as EXPERIENCE, Look Sideways East and Celebrating Culture 2021 to develop cultural and experiential tourism, promoting less well-known destinations and year-round attractions.
- Develop programmes which promote innovation and digital adoption as well as peer-to-peer learning to enable businesses in the sector to become more resilient and productive. Link up with existing programmes such as Collaboration: Place: Change to enhance leadership and business skills.
- Scope and bid for funding for a Destination Alliance to deliver activity in a co-ordinated and collaborative way across local authorities and DMOs. This will capitalise on the aspiration to work together, embedding long-term partnerships.
- Commission Culture Drives Growth Phase 2 in August to create the structures, plans and projects to underpin the cultural sector's recovery and maximise the role of the cultural sector in wider regional recovery.



## Health and social care

**Health and social care is one of the foundations of our local economy. It is the largest sector in terms of employment and plays an essential role in improving the health of populations, promoting independence and social justice. The sector is fragmented, with great diversity in business size from large care providers to SMEs providing a range of residential and homecare services.**

Already struggling with skills shortages and increasing demand, the global pandemic has pushed the health and social care sector into the frontline of dealing with the crisis. Nationally, care homes have seen high Covid-19 death rates in both residents and frontline staff, reinforcing the need for access to appropriate infection control training and access to adequate and timely delivery of Personal Protective Equipment to ensure the safety of all.

There are many other factors such as unsociable hours, travel and transport issues, particularly in a large rural economy. Interestingly, the vacancy rate has fallen during the pandemic. It is true, however, that there was significant staff sickness, especially at the beginning of the pandemic, due to self-isolation.

A relatively low-pay sector, care has struggled with recruitment and retention of staff, worsened by the cumulative impact of Brexit. The pandemic has made these issues more acute, with many staff off due to illness and self-isolation and extra training needed for identification and management of Covid-19.

In addition, the sector is experiencing a slowdown as clients become cautious about engaging in external care, preferring to care for relatives themselves, impacting on income and business sustainability. With increased cost of wages and additional resources required for Personal Protective Equipment as well as training at a time when income is down, a huge burden is being placed on strained budgets with some business failure projected.

It is possible that the slowdown in demand for provision will continue, with long-term changes to the patterns of requirement for social care. Businesses operating in areas where there might be surplus provision need to be supported to pivot to adapt to new demand. Improved leadership and business management will enable care providers to become more agile and enhance the professionalism and resilience of the sector.

Partnerships across the region from our universities, research institutes and hospitals have been strengthened by working together to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

### **Sector actions:**

- Build on partnerships with training providers and business groups to ensure access to quality and accessible training. Increase access to progression of care sector workforce at all levels through development of, or access to, relevant training, enabling a safe environment. Take steps towards developing an integrated workforce that can assist where there are gaps in services.

- Continue to establish a cost-effective and easily accessible local PPE supply chain and make it available to businesses in the care sector, linking resource to where it is most needed.
- Address the skills shortages and challenges to recruitment, capitalising on the high levels of positive public interest resulting from the pandemic, and through refocussing the sector skills plan for Health and Social Care. Develop initiatives to make the sector more accessible for younger people, providing clear career progression and pathways.
- Develop further ways of communicating digitally with the sector for peer support in different forums, building on the work of partners. Facilitate relationships with business leaders and universities to enhance management, innovation and leadership practices and adoption of digital technology.
- Work with key stakeholders across local authorities, health and Primary Care to carry out accurate and informed planning about future needs for care and responses to pandemic. Take necessary commissioning steps to encourage innovative future models for care, such as digital care based on plans to ensure there is capacity for current and future need.



# Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE)

**The pandemic has negatively affected resources and income of the VCSE sector organisations and has impacted their ability to meet objectives in the longer term, whilst the sector has witnessed increasing demand on specific areas.**

The voluntary sector is extremely diverse and such diversity requires further analysis to enable the relative strengths of the sector to be optimised. For those organisations who are actively engaged or else aspire to help drive the ambitions set out in the Economic Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy, they need to re-envision their offering in the current climate.

It is important that business resilience best practice is shared across the sector, taking advantage of collaborative working, to increase impact, the new and adapted models of working and increasing use of technology and digital delivery. With the prospect of unemployment levels increasing, the sector is uniquely positioned to play a key role in getting the economy restarted through multiple contributions towards work readiness, but needs investment to span this divide.

The sector is embedded across all of our communities. It will help to get people back into work and overcome the personal trauma of the crisis, by helping to build confidence, identifying opportunities for basic skills acquisition and improvements in health and wellbeing for all individuals.

The sector is well placed to ignite employment opportunities across the spectrum. The sector is a key provider of jobs, skills development, experience and ongoing training, including through volunteering. For example, it will play a strong role in removing barriers for those furthest from the labour market and supporting both young people who have been disproportionately affected through opportunities to enter employment, as well as the increasing number of midlife job seekers in gaining skills to open new areas of employment by working collaboratively with all sectors, notably the health and social care and skills sectors. Support is required to create jobs and train through enhanced links with employers and providers in the private sector.

## Sector actions:

- ❖ Develop a VCSE sector-facing offer for the New Anglia Growth Hub, so organisations have access to relevant business support, which includes management support, mentoring, networking and restarting under social distancing, alongside the support they receive from VCSE sector umbrella organisations, to enhance their internal resilience.
- ❖ Deliver the roadmaps and agreed courses of action for the local VCSE sector umbrella organisations, which will include supporting better communication between VCSE sector organisations and building on collaborative work, initiatives and programmes.
- ❖ Link up the financial, legal, and ICT and Digital sectors with the VCSE sector to support the digitalisation of services, which can assist with remote working and online delivery as more resources come back.
- ❖ Encourage commissioners/funders to accept that new ways of working such as online operational delivery are recognised as eligible activity alongside face-to-face delivery.
- ❖ Move further towards public sector whole-system thinking and commissioning, with greater consideration given to how public sector commissioning impacts upon the wider local economy – securing social, economic and environmental benefits.
- ❖ Develop a Sector Skills Plan for the VCSE sector, which recognises the sector's significant offer to the wider business community through meaningful skill acquisition. To create a professional, responsive, evolving, fit-for-purpose sector across all levels and sizes in Norfolk and Suffolk.



# Construction

**Norfolk and Suffolk has a large and diverse construction sector, with an emerging specialisation in modern methods of construction and sustainable design. Major construction projects have continued throughout the pandemic but there have been delays caused by issues in the supply chain. Low-carbon developments and circular economy principles in housing will form a major part of our recovery and renewal.**

Caution to invest in new office developments after the shift to homeworking and a potential slow-down in the housing market may also have impacts on the sector over the coming 12 months. However, demand for different types of housing, from specialist housing, for people with care needs, to affordable housing remains. At the same time Norfolk and Suffolk have significant infrastructure investment priorities that could benefit from Government recovery funding and provide much-needed jobs and an economic boost.

A key focus for firms is to ensure staff are safe and construction sites can operate with the right measures in place. Access to Personal Protective Equipment has been a challenge due to supplies being diverted to the healthcare front line. Nationally, the Construction Leadership Council has worked collaboratively to establish a 'Roadmap to Recovery' which has been endorsed by local partners.

## Sector actions:

- Work with local firms to deliver the existing portfolio of infrastructure projects which will help to support and minimise the impact on the local construction sector.



*We will work with local firms to deliver the existing portfolio of infrastructure projects.*

- Work with business networks to ensure businesses have the right information and tools they need to ensure the safety of their workforce, linking them to the Personal Protective Equipment supplier database.
- Work with industry and regulatory authorities to encourage the use of different and more sustainable materials to ease supply chain pressure.
- Support and promote innovation in the sector, including demonstrator projects to move towards more sustainable approaches to development.
- Work with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) with its National Construction Centre at Bircham Newton, and all local FE colleges and training providers to support apprentices and trainees in the industry.
- Examine local planning and other regulatory functions to enable the acceleration of housing and other construction projects.



# Engineering and manufacturing

**The engineering and manufacturing sector has played a pivotal role in the response to the pandemic, from supporting the call to produce Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at pace, to ensuring a continued and stable supply of food and drink.**

As the economy reopens, manufacturing and engineering companies are developing innovative solutions to enable businesses to keep their workforce as safe and productive as possible.

The pandemic has had complex impacts on the sector, with businesses reporting varying levels of impact on their operation dependent on which sectors they serve. Manufacturers in the aerospace industry have lost a large proportion of orders and income, while other areas of the sector have seen an uplift.

Managing a workforce in the face of fluctuations in demand is an issue for many businesses. In addition, the pandemic has interrupted the international supply chains, with some raw material redirected for the manufacture of PPE or stockpiled by other countries.

There is concern that the disruption on the supply chain will be long-term as other nations seek to onshore more of their manufacturing base. Building on the work developing PPE manufacture locally, resilient supply chains need to be formed in other areas by adopting a 'buy local' approach. Businesses in the region are keen

to collaborate, share staff resources and find solutions to new market opportunities and challenges.

## Sector actions:

- ❖ Work with potential manufacturers of prioritised PPE and return-to-work equipment to understand scale-up or diversification challenges and support interventions. Develop a support package for the most viable proposals and match with the long-term demand from across the economy.
- ❖ Deliver the Engineering Success project, a collaboration between New Anglia LEP, NAAME, UEA and the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor, to strengthen and support the region's emerging engineering and manufacturing cluster, increase collaboration between businesses and strengthen the sector's investment proposition.
- ❖ By the autumn, publish an impact-based development plan to build the region's manufacturing clusters, leading to a sustainable recovery and resilient sector.
- ❖ Launch a pilot of the Talent Sharing Platform by September: a novel tool to support businesses to share workforce and fuel new employment opportunities.
- ❖ Deliver the [Productivity East](#) project: a new regional hub for engineering, technology and management at the University of East Anglia. Although work on site was temporarily suspended during the pandemic, the new state-of-the-art facility will open to students in January 2021 and will provide the technical talent and leaders of tomorrow.



Staff at Vanilla Electronics in Thetford.



## Financial and insurance services

The financial and insurance services have been heavily involved in the response to the impact of the pandemic, whether through providing economic support to struggling businesses or dealing with insurance claims for lost income. The impact of the pandemic has presented operational challenges for businesses in the sector, with cyber security a big concern with so much of the workforce operating from home.

Companies in the sector report concerns on behalf of their clients as debt burdens rise (and possible defaults) as the world enters recession caused by the pandemic. The sector reports major concerns resulting from the financial impact including liquidity and capital resources.

*Financial professionals have a lot of expertise that could be used to support many business sectors.*

### Sector actions:

- ❖ Ensure that financial and insurance businesses have access to the latest support and advice, working with industry groups including Financial Industry Group (FIG) in Norwich and Financial Insurance and Professional Services (FIPS) in Ipswich.
- ❖ Work with partners including the FIG to leverage networks and host events and information sharing, including webinars, networking and training in cyber security. Establish measures to allow for remote working, providing opportunities for cyber security professionals to meet and exchange knowledge about potential threats.
- ❖ Explore ways of mobilising pro bono support from financial and legal professionals, such as speaking at cross-sector events or working with VCSE sector organisations to support resilience and financial planning for communities, individuals and other sectors.



*The iconic Willis building in Ipswich is home to insurance brokers Willis Towers Watson.*



## Life Sciences and biotech



*The Norwich Research Park is a world-leading centre for research into the microbiome.*

**The importance of science and health has been clearly demonstrated through the need for rapid vaccine development and manufacture of medical devices and diagnostics. Public attention has never been higher.**

With international expertise in the fields of food, health and the microbiome, and an advanced cluster of animal health and emerging pharmaceutical manufacture on the Cambridge-Norwich Corridor, the life sciences and biotech cluster has taken a leading role in the response

to the pandemic. Norwich Research Park has played a central role in increasing regional Covid-19 testing. Our combined expertise in this sector is core recovery, restart and renew capability for the region and beyond.

The sector in Norfolk and Suffolk has a large SME base, which is agile and has adapted well to new ways of working. However, businesses relying on external investment to develop new products are seeing delays to get to market and commercialisation. Those offering non-core products and services to the NHS have seen

a downturn as the focus has been on response to the pandemic. In addition, the lack of opportunities for business development, meeting investors and building international relationships may impact on the pipeline of new products and services.

### **Sector actions:**

- ❖ Capitalise on increased public awareness and attention to life sciences and biotech – showcasing the careers available locally and increasing the talent pipeline.
- ❖ Work collaboratively across the sector to identify opportunities arising from the pandemic and the UK's departure from the EU, addressing barriers to innovation in the sector such as complex contracting, which can make it difficult for new companies to break into supply chains.
- ❖ Create a clear narrative for the region's excellence in life science and enhance relationships with surrounding areas to ensure investment comes to the region, using the Norfolk & Suffolk Unlimited brand. Develop a plan for the region to grow as a manufacturing base, taking into consideration workforce availability, commercial space and support network for companies.



## Ports and logistics

### **Ports and airports have played their role as essential and critical infrastructure during the pandemic.**

Norfolk and Suffolk have the closest ports to the four high-growth export markets of Belgium, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands and is the main gateway for container trade with countries beyond Europe. Norfolk and Suffolk companies are already exporting their expertise to Asia, North and South America and the Middle East, so are perfectly positioned as vital gateways for economic success.

Norwich International Airport provides fast connections to Europe and beyond as well as to other UK cities. It is also the main base for aviation access to nearby North Sea gas, oil and renewables installations.

The lockdown period saw less port traffic but with spikes in activity; despite this, the maritime sector remained resilient. Airports have had to adhere to restrictions on travel including the 14-day quarantine period for new arrivals to the UK, and this has seen a greatly reduced commercial flight schedule.

In the restart phase ports, airports and logistics are facing challenges relating to cash flow, access to supply chains and the logistics of border restrictions and running operations whilst maintaining social distancing.

Through the restart and renew phases of recovery it will be important to enable our ports to be centres of development and sustainable growth. The Government's Freeports programme recognises the potential for ports to play a wider role in the economy by supporting manufacturing and logistics, identifying new ways of working and technology that can advantage the whole supply chain and benefit those coastal communities in deprived areas.

### **Sector actions:**

- ❖ Enhance the capacity and capability of Norfolk and Suffolk's ports with a series of planned ambitious projects to attract and capture investment in operations and maintenance, manufacturing and construction.
- ❖ Support the creation of a regional freeport, developing Felixstowe as an exemplar for Blue Tech driving sustainable innovation across the maritime and logistics sectors. Deliver a virtual Blue Tech Cluster event, which will connect SMEs who have experience in innovation and technology that can support the port.



*The port of Felixstowe.*



### *Supporting the Norfolk & Suffolk Covid-19 Economic Recovery Restart Plan*

This Restart Plan badge will be used to help identify campaigns, events and interventions which support the delivery of this plan.

Shared with partner organisations, it will help businesses identify the actions being taken to support their recovery.



## *Making it happen*

The way we work together is a major strength. Business leaders, local authorities, the VCSE sector, universities and colleges led by the Local Enterprise Partnership have rapidly come together to produce this Restart Plan.

We are all committed to working together to align relevant actions and investment and to put in place the support needed to get the Norfolk and Suffolk economy back on its feet rapidly, in a way that makes it more resilient and innovative, and benefits all our people. There will be different phases of recovery as lockdown will be lifted gradually. This will impact different parts of the economy at different times, meaning some response and recovery activity may run simultaneously.

The transition between response and recovery will be agile to the possibility that we may need to transition back into response if there are further lockdowns and to respond to potential issues caused by the ending of Government support packages.

### *Over the next 12 months, together we are committed to:*

- Work with government to develop a Renew Plan that builds on the Economic Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy, ensuring the role that Norfolk and Suffolk can play in renewing the UK economy is recognised and has the tools needed to thrive.
- Enhance the shared evidence base and mechanisms to inform intervention developments, monitor progress and ensure interventions are creating the most appropriate environment to support a fast recovery.
- Develop an investment plan which brings together future government investment, alongside private sector and local funding.
- Deliver the Restart Plan and regularly report progress.

## *Respond*

## *Restart*

## *Renew*

*March 2020 – Autumn 2020*

*June 2020 – Autumn 2020*

*Autumn 2020 – Onwards*

Respond to the economic shock from Covid-19 across Norfolk and Suffolk.

Support businesses, individuals, communities, anchor institutions, and further and higher education providers to open and start trading and living life with confidence in an environment dominated by social distancing as quickly and safely as possible.

Renew the economy, building on the Economic Strategy and Local Industrial Strategy and respond to long-term changes brought about by the pandemic, making advances where possible.



Tel: 01603 510070  
 Email: [info@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:info@newanglia.co.uk)  
[newanglia.co.uk](http://newanglia.co.uk)

Version 29/06/20

**NEWANGLIA**  
 Local Enterprise Partnership  
 for Norfolk and Suffolk





**Norwich City Council**  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **Item No 8**

**REPORT for meeting to be held on Thursday 17 September**

### **Report of the scrutiny select committee for short term letting**

**Summary:** The purpose of this report is to receive the report from the scrutiny select committee for short term letting. The select committee is made up of Cllrs Carlo, Giles, McCartney-Gray and Oliver.

**Conclusions:** To consider the report.

**Recommendation:** To consider the report of the scrutiny select committee.

**Contact Officers:** Emma Webster, scrutiny liaison officer  
preferred contact by e-mail  
[emmawebster@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:emmawebster@norwich.gov.uk)

## Summary

1. There is evidence of a sharp rise in the number of short-term lets in many British cities. Such lets bring some advantages, such as promoting the visitor economy and diversifying the available accommodation. However, they also pose a number of problems including: anti-social behaviour, pricing families out of rented accommodation, the erosion of local communities and a general problem of accountability.
2. It is difficult to quantify the number and location of entire place short-term lets and to assess the various problems associated with them. So far the numbers involved do not seem to have presented a major housing supply issue or financial problem in Norwich. However, with the sharp rise in such properties this is unlikely to remain the case. We found some evidence of anti-social behaviour, which is likely to be underestimated in official figures and it seems that properties do not always comply with health and safety regulations. A major problem is that the issue cuts across several departments and there are no specific processes in place for identifying short stay accommodation and addressing problems and short comings when they arise.
3. Currently, few measures are available for regulating the rising number of short lets as the government is keen not to inhibit this aspect of the sharing economy. Ministers have rejected calls for registration of properties which would provide councils with information about exact numbers and locations. In the absence of government support, councils in several cities with high visitor numbers and excessive growth in short stay accommodation and associated problems have experimented with a range of solutions.
4. In the light of action taken by some other local authorities, we have made several recommendations. We recommend that the Cabinet nominates a portfolio holder with responsibility for short-stay lettings. We propose that the Council promote a way for citizens to report complaints on line regarding short stay properties. We would like to see Norwich City Council (Planning) conduct a sample survey of whole property short stay lettings and the extent to which they comply with health and safety standards and planning controls. Also, Planning to consider whether a policy on short stay lets is needed as part of the review of the City of Norwich Development Management Plan.
5. It is also important that the City Council works with other bodies to seek better regulation of short stay accommodation. They include the Short Stay Sector All-Party Parliamentary Group via Norwich South MP Clive Lewis and Airbnb which is currently consulting UK decision makers on proposals for registration of their short lets.

## Background

6. The Scrutiny committee originally considered the subject of unregulated short-term lettings on 28 June 2018 in response to a suggestion from a member of the public. A link to the report is [here](#). Among recommendations to the Cabinet, the

committee resolved to set up a select committee to examine the growth of short-term lettings in Norwich.

### **Outline of tasks undertaken by Select Committee**

- a. Review actions from recommendations of scrutiny committee on 28 June 2018.
- b. Research policy responses from other towns/cities in UK.
- c. Review and update background information report to Scrutiny Meeting on 28 June 2018, "Growth of short term letting of homes in Norwich".
- d. Agree list of tasks/questions for further investigation, drawing on assistance from officers and on-line information.
- e. Meet the member of the public who suggested the topic.

### **Review follow up to recommendations made at scrutiny committee on 28 June 2018**

These were as follows:

- f. Ask cabinet to promote a way for people to report sub-standard short-term let properties to the Council.
- g. Endorse the Short and Holiday-Let Accommodation (Notification of Local Authorities) Bill 2017-19 by asking the chair of scrutiny to write to the appropriate Minister.
- h. Ask the chair of scrutiny to write to the head of the Health and Safety Executive to ask what actions are being taken around short term lets.
- i. Ask the Independent Hoteliers Group to feed into this select committee investigation.

### **Action taken over Resolutions**

Ask cabinet to promote a way for people to report sub-standard short-term let properties to the Council.

*The Cabinet on 11 July 2018 RESOLVED to:*

- i) Agree to consider promotion of a way for people to report sub-standard short term let properties to the council; and*
- ii) Note the additional recommendations as outlined in the report.*

The scrutiny officer was unable to find evidence of what happened as a result of this resolution. The Select committee agreed to carry i) forward as a recommendation.

Endorse the Short and Holiday-Let Accommodation (Notification of Local Authorities) Bill 2017-19 by asking the chair of scrutiny to write to the appropriate Minister.

A private member bill sponsored by Karen Buck MP for Westminster North, requiring householders to register accommodation for short or holiday lets with local authorities, fell in 2017 when a general election was called. Ms Buck subsequently launched the Short Let Sector All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) in April 2019 aimed at balancing the provision of short-term lets accommodation with the need to protect long-term rented housing and neighbours.

Ask the chair of scrutiny to write to the head of the Health and Safety Executive to ask what actions are being taken around short term lets.

It appears that this action was not undertaken and the select committee picked up safety matters as part of their research.

Ask the Independent Hoteliers Group to feed into this select committee investigation.

The select committee members contacted the Independent Hoteliers Group who did not respond. However, the Operations Manager at the Maids Head Hotel had already expressed his concerns when he appeared before the Scrutiny committee in June 2019, supported by the City Council Operations Tourism manager.

### **Update on developments elsewhere in UK since June 2018**

7. The Deregulation Act 2015 allows owners in London to rent out their property for short term lets for up to 90 nights per calendar year without the need for planning permission for change of use. Prior to this, London homeowners needed planning permission or face a fine. The Coalition Government enabled the change as a boost to the sharing economy.
8. Enforcement of the 90 nights restriction has proved impossible as there is no requirement for householders to notify local authorities of their intention to use a property for short stays. Sadiq Khan Mayor of London wrote to the Government in April 2019 seeking the compulsory registration for all landlords using a single online database to enable councils to keep track of the numbers and locations of short-stay lets.
9. Outside of London, rapid expansion of on-line platforms for short lets, the concentration of short stay accommodation in some neighbourhoods and the lack of available control measures has prompted councils to try different approaches:

**Cambridge City Council** has changed its complaint-led approach to the misuse of homes for short-term rental to more proactive enforcement. In 2015, the Council investigated just one case of unauthorised change of use, but by September 2019, it was investigating 74 cases. The Council has also used 'discrete sampling' to assess properties for rent online against planning and safety standards.

**Manchester City Council** began trialling a scheme in a new PFI regeneration development in inner city Brunswick to stop new home owners sub-letting or offering short-term lets in July 2019. Purchasers of 300 new-builds in inner city Brunswick must sign a covenant which bans them from letting through third party sites such as Airbnb.

**Oxford Council** in October 2019 urged short-let landlords to voluntarily apply for planning permission if they let out an entire house for more than 140 nights a year.

In the absence of any additional changes to national legislation, these measures lack teeth and so councils have continued to lobby central government for regulatory changes.

**Bath and NE Somerset Council** approved a motion on 12 July 2018 calling on the Government to bring in a range of measures for regulating short term lets. These included a change in the law to limit short-term letting of whole residential properties to 90 days a year; a requirement for hosts to register with the local authority to

enable enforcement; change to the use classes order to put short-term holiday accommodation in its own specific class to differentiate from dwelling houses; application of the same regulatory framework to short-term lets as with other forms of visitor accommodation; any future Tourism Levy to apply to short-term lettings.

In response to a **written question from** David Drew MP, Shadow Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who enquired about government plans to close the loophole enabling second home buyers to let accommodation on a short-term basis, the **Housing Minister** Kit Malthouse stated (9 July 2019) that the government would not intervene to regulate the use of Airbnbs. This has not stopped councils from continuing to raise concerns.

**Bristol City Council** passed a motion on 17 December 2019 calling for greater powers and resources to regulate short stay accommodation rentals by non-owner occupiers and the ability to levy business rates on short-term lets and student accommodation. Bristol is said to have the highest number of Airbnbs (2,000) outside London.

However, in response to a written question (23 Jan 2020) concerning the Lord Mayor's request for a register of short-term lets, the housing, communities and local government minister in the House of Lords, Viscount Younger said in a parliamentary answer that the government had no plans to establish a register and they were aware of industry plans to put their own procedures in place to avoid breach of the 90 day limit.

**The Scottish Government** is pursuing a set of solutions in response to a dramatic escalation in numbers of Airbnb places in Edinburgh, rising from 8 in 2009 to 12,000 in 2018. Councils have been given new powers to regulate short-term lets from Spring 2021. They will be able to implement a licensing scheme with mandatory safety requirements and to designate control areas to ensure the need for planning permission for change of use of whole properties to short term lets. Ministers will also consider taxing of short-term lets to complement the Transient Visitor Levy Bill.

**Edinburgh city council** has set up a webpage for residents to report a problem with a short-term let, but investigation and enforcement is resource intensive. The council is working with the Scottish government to introduce a licensing regime and has the ability to set a cap on numbers. The public are being asked as part of the consultation (Spring 2020) on a new Local Development Plan for Edinburgh, Choices for City Plan , if Edinburgh should be a short-term let control zone implemented through new planning policies.

## **10 Advantages and disadvantages for Councils of short-stay accommodation**

The councils above point out the many benefits of short term rentals:

- benefits to visitors
- provide direct income to host households
- provide additional accommodation capacity at peak times
- provide different types of accommodation not catered for by the hotel market
- support eating and drinking establishments and local attractions such as museums
- grow the visitor economy
- provide short stay accommodation for business travellers.

On the other hand, councils have found that the unregulated short-stay rental sector has grown to such a degree that problems have resulted:

- lack of a level playing field. Costs fall on neighbours, councils, local businesses and taxpayers, while the benefits accrue to owners and short-let platforms
- lack of accountability
- pricing out families from rented accommodation
- leaving premises empty for periods
- large turnover of short stay visitors erodes the local community
- anti-social behaviour
- poor levels of recycling by short-stay visitors
- unfair competition for independent hotel and guest house trade
- short term lets are just one aspect of the gig economy. Short stay visitors may order in food for delivery using Deliveroo and use Uber in preference to local taxis
- they do not have to comply with health and safety rules unlike hotels and guest houses
- they are not inspected for safety
- short term lets are not subject to planning regulations
- they do not pay business rates or VAT

## 11. Other developments

In recognition of campaigning by local authority and MPs for registration of short-stay lettings, **Airbnb**, the main global platform for short-term accommodation, is proposing a simple registration system. Last September, Airbnb announced its intention to work with UK hosts, communities and policymakers via a series of roadshows on its proposals for registration, with the aim of presenting a 'white paper' to government and other key stakeholders in 2020. The first roadshow took place in Brighton in February, with further events planned for other major cities. Norwich is not among those listed. ('Airbnb kicks off host registration roadshow in UK cities', Airbnb, 17 Feb 2020).

A detailed and informative briefing on short-term lettings has been published by the House of Commons Library, [The growth in short term lettings \(England\)](#), (number 8395, 26 May 2019, 43 pages). The choice of topic for research by the HoC Library reflects the extent of MPs' concerns over the significant growth in short-term lettings and calls for greater regulation. Its contents cover:

- statistics on short-term lettings
- restrictions on short term lettings
- positive impacts of the accommodation sharing economy
- concerns around the growth in short-term lettings
- calls for greater regulation of short-term lettings
- regulation of short term lettings in other countries

As reported by the HoC Library Briefing, the nature of the the short-term lettings sector is diverse, ranging from hotels to individuals letting spare rooms through sharing economy platforms. There is no single definitive source of data and no requirement to register short term lets, but the evidence suggests the number has risen significantly in the UK.

The Paper reiterates the Government's preference for a non-regulatory approach

and reliance on the Short Term Accommodation Association (industry body founded in 2017) to improve standards, promote best practice and share data on bookings with local authorities to aid enforcement and monitoring.

In July, **HM Treasury** published 'Business Rates Review: Call for Evidence'.

The main aims of the review announced in Budget 2020 are:

- to reduce the overall burden on businesses
- to improve the current business rates system
- to consider more fundamental changes in the medium-to-long term.

The consultation may be an opportunity to comment on short-term lettings, among other matters. There are two deadlines:

18 September for commenting on business rates reliefs and the business rates multiplier, (the tax rate that is multiplied by a property's rateable value to give the annual amount payable for that property before any reliefs are applied).

31 October for other matters (valuations, administration, alternatives to business rates).

## **12. Questions posed by the select committee and responses**

Responses from City Council officer are noted. Unless otherwise stated, all other responses to questions are those of the select committee based on information gathered from on-line research.

## **Numbers of Short Stay Properties and Housing Supply**

### **Q1 What has been the year on year rise of short term lettings in Norwich?**

The June 2018 report to Scrutiny recorded approximately 300 Airbnb listings for Norwich, with around 100 located in the city centre. Approximately 60% of the listings were 'entire place' and 40% were listed as 'private room'.

In May 2020, the Airbnb Norwich platform continued to refer to 300+ stays. In fact, the Airbnb platform for all other towns and cities reviewed also refer to 300 + stays. This suggests that the figure of 300+ stays is a standard moniker and not an accurate reflection of the number of short-term lets in Norwich.

Further investigation of the Norwich Airbnb platform gives the number of 'entire place' properties under the urban housing-type categories, a large number of which are concentrated in the city centre:

Townhouse – 25; house – 186; serviced apartment – 50; flat – 199.

Total = 460 entire place properties.

Under the category of 'private room' (i.e. within a private house/flat), the numbers are:

Townhouse – 38; house – 159; flat- 23.

Total = 220 private rooms.

A number of other holiday/short term stay platforms operate:

- Bookings.com – 71 apartments (flats and houses).
- Trip Advisor, Holiday Lettings – 157 houses and apartments in Norwich and the Broads. Minimum stay varies.
- HomeAway: vacation/short stay platform: 189 properties listed for Norwich and the Broads.

- “Serviced Lettings”, (local company) Norwich: 26 properties, with 3 nights minimum stay.
- NR2 Bed and Breakfast (a platform covering a range of accommodation types: hotels, people letting out rooms/breakfast in their homes; short stay apartments/no breakfast).

An overlap in the properties advertised can be seen between the platforms. Because the figure of 300 properties cited in the June 2018 cannot be regarded as an accurate baseline, it is impossible to say whether the number of 'entire place' properties has increased in Norwich. However, judging by concerns expressed by councils elsewhere and by the statistics provided by the House of Commons Library Briefing, it is likely that whole property short stay lets have increased in Norwich.

**Q2 How does the rise of short term letting in Norwich effect the permanent supply of housing for local people in need?**

The view of the Norwich Area Development Manager (Inner) is that the numbers involved do not present a housing land supply issue at the moment.

However, as the data in Q1 suggests, short term letting of whole properties appears to have increased quite significantly in Norwich since 2018. It follows that the higher the number of entire place properties, the greater impact on the supply of permanent housing for rent or purchase. Seeing change of even a percentage of the number to permanent occupation would go some way to meet local housing needs.

Councils which have been proactively pursuing strategies to address the year-on-year rise in short term lets in their areas have cited this as a one of the main reasons for taking action.

There are several reasons why private landlords might prefer short term holiday lets. Rents are higher, although not guaranteed. Landlords avoid the problem of eviction. A property can be easily sold/converted if they are not someone's home on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy basis.

It is interesting to note that the National Residential Landlords Association is campaigning against the growth in short-term holiday lets on grounds they result in a loss of housing for long-term rent. The NRLA blames Government tax changes and the restriction of Mortgage Interest Relief for residential lettings for the year on year rise in short lets.

**Q3 To what extent is the sub-letting of council properties on Airbnb or similar a problem in Norwich?**

According to the Head of Neighbourhood Housing Services (Oct 2018), it is not something that is registering as an issue with the housing team in any way.

**Q4 To ask higher education institutions and student unions whether short term lets are having any impact on the provision of accommodation for students/ employees and rent levels?**

We wrote to NUA and to UEA Home Run housing. No responses were received.

**Q5 Is there any merit in distinguishing between a short-term let of a whole property vs a spare room?**

Yes, great value remains in the original concept of advertising a spare room to earn extra income and enabling tourists to share people's homes. However, the business

model has escalated from small beginnings in 2007, when two flat mates advertised air mattresses in their San Francisco apartment to help pay their rent via a platform they created and called Airbnb, into a multi-billion global enterprise, with Airbnb advising owners on how to operate as property management businesses.

## **Impact on City Council Finances**

### **Background**

The Valuation Office Agency determines whether a property is used either as a dwelling and given a council tax banding or else used for business purposes, given a rateable value and put on the rating list. Once the property is on the council tax list or rating list, the Council must bill accordingly.

Council tax: if the property is available for letting throughout the year, but the owner accepts bookings for a total of 139 days or less, the property will be allocated a council tax band A - H.

Business rates: properties are assessed for business rates if they are available for letting for periods totalling 140 days or more per year. (HM Valuation Office Agency, 'A Basic Guide to the Rating of Holiday Cottages and Self-Contained Units in England.' 2014).

If a person or business lets one short lets property and its rateable value is less than £12,000 they do not pay business rates. If they have a second property, they can obtain business rate relief if the total rateable value of all their properties is less than £20,000. The Council receives very little if anything from properties assessed for business rates due to rate relief.

Since the removal of discounts for unoccupied properties and second homes, the move to short stay lettings has become a more attractive proposition. Coupled with the long-term empty premium, the cost of property investment can be improved by moving to a short-term let option.

### **Q6 What is the loss to the City Council finances?**

The Revenues & Benefits Operations Manager provided information (August 2020) on short stay/holiday lets in Norwich:

*"There are 116 properties assessed for business rates.*

*51 of these are in receipt of small business rates relief and have nothing to pay – a total of £92,240.15*

*There are 65 that would pay business rates – a total of £142,140.15. This year due to Covid-19 these are all in receipt of the extended retail relief for the retail, hospitality and leisure sector (see reply to Q7).*

*There are many Airbnb properties that are still listed for council tax which possibly should be business rated however it is impossible to identify these.*

*It is better in many cases that properties are left in council tax as they would pay more although Norwich City Council receives a smaller percentage. An example: three apartments currently with a rateable value of £2,000 each are charged business rates of £998.00 per annum but as band C properties before that, they would be paying £1,670.62 this year."*

Overall, the Revenues & Benefits Operations Manager concluded:

*"In terms of impact on the city finances we are losing out on council tax where owners only have the one property. However, there could be an argument that they bring visitors to the city and potentially bring trade. With council tax, the city only receives 14% so*

*the impact of a relatively small number is not huge and is more partly offset by those paying business rates on multiples, this year there is full relief on all of them due to Covid-19."*

*..... "For someone who wants an investment portfolio and ad-hoc use, short stay letting avoids a long-term empty charge where council tax is doubled or trebled and if just one property is held there is nothing to pay."*

**Q7 How many business grants have been paid out during Covid-19?**

During the Covid-19 lockdown, holiday homes and short term lets were entitled to apply for a government retail, hospitality and leisure grant of up to £10,000.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager provided information below and at Qs 8 - 10:

*"Norwich City Council has 111 hereditaments rated as Self Catering Holiday Unit and Premises.*

*The Council has paid 88 grants to holiday lets/Airbnbs as at 5 June. At £10,000 per property, this amounts to a total of £880,000.*

*Because the grant is paid per hereditament, anyone with multiple properties has been entitled to receive multiple grants."*

**Q8 Does the Council have information on the numbers of short stay letting properties held in multiple ownership and in receipt of business rates relief?**

*"The ownership breakdown is as follows:*

*1 property = 78; 2 = 6; 3 = 6; 4 = 2; 5 = 1; 6 = 1.*

*In terms of relief there are currently 10 of these that do not receive any relief as they have only just identified themselves since the grants became available.*

*1 of these is in administration.*

*49 are in receipt of the extended retail relief which is part of the government's help to businesses but previously they would have been paying business rates as they do not qualify for small business rates relief."*

**Q9 If the Council has a record of short term lets in receipt of business rates relief, does this provide information for investigating the number of short term lets which operate without planning permission for change of use?**

*"The records we have would enable a check with planning if permission is required".*

**Q10 Does information held on business rates relief for properties let for holiday use/short stay negate the need for a register which other local authorities have been lobbying for?**

*"A register would be useful as it is sometimes difficult to know exactly what properties are actually being used for. There is a number of days that a property must be available to let out, but this enables those with second homes to transfer across to business rates avoiding council tax that no longer has any discounts available."*

**Impacts on Neighbours**

**Q11 How does the rise of short term letting in Norwich affect residential amenity?**

The City Council says that it has received few complaints in relation to ASB and short-term lettings. However, in their councillor role the select committee members have received three separate complaints.

In relation to one of these, the select committee heard in detail about the detrimental

impacts on permanent residents of several apartments in a small city centre housing complex let out for holiday use: the constant coming and goings, often on a daily basis; anxieties over security; competition for limited car parking; noise not only from within the apartments but also from voices in the street and from suitcases being wheeled along the pavement; partying - on one occasion, the Police were called and found drugs being sold to people in the street.

Residents in these cases had complained to their local councillors but they were reluctant to make formal complaints to the City Council for fear of repercussions. Consequently, there may be under-reporting of incidents to the Council. Indeed, a Select Committee member picked up a fourth example via a Facebook page set up by residents' living in a street in NR2. Several complaints had been posted about anti-social behaviour (noise, brawling in street, drinking in public) at a pair of terrace properties in the street. They are being advertised as budget hotel rooms (6 in number), with free parking (in an area of limited parking and no parking permits). No-one lives on site to supervise visitors. According to the Police, the owners responded to a Probation Service call for temporary accommodation during lockdown. Planning Enforcement are investigating a possible breach of planning control.

The number of complaints received by the Council in relation to short stay lets may reflect the way in which complaints are logged. For example, a significant number of budget 'hotels' and apartments under a single ownership in the Earham Road and Unthank Road operated in effect as short stay lets between 2013 – 2020 until they were sold off by one owner. Visitors let themselves in via a keypad, with no-one employed at the properties to manage visitors. The properties and style of operation caused an innumerable range of ASB problems for residents, ward councillors, the Council and Police. If the Council says that they have received few complaints about ASB and short stay lets, the above long stream of complaints about these particular properties suggest a lack of tie-up between ASB reported and types of accommodation.

The Task Group asked the Norwich Police about statistics on complaints involving short term lettings. The Norwich Command Inspector replied that *“ASB reporting over a 12 month period would highlight our hotspots, (but it) wouldn't however specifically evidence the issue you highlight. The Airbnb issue is not something that has caused us specific issues and any evidence base from a Policing perspective in terms of calls for service would not necessarily identify this. Clearly the use and classification of premises would be held within the council and would be interested to understand that intelligence picture following the introduction of the online reporting.”*

## **Health and Safety**

### **Q12 How compliant are short-term lets with health and safety/fire regulations (e.g. requirement for smoke alarms, carbon monoxide monitors)?**

The Scrutiny officer contacted the Norwich Fire Service who advised that ALL properties should be fitted with smoke alarms and monitors.

However, there is no obligation on the part of hosts to install fire safety measures such as a fire alarm and fire escape route, a functioning carbon monoxide detector,

safety checks on gas appliances and hazard prevention.

Visit England, the Short Term Accommodation Association (STAA) and Airbnb all publish their own guidance on compliance with health and safety legislation. In addition, the STAA has appointed Quality in Tourism to offer Safe Clean and Legal accreditation.

Several properties on Norwich Airbnb report for individual properties that the host has not reported a carbon monoxide detector on the property. They include 'NR2' a 30 bed property/6.5 bathrooms on Earlham Road (since closed and up for sale); the website entry notes that 'the host hasn't reported a carbon monoxide detector on the property'. The City Council placed rough sleepers with supervision in NR2 hotel during the Covid-19 lockdown. In another case, neither of the smoke alarm nor carbon monoxide detector boxes were ticked in one shared room advertised. One of Scrutiny Committee's June 2018 recommendations required the Chair of scrutiny to write to the Health and Safety Executive director to enquire about actions being taken on short term lets. We concluded that there is not much to be gained by writing to the HSE as their reply would no doubt point to extensive HSE material on the subject posted on Visit England's website. The matter may be more about following up and remedying missing safety features in advertised lettings such as NR2 hotel.

**Q13 Where individual rooms are let out, is there an obligation to provide locks on bedrooms?**

This issue particularly applies to private single rooms within private occupied properties, to shared spaces within occupied properties and to rooms let as short stays within HMOs (Norwich council has found a couple of the latter).

The Norwich Airbnb platform includes the category of 'shared rooms' and five such entries. One entry advertises two sofa beds in a common space (presumably a living room) housed in a 1-bedroom city centre flat.

Airbnb guidance for hosts in the UK makes no mention of locks under safety measures. It appears that there is no obligation to provide locks on individual bedrooms for short-term lets. The onus is on the person booking the property to enquire and on the host to ensure security for both themselves and their guests.

## **Planning Controls**

**Q14 Is planning permission required for short term lets?**

As the HoC Library Briefing sets out, planning legislation specifies that the change of use of land or buildings requires planning permission if it constitutes a material change of use.

It is not always easy to determine whether there has been a material change of use without planning permission, for example, converting a residential house to a place primarily used as a home first and short-term letting accommodation second, when local authorities have little information about which properties are being used for short-term lettings.

The June 2018 report, under the heading of Planning states:

*"Whether a change of use has occurred from 'single private dwelling house' is a 'matter of fact and degree' on a case-by-case basis with reference to case law."*

*This means in practice that, if we are made aware of the presence of short-term lets which are causing a particular concern (possibly due to noise, anti-social behaviour or vehicular movements), we will investigate and establish whether a change of use has occurred; if so this may result in a planning application being sought or planning enforcement action being taken. However, it may be determined there has not been a change of use, in which case there would be no requirement for planning permission or enforcement action”.*

The HoC Library Briefing quotes the case (2012) of *Moore V SSCLG and Suffolk Coastal District Council*. Lord Justice Sullivan considered when a use of a dwelling house for commercial holiday lettings amounted to a material change of use had occurred. He summarised the changes as:

*“the pattern of arrivals and departures, with associated traffic movements; the unlikelihood of occupation by family or household groups; the numbers of people constituting the visiting groups on many occasions; the likely frequency of party type activities and the potential lack of consideration for occupiers”.*

If local residents complain about frequent comings and goings and noisy partying at a house which is wholly let for short term use, the City Council, as well as investigating noise complaints, should also investigate for a breach of planning control.

**Q15 If a material change of use is found where planning permission is required but has not been granted, what planning enforcement remedies are available?**

The HoC Library Briefing identifies various options available: a temporary stop notice which can stop a specified activity at short notice; a court injunction and/or serving a planning enforcement notice.

**Qs 16 – 19:** The City Council Planning Area Development Manager (Inner) responded to a number of planning queries submitted by the Scrutiny Task Group:

**Q16 Can a local plan policy be brought in to prevent further concentration of short term lets in an area, for example, the city centre?**

*“In theory, yes it could. However, it would have to be brought in through the plan review process and there would have to be justification for it. If there are localised issues in certain areas, it may be appropriate to try and control the use of new properties through conditions on the back of a policy but there would have to be evidence that there was a planning issue to be addressed. The policy could only be applied to new dwellings that need planning permission.”*

**Q17 Can planning conditions be imposed on new developments at the planning permission stage to stop the problem of dwellings being used as short term lets?**

*“No. The local planning authority cannot attach conditions to the grant of consent that would prevent a property changing to another use that would, of itself, require planning permission. The problem with Airbnb usage is that it does not automatically trigger a change of use. For example, letting out an*

*individual room in a property is very unlikely to result in a change of use. Even letting out a whole property may not – it would depend on the level of usage. You can use conditions to restrict a use that does not require planning permission. So, if you had a new build dwelling – a C3 planning use – you could use conditions to control its use within the C3 use class. This is done quite commonly in places where, for example, a dwelling for normal use wouldn't be permitted but a dwelling for holiday use would (not in Norwich because we don't encounter this situation but it is a matter in coastal rural districts). So if you had a policy that said we don't want short term lets because [insert planning reason], then you could have a condition that restricted the use of new dwellings.”*

**Q18 Can a covenant restricting use of new properties for short term lets be adopted as in Manchester?**

*“The scheme in Manchester is a new build scheme involving Manchester Council. The covenant is a contractual instrument between the council as developer and the person buying the property. It's not a land use planning tool. Norwich City Council as the local planning authority can't require developers to enter into a covenant but could place conditions on new development to prevent them being used as short term lets. This would have to be justified to meet the 'necessity' test for conditions (in a nutshell, you wouldn't grant planning permission without it). Conditions could only be applied if we had a Local Plan policy to justify it. “ (see Q15).*

**Q19 Can an Article 4 direction be applied to stop further spread of short term lets in an area such as the city centre?**

*“An Article 4 direction can only be used to control development. Using a house as a short term let is rarely development and so could not be controlled in this way.”*

**Local Businesses**

**Q20 To ask major employers (eg Aviva) whether they benefit from short term letting sector?**

We contacted Aviva but no response was received.

**Q21 What is the view of the pub, restaurant, club sector on whether short stay lets benefit or undermine their businesses?**

This is an interesting aspect of the gig economy highlighted by Bristol City Council where guests staying in short stay accommodation order in food for delivery, rather than eating out. The select committee is unaware of any local food businesses flagging this up as an issue with the City Council. We did not seek views from trade bodies and it would be worthwhile keeping an eye on this.

**The Future of Short Term Lets**

Several of the short-term rental companies have been fairly adept at responding to criticisms by selectively supporting local regulations. For example, platforms such as Airbnb, HomeAway and TripAdvisor have put in place their own procedures to avoid breach of the 90-day limit in London. They have also joined industry bodies such as the UK Short-Term Accommodation Association founded in 2017 to promote the sector, address policy and

regulatory challenges and develop industry standards. Ironically, innovations which have made Airbnb and similar short-let accommodation platforms so successful have been being blunted by the rise in professional management companies operating on a commercial basis. ('Silicon Valley unicorns turn into dinosaurs', *Sunday Times* 23 Feb 2020). Airbnb planned its public flotation in 2020, but this was halted following the collapse in global travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There is the potential for the numbers of short stay accommodation in the UK to remain steady in the short term, even if restrictions on international travel deter overseas visitors, as more citizens decide to take domestic holidays.

## **Conclusions**

To what extent are short lets an issue that needs addressing in relation to local housing supply, impact on neighbours, city finances and the health and safety of visitors?

The amount of short stay accommodation has increased significantly in Norwich since 2018; in particular entire properties. The downsides have not generated as much noise and attention in Norwich as places which attract high numbers of visitors such as Bath, Oxford, the Lake District and North Norfolk AONB. This is not to play down the local impacts and nuisance experienced by individual residents.

The lack of data which a register would provide makes it difficult to quantify the impacts, for example on local housing supply. However, if it is the case that 460 entire properties operate as short lets through the Airbnb platform alone, that is not an inconsiderable number of units and more units are advertised through other platforms (although there is an overlap). If even a percentage of these were to become available for permanent occupation, this would go some way to meeting local housing demand.

It is also difficult to quantify the impact on neighbourhood amenity. It seems likely that there is under-reporting of complaints to the Council due to the understandable anxiety of some residents over the fear of repercussions. Also, the problem may be under-estimated due to what appears to be a lack of joining up the dots of ASB complaints to the City Council to any involvement to short stay lettings.

There is some impact on the city's finances. Fifty one properties run as whole property short lets receive small business rates relief and a total of £92,240.15 is lost to the City Council. This sum may be off-set by the benefits to the local economy, though seeing some whole properties return to permanent housing, with Council tax paid, would undoubtedly help the city finances.

At least 88 retail, hospitality and leisure grants, at £10,000 per property for a three month period from April to June, were paid to holiday lets/Airbnbs during the lockdown. This amounts to a massive total of £880,000. Fortunately, the grants for this were provided by central government and paid through the City Council and so did not involve city money.

Adherence to health and safety standards is essential. Even one property failing in this respect could result in harm to occupants and neighbours. At present, there is a large amount of voluntary guidance but ensuring safety is down to the responsibility of the property owner.

Given that action is required, what can be done practically?

One of the first steps should be for the Council to set up an on-line system for short stay lets to enable people to report complaints about impacts on their neighbourhood, ASB incidents, sub-standard properties and whole residential dwellings operating as short lets without planning permission.

Norwich City Council should consider following the example of Cambridge City Council and conduct discrete sample assessment of properties for rent online against planning and safety standards.

The City Council could also follow up a small number of properties in receipt of business rates relief to check whether they have planning permission for change of use to holiday lets. Determining whether there has been a breach of planning controls which requires the owners to seek planning permission would give chance for neighbours to comment.

Owing to resource constraints, there is a limit to what the City Council can achieve on its own. The Council should collaborate other local authorities through bodies such as the Short Let Sector All-Party Parliamentary Group, LGA, short stay platforms such as Airbnb and trade bodies such as the STA on matters such as need for registration and stronger health and safety safeguards.

Short term lets came to Scrutiny in June 2018 at the request of a member of the public. They have not featured strongly on the Council's radar. There are several reasons for this:

- short lets is a topic which cuts across several departments/teams (Planning, Housing, Public Protection, Policy, Finance, Tourism). They do not come under any specific Portfolio Holder and so there is no-one to politically champion this issue.
- there appears to be no written record of whether the Cabinet discussed its resolution on 11 July 2018 to "Agree to consider promotion of a way forward for people to report sub-standard short-term let properties to the Council" and what decision was reached. The creation of a Scrutiny tracker will help to ensure that the outcome of Scrutiny recommendations is recorded.

Hopefully, the recommendations below will go some way to creating processes which build up a picture of short lets in Norwich and what can be done to support residents.

Finally, this research as noted earlier, has not examined the impact of short-lets on local hospitality businesses such as independent hotels, guest houses, restaurants and taxi firms, partly because the Scrutiny Committee heard evidence in 2018. If the Committee

considers this an important area for research, it could be considered in a follow-up study.

## **Recommendations**

1. The Cabinet to nominate a lead Portfolio Holder with responsibility for short lets (private sector housing?).
2. Norwich City Council (Planning/Strategy and Transformation/Environmental Protection) to promote a way for citizens to report on-line complaints about short lets without fear of repercussions; (ASB, sub-standard, whole properties operating short stays). Relevant officers to liaise where necessary with relevant local agencies (Police, Fire Service)
3. Norwich City Council (Strategy and Transformation) to contact Airbnb UK and request copy of their proposals for a registration system and to comment.
4. Norwich City Council (Planning) to conduct a sample of whole property short stay lettings and the extent to which they comply with planning and health/safety standards.
5. Norwich City Council (Revenues/Benefits and Planning) to examine a sample of short let properties in receipt of business rates relief to determine whether they require planning permission for change of use and if not, should they be paying Council tax?
6. Sustainable Development Panel (led by Planning) to consider whether a policy on short stay lets is needed as part of the review of the City of Norwich Development Management Plan Policies and any policy changes to feed into the Greater Norwich Local Plan.
7. The Chair of Scrutiny to write to Clive Lewis MP and ask him to join the Short Let Sector All-Party Parliamentary Group and work with Parliamentary colleagues on the need for a registration system, enforcement of health and safety standards (to include need for locks on bedrooms and bathrooms) and report back on progress to Scrutiny Committee.
8. The Cabinet to write to the Government and outline the growing problems around short stay accommodation in Norwich and request: a compulsory registration and licensing scheme fully funded by Whitehall; a specific planning use class; and basic, enforceable health and safety obligations to install smoke detectors, carbon monoxide monitors, and locks on individual bedrooms where properties are split into multiple lettings, and/or the owner continues to live.
9. Norwich City Council (Revenue and Benefits) to consider responding to the HM Treasury Business Rates Review with regard to short term lettings and business rates relief and short stay visitor costs falling on permanent residents and businesses; (deadlines of 18 September and 31 October).
10. Scrutiny Committee to consider whether it wishes to consider the impact of short-lets accommodation in relation to the gig economy on local hospitality businesses such as independent hotels, guest houses, restaurants, cafes and taxi firms.
11. Scrutiny Committee to keep short term lettings under review.

