

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# **RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**Wednesday 1 June 2011  
at 6.00pm**

**NB: The Resources and Performance – Audit and Risk  
Committee meeting will immediately follow this meeting  
(Separate Agenda)**

Committee Suite  
King's Court  
Chapel Street  
King's Lynn  
Norfolk  
PE30 1EX



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Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX  
Telephone: 01553 616200  
Fax: 01553 691663

23 May 2011

Dear Member

**Resources and Performance Panel**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the above-mentioned Panel which will be held on **Wednesday 1 June 2011 at 6.00pm, in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn**, to discuss the business shown below.

Please note that the Resources and Performance Panel – Audit and Risk Committee meeting will immediately follow this meeting. (Separate Agenda)

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

**AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 29 March 2011 and 11 April 2011.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Please indicate whether the interest is a personal one only or one which is also prejudicial. A declaration of a personal interest should indicate the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of a personal interest, the Member may speak and vote on the matter. If a prejudicial interest is declared, the Member should withdraw from the room whilst the matter is discussed.

4. **Urgent Business Under Standing Order 7**

To consider any business which, by reason of special circumstances, the Chairman proposes to accept as urgent under Section 100(b)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

5. **Members Present Pursuant to Standing Order 34**

Members wishing to speak pursuant to Standing Order 34 should inform the Chairman of their intention to do so and on what items they wish to be heard before the meeting commences. Any Member attending the meeting under Standing Order 34 will only be permitted to speak on those items which have been previously notified to the Chairman.

6. **Chairman's Correspondence** (if any)

7. **Matters referred to the Panel from other Council Bodies and responses made to previous Panel recommendations/requests**

To receive comments and recommendations from other Council bodies, and any responses subsequent to recommendations, which this Panel has previously made. (N.B. some of the relevant Council bodies may meet after dispatch of the agenda).

At the Special Cabinet meeting held on 14 April 2011 the following response was made to the recommendations from the Resources and Performance Panel meetings held 29 March and on 11 April 2011, on the following items:-

(i) **Local Poll – Procedures**

**Panel Response:** “**RESOLVED:** This Panel has listened to and had recorded the views and discussions which have taken place this evening. The conclusion we have reached from all this is that the County Council’s attitude and disparaging and unhelpful actions in respect of the legitimate decision of the Borough Council to hold a referendum, whilst falling short of malfeasance, nevertheless have been perverse and perplexing. We therefore recommend that our findings on this matter be referred through Cabinet to Full Council with a view to Full Council deciding whether we wish to make a formal complaint to the County Council about the matter. We further recommend that this process is carried out as a matter of urgency, preferably before the various call-ins of the County Council Cabinet’s decisions are debated in the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee meeting on 19 April.”

**Cabinet Response:** “The Panel’s recommendations were duly taken into account when Cabinet considered the item”.

(ii) **Expenditure Reduction Programme**

**Panel Response:** “**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet be advised that the Resources and Performance Panel supports the following

recommendations to adopt the expenditure reduction strategy outlined in the report specifically to:

- (i) Complete the final elements of the Cost Reduction Programme.
- (ii) Deliver the work required to achieve the internal savings listed in Table 1.
- (iii) Scope out and work through the new areas of work identified in Section 3 of the report.

**Cabinet Response:** “The Panel’s recommendations were duly taken into account when Cabinet considered the item”.

**(iii) Municipal Waste, Mass Burn Incinerator**

**Panel Response:** “**RESOLVED:** That Cabinet be advised that the Resources and Performance Panel support the following recommendations:

- (i) The strategic approach outlined in this report is endorsed.
- (ii) That an initial budget of £150,000 to fund any legal action required to pursue.
- (iii) A budget of £45,000 be established to provide technical support to the Executive Director, Environmental Health and Housing.
- (iv) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader be given delegated authority to pursue the matter through legal action to Judicial Review if necessary.
- (v) That the Legal Services Manager be given authority to procure suitable legal advice.

**Cabinet Response:** “The Panel’s recommendations were duly taken into account when Cabinet considered the item”.

**8. Asset Management Monitoring Report – 31 March 2011 (pages 1 to 8)**

Committee Members are invited to note the attached report.

**9. Performance Monitoring Report and Action Plan – Quarter 4 (pages 9 to 15)**

Committee Members are invited to note the attached report.

**10. Corporate Monitoring Report (pages 16 to 35)**

Committee Members are invited to note the attached report.

**11. Cabinet’s Forward Decision List for 7 June 2011**

The following items are on the Cabinet Forward Decision List for consideration on the 7 June 2011 and have been identified for consideration by the Panel.

(i) **Framework Agreement for Professional Services** (to follow)

Panel Members are invited to consider the report and to make any appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.

(ii) **Structure of the Policy Review and Development Panels** (to follow)

Panel Members are invited to consider the report and to make any appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.

(iii) **Costs of Democracy – Electoral Review** (to follow)

Panel Members are invited to consider the report and to make any appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.

**NB: Copies of the reports marked (to follow) will be sent to Members of the Panel following publication of the Cabinet Agenda for the 7 June 2011 meeting.**

**12. Panel's Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decisions List**

To consider the attached Work Programme (page 36)

N.B. In considering the Work Programme, Members' attention is drawn to the attached Cabinet Forward Decisions List (pages 37 to 38)

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting of the Resources and Performance Panel will be held on **Tuesday 28 June 2011**.

**To: Panel Members – Councillors Mrs K Mellish (Chairman), A Lawrence (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, Mrs S Collop, C Crofts, M Hopkins, D Tyler and T de Winton,**

**Portfolio Holders:**

**Councillor N Daubney, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Resources – Agenda Items 9, 10 and 11(i), (ii) and (iii)**

**Councillor A Beales, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration Commercial Services – Agenda Item 8**

**Chief Executive – Items 9, 10, 11(ii) and (iii)**

**Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Director, Finance and Resources**

**Property Services Manager – Agenda Item 8**

**Performance and Efficiency Manager – Agenda Items 9 and 10**

**Purchasing Officer – Agenda item 11(i)**

**All other Executive Directors**

**Press**

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



# Asset Management Monitoring Report

31 March 2011

David Thomason  
Deputy Chief Executive

Matthew Henry  
Property Services Manager



**Asset Management 2010/2011****Monitoring Report – 31 March 2011  
Executive Summary**

This Asset Management report highlights the performance of the Property Services team over a number of areas of work for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

Managed lettings on the **industrial estates** are producing 86% of floor space as occupied compared to a target of 90%. As at 31 March 2011 there were 12 units vacant. Rent income from the holdings was £1,526,691 as compared to the revised estimate for the year of £1,528,170. The level of rent achievable stood at 90% against a target of 90%. Rent arrears on the estates stood at 1.4% as at 31 March 2011 against a target of 3%.

The March figures on rent and floor space are subject to the influence of one very large unit on the Hardwick Estate of 31,050 sq ft being vacant. The company occupying the unit went into liquidation some time ago but the surrender of the lease has only recently come about

The **retail/offices property portfolio** consists of a small number of shop units/offices across the borough with rent levels producing income of £308,593 in 2010/2011. At present there are 4 vacant shop/offices. There remain concerns that the current economic climate may have an impact on the viability of the retailers. Lettings account for 84% of rent achieved against a target of 95% and arrears stand at 3% against a target of 3%. The arrears position at 31 March 2011 totals £10,094.

The Council also has one **ground rent** on the portfolio – that of the freehold land at Westgate. Income from rent in 2010/2011 was £105,702.

**Capital receipts** generated by 31 March 2011 totalled £838,897 against a target of £1.2m.

Proposed development of the **Marsh Lane** site has been subject to consultation and talks are underway with County Highways on access issues. A planning application will be considered in the near future, however the residential development market remains relatively flat.

Stage One of the review of landholdings at **Lynnsport** is complete. The capital programme contains a budget provision in 2013/2014 to take forward the feasibility study.

The **Technical Team** completed work on the more immediate building conditions survey repairs (Priority 3) in the 2009/2010 and Priority 2 works are now underway. During 2010 the property at 90 London Road, Kings Lynn was transferred to the Kings Lynn Preservation Trust.

There is a new requirement for the records to be updated for instances of white asbestos in any buildings built or acquired since 1985 through to 2000. Work is underway to complete the exercise by April 2011. The Technical team has been involved in the work to bring in the changes to the Town Hall.

Work in 2009/2010 on **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)** improvements, adaptations and signage brought the Council's Performance Indicator up to 84% by 31 March 2010 and left the Council in a position where most of the work that could be done had been completed. Improving on the 84% indicator would prove to be extremely difficult or involve significant spending which would be questionable in terms of reasonableness and value for money. Some works on signage were completed in 2010 at the Oasis and Mintlyn Crematorium.

During 2010 React, a versatile talking sign system that helps people who are blind or partially sighted find their way around town centres and other external environments was introduced.

The **NORA** site is now ready to progress in terms of land sales and Property Services are actively marketing to potential developers on the business/retail sites. Although the housing market is extremely slow there remains a much higher interest in Kings Lynn for commercial and retail development and Property Services are currently talking to a number of parties.

The development of the NORA site also includes the relocation of the community centre currently based in the NORA Project Office. Property Services have finalised the terms and conditions that will apply on a move, as planned, from the NORA office to the old St Michael's School site. The acquisition of the site was completed in May 2011. Works will be carried out over the summer period.

The work on compiling a register of **watercourses** in council ownership is now complete. The register now contains details and maps on all known watercourses in council ownership, those transferred to Freebridge Community Housing and those that belong to the Middle Level Commissioners. The details of the Kings Lynn Internal Drainage Board watercourses are available on their web site.

The Council currently owns 14 **allotment sites** and rents one site from Norfolk County Council. Property Services directly manage 11 of these sites and the other 4 sites are let to Allotment Associations. The number of vacant sites as at 31 March 2011 stood at 37 as compared to 47 as at 30 September 2010. There is currently a waiting list of 43 – all for sites that are full.

The net cost of the allotments for 2010/2011 was £22,295 against an estimate of £26,190. Once again fly tipping caused some difficulties and costs associated with removal of the rubbish were £6,330.

## Industrial Estates

The Council has a portfolio of 132 units on a number of industrial estates throughout the borough. There are also 31.98 acres of ground leases on the estates. Rent income from the holdings was £1,526,691 as compared to the revised estimate for the year of £1,528,170.

As at 31 March 2011 the number of vacant units on the estates was 12.

Estate		
Flitcham Barns	1	1 unit 1,000 sq ft
Hardwick	2	1 unit 2,190 sq ft / 1 unit 31,050 sq ft
Narrows	3	3 units 500 sq ft
North Lynn	3	1 unit under 2,500 sq ft / 1 unit 4,740 sq ft / 1 unit 5,900sq ft
Trafalgar	1	1 unit 750 sq ft
Saunders Yard	1	1 unit 1,700 sq ft
St Johns	1	1 unit under 1,500 sq ft
	12	

The Valuers dealt with 17 cases of surrender of leases during 2010 and 20 new lets. There are a number of enquiries on the vacant units which are at various stages. Advertising of the units is carried out through the press and website.

The table below shows the position in terms of the performance targets set for the year;

	Target 2010/2011	31 March 2011
maximum rent achieved	90%	90
maximum floor space let	90%	86
rent arrears 3% or below	3%	1.4%

The figures on rent and floor space are subject to the influence of one very large unit on the Hardwick Estate of 31,050 sq ft being vacant.

## Retail Portfolio

The retail property portfolio consists of a small number of shop/office units (29 in total) and one ground rent mainly within the town centre. The rent income for 2010/2011 was £308,593 as compared to the revised estimate of £307,310 for the year. In addition to the retail property a ground rent of £105,702 was received in respect of freehold land in the town centre.

The unit sizes of the portfolio range from 108sq ft to 5,787 sq ft and rents range from £820 to £60,000 per annum. At present the Council has 4 vacancies.

The vacant properties are;

Property	Sq ft
408 Hillen Road, South Lynn	630
39 Broad Street, Kings Lynn	560
12 Norfolk street, Kings Lynn	3,361
14 Norfolk Street, Kings Lynn	5,787

The targets set for the portfolio for 2010/2011 are:

	Target 2010/2011	31 March 2011
maximum rent achieved	95%	84%
rent arrears 3% or below	3%	3%

The arrears position at 31 March 2011 totals £10,094. Clearly in the current economic climate the Council is closely monitoring the level of arrears on all properties.

### **Capital Receipts / Land Disposals**

The ongoing difficult economic climate is having a significant impact on the level of capital receipts the Council is producing and likely to achieve in this year. The target set for 2010/2011 was revised in January 2011 to £1.2m which included £500,000 for Right To Buy Sales of Freebridge stock. Although the housing receipts were achieved (£520,536) the income from land sales was very low at £318,361.

	2010/2011
Target Receipts	1,200,000

As at 31 March 2011 capital receipts received totalled £838,897.

### **Marsh Lane / Lynnsport Land Reviews**

Proposed development of the Marsh Lane site has been subject to consultation and received a lot of local interest. A planning application will be considered in the near future.

Stage One of the review of landholdings at Lynnsport is complete and initial findings were reported to Council in January 2010. Further work is now phased to occur after the Council has dealt with the Marsh Lane site and the capital programme contains a budget provision in 2013/2014 to take forward the feasibility study that will lead to the development of the site.

## **Technical Team**

Work on the more immediate repairs (Priority 3) was completed in 2009/2010 and Priority 2 works were underway in 2010. As part of the process the survey results have been reviewed prior to works being ordered to ensure that the necessary repairs are being carried out. The section was involved in the transfer of 90 London Road to the Kings Lynn Preservation Trust.

Part of the capital programme in 2010 included works on Hamlin Way roadway. The Council has now completed the works to a high standard that has provided for the transfer of responsibility to the County Highways. A certificate of completion is expected to be issued soon.

Although the Council has a complete and comprehensive asbestos register for its buildings, there is a new requirement for the records to be updated for instances of white asbestos in any buildings built or acquired since 1985 through to 2000. Work is underway to complete the exercise by April 2011.

The Technical team has been involved in the work to bring in the changes to the Town Hall in order to accommodate the Registrars Service and has also played its part in formulating a Lottery bid with The Executive Director Leisure and Open Spaces for major refurbishments to the Town Hall.

## **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)**

Work in 2009/2010 on improvements, adaptations and signage brought the Council's Performance Indicator up to 84% by 31 March 2010 and left the Council in a position where most of the work that could be done had been completed. Improving on the 84% indicator would prove to be extremely difficult or involve significant spending which would be questionable in terms of reasonableness and value for money. Some works on signage were completed in 2010 at the Oasis and Mintlynn Crematorium.

During 2010 React, a versatile talking sign system that helps people who are blind or partially sighted find their way around town centres and other external environments was introduced. It has the added benefit that it can be used to deliver additional messages for a variety of purposes such as tourist information. The concept is simple but extremely effective. A number of strategically placed speaker units are sited on the Pilgrimage Trail and are activated by a "Trigger Fob".

The installation of this system not only promoted our Disability Equality Duty but also improved our social inclusion element of our Equalities Policy.

## **NORA/Waterfront Projects**

The NORA site is now ready to progress in terms of land sales and Property Services are actively marketing to potential developers on the business/retail sites. Although the housing market is extremely slow there remains a much higher interest in Kings Lynn for commercial and retail development and Property Services are currently talking to a number of parties.

The development of the NORA site also includes the relocation of the community centre currently based in the NORA Project Office. Property Services have finalised the terms and conditions that will apply on a move, as planned, from the NORA office to the old St Michael's School site. The acquisition of the site was completed in May 2011 and works will be carried out over the summer period.

The Council is continuing talks with the County Council to examine the potential of establishing a joint venture company to assist in the development of NORA and other sites in Kings Lynn.

## **Land Drainage – Watercourses**

The work on compiling a register of watercourses in council ownership was completed during 2010. Although there are one or two ownership issues to be clarified the register now contains details and maps on all known watercourses in council ownership, those transferred to Freebridge Community Housing and those that belong to the Middle Level Commissioners. The details of the Kings Lynn Internal Drainage Board watercourses are available on their web site.

## **Allotments**

The Council currently owns 14 allotment sites and rents one site from Norfolk County Council. Property Services directly manage 11 of these sites and the other 4 sites are let to Allotment Associations. Allotment Associations collect rent from each Plot Holder and make an agreed rental payment to the Council.

The Council owned sites cover an area of 45.28 acres (18.32 hectares approximately) which are as follows:

Site	Acres	Plots	Vacant
Turbus Road	0.50	9	0
Salters Road	5.04	17	14
Seven Sisters	0.64	7	0
Wardles Chase	9.16	117	0
Walker Street	0.08	1	0
North Lynn	9.84	131	21
Curtis Field	1.08	8	0
Ouse Avenue	3.55	37	0
Gaywood Park	4.15	62	0
Ferry Road West Lynn	6.05	68	1
South of Saddlebow Road*		1	1

The site at Salters Road is not in demand and at present would need significant works to be carried out to bring it into use. It is seen as having potential for redevelopment which would involve the site being relocated.

The North Lynn site is being brought into use as demand rises. The vacant land is currently uncultivated but it is planned to bring a further number of allotments into use over the next year.

The Saddlebow Road single plot allotment has been reserved as part of the NORA development for a possible access to the site.

The number of vacant sites as at 31 March 2011 stood at 37 as compared to 47 as at 30 September 2010. There is currently a waiting list of 43 – all for sites that are full

The net cost of the allotments for 2010/2011 was £22,295 against an estimate of £26,190. Once again fly tipping caused some difficulties and costs associated with removal of the rubbish were £6,330. The allotments are deemed to be special expenses and are charged to the Kings Lynn council tax payers.

It was pleasing to note that Drakes Field Allotments in Kings Lynn, one of the self managed allotments, won the Grow Your Own Garden awards as part of the In Bloom competition.

Rents on the allotments were last increased in April 2000 and now stand at £17.50 pa for 250 sq metres. According to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners in 2008 the national average rent for 250 sq metres was £25 pa.



<b>Status</b>		This indicator has not met the target		This indicator is on target		New indicator, historic data unavailable
<b>Trends</b>		The value of this indicator has improved		The value of this indicator has worsened		The value of this indicator has not changed









Actions being taken on indicators that have not met target are outlined on the accompanying Action Report

**Central Services**

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
CS1	Staff turnover	Aim to minimise	5.54%	10%	12.3%			Monitor only
CS2	Overall sickness absence (FTE)	Aim to minimise	7.57	6.9	8.79			Includes a number of cases of long term sickness
CS3	% of short term sickness	Aim to minimise	–	–	46%	–	–	New indicator - added as short term is the element that the sickness scheme is designed to influence
CS4	% of freedom of information requests given final response within	Aim to maximise	97%	100%	96.2%			4 complex requests, either involving a lot of research or the gathering of information from a number of departments
CS5	The % of standard searches carried out within 10 working days	Aim to maximise	100%	100%	100%			
CS6	% of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds	Aim to maximise	88%	85%	89%			
CS7	% of telephone calls answered overall	Aim to maximise	97.8%	95%	98%			
CS8	Telephone average wait time (seconds)	Aim to minimise	13	15	11			
CS9	Avoidable contact: The average number of customer contacts per resolved request	Aim to minimise	8.2%	10%	6%			






**Development & Regeneration**

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
DS1	Appeals - % planning and enforcement appeals lost	Aim to minimise	33%	33%	20%			
NI 157a	Processing of planning applications - <u>Major</u>	Aim to maximise	77%	60%	74%			
NI 157b	Processing of planning applications - <u>Minor</u>	Aim to maximise	76%	65%	78%			
NI 157c	Processing of planning applications - <u>Other</u>	Aim to maximise	90%	80%	91%			

**Environmental Health & Housing Services**

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
EH1	Average time (in days) from enquiry to installation of Careline alarm	Aim to minimise	5.7	9	4.82			
EH2	Home Improvement Agency (Care & Repair) core service - enquiry to first home visit (in days)	Aim to minimise	11.34	12	13.02			Q4 performance achieved 9.69 days
EH3	Quarterly survey of 10% of closed cases involving noise, nuisance and ASB - customers satisfaction levels	Aim to maximise	93%	95%	85%			Throughout the year the procedure has improved and complainants are contacted more regularly with progress reports.

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
EH4	Waiting time for cremation bookings in working days	Aim to minimise	5	5	4			
EH5	Percentage of known HMO's (Mandatory licensed and non licensable) that have been subject to action to assess compliance against the legal standards	Aim to maximise	-	60%	87.5%			
EH6	Percentage of properties alleged or suspected to be HMO's positively identified as an HMO or excluded from consideration	Aim to maximise	-	80%	87%			
EH7	Number of homeless applications taken as a percentage of numbers of households seeking housing assistance	Aim to minimise	17%	20%	9.5%			
EH8	Respond to contaminated land planning applications within agreed response time	Aim to maximise	99.4%	97%	86%			Q4 achieved 100%, low overall performance due to staffing issues in previous quarters
EH9	Food establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Aim to maximise	75%	75%	80%			
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered-gross	Aim to maximise	90	160	160			



Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
NI 156	Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation	Aim to minimise	21	30	30			

**Finance & Resources**

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
FR1	Value of sales, non housing and capital assets	Aim to maximise	£1,230,680	£1.2m	£838,897			Interest in certain sites remains, but commitment to schemes is slow to come about.
FR2	Local suppliers invoices paid within 30 days	Aim to maximise	92%	95%	95%			
FR3	Local supplier invoices paid within 10 days	Aim to maximise	73%	100%	77%			The figure shows performance across the year, and is improved versus last year. February and March showed some improvement (85%)
FR4	% of rent achievable on industrial estates	Aim to maximise	93.3%	90%	90%			
FR5	% of rent arrears on industrial estates	Aim to minimise	3%	3%	2.58%			
FR6	% of space let on industrial estates	Aim to maximise	92%	90%	88%			The vacancy of a large unit of 31,050 sq ft distorts the figures. The number of vacancies at 31st March 2011 was 12 units out of a total of 132.
FR7	% rent achievable on retail units	Aim to maximise	99%	95%	97%			
FR8	% rent arrears on retail units	Aim to minimise	5%	3%	3%			




Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
FR9	Number of days to process new benefit claims	Aim to minimise	16.8	14	16.3			Whilst the target wasn't achieved, performance improved against 2009/10 despite an increase in staff absent on maternity leave and an increasing caseload.
FR10	Number of days to process changes of circumstances	Aim to minimise	12.1	10	11.8			Performance improved against last year – see comments for FR9
FR11	% of Council Tax collected against target	Aim to maximise	98.1%	98.2%	98.1%			Performance matches last year and in the current climate this is an achievement.
FR12	% of Business Rates collected against target	Aim to maximise	98.6%	99.2%	98.6%			See FR11. A 'Top 10' list of bad debtors and the recovery action taken will be produced.
NI 181	No of days taken to process Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	Aim to minimise	13.4	11	12.9			National indicator - This is a combination of FR9 and FR10, see comments above.


**Leisure & Public Space**

Ref	Name	Good Performance	Full year perf. 2009/10	Full year target 2010/11	Full year perf. 2010/11	Status 2010/11	Versus this time last year	Notes
LPS1	Average response time for removal of fly-tips (days)	Aim to minimise	0.4	1	0.3			






This report highlights indicators that have not met target for 2010-11 and is a supporting document to the Performance Monitoring 2010-11 report. Comments / actions are recorded to help evidence performance management undertaken by the Council.

<b>Status</b>		This indicator has not met the target.
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### National Indicators Year End 2010/11

Ref	Name	Cumulative target 2010/11	Cumulative performance 2010/11	Status	Notes	Actions
NI181	No of days taken to process Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	11	15		National indicator - This is a combination of FR9 and FR10, see comments below.	

### Local Indicators Year End 2010/11

Ref	Name	Cumulative target 2010/11	Cumulative performance 2010/11	Status	Notes	Actions
CS2	Overall sickness absence (FTE)	6.90	8.79		Includes a number of cases of long term sickness	The sickness scheme is designed to have a positive impact on short term absence
CS4	% of freedom of information requests given final response within deadline	100%	96.2%		4 complex requests, either involving a lot of research or the gathering of information from a number of departments	Processes are in place to endeavour to achieve the target.
EH2	Home Improvement Agency (Care & Repair) core service - enquiry to first home visit (in days)	12	13.02		Q4 performance achieved 9.69 days	The team will continue to focus on this, performance has improved throughout the year.
EH3	Quarterly survey of 10% of closed cases involving noise, nuisance and ASB -customers satisfaction levels	95%	85%		Throughout the year the procedure has improved and complainants are contacted more regularly with progress reports.	A more realistic target of 85% will be set for 2011/12 to provide a good and fair service.
EH9	Respond to contaminated land planning applications within agreed response time	97%	86%		Q4 achieved 100%, low overall performance due to staffing issues in previous quarters.	Staffing situation resolved.



Ref	Name	Cumulative target 2010/11	Cumulative performance 2010/11	Status	Notes	Actions
FR1	Value of sales, non housing and capital assets	£1.2m	£838,897		Interest in certain sites remains, but commitment to schemes is slow to come about.	Housing sales from preserved Right to Buy amounted to £520,536 of the total against a target of £500,000. The value of land sales did not meet the target of £700,000. Performance unfortunately reflects the uncertainties in the market at present.
FR3	Local supplier invoices paid within 10 days	100%	77%		The figure shows performance across the year, and is improved versus last year. February and March showed some improvement (85%)	Payment runs have been increased from two to three per week.
FR6	% of space let on industrial estates	90%	88%		The vacancy of a large unit of 31,050 sq ft distorts the figures. The number of vacancies at 31st March 2011 was 12 units out of a total of 132.	
FR9	Number of days to process new benefit claims	14	16.3		Whilst the target wasn't achieved, performance improved against 2009/10 despite an increase in staff absent on maternity leave and an increasing caseload.	The target remains at 14 days for 2011/12.
FR10	Number of days to process changes of circumstances	10	11.8		Performance improved last year – see comments for FR9	
FR11	% of Council Tax collected against target	98%	98.1%		Performance matches last year and in the current climate this is an achievement.	Target of 98.2% remains for 2011/12.
FR12	% of Business Rates collected against target	99.2%	98.6%		Performance matches last year and in the current climate this is an achievement.	A 'Top 10' list of bad debtors and the recovery action taken will be produced.

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# **Corporate Monitoring Report**

## for use in assessing corporate improvement

March 2011

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End of year position statement

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## Purpose of the report:

This document reports on the activities and progress of this Council for the 2010/11 financial year against its corporate aims as set out in the Corporate Strategy.

A full list of corporate objectives are shown in Appendix A.

Please contact Performance & Efficiency on 01553 616282 for further information.

## Corporate Aims:

Promote and lead West Norfolk

Supported by these corporate priorities:

1. Deliver a regeneration programme for King's Lynn, developing its role as the major economic driver of West Norfolk and its wider sub-region, with a Marina as its flagship scheme and increasing the size of its population by 25%
2. Strengthen our links with Hunstanton and Downham Market, and develop with them regeneration proposals to enhance their environment and boost their economies

Achieve value for money

Supported by these corporate priorities:

3. Ensure our services are provided at an appropriate level of quality whilst keeping council tax increases at or below the rate of inflation

Tackle important local issues

Supported by these corporate priorities:

4. Provide a quality refuse and recycling service that is appropriate to local circumstances
5. Tackle important local environmental 'street scene' issues that impact on people's lives
6. Work to develop thriving rural villages and support the provision of local amenities

Deliver quality accessible services

Supported by these corporate priorities:

7. Work with our partners to ensure the most appropriate range of services are accessible through our council information centres and our website
8. Drive up performance and continuously improve our services

## **Aim: Promote and Lead West Norfolk**

*We must set out our vision and ambitions for West Norfolk and take every opportunity to promote the place and our vision of the future. We must champion the regeneration of King's Lynn and promote its standing as an important regional centre, playing an appropriate role as democratic leaders of the local strategic partnership and similar bodies, and developing our Councillors to take these leading roles. We must exploit our local assets and resources, including our heritage and our environment, and bring external funding to West Norfolk whenever the opportunities present themselves.*

### **Progress against this aim:**

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#### Town Centre

Footfall continues to increase year on year despite the tough economic trading conditions. December 2010 saw the UK High street footfall decline by ▼11.2% in December, King's Lynn was up ▲9% .

National footfall trends have decreased whilst Kings Lynn's continues to rise. The overall annual national change in footfall Jan – Dec 2010 was ▼3.5%, King's Lynn was up ▲3.7%.

Primark has opened its new store on the High Street, there has been a significant investment by the company to increase the available retail floor space, (28,300 sq feet) they have built an extra floor to accommodate larger stockroom and office space.

#### College of West Anglia

Following the Borough Council's agreement to invest £1.5Million into the college Norfolk County Council have been persuaded to match this figure. Added to this has been funding from the Skills Funding Agency and the College itself which will now enable a new state of the art technology block to be built on the King's Lynn campus.

#### Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

The Borough Council is an active member of both the Greater Cambridge/Greater Peterborough LEP and the new Anglia LEP. Local businessman Mark Reeve (Charlcroft Construction) is a member of the GC/GP LEP Board. We have no West Norfolk representation at present on the new Anglia Board. Officers however are actively engaged with both LEP officer teams.

The Borough Council has submitted a proposal for an Enterprise Zone to both LEP's based on the major industrial/commercial sites in King's Lynn (NORA, Hardwick Extension and Campbell Meadows).

The first meeting of the planned West Norfolk Business Forum is scheduled to take place in the early part of the summer to ensure that there is a coherent business voice speaking to both LEPs.

Supporting the West Norfolk Partnership (WNP)

During the last six months a fundamental review has been conducted of the Policy and Partnerships team and the support it provides to partnership working. The results of this review are that:

- The thematic partnerships and the partnership board have been formally abolished, with the exception of the Economic Growth Partnership, which will be our key link into the Greater Cambridgeshire - Greater Peterborough and New Anglia Local Economic Partnerships.
- We have set up an online 'community of practice' which provides a 'virtual' partnership with sharing of documents, discussion forums and events.
- We have retained the annual forum which will be the main stakeholder conference for those working in West Norfolk.
- We continue to support the effective running of the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panels in West Norfolk where we work alongside the Police and other groups

From April 2011, the Neighbourhood Officers will work as part of the Operational Partnership Team (OPT) which consists of the Police, Neighbourhood Nuisance and Neighbourhood element of the Policy & Partnerships Team. The officers will follow up issues that are identified by residents calling either the Police or Neighbourhood Nuisance Team which can be better resolved or actioned through non Police or enforcement routes. Early indications show these are predominately ASB or similar issues that have a big impact on residents' quality of life and early follow up contact by neighbourhood officers has already resulted in some positive outcomes for residents in the borough, in addition to some positive feedback regarding multi-agency working.

Homes and Communities Agency

The HCA have had a severe reduction in their funding from government. As a consequence they have withdrawn from the proposed joint venture to develop market housing on the NORA site. The joint venture is now proceeding with the remaining partners i.e. the Borough and County Council. West Norfolk did however benefit from a significant level of investment in social housing projects from the HCA.

In future years the HCA plan to concentrate their investment on 'affordable' rather than 'social' housing. The Borough Council is working with Residential Social Landlords to endeavour to maximise the level of investment in West Norfolk under the new regime. Regeneration funding is unlikely to be available from the HCA over the next few years

Tourism

The Borough Council continues to undertake marketing to attract visitors to West Norfolk and provide information to both staying visitors and day visitors about the range of attractions, events, facilities and services available throughout the Borough. The Borough Council has also continued to work with partners on the East Anglia coast seaside campaign, and with partners across Norfolk to promote West Norfolk as part of the wider Norfolk tourism product including work to develop marketing opportunities for visits to Norfolk based around the 2012 Olympics.

A new contemporary stand-alone website will be launched with much more functionality, user-friendly design and content than is currently available via the existing web link. As well as more functionality for the site visitor, the new website will be created with its own strong local tourism identity to further attract potential visitors to the area.

Raising the profile of the Council

93 media releases were produced in the period 1 October to 31 March 2011. There was a 99% take up of these releases with all but one being published in a local paper or broadcast on a local radio station.

In the same period 707 items were recorded which mentioned the Borough Council and its services. Of that coverage 59% was neutral, i.e., would not alter the way people feel about the authority. 30% was deemed to have a positive impact on the overall reputation of the council, with 11% believed to be potentially damaging to the council's reputation.

The main focus over recent months has been around communicating our cost reduction programme. The Princess Theatre has now been taken on by a private operator, the Arts Centre will be operated by a new charitable trust, the cash offices have been closed, and all service areas have been subject to service reviews. We have also continued to promote positive activities throughout this period. Over the last few weeks, the two key topics have been the forthcoming elections and the ongoing issue of Norfolk County Council's proposal to build an incinerator in King's Lynn.

The Council has taken its first tentative steps into the world of social media and already has 214 followers on Twitter. Lynnsport, the Oasis and King's Lynn Corn Exchange also have Twitter accounts, and Lifestyles Festival has a Twitter account and a Facebook page. We have tweeted from a Council meeting and the election results. It is anticipated that social and online media will play a much larger role in our communications activity than has previously been the case. In the coming few months we will be developing a series of e-zine (online magazines) which will provide a cost-effective way to ensure that local people kept informed about services and decisions.

In the same reporting period, we have handled 186 media enquiries, many related to planning, the incinerator and service reviews.

Decade of Development

Delivery of this major regeneration programme, which consists of a number of projects implemented in several stages, is dependent on current and future market conditions, especially the housing market. The recession has affected the pace of delivery, but the council maintains its regeneration aspirations and works with private sector partners to identify ways of taking forward its ambitious regeneration agenda. Planned or completed initiatives include:

- Setting up a Joint-Venture Company (JVC) with Norfolk County Council to bring forward housing delivery in the borough. The JVC, which has been formed earlier in the year, plans to build 155 homes on NORA and a planning application for the construction of first 46 homes has been submitted in April 2011.
- Construction of the CIF funded Bus route linking Boal Street with Wisbech Road. Completed March 2011
- Creation of a surface water storage facility in Blubberhouse Creek. 80% of works have been delivered and the project is due to be completed in June 2011. This facility will enable the construction of housing on NORA.
- Delivery of a Community Centre in the former St Michael's School, following refurbishment works by July 2011.
- Construction of Wisbech Road Play Area by May 2011
- Complete demolition and site clearance works on site adjacent to Boal Quay car park by July 2011
- Installation of pontoons at South Quay Berth 6 by July 2011.

Local Development Framework

The Borough Council submitted their Core Strategy to the Secretary of State on 5 November 2010. The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) appointed Mr Paul Dobsen MA DIPTP MRTPI FRGS to be the Independent Planning Inspector to determine if the Core Strategy is 'sound', and the Examination in Public Hearing sessions ran from 1 February 2011 to 16 February 2011 at Lynnsport. The Inspectors Final Report is due in May 2011, and if the Council are content with the Inspectors recommendations the Core Strategy will move forward to adoption in July 2011.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

The SHLAA was published on the Council's website in March 2011.

Supporting local businesses and economic growth

We have secured assistance with growth support services from the Institute for Manufacturing, Cambridge University for manufacturing companies in King's Lynn. A first seminar for 18 businesses was organised in March 2011 and resulted in an initial take up of services by five manufacturers.

We have sent two mail shots to micro-businesses and one mail shot to Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) regarding funding available under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). The total amount of funding granted to West Norfolk businesses was £378,000.

Panto

The Pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk, held at the Corn Exchange was very well received and enjoyed by 15,375 people of all ages including 38 schools, an increase of 18% from 2009. The same company has been asked to perform the Cinderella Pantomime this Christmas 2011.

Markets

Negotiations are ongoing with Norfolk County Highways regarding our proposal to introduce a limited number of extra market stalls at the southern end of the High St and New Conduit St. It is hoped to have these in place by the summer.

Town Hall

Work will commence on the Town Hall at the beginning of April to provide accommodation for the King's Lynn Registrars who will commence operation from the beginning of June. Building works have benefitted from an Improvement East grant of £85,000 to assist in achieving revenue savings from Asset Rationalisation. A Heritage Lottery Fund bid is being developed for the rest of the Town Hall in a joint initiative with the County Museum Service and County Archives Service.

Festival Too

In 2010 Festival Too celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The line-up over the five nights included tribute bands, local acts, hillbilly band Hayseed Dixie and R&B singer Lemar topping the bill on the final Saturday. An estimated 25-30,000 people enjoyed the Festival events.

## **Aim: Tackle important local issues**

We aim to make West Norfolk cleaner, greener and safer. We must take decisive action where we need to, and work with others to achieve our goals. We must think and act locally, but help to deliver on global issues such as climate change. We must tackle issues based on evidence of need, for example delivering effective services to rural areas, the challenges presented by our changing ethnic profile and our ageing population and the need for affordable housing. We must identify local priorities as well as delivering the fundamental services like refuse collection and recycling, to the highest standards and providing the best value for money.

### **Progress against this aim:**

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#### Mass Burn Municipal Waste Incinerator

The Borough Council has now adopted a policy position in opposition to the County Council's proposal to build an incinerator at Saddlebow in West Norfolk following the overwhelming rejection of the proposal in the Local poll. Plans are now being prepared to give effect to this policy which is likely to extend to judicial review action in the High Courts.

#### NORA

Negotiations are now at an advanced stage for the sale of the first commercial development site at NORA on the 'old lorry park'. This is to be a mixed used development.

#### Careline

Careline has been expanding its customer base significantly. In the space of 12 months the customer count has increased from 3,000 to 4,704. The Careline Community Alarm newsletter was launched in Spring/Summer 2011, it details some new products being promoted and trialled including wireless smoke detectors, intruder alarms, and mobile alarm units.

#### Contaminated Land

Following a successful grant bid to DEFRA in 2010/11, the council concluded the investigation into the Wisbech Canal Landfill site in December, on time and on budget. The results of the investigation have shown that the land adjacent to the canal including several hundred homes is not contaminated land. The Environmental Quality Team held public and member briefing sessions to publicise the results. A newsletter was also circulated to all residents explaining the findings of the investigation. Copies of the final report and non technical summary have been placed on the Council's website. The report can now be used by residents who need information on the landfill when they are selling or buying property nearby or if they wish to build a new home or large extension adjacent to the canal. The report can be used as part of the planning application saving residents time and money.

#### Decriminalisation of Parking

Work is progressing to implement Civil Parking Enforcement (decriminalisation of parking) from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011.

Refuse and Recycling Contract

The Council has entered into a contract with Kier Street Services Ltd as this tender offers the best combination of quality and price. A joint contract with North Norfolk District Council provides the most economically advantageous option.

Urban Sports Regeneration

Work with Parkour continues and a thriving club is now established at Lynnsport which the police recognises as contributing to reducing anti social behaviour in and around King's Lynn town centre.

Similarly the Neighbourhood Football League continues to grow with weekly activity on the urban MUGAs. Over 70 children and teenagers are engaged weekly and tournaments are staged periodically at Lynnsport's 3G pitch. Over 200 young people took part in the February half term programme of activities at the urban MUGAs.

In the coming months running, netball and bowls will be promoted, attempts to bring back Linford Christie's Street Athletics to Kings Lynn will be made and a new Rugby initiative (the School of Hard Knocks) is planned in partnership with the police.

Shoreline Management

The Environment Agency signed off the Wash Shoreline Management Plan in November 2010 and the North Norfolk Shoreline Management Plan is due to be signed off imminently. A process of engagement with Hunstanton cliff top residents, businesses and other interest groups has commenced. As part of this a drop-in session took place on 17 March 2011 at Hunstanton Town Hall. This was attended by some 100 interested parties.

North Norfolk Coastal Change Pathfinder Project

Presentations were made to the Wolferton Creek – Hunstanton Key Stakeholder Group on 28 February 2011 and to the Regeneration and Environment Panel on 1 March. A final report has been produced and submitted to DEFRA.

A project group has been formed, for the Wolferton Creek to Hunstanton Strategy Review. Work has taken place and project objectives have been agreed. The project is planned to start by the Autumn 2011 and will take around 18 months to complete.

Let's Get Active

152 Adults took part in 'Get Back Into' courses throughout the borough between Oct 2010 and March 2011. The May to June programme is the largest yet with courses ranging from Ballroom Dancing, Climbing and Fitness Activity to Golf, Swimming and Netball.

Beginners Running for Women remain very popular with courses from January attracting over 80 women and two new clubs/groups emerging in Hunstanton and Terrington St Clement. The Fit4Work project has seen a running course start at Bepak and a new sports tournament was held at Lynnsport in March, aimed at encouraging West Norfolk businesses/employers to improve the health and fitness of their workforce.

Following the Tour of Britain coming to West Norfolk in September 2010, training of Bike Leaders and Coaches has taken place with a programme of bike rides and a Junior 'Go Ride' Cycling club for children about to begin.

In 2009/2010 the Council achieved an overall 3.3% reduction in CO2 emissions and is aiming to achieve a 5% reduction in 2010/2011. The Council has recently been subject to a follow up audit by PWC on our approach to energy efficiency, the results of which will come to the Panel as part of the annual Environmental Statement in June 2011.

To date orders have been placed to the value of £200k for energy saving projects using the Salix Recycling Fund. This covers 24 projects that are anticipated to reduce annual energy costs by £55k and save 378 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Water saving projects at the Corn Exchange and Streetscene Depot are on course to reduce annual water costs by £4,500 (58%) and £10,000 (60%) respectively.

The ongoing detailed evaluation of utility accounts has resulted in excess of £50k being refunded to the Council.

Two projects are being evaluated concerning the installation of solar photovoltaic panels at King's Court and Lynnsport. If implemented, it is expected in excess of 40,000 kWh of electricity will be generated for use at the sites, avoiding the emission of 24 tonnes of carbon dioxide and providing a financial return of £350k over the 25 years the Feed in Tariff scheme will be operating.

#### Hunstanton – The Green – Joint Management Arrangements

The new joint management group consisting of members from Hunstanton Town Council and the Borough Council is now up and running.

The Council is working with Norfolk Supporting People and Children's Services to develop joint working arrangements to respond to the G v. Southwark court case. This requires agencies to work together to prevent youth homelessness and changes the way that agencies have worked together previously. The aim will be to improve access to supported accommodation and to help young people to develop life skills to prepare them for independent living.

#### Homelessness prevention

Work has started to review tenancy sustainment initiative to prevent evictions for rent arrears or other possession action. The Council is working with Children's Services, Stonham Homestay and landlords to see how multi-agency interventions can prevent evictions. For example, a large local landlord was seeking possession for £2,500 arrears for a large family. A payment of £560 by the Council and £800 by Children's Services (*considerably less than the expense of assisting the family as homeless or placing children in care*) towards the arrears stopped the action and the family was invited to a meeting to engage floating support to improve rent payments and provide financial advice.

#### Home Improvement Trust

The Council is planning to work with a non-for profit national organisation that exists to help older people and disabled households access affordable private finance to repair or improve their homes. The scheme will be run locally by Care and Repair, the Council's Home Improvement Agency.



Council Officers have led a clean-up operation and planting project to transform two neglected areas of South Lynn, working with partner funding organisations, the South Lynn Partnership, Freebridge Community Housing Association and the Probation Service. The areas known locally as the Hideout (located behind Baker Close) and the Blackie (a former car park between Beloe Crescent and Hillen Road) had become overgrown and fly-tipping was common. Across the two areas, clean-up work was undertaken, shrubs were cleared, a 6 ft chain link fence was installed, a wall was repaired and bollards installed to deter fly-tipping and help increase security. Additionally, rubbish was removed, a bench installed and an existing planter cleared and modified so that a local Scout group can adopt it.

A programme of 10 Village Sports Roadshows has been in preparation and is to be delivered April to August in villages across West Norfolk. The Inter Village Games has been relaunched as part of a new county wide initiative and is now branded as the West Norfolk Village Games to take place on 26<sup>th</sup> June with winners and runners up going forward to county finals in September. The Village Sports Coordinator scheme has been reinvigorated with 13 villages now covered. Lets Get Active holiday courses for young people have taken place in 5 villages and an adult Netball group has been established in Methwold and a young persons badminton group in Middleton.

## **Aim: Achieve value for money**

We must listen to customer views and provide the right balance of cost and quality of service, keeping council tax low but maintaining the highest levels of service. We must meet all our statutory duties and responsibilities as a matter of course, exceeding local people's expectations of an efficient, effective and responsive Council. Our choices and decisions on services and spending should follow the evidence of what our customers need. We must explore new ways of delivering our services and embrace change and innovation when it's needed, meeting and exceeding our obligations across all services both statutory and discretionary.

### **Progress against this aim:**

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#### Shared Services

The Council continues to work with North Norfolk on the shared services initiative for Revenues and Benefits. A business case is almost complete and the early results show that a partnership between the two councils could produce significant annual savings once the initial investment in systems software had been made. The announcement by Government of the introduction of the Universal Credit system to replace benefits did have an impact on the savings to be made in the longer term by the shared services but it is evident that good levels of savings can still be achieved.

At present the councils are looking at the infrastructure of the ICT platforms to ensure that a hosted system could be put into place. This would allow for much wider cooperation and sharing of services if it can be arranged.

Recently the councils appointed a lead officer from within the existing services who together with the support of a project manager will press on with the partnership work.

#### Cost Reduction Programme

In announcing the level of grant payable to the Council in 2011/2012 the Government has made a settlement that has reduced the sum paid to the Council by £2m to £12.3m. This represents a cut of 13.9%. The announcement also provided provisional figures for 2012/2013 that shows a further cut in grant by £1.3m to £10.9m. This is a further cut of 11.3%.

The Council's determination to act early during 2009 and 2010 showed it to be 'ahead of the game' and it has made significant progress in identifying ongoing savings of £3.5m in 2011/2012 rising to £4.5m in 2013/2014.

As part of the cost reduction programme we have now reduced the size of the Council's Management Team by two posts, as part of an overall reduction, the number of staff employed by the Council has reduced by 88 posts. This number is set to increase as the final elements of the cost reduction programme are concluded over the next 2 to 3 months.

The changes have impacted on all service areas and in addition to the closure of the cash offices and pest control service we have ceased the direct operation of the Princess Theatre and visual arts service. All remaining service areas are now operating a more limited service capacity.

#### 2009/10 Accounts

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PWC), the external auditors, gave an unqualified opinion on the Statement of Accounts in September 2010 and issued a report to members, together with the Annual Audit Letter, in November 2010. There were one or two points raised in the audit but nothing significant was raised by PWC.

#### Audit 2010/2011

In February 2011 PWC presented the Audit Plan to members for the work to be carried out on the 2010/2011 accounts. The major issue on the preparation of this year's Statement of Accounts will be the introduction of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) which will reshape the format and the content of the accounts.

#### General Fund Working Balance

As part of the accounting arrangements for all councils it is expected that they will hold a balance on the accounts that would provide for any unforeseen circumstances – this is known as the General Fund working balance. There is a formula that the auditor looks at to see if the Council is holding adequate balances and in our case in 2011/2012 that minimum balance would have to be £961,615. We have budgeted to draw £366,420 from the balances but this will still provide for a working balance of £3,143,234. This sum is available for future years and it is planned to use the balances over the next two years to help reduce the impact of cuts in government grants and protect the Council whilst it draws up plans for reductions in spending.

#### Key Messages in the Financial Plan 2011/2012

The Council set its budget in February 2011 and in doing so recognised that there will be changes to the way that the Council operates over the next few years but also emphasised that there are Key Messages in the Plan for 2011/2012 that remain in place;

- The Council will continue to focus resources on the role of facilitator and provider of regeneration initiatives in the borough. The Council will continue to promote the borough within the Eastern Region as a key centre for development and change through its Growth Point status.
- The Council will ensure services are provided at an appropriate level of quality whilst keeping council tax increase at or below the rate of inflation.
- The Council will continue to seek efficiency gains, drive down procurement costs and promote a commercial approach in service areas. Reviews will continue to take place across all services of the Council.
- The Council will, where appropriate, seek to deliver services in other ways through shared arrangements, partnerships, charitable companies, outsourcing and joint working.

#### VAT changes in January 2011

When the VAT increased from 17.5% to 20% in January 2011, with an aim to assist businesses and the town centres, the Council held car parking and trade waste at existing levels but for other services adjusted fees and charges to reflect the VAT increase.

Capital Programme 2010/2014

In January 2011 the Council revised the 10 year capital programme. The impact of the recession on land sales continues to limit the level of spending that the Council can accommodate on the programme. However, many of these schemes included in the programme emphasise the Council's commitment to the regeneration of the area and the continued development of King's Lynn as an urban centre of regional significance. Spending over the period 2010 to 2014 is estimated to be £28m.

Consultation on Parish Council Elections

A mixed response was received from the Parish Councils to the consultation exercise regarding passing costs of elections to Parishes. Subsequently a report was taken back to Cabinet which recommended that the costs be recharged, payable the year following that in which the election was held (to assist with their financial planning). This was agreed and has now been acted upon.

Housing Choices

This new Care and Repair pilot service commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. It aims to help clients where moving home may be more appropriate than adapting their existing property. This will be of particular benefit where the cost of adaptation work funded by Disabled Facilities Grants does not represent value for money, or the dwelling is not physically suited to adaptation. Funding for the scheme, including the Client Officer appointed to run this service, is being provided by Norfolk Supporting People.

Home Improvement Agency – Framework contract

In order to improve the service that they provide Care & Repair are proposing to enter into a framework contract with a number of selected contractors.

There will no longer be a lengthy and burdensome procurement process whereby multiple tenders will need to be sought for each job. The creation and agreement of a priced schedule of rates will allow jobs to be priced and awarded immediately. Once works are awarded all framework suppliers will be bound to performance criteria that will ensure that all works will be commenced within agreed timescales thus dramatically improving process timescales and the client experience.

There will no longer be a need for C&R to manage a large database of contractors as any framework will operate with a reduced and dedicated list of suppliers. This will allow C&R to manage all issues relating to compliance such as health and safety, insurances etc more efficiently. This change will also improve contractor performance management and communications. Regular framework review meetings will allow both parties to discuss and resolve any issues that may arise.

The above will also ensure that the quality of works is adequately monitored and managed and that any adjustments to the schedule of works can be mutually agreed. The framework will be open to contractors of varying sizes including those geographically based within other service areas thus potentially mitigating any negative impact upon relevant local economies.

Arts Centre Galleries

The Council has let the Arts Centre Galleries to the new King's Lynn Arts Centre Trust (KLACTION). The Trust will take over the operation early in the 2011/12 financial year with the benefit of a three year Service Level Agreement with the Council.

Princess Theatre

The Princess Theatre has been leased to C&R Cinemas group from January 2010.

External Grants/Resources

Sponsorship of large events (eg GEAR and Lifestyles) has brought in over £23,000 to the Borough Council since September 2010 whilst advice and support to voluntary groups has brought in over £7000 into the Borough (grant aid is getting harder to find in the current climate).

Financial support from Active Norfolk, the County Sports Partnership, is excellent: £17,000 this last financial year for the Fit Together Walking Programme and over £20,000 for the Sports Unlimited programme for young people; dedicated officer support for the new Village Games initiative; funding for Get Back Into, Fit4Work and Cycling activity.

Exceeding local people's expectations

"What an excellent service your council runs - the booking of the chalet from here in Essex was administratively completed by your staff in an excellent manner. The chalet supervisor, was for the second year running outstanding in his helpfulness and concern. I had with me two elderly ladies, both nearly 90, your staff member could not have been more kind or helpful - an excellent advert for your council and the town of Hunstanton. Your council is to be congratulated on the service it provides and the staff it employs."

"I am writing to thank and praise three members of your staff who today helped me above and beyond what I would expect of most people these days. My car broke down, I was stuck at traffic lights in the middle of a junction, unable to get out of the car due to the fast moving traffic on both sides of me. The Fairstead Ground Team pushed me off the road to a safe location the three men then helped me with my car, fixing the problem and getting me on my way again. They acted with compassion and did far more than I would have asked or expected from anyone stopping to help. I am so appreciative of their actions."

## **Aim: Deliver quality accessible services**

*We must listen to our customers and understand their needs so that we can deliver high quality services in the most accessible way. We should continually assess our performance and compare ourselves with the best in the country, aiming for efficiency and improved performance across the board. We must aim to be “right first time” in all our services, increasing satisfaction by delivering excellent services in the way that our customers demand. We must take every chance to build our knowledge of our customers, especially those with special needs such as elderly people and those whose first language is not English. We must be business-like in the way we deliver our services, but responsive to all our customers, and we should aim to interact with our customers at the most convenient time and place for them.*

### **Progress against this aim:**

#### Avoidable Contact

The abolition of the National Indicator NI14 has resulted in the council no longer being required to officially report on this data. However, the fundamental principle of monitoring avoidable contact is considered to be highly beneficial for the council to consistently improve our services and the way we communicate with citizens. The CIC utilises the SNAP survey software to record details of every call received and whether it was avoidable. This information is then collated and analysed and used to make suggestions for improvements.

For the period October 2010 – March 2011, the Council Information Centre dealt with 61,345 enquiries of which 3,909 (6.4%) were classed as avoidable and where appropriate, this has been fed back to services.

#### Changes to Opening Hours for CIC in Downham Market and Hunstanton

As a result of the Revenues Service Review, the offices at Downham Market and Hunstanton have been reduced to one member of staff offering a face to face service only. The opening hours have also been reduced slightly to allow the member of staff an hours break at lunchtime, although there is usually another member of staff working out of the office providing a telephone service. Both offices have had self service computers installed for customers to access our services online if they wish.

Although it is still early days operating the new service, it appears to be working well with no issues reported. A fuller report on the changes will be reported in the next half year.

Assess public perception of Council Services

The Council uses the GovMetric customer satisfaction monitoring system to measure satisfaction by telephone, face to face and the website. For the period October 2010 – March 2011, 98% of customers telephoning the Council rated the service as “good”. 71% of face to face customers rated the services as “good” and 44% of customers using the website rated the service as “good”. Customers are able to leave comments regarding the service received by all three access channels and this information is provided as feedback to Service Managers to improve our services.

Following the CIC service review and the reduction in staffing numbers in the CIC, it is important that the website is promoted as an efficient and user friendly method of accessing council services. The CIC, the Corporate Communications Team and the Web Team will be working collaboratively over the coming months to publish an updated web development and take up strategy, designed to enhance our web presence, increase the use of Social Media (Twitter and Facebook) as communications tools and to increase customer satisfaction when using our website.

Service Levels

For the period October 2010 – March 2011, the CIC switchboard answered 79,866 calls with 90.1% being answered within 30 seconds and only 1.7% abandoned. The average wait time for a call to be answered is 11 seconds. For the period October 2010 – March 2011, the King’s Lynn CIC dealt with 15,791 face to face enquiries with an average wait time of 13 minutes for a customer to be served.

Changes to Cash Office Service

The council closed its three Cash Offices in King’s Lynn, Hunstanton and Downham Market on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. To enable customers wishing to pay their council bills in cash and cheque to be able to continue to do so, a barcode needed to be placed on every bill the Council issues as well as a bespoke solution to allow payments for miscellaneous payments to be made. The CIC have been working closely with ICT, Internal Audit and Accountancy to produce the barcode on all of the bills and this project was completed on time with barcodes now appearing on all new Council Tax and Business Rates bills, Sundry Debt Invoices, adhoc bills and Car Parking Penalty Charge notices. These payments can now be made via Allpay at any Post Office or PayPoint outlet in the country. Up to the 14<sup>th</sup> April, 5,198 payments totalling £674,643 had been made through Allpay. The CIC still has the residual cash office function for processing cheque payments (sent by post), internal payments and batch processing.

Along with the closure of the cash office, the Customer Services department have been working on the development and implementation of the new cash receipting and payment processing system Paye.Net and the new telephone payment service. Both of these systems went live on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

The closure of the cash offices has understandably caused an increase in enquiries from customers regarding their payments. The CIC experienced a large increase in enquiries in early April when the first council tax instalment was due following the closure. It is anticipated that this will decrease as more customers pay their bills and understand how the system will operate in the future.

Corn Exchange Booking System

The Corn Exchange is to invest in a change in the booking system that will allow booking over the web and also provide for the choice of seating - this will be an improvement on our current offer for customers. Once the first year of the investment has been made there will be annual savings of around £15,000 to the Council.

Staff Training (full fiscal year 2010/2011)

Basic Skills: qualifications achieved in 2010/2011:

Adult Literacy = 11

Adult Numeracy = 7

ITQ = 8

Basic Skills: currently being studied (carried over to 2011/12):

ITQ = 13

In-house NVQ's - variety of programmes achieved in 2010/2011 = 54

In-house NVQ's – variety of programmes currently being studied (carried over to 2011/12) = 16

Post Entry Qualifications achieved in 2010/2011 = 18

Post Entry Qualifications currently being studied (carried over to 2011/12) = 42

Equalities Group

With the introduction of the new Equality Act, and the need to carry out Equality Impact Assessments when changes are made to services, the need to refresh and update the Council's approach to equalities has been identified. This has led to a review and new terms of reference for the corporate equalities working group, which is now led by the Personnel Services Manager. The revised group, which consists of representatives from across the Council, will look at current equalities issues and provide advice on necessary changes. The group will also provide support to Managers in the completion of Equality Impact Assessments, including undertaking a review of existing corporate policies for equalities impacts.



## Corporate Objectives Appendix A

1. Deliver a regeneration programme for King's Lynn, developing its role as the major economic driver of West Norfolk and its wider sub-region, with a Marina as its flagship scheme and increasing the size of its population by 25%
2. Strengthen our links with Hunstanton and Downham Market, and develop with them regeneration proposals to enhance their environment and boost their economies
3. Support the development of the proposed Anglia Ruskin university alongside the rebuilt College of West Anglia and the millennium community on the NORA site in South Lynn
4. Develop King's Lynn as a Festival town, building on the success of the Great East Anglian Run, Food Fortnight and the Vancouver Festival; continue to support the King's Lynn Festival and Festival Too
5. Continue to invest in tourism as an important driver of the economy across the Borough, including the rural areas
6. Bring a democratic accountability to the West Norfolk Partnership, leading efforts to achieve the priorities of the vision for West Norfolk as set out in the sustainable community strategy and the local development framework
7. Ensure that any changes to the structure of local government in Norfolk recognise and enhance the status of King's Lynn as a sub-regional centre within Norfolk and the East of England and that the outcome of any restructure ensures that local residents receive enhanced, locally managed, value for money services.
8. Provide a quality refuse and recycling service that is appropriate to local circumstances
9. Tackle important local environmental 'street scene' issues that impact on people's lives.
10. Work to develop thriving rural villages and support the provision of local amenities
11. Participate and seek appropriate investment, with partners, in the formulation and implementation of effective Shoreline Management Plans and measures to mitigate flood risk
12. Reduce the size of the Council's carbon footprint, and encourage others, particularly commercial, industrial and residential, to reduce their consumption of energy
13. Use the powers available to us to enable the provision of affordable housing where it is most needed including rural areas
14. Support measures to preserve and enhance the quality of our environment across the Borough, in particular the Wash and the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
15. Intervene, as community leaders, where we consider the well-being of our residents is not being best served by others, and challenging service providers to meet local need where necessary
16. Tackle local issues impacting on crime and fear of crime, with local partners
17. Ensure our services are provided at an appropriate level of quality whilst keeping council tax increases at or below the rate of inflation
18. Maximise the commercial opportunities of the Council's discretionary services and facilities
19. Maximise external funding where this helps us achieve our priorities
20. Run the council on a business-like basis, with prudent asset, financial, risk & performance management
21. Meet our statutory and legal responsibilities

- 22. Achieve efficiency savings and re-invest in our priority areas, ensuring that our staff and other resources are deployed effectively in support of our priorities
- 23. Work with our partners to ensure the most appropriate range of services are accessible through our council information centres and our website
- 24. Drive up performance and continuously improve our services
- 25. Continue to improve our range of leisure, sport and cultural facilities to improve the well-being of residents across the Borough including young people
- 26. Roll out Community Information Points in rural areas to improve access to Council services and information
- 27. Enhance the accessibility of services to our residents, particularly for those in rural areas or those who have traditionally found it difficult to access, or who don't access, our services
- 28. Promote community cohesion and diversity, and continue to ensure equity in our service provision
- 29. Focus our communications to ensure the public, businesses and stakeholders are aware of our key decisions and actions
- 30. Meet the highest ethical and corporate governance standards
- 31. Support, develop and promote the role of Scrutiny
- 32. Improve consultation and customer feedback
- 33. Support councillors to perform their roles
- 34. Continue to improve and enhance our three-tier working with the County and Parish Councils
- 35. Empower managers to innovate and develop new ways of working
- 36. Support partnership and joint working where it improves services or generates efficiencies
- 37. Improve our recruitment and retention procedures and policies
- 38. Support staff to achieve an appropriate work – life balance
- 39. Keep staff informed to help them become ambassadors for the council

## RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2011/2012

**1 June 2011**

- Asset Management Monitoring Report (6 monthly)
- Performance Monitoring and Action Report – year end 2010/2011
- Corporate Monitoring Report – year end 2010/2011

**Cabinet Report**

Framework Agreement for Professional Services

**28 June 2011**

- Setting Local Planning Fees – (R & E Panel and DCB Members to be invited for this item of business)

**19 July 2011**

- Employment Monitoring 2010/2011
- Staff Sickness Absence 2010/2011
- Formal Complaints against the Borough 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011
- Development Control/LDF : Performance (6 monthly)
- Derelict Land and Buildings (6 monthly)

**FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

**Officer**

**Portfolio  
Responsible**

**7 June 2011**

Home Improvement Trust	Exec Dir, Environmental Health and Housing	Community
Affordable Housing Policy	Exec Dir, Environmental Health and Housing	Community
Framework Agreement for Professional Services	Deputy Chief Executive	Performance
Licensing Procedures & Conditions	Exec Dir, Environmental Health and Housing	Community
Outside Body Appointments	Exec Dir Central Services	Leader
Freebridge Community Housing – reps on Board	Exec Dir Central Services	Leader
Councillors Call for Action – referral from R&P Panel	Exec Dir Central Services	Leader
Structure of the Policy Review and Development Panels	Chief Executive	Special Projects
Costs of Democracy – Electoral Review	Chief Executive	Special Projects

**21 June 2011 – Special meeting for Accounts**

Accounts	Deputy Chief Executive	Leader
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**5 July 2011**

Planning Fees	Exec Dir Regeneration and Development	Development
Town Centre Plan	Exec Dir Regeneration & Development	Regeneration
Town Hall Progress and way forward	Exec Dir Leisure and Public Space	Sports Arts and Open Space/ Special Projects
Adoption of Core Strategy	Exec Dir Regeneration and Development	Development
Care and Repair Framework Agreement	Exec Dir Environmental health and Housing	Community
Revised Health and Safety Policy	Exec Dir Central Services	Leader
Expenditure Reduction – Cost of Democracy – Boundary Committee Review	Chief Executive	Leader

**26 July 2011**

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**6 September 2011**

Contract for shared service Revs & Bens system with NNDC	Deputy Chief Executive	Leader
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**20 September 2011**

ISA (UK&I) 260	Deputy Chief Executive	Leader
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**Forthcoming Items, as yet unprogrammed**

Revised KLATS & KL Car Parking Strategy	Exec Dir Regeneration & Development	Regeneration / Sports Arts and Open Spaces
Planning Scheme of Delegation	Exec Dir Regeneration & Development	Development
Service Review – Refuse and Recycling	Exec Dir, Leisure and Public Space	Environment/ Personnel/ Resources
Community Cohesion Strategy	Chief Executive	Community
Asset Management - Marsh Lane, King's Lynn – Disposal	Deputy Chief Executive	Performance