



AGENDA

NOTE: In the case of non-members, this agenda is for information only

Committee - CABINET

Date & Time - MONDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2021 AT 9.30 AM

THIS MEETING WILL BE STREAMED LIVE VIA THE LINK BELOW AND WILL BE ACTIVATED AT THE START OF THE MEETING

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THIS MEETING IS IN LINE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020

Members of the Committee requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting. If the information requested is available, this will be provided, and reported to Committee.

The Cabinet

Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen (Chairman)
Cllr Paul Claussen (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Gordon Bambridge
Cllr Philip Cowen
Cllr Paul Hewett

Cllr Mark Robinson
Cllr Ian Sherwood
Cllr Sarah Suggitt
Cllr Alison Webb

Democratic Services
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham Norfolk, NR19 1EE

Date: Monday, 15 March 2021

PART A - ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
1. <u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the Minutes (including the restricted minute) of the meeting held on 1 February 2021; and the restricted minute of the meeting held on 4 January 2021.	3 - 18
2. <u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
3. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u> To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any item as urgent business, pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4. <u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u> The duties to register, disclose and not to participate for the entire consideration of the matter, in respect of any matter in which a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. Members are also required to withdraw from the meeting room as stated in the Standing Orders of this Council.	
5. <u>NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING</u> To note the names of any non-members who wish to address the meeting.	
6. <u>CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)</u>	
7. <u>BRECKLAND COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS (STANDING ITEM)</u> To consider the grants put forward (if any).	
8. <u>Q3 PERFORMANCE UPDATE</u> Report of Councillor Sarah Suggitt, Executive Member for Governance.	19 - 30
9. <u>LOCAL PLAN PRODUCTION BUDGET</u> Report of Councillor Paul Claussen, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Planning.	31 - 34
10. <u>NEXT MEETING</u> To note the date of the next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Tuesday 4 May at 9.30am.	

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

CABINET

Held on Monday, 1 February 2021 at 9.30 am

This meeting is in line with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

PRESENT

Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen (Chairman)	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr P.D. Claussen (Vice- Chairman)	Mr I. Sherwood
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs S. E. Suggitt
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mrs A. M. Webb
Mr P.J. Hewett	

Also Present

Mr R. Atterwill	Mr I. Martin
Mr T. Birt	Mr K. Martin
Miss H. Bushell	Mr P. Morton
Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mr S. Terry
Mrs H Crane	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr T. J. Jermy	Mr D. Wickerson
Mr M. Kiddle-Morris	Mr P. S. Wilkinson

In Attendance

Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Gill Duffy	- Housing Manager
Nathan Elvery	- Head of Paid Service
Stephen James	- Communities & Environmental Services Manager
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Rory Ringer	- Democratic Services Manager
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place
Sarah Wolstenholme-Smy	- Legal Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer BDC)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Team Leader

16/21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

17/21 APOLOGIES

None.

Action By

Action By

18/21 URGENT BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

19/21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

20/21 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all non-Members present to the meeting.

21/21 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

The Chairman was pleased to announce that Attleborough would be the first vaccination centre to open within Breckland District, on 3 February 2021, with further vaccination centres opening across Norfolk and Waveney over the coming weeks.

He went onto mention that it was 'Childrens mental health week' this week, and wanted to raise awareness of the mental health provision in that there were many organisations available for support and that it was important to speak up and speak out.

22/21 BRECKLAND COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS (STANDING ITEM)

The Executive Member for Community, Leisure & Culture was pleased that the Council were able to support the Dereham Foodbank with funding which helped to secure a new building for them within the Town to distribute food. He thanked Members for bringing the item forward for consideration and in particular thanked Councillor Webb who had supported the foodbank throughout the process.

He was aware that many Members supported charity projects and community groups across the District and informed that Breckland Council were hosting a session with the National Lottery Community Funds project whereby charities and project groups could book appointments to apply for funding of up to £10,000. Further details were available on the Community funding website.

Councillor Webb added that the £2,500 funding provided by Breckland Council for Dereham Foodbank was also matched by Dereham Town Council. The pandemic had seen the foodbank become overwhelmed and required a larger area for storage so the funding was extremely welcomed, and thanked the Council for their support.

23/21 UPDATE ON BRECKLAND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Customer Engagement and Member Champion for Breckland Sustainability was pleased to update Members on the continued progress of the Sustainability strategy and advised that over 200 responses had been received in response to the public consultation. As a result, the Strategy would be considered at the February Council meeting to enable Officers to analyse and incorporate the responses into the Strategy.

Action By

He went onto say that details of the new Environment and Climate Change Officer had been circulated to all Members.

Councillor Birt said that he looked forward to the Sustainability Strategy being discussed in the coming weeks. He added that whilst there had been a good response from the consultation, he felt apprehensive about what the Council would learn from those responses, as no guidance had been set as to the value of the order of priorities given. He went onto ask if there could be an opportunity to view the webpages before they were made public.

The Executive Member felt that Members should not underestimate the concern the public had on climate change. He believed residents who were passionate about the subject had already carried out their research which was apparent in the responses received. He also informed Members that he would be meeting with each political group across the Council to provide an opportunity to discuss the programme, feedback received and the carbon audit report, before the full Council meeting.

Members noted the content of the report.

24/21 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020-21

The Executive Member for Finance and Growth introduced the report that provided information on the forecast full year financial position of the Council as at 31 December 2020.

He explained to Members that as a consequence of the current climate the report recommended to full Council that funds should be carried forward into the next financial year, which was an unusual step.

Councillor Hewett felt that it was critical at this point in time for the Council to err on the side of caution and whilst it was unusual in accounting purposes to carry forward budgets agreed that it should happen at this stage. He also added his thanks to the Executive Member and the Finance team for reporting that the Council was in a robust position at the end of Quarter 3.

Councillor Birt added that whilst he fully recognised the difficult position for the Council to predict the future, he felt it should remain open and transparent as much as possible. He went onto ask how information on the variances could be made public as he was yet to receive information on the Worksmart 2020 programme. Councillor Hewett apologised and asked for Councillor Birt to send a request and would respond accordingly.

The Chairman added that it was important to clarify to members of the public, that Members set out projects with clear objectives and timescales to be achieved within the budget constraints. Members would then allow the Officers to deliver the requirements which had been set out within reports and agreed at committees. He felt it important to understand that it would take time and effort for everything to be open and transparent which would result in unnecessary reports to Members. He added that the Worksmart project had been set out in an open report in October 2019 and Councillors Hewett, Sherwood and Claussen were part of the Member board to over see the project being delivered.

Options

Action By

- 1) That the report and appendix be noted and recommend to Full Council that:
 - a) The income received from the NNDR and Council Tax income compensation scheme be carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in future years (as detailed in paragraph 1.6); and
 - b) The NNDR S31 grant for expanded retail relief and nursery reliefs received in 2020-21 is carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in 2021-22 from the lost income as a result of these NNDR reliefs (as detailed in paragraph 1.6); and
 - c) The below budget NNDR levy payment at the end of the year is carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in future years from the lost income as a result of the pandemic (as detailed in paragraph 1.6).
- 2) Do nothing.

Reasons for Recommendation

To provide timely information to Members on the overall financial position of the Council, enabling resource re-allocation to priorities where necessary and to smooth the effects on the unusual collection fund deficits.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cabinet noted the report and appendix; and,

Recommend to FULL COUNCIL:

- 1) That the income received from the NNDR and Council Tax income compensation scheme be carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in future years (as detailed in paragraph 1.6 of the report).
- 2) That the NNDR S31 grant for expanded retail relief and nursery reliefs received in 2020-21 be carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in 2021-22 from the lost income as a result of these NNDR reliefs (as detailed in paragraph 1.6 of the report).
- 3) That the below budget NNDR levy payment at the end of the year be carried forward in reserve to cover the deficits recognised in future years from the lost income as a result of the pandemic (as detailed in paragraph 1.6 of the report).

25/21 BUDGET, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Finance and Growth presented the report that sought approval for the Capital and Revenue budget estimates, and the proposed Council Tax and the Financial Medium-Term Plan and Capital Strategy. He added that it was a proposed balanced budget going forward into 2021-2022 which had been a phenomenal achievement for any Council against the backdrop of what had been experienced across the Country during 2020.

He explained that within the budget it was proposed there would be an increase of the Council Tax by £4.95 for a band D property, although most people in the District would see a smaller rise. The draft budget had been set

Action By

based on principles set out within the report and in most cases front-line services had been enhanced and allowed for projects that would lead to future growth and investment across the District.

Whilst setting the budget, thought had been given to fixed-term temporary staff roles and in particular roles which may need to be continued to support the Council's priorities. It had been recognised that in order to continue with the digital programme, that the budget allowed for the two fixed-term posts to move to permanent roles.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission proposed to utilise part of the Government Local Council Tax Scheme (LCTS) one off grant for 2021-22 to create a S13A1c hardship fund for Council Tax to provide exceptional hardship payments (EHP). The budget included £65,000 that had been set aside to create the hardship fund and work was underway with Anglia Revenues Partnership to determine a policy which was fair and transparent, and targeted the affected working age of LCTS residents (which supports Government intentions) and would be workable to administer.

Councillor Hewett congratulated the Executive Member and the Finance team for producing a balanced and exceptional budget in exceptional times. He appreciated that there would be some residents who may find it difficult to meet the extra 10p per week increase in their Council Tax bills. He asked how the Council could support those that were most vulnerable at this time. The Executive Member explained that in the past a Council Tax relief scheme had been supported by Norfolk County Council, but that would not be the case going forward, and therefore Breckland Council had decided to see what support could be provided. The issue had been discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting and as a result work was underway with colleagues in Anglia Revenues Partnership to develop a most effective, efficient, and optimum way to support those in need at this time.

Councillor Jermy thanked the Executive Member for Finance and Growth for incorporating the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny into the report. He went on to say that the financial impact of COVID varied for so many and he particularly liked that the hardship fund would be flexible in its approach. He noted that the report had stated that efficiency savings would be required in the following years and asked how this would be approached.

The Executive Member advised Members that efficiency savings would be required in the coming years. The Council would continue to look at the Digital journey across all services in order to make services available on the internet more efficient and user friendly which in turn would create further efficiency savings. In addition, the Worksmart 2020 programme would look to see changes at Elizabeth House, that would allow Officers to work together in a comprehensive and inclusive way and at the same time allowing space to become available to rent out. He also added that a large proportion of income would be generated from the Commercial Property portfolio and therefore create a maximum return.

Councillor Birt was also pleased to see that the proposal from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission had been included. He went on to say that he felt public could be confused by the Council Tax and wondered if the information available culminated in that and felt by having the parish precepts included would create a fairer picture.

Action By

The Executive Member informed that the chart compared the District Council Tax rates of Local Authorities across Norfolk and was a form that had been completed for many years. He would ask the Chief Accountant to provide Councillor Birt with additional information on this.

Options

- 1) That recommendations 1 to 8 above are approved.
- 2) That amendments are made before recommendations 1 to 8 above are approved.
- 3) That some of the recommendations 1 to 8 are approved.

Reasons for Recommendation

To comply with budgetary and policy framework and allow consultation with Members.

RESOLVED that CABINET Recommend to FULL COUNCIL:

- 1) That the Breckland revenue estimates and parish special expenses for 2021-22 and outlined position through to 2024-25 (as set out in Appendix B and E of the report) be approved.
- 2) That the capital estimates and associated funding for 2020-21 and 2021-22 and outline position through to 2024-25 (as set out in Appendix H of the report) be approved.
- 3) The fees and charges shown at Appendix D and D2 of the report, for adoption on 1 April 2021 be approved.
- 4) The Council Tax is set at £98.73 for a Band D property in 2021-22 (a £4.95 per annum increase on 2020-21 levels).
- 5) The financial Medium Term Plan and associated staffing full time equivalents at Appendix A of the report be approved.
- 6) The Capital Strategy at Appendix G be approved.
- 7) To increase the permanent establishment by 2 FTE for 2 Digital roles (front end developer and back end developer) to provide stability and consistency enabling us to deliver our digital roadmap (as detailed in paragraph 1.11 of the report).
- 8) To set aside £65,000 for a Council Tax (S13A1c) hardship fund for 2021-22 and delegate finalisation of the policy to the Executive Member Finance & Growth and S151 Officer in conjunction with ARP (as detailed in paragraph 1.12 of the report).

26/21 INTEGRATED SHARED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND JOINT WORKING ARRANGEMENTS REVIEW – PREFERRED OPTION FOR BRECKLAND AND SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCILS.

The Head of Paid Service introduced the report and reminded Members that in October 2020, both Councils had commissioned a strategic review of the integrated shared management and joint working relationship between South Holland and Breckland District Councils and the report had set out

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recommendations from the first stage of that review.

There would be three stages to the strategic review, with the first providing both Councils a signal of direction going forward through the preferred option. The second phase would see a separate set of decisions that would include a business case based on the preferred option. The third stage would be to implement of the preferred option.

Members were informed that since the publication of the report, a fourth recommendation had been circulated to Members as the report had continued to develop and adapt. The recommendations of the report had been unanimously agreed at the Cabinet meeting of South Holland on the 26 January.

Following a set of criteria as detailed within the report, the preferred option for both Councils was to form a Local Strategic Partnership within the Council's own County.

The Chairman added that since the pandemic both Councils' had operated within a place-based model which he felt was the right thing to do to respond to the emergency position. It had formed the catalyst for both Councils to consider what the best option would be going forward for the residents and businesses of Breckland. The partnership had, for over a decade been working well, and he reminded Members that we were the first in the Country to set up a Strategic Partnership expanding across two counties. Both Leaders had a mutual respect and trust for each Authority with a moral obligation to ensure that no single Authority would be left without being able to provide the ongoing services.

Councillor Sherwood thanked the Head of Paid Service for the detailed report. He went on to say that the partnership had worked, where many had failed, and that had been down to the trust of both Leaders, Officers and Members across the organisations. In addition, as a result of the partnership Breckland had been able to redirect the savings made to support the frontline services.

Councillor Hewett also added that it had provided an opportunity to allow the Council to adapt to the future needs of the residents and Businesses across Breckland.

Councillor Webb asked what the savings had been of the Partnership and if there would be an additional cost of the interim place-based structure. The Head of Paid Service reminded Members of the report in 2015 that saw savings across the Partnership of £4.4m with ongoing savings of £500k per year. Further savings could be made as new partnerships were created within Norfolk. He confirmed there would be no additional costs to the interim Structure, however the safe landing of Officers was still to be finalised. In addition, there had been an assumption that moving forward there would not be a Chief Executive appointed at this time.

Councillor Cowen added that an opportunity had been created due to a changed landscape to all the Council to operate differently. Breckland Council would be able to bring a significant knowledge base to share with a new partnership, and felt it would be an opportunity to form something better and stronger for residents across Norfolk.

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Councillor Bambridge said it had been a unique relationship that had led many other Authorities to follow in a similar path. The arrangement had been extremely successful, and we would leave the partnership as good friends with South Holland District Council.

Councillor Claussen added that the partnership had succeeded due to having the right leaders in the right place and the right time. He felt that Breckland were equally fortunate at this time to be in a good place and had an opportunity to make a huge step in the Council's history.

Councillor Birt asked where the methodology for the assessment had derived from and felt the data and evidence to support the assessment had been omitted from the report. He felt that there was a substantial difference in the scoring scheme, and he wanted to know, based on the reporting, why the Council would be in a poor position under the 'as is' option. In addition, there had been no mention of who the new Local Strategic Partnership might be and was not clear on how that information could be scored. He also asked the Chairman if the Unitary proposal for Norfolk was under consideration as part of the new strategic partnership.

The Head of Paid Service said the methodology had been conducted using a combination of ambitions which had been set out within the organisations corporate plans; principles set during the review of the partnership in 2010 and again in 2015; and thirdly, issues that allowed the organisations to adapt to their environment such as the pandemic and response to the Local Government re-organisation.

The Chairman added that he was confident in the activity both Cabinets of both Councils had undertaken and felt the Organisations were in a strong position with the proposal to move forward as a Council. He went on to explain that prior the pandemic, everything had worked well with the shared arrangement and a 60/40 split albeit that Officers worked harder to make effective what was required in both localities. Throughout the pandemic, the place-based team had worked with local organisations at pace to deal with the National issues. He informed Members that the Local Government re-organisation was on hold, however, that did not stop those involved within Local Government to work collectively to provide efficiency savings across Norfolk.

Councillor Birt went on to request if additional information of evidence and data was available for it to be included when the report was published for the Overview and Scrutiny Agenda.

Councillor Wickerson asked if the scoring of the new Local Strategic Partnership had been influenced by any particular partnership within Norfolk. Members were informed that it had been scored objectively without being targeted to a specific partnership.

Councillor Morton welcomed the opportunity to consider the relationship with South Holland and in particular felt it would significantly reduce the amount of commuting that Officers would do. He asked how the effectiveness and efficiency had been judged and rated within the Appendices to the report. The Head of Paid Service explained that the 'As Is' option had been evaluated on what had already been achieved. To continue with the

Action By

partnership would result in achieving more effective and efficient ways that would require large changes to the existing operating model. However, by moving to a new Shared Local Partnership it would provide opportunity to set a new baseline to build on those partnerships.

RESOLVED to Recommend to FULL COUNCIL to:

- 1) approve the preferred option for the future of the integrated shared management structure and joint working arrangements between the two Councils as set out in paragraph 1.8 of the report;
- 2) activate clause 8 of the memorandum of agreement between Breckland District Council and South Holland District Council and authorise any extension or shortening of the timeframe set out in clause 8.6A by mutual agreement between the two parties, so far as may be considered appropriate by the Leaders, following consultation with their respective Cabinets; and
- 3) approve for consultation the interim structures to support and enable the achievement of the preferred option for both Councils.
- 4) subject to there being no material changes to the senior management structure following consultation with officers, delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the leader to implement the said structure.

27/21 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on Monday 22 March at 9.30am were noted.

28/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS & PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

29/21 HOUSING SERVICE REVIEW

The Executive Member for Health and Housing presented the report that asked Members to consider the details of the Housing Service Review and the presented recommendations for change to allow for improvements in the Housing Service.

RESOLVED that the Recommendations set out within the report be forwarded to FULL COUNCIL.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

CHAIRMAN

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Councillor Sarah Suggitt- Executive Member for Governance
To: Cabinet- 22nd March 2021
Author: Ryan Pack- Innovation and Change Business Partner
Subject: Performance Overview Report- Quarter 3 2020/21
Purpose: To provide members of the commission with an overview of the council's performance for the period 1st October 2020- 31st December 2020

Recommendation:

- 1) Members of the commission are asked to note the report.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Quarter 3 2020-21 Performance Report detailed in Appendix A aims to provide Members, businesses and residents with an overview of how the Council is performing against several key strategic indicators. These indicators include the delivery of frontline services, financial performance and progress made towards achieving the overarching aims and objectives of the Council as set out in the Corporate Plan.

In addition, the covering report will highlight areas of improved and high performance and where performance is challenging.

1.2 Since this report was last seen by the commission, the council has had to redirect resources towards responding to the COVID pandemic. As a result, some minor changes have been made to the report.

1.3 The report was previously submitted in an infographic format, beginning in 2018. This format has been altered based on both feedback previously submitted by members of this commission and the available resource within the Change, Innovation and Performance team to create this report.

1.4 Due to the gap between when this report was last seen by the committee, a completely new infographic format would have needed to have been created by the CIP team in order to properly the council's performance during this period. This would have taken a considerable amount of staff resource to create. The decision to alter the format was therefore taken by the Change, Innovation and Performance team and the Executive manager for People and Innovation.

1.5 The attached appendix breaks down the council's performance into three separate periods to reflect both trends and the impact of COVID-19 on the council. Q3 19/20 highlights how the council was doing a year ago (before the pandemic) with Q2 20/21 highlight the council's performance during the pandemic. Q3 20/21 highlights how the council is currently performing.

1.6 It should be noted that all KPI's and business intelligence indicators used in this report are the same as those previously reported to the committee except for one related to EHT&C. This indicator has been removed due to the commercial activities of this team being on

pause since November 2020 as the result of a portfolio holder decision concerning the ongoing pandemic.

2.0 **Areas of success**

- 2.1 There has been a notable improvement in both the abandonment rate and average wait time for the customer contact centre. The team have made many changes to allow for this improved performance such as the introduction of greater performance management within the team and the introduction of several new systems. These include a telephone appointment system (which allows for resources demand to be better planned), an automated callback system (whereby if a customer doesn't want to wait in a queue they can request a call back and when an Officer is free the system automatically reconnects the call to the customer) and queue positioning software (which allows for residents to be better informed about whether to remain on hold or request a call back).

The council continues to perform well in the collection of waste, with 99.95% of those left out successfully collected during Q3. Furthermore, of those bins that were missed in Q3, the council took an average of 1 day to collect them. It is also notable that the council's garden waste scheme has continued to grow during this period and has now exceeded its projected revenue target for the year.

The council continues to perform strongly in relation to its two planning indicators, both of which have continued to improve during Q3 20/21.

3.0 **Areas requiring improvement**

- 3.1 Performance around empty properties being brought back into use has performed below target during Q2 and Q3, as a result of staff being redeployed within the Housing area to deal with other issues such as emergency cases.

Staff sickness has also risen to above its target during Q3, with an increase of 0.86 working days lost per FTE. It should be noted that this is the first quarter since Q4 19/20 that sickness levels have risen above their target. Before Q4 19/20, sickness had been below target since 2017/18. Sickness levels continue to be monitored by the council's Human Resources team and to ensure that the wellbeing of staff remains a high priority.

The council's commercial property portfolio has been impacted by COVID-19. The current debt position outlines that the outturn is likely to be a deficit in the region of £500k. The buffer fund has been applied where appropriate. Despite the debt situation, the occupancy remains stable with good interest and new lettings in industrial space.

4.0 **OPTIONS**

- 4.1 To note the content of the report
- 4.2 Do nothing

5.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 5.1 The Corporate Improvement and Performance Team will use the content of this report to identify areas of improvement.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

6.1.1 Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues have been considered and it is the opinion of the author that there are no implications.

6.2 **Constitution & Legal**

6.2.1 Constitutional and Legal issues have been considered and it is the opinion of the author that there are no implications.

6.3 **Contracts**

6.3.1 Contracts issues have been considered and it is the opinion of the report author that there are no implications.

6.4 **Corporate Priorities**

6.4.1 The report presents progress monitoring of key performance indicators from the corporate priorities which highlight the areas of focus in the new BAU Covid era.

6.5 **Financial**

6.5.1 The report contains information on Council's performance which does convey some information relating to financial matters.

6.6 **Health & Wellbeing**

6.6.1 The report contains information on Council's performance which does convey some information relating to health and wellbeing.

6.7 **Reputation**

6.7.1 Performance issues can cause some reputational consequence. It is the purpose of this report to highlight performance issues at an early stage.

6.8 **Risk Management**

6.8.1 Performance issues may be subject to risk management measures to protect Council interests.

6.9 **Staffing**

6.9.1 The report contains information on Council's performance which does convey some information relating to staffing.

7.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

7.1 No Wards or Communities are affected.

8.0 **ACRONYMS**

8.1 CIP- Change, Innovation and Performance team

8.2 FTE- Full time employee

8.3 EHT&C- Environmental Health, Training and Consultancy

8.4 KPI- Key performance indicator

Background papers:-

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Ryan Pack- Innovation and Change Business Partner
Telephone Number: 07766 510582
Email: Ryan.Pack@Breckland-Sholland.gov.uk

Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Quarter 3 20/21 performance report

BDC Performance and Business Intelligence Report

Q3 20/21



Customer Engagement- Key performance indicators- 20/21							
	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<i>Q3 19/20</i>	<i>Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Q3 20/21</i>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Calls abandoned (%)	Smaller	19.6%	9.8%	7.6%	-2.2%	10.1%	During the pandemic, the council has seen a period of growth for both its digital and traditional contact channels. Digital channels saw growth as reflected in increased social media following and engagement. Since the start of the pandemic, web chat has grown 120%. It is also notable that despite a fall in Q3, web site visitors remain higher than those from the same period twelve months ago.
Average wait time (in seconds)	Smaller	236.6 seconds	59.6 seconds	89.3 seconds	+29.7	150	
Customer Engagement- Business intelligence							
Number of calls received	N/A	5,228	19,026	12,956	-6,070	Data only	<p>KPI's around telephone calls have also changed dramatically during the pandemic. Abandonment rate has fallen below its target of 10.1% in Q1, Q2 and Q3 20/21. This is the first time since this KPI was created in 2015 that the council has been below target for three consecutive quarters. It is also down 12% compared to Q3 19/20. During this period Customer contact have introduced an automated call back system and new queue position software. These changes now allow customers to make more informed choices about if they want to remain on hold or if they would prefer a call back.</p> <p>Wait times have also improved dramatically compared to 19/20, but it should be noted that they have gradually increased since Q1 20/21. The KPI is still well within target, however, despite a spike during December where wait times were 169 seconds (compared to 44 seconds and 55 seconds in October and November). This averaged out to a wait time of 89.3 seconds for Q3 20/21. Notably, when compared to Q3 19/20, there has been a 62% drop in wait times.</p>
Number of retweets	Bigger	317	448	395	-53	Data only	
Total website visitors	N/A	64,495	121,239	93,783	-27,456	Data only	
Twitter followers	Bigger	4,512	N/A	4,817	N/A	Data only	
Facebook likes	Bigger	5,760	N/A	8,792	N/A	Data only	

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Q3 20/21



Information and feedback- Key performance indicators							
	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<i>Q3 19/20</i>	<i>Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Q3 20/21</i>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Comments</i>
% of FOI's responded to within time limit	Bigger	97%	97%	97%	0%	100%	During Q3, 67 freedom of information requests (FOI) were received by the council, with 65 closed within this period.
% of complaints responded to within time limit	Bigger	98.39%	100%	98.48%	-1.52%	96%	During Q3, 66 complaints were received with 65 being successfully closed. It should be noted that the council made the decision to not prioritise complaints work during the earlier stages of the pandemic, with residents advised that issues could in some cases be dealt with as a service issue or dealt with later. It should therefore be noted that the Q2 statistics include some complaints dealt like this.

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Environment and Community- Key performance indicators							
	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Number of missed waste collections (Per 100,000 households)	Smaller	5	9	6	-3	45	In total 104 waste collections were missed during Q3 out of the 62,020 properties in the district. This represents 0.05% of waste bins within the district.
# of incidents of fly tipping	Smaller	208	273	227	-46	N/A	<p>There was a slight drop in reported fly tips the quarter. Since Q4 19/20 there has been a progressive drop in the number of reported fly tips within the district (down 34% from 349 instances).</p> <p>Nationally fly tipping has increased during the pandemic, which has anecdotally been linked to the closing of tips and the greater use of green spaces by residents. Whilst fly tipping does remain high, Breckland has to some extent gone against the national trend of increases during this period.</p> <p>The continue continues to use the enforcement powers at its disposal to take action against those who commit fly tipping.</p>
Environment and Community- Business intelligence							
% of household waste recycled or composted	Bigger	36.8%	39.75%	37.47%	-2.28	Data only	<p>During Q3, there was a slight decrease between October and December in terms of the % of household waste recycled or composted. December was the lowest recorded month during this quarter (31.58% recycled or composted). A drop in December is however normal, when compared to data between 2017/18 and 20/21.</p> <p>Since the Q1 20/21, the council has collected more recyclable materials than previous year. This is attributed to an effect of lockdown.</p>

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Average number of working days to collected missed waste (per 100,000 households)	Smaller	1	1.5	1	-0.5	Data only	
Number of garden waste subscribers	Bigger	21,954	23,662	24,015	+353	Data only	The council garden waste scheme has continued to grow with over 2,000 new subscribers gained between January and December 2020. The scheme has also exceeded it's projected revenue generated target of £667,798 for 20/21 already as a result of the boost in subscribers.
Fly tipping (tonnes)	Smaller	231.12 tonnes	119.08 tonnes	88.93 tonnes	-30.15 tonnes	Data only	The reduction of fly tips reports has also seen the total tonnage of fly tips decreased significantly compared to Q2 20/21.
Residual waste per household per household (kg)	Smaller	40.6	46.7	41.1	-5.6 kg	Data only	
Breckland Lottery- Value awarded	Bigger	£11,919	£12,801	£13,766	+£965	Data only	Overall figure for the lottery since it was started now stands at £115,866.
Breckland Lottery- Number of good causes	Bigger	5	1	0	0	Data only	Overall number of good causes stands at 89. During the last quarter the Council gained one new good cause and lost one good cause.

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Q3 20/21

Housing and homelessness- Key performance indicators

	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<i>Q3 19/20</i>	<i>Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Q3 20/21</i>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Cases prevented from homelessness	N/A	46	44	46	N/A	N/A	Since Q1 20/21, the council has successfully prevented 109 cases of homelessness through caseworker intervention. This KPI is also a statutory return that the council makes to central government.
Empty properties brought back into use	Bigger	58	7	6	-1	100	Between Q1 and Q3, the council have brought 20 properties back into use through direct officer intervention. The council's ability to bring properties back into use via direct intervention was limited on 2020 as a result of the pressures of the pandemic on the service. This meant that a decision was made to reprioritise officers to deal with emergency cases and other areas of the council's housing department.

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Housing and homelessness- Business intelligence

% of residents who are homeless in the district	Smaller	0.06%	0.05%	0.06%	N/A	Data only	These indicators are based off the number of main applicants who are homeless and owed a relief duty.
# of residents who are homeless in the district	Smaller	79	69	79	N/A	Data only	
Empty properties within Breckland	Smaller	479	609	548	-61	Data only	This indicator is based off the number of Empty homes within the district at the end of each month.

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Employee workforce- Key performance indicators								
	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Comments</u>	
28	Staff turnover	See target	2.6%	3.3%	4.6%	+2.3%	4.3%	<p>Staff turnover has risen slightly above target in Q3 after having two quarters performing below target. The result of this is whilst Q3's rise is notable; the council remains on track to not exceed it's annual target for staff turnover.</p> <p>Those that left the council during Q3 20/21 comprised of- 1 redundancy, 10 resignations, 1 end of contract and 2 retirements. This totalled 14 leavers, which is up 4 on the 10 leavers from Q2 20/21.</p> <p>Staff turnover is targeted at 4.3% based on benchmarking amongst other local authorities.</p>
	# of working days lost to sickness per FTE	Smaller	1.77	2	2.86	+0.86	2.01	<p>Staff sickness has continued to rise during 20/21 and has now risen above it's target threshold.</p> <p>80.7% of these absences are attributed to long term absences. 52% of total absences were attributable to sickness reason of Stress / Anxiety / other mental health problems. This continues to be monitored by the council's Human Resources team.</p>
Employee workforce- Business intelligence								
	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<i>Change against Q2 20/21</i>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Comments</u>	

BDC Performance and Business Intelligence Report

Q3 20/21

# of days lost to sickness	Smaller	498	552	797	+245	750	
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Public Protection- Key performance indicators

	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<u>Change against Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Food businesses rated 'generally satisfactory' or above	Bigger	95.5%	98.8%	98.3%	-0.5%	95%	<p>Figures in accordance with Food Standards Agency for FHRs ratings are those shown here. Currently rated 1147 premises in total, not included Excluded, Exempt and Awaiting Inspection.</p> <p>19 businesses within the district (1.6%) fall below generally satisfactory.</p>

Economy and Growth- Key performance indicators

	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<u>Change against Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Commercial property occupation	Bigger	97%	98%	98%	0%	98%	<p>Performance of the investment portfolio continues to be affected by the Covid 19 pandemic and likely to be exacerbated by the latest lockdown and this will affect the outturn. Whilst the government has provided emergency financial support to businesses many commercial property tenants have had to seek further support from their landlord or been forced to enter formal legal arrangements. With so much economic uncertainty it is anticipated that the outturn change over the coming months. The target shows the invoiced rents, however</p>
Commercial Property gross rental income	See target	£2,337,832	£1,507,675	£2,145,206	+ £637,531	£3,063,939 (Annual target)	

BDC Performance and Business Intelligence Report

Q3 20/21

							the current debt position outlines that the outturn is like to be a deficit in the region of £500k. The buffer fund has been applied where appropriate. Despite the debt situation, the occupancy remains stable with good interest and new lettings in industrial space.
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Planning Provision- Key performance indicators

	<i>Bigger is better/Smaller is better</i>	<u>Q3 19/20</u>	<u>Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Q3 20/21</u>	<u>Change against Q2 20/21</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Comments</u>
% of Major applications determined within 13 weeks or agreed extension	Bigger	93.33%	83.33%	97.67%	+14.34%	70%	Major applications determined within 13 weeks rose this quarter and included two months where the team achieved 100%. This is notable improvement over Q2, where the team briefly went below target in August.
% of Minor applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed extension	Bigger	96.35%	92.33%	97%	+4.65%	80%	Q3 saw a minor improvement in relation to minor decisions, with a 4% rise. This marked the most successful quarter since 2017/18.

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Paul Claussen: Executive Member for Planning

To: Cabinet: 22 March 2021

Author: Simon Wood: Director of Planning and Building Control

Subject: Local Plan Review: Budget carry over Request

Purpose: To request that the remaining underspend held in the forward planning – local plan production (154 0000 000 4410) heading for 2020/21 be carried over to 2021/22 for use in the preparation of the new Local Plan.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the underspend of £73,670 in the forward planning – local plan production (154 0000 000 4410) from 2020/21 be carried over into the same budget for 2021/22

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Breckland Local Plan was adopted in November 2019. The Council is required to maintain an up-to-date local plan, and this requires plans to be reviewed at least every 5 years. In June 2020, the Council approved a Local Development Scheme for the review of the Local Plan.
- 1.2 For some time, the Government has been signalling its intention to make radical changes to the planning system in England. The Covid-19 pandemic brought about some immediate changes to certain aspects of planning policy – such as enabling pubs to offer hot food takeaway services – while other, substantial changes to the planning system, were published for consultation on 6 August 2020 through the White Paper Planning for the Future. The Government also proposed some changes to the current planning system, including a review on the methodology underpinning the standardised housing figures and launched a concurrent consultation about that.
- 1.3 As a result of these consultations Breckland resolved to pause work on the review of the Local Plan until there was greater certainty on the Plan making process and in particular on the housing figures. The Council did not want to embark on potentially expensive and abortive work on the review as the Review would not have progressed to a sufficiently advanced stage by the introduction of any reforms (suggested to be November 2021) that would have been triggered under any transitional arrangements.
- 1.4 In January 2021 the Council received confirmation from MHCLG indicating that the Government continues to consider the proposed reforms to the planning system and reiterated its commitment to work with those remaining local planning authorities to secure an adopted local plan and that it is essential that plans are kept up to date. Critically, the Government also highlighted the recent publication of the changes to the methodology for assessing Local Housing Need and the outcome of its consultation on the standard method for calculating housing need. This produced a figure of 661 dwellings per annum for Breckland District. This is up from the previous figure, on which the current Local Plan was based, of 612 dwellings per annum.

- 1.5 The preparation of the Local Plan for Breckland is an on-going and complex process. The level of expert evidence that is required to support the emerging Local Plan is significant. This is unlikely to change. The guidance on exactly what this should cover continues to evolve in light of the National Planning Policy Framework and its associated Guidance, and emerging Inspector's Reports into other Local Plan Examinations around the country and its timing will need to reflect changes to the Planning system as they emerge over the forthcoming months. Much of the evidence and support needed requires expert knowledge on specific topics, and therefore necessitates commissioning external consultants with the requisite expertise and experience.
- 1.6 There is a need to review all the evidence the Council has prepared over time and undertake technical assessments that will allow Members to make the final decisions on the plan's content. The Government has made clear their expectation that all local planning authorities should continue to have an up-to-date Plan in place and It is clear that the Council needs to make good progress on the Plan this year.
- 1.7 The preparation of a Local Plan is an expensive area of work. As well as the production of the evidence base, there will need to be a commitment to resource the production of the Plan, consultation, legal support and costs associated with the examination. The budget allocated for 2020/21 was related to the review and completion of the evidence work as outlined above. The delay to the Plan has resulted in £73, 670 not being spent. However, this remains a key requirement in the production of the Plan.
- 1.8 There are a number of key areas where bespoke evidence will be required as part of the review of the Local Plan. These include:
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - Gypsy and Traveller Assessment Update
 - Local Housing Technical Standards Study
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (update)
 - Water Cycle Study (update)
 - Design Landscape Character and Green Infrastructure Audit
 - Brecks Landscape Character Assessment (update)
 - Local Architecture Character Assessment
 - Open Space and playing pitch Assessment (update)
 - Retail Study Update
 - Viability (whole plan and individual allocations)
 - Renewable and low carbon Study
 - Transport modelling of options/ schemes (Dereham and maybe others depending on preferred allocations)
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - Dereham Open Space Review
- 1.9 These will need to be completed within years 2021/22 and 2022/23. Therefore, the funding for these is an essential part of the plan making process that will be assisted by the carry-over of the budget.
- 2.0 **OPTIONS**
- 2.1 To agree to the recommendation. This would allow the Council to commence critical work on the review of the Local Plan.
- 2.2 Not to agree to the carry over of the budget. (Do Nothing). This would mean that some of the evidence required for the review of the Local Plan would not be completed and would

result in work on the new Plan being delayed until the required evidence base was resourced and completed.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 The Preparation of a Local Plan is a statutory requirement. Plans must be underpinned by an appropriate evidence base, much of which is required at an early stage of the preparation process in order to inform future decisions over development strategies and allocations.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 An up to date Local Plan helps the Council to shape where developments can take place in the District to maximise environmental benefits and ensure the provision of appropriate transport links, provide for a variety of homes to meet local needs, built to an appropriate standard, create policies that address the causes and potential impacts of climate change, and the improvement of biodiversity, inform providers of infrastructure the types of infrastructure and community facilities to benefit both existing and new residents, and support new and growing businesses so that people can work locally to minimise commuting.

4.2 If the Council does not have an up-to-date Local Plan, development will still take place. However, we will not be able to use our own planning policies to help decide where development should go, and will be less able to require the schools, open space and road upgrades that are needed to support development.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.2 Corporate Priorities

5.2.1 Publication of the BLR aligns with the following corporate priorities in the Breckland Corporate Plan 2020–2023.

- To deliver substantial and continued growth as proposed through our Local Plan, in conjunction with our key partners.
- Enable the effective planning and delivery of housing solutions to meet local needs and aspirations to ensure that our residents including veterans have access to a range of housing options in the district.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 All

Background papers:-

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service.