



Corporate Business Plan

2011/12 to 2014/15

Second Edition

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The council's corporate strategy 2011-2015

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Introduction

The Council's Corporate Business Plan sets out our priorities for the next four years of the current administration, together with the key actions we will take to achieve them over the first two years of the plan period.

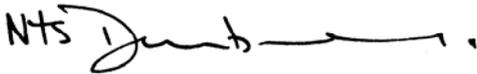
This second edition of the plan has been updated with

- more up to date data
- actions we have completed
- new actions we intend to take

During this time of severe economic difficulty our first priority must be to support the local economy. Here our role is focused upon encouraging new and growing businesses, promoting the area to visitors and business investors and improving the infrastructure upon which the expansion of successful business relies.

This business plan will be delivered during a period when the Council's own funding is being significantly reduced as a direct consequence of the Government's deficit reduction plan. Our second priority therefore must be to find new lower cost ways of delivering our services without seriously compromising either the quality or the range of services provided. Consequently we will be looking to share services (and costs) with other public authorities, rationalising our premises portfolio, and delivering services in new ways, perhaps in some cases through charitable trusts and arms length companies.

This period will continue to be exceptionally challenging but also exciting for both West Norfolk and the Borough Council. I am confident that the Council staff with the support and leadership of our Councillors will rise to the challenges ahead and help to prepare West Norfolk for the economic upturn whenever that should occur.



Cllr Nick Daubney, Leader of the Council



Ray Harding, Chief Executive

Timescales

This corporate business plan covers the four-year administrative term 2011/12 to 2014/15. Version 2 is an update after the first year of implementing the plan. It will continue to be refreshed regularly with a mid-term review in the summer of 2013 to ensure the work programme still reflects what is important and relevant locally.

Data

The data in this document is available from visitdawn.com, the West Norfolk Partnership's data observatory, the Norfolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, available from norfolkinsight.com/jsna, and with supporting information drawn from West Norfolk's Local Development Framework (core strategy and annual monitoring report), west-norfolk.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=24482 and the West Norfolk Local Economic Assessment available at norfolkinsight.org.uk/lea. Perception indicators are taken from our Quality of Life survey undertaken in 2007, 2009 and 2011 and published on DAWN.

Schedule of Changes

Page 3	Introduction reworded for second edition
Whole doc	Font size increased
Page 6-7	Replaced summary indicators with clearer summary of what we want to achieve for each outcome and how we will measure success
Page 7	Added summary on our role and resources to set the organisational context at the start of the document following MT feedback
Pages 8-19	Outcomes pages updated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data from 2011 Quality of Life survey and other data as available • actions completed, underway and planned refreshed following Management Team feedback
Page 19	Outcome on Thriving Communities amended in line with West Norfolk Strategy with slightly different aims to make the priorities clearer
Page 20	Deleted two pages summarising our work programme and 2011/12 actions started Added page on the Council's role of being a champion for local issues, which is the reasoning behind the strategy covering the full breadth of local quality of life issues, based on Ray's 'Commercial Council' paper from summer 2012.
Page 22	Amended the three priorities under this strand for clarity (focusing on finance, staff and members/democracy)

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Outcomes

We track a range of issues that define the quality of people's everyday lives - even where these don't directly relate to our core services. This is because we recognise all these issues are interlinked. Improving all elements of quality of life is essential if we are to help make West Norfolk a better place for everyone that lives and works here. We have defined quality of life in terms of outcomes – or end results – that we want to achieve. They are summarised below. This business plan sets out the council's contribution towards these outcomes.

People in West Norfolk...

...benefit from a growing economy

We want to see

- business growth
 - Growth in business rates
 - Number of business start-ups
- vibrant town centres
 - footfall numbers in King's Lynn town centre
 - town centre vacancy rates
- better infrastructure
 - development of employment land
 - broadband internet access

...live in a quality environment

We want to see

- regenerated urban areas
 - % people saying their neighbourhood has improved
 - number of sites of derelict land and buildings
- an enhanced natural environment
 - % household waste recycled
 - measure of biodiversity
- affordable housing
 - number of new homes built
 - number of empty properties

...maximise their potential

We want to see

- young people succeed
 - % students gaining 5+ A*-C GCSEs incl English and maths
 - % young people not in employment, education and training
- a skilled workforce
 - % people reaching NVQ3 and above
 - % of population with no qualifications
- people in work
 - Job Seeker Allowance claimant rate
 - % working age population in employment

...lead safe and healthy lives

We want to see

- low levels of crime
 - % people feeling safe in their neighbourhood

- anti-social behaviour rate
- clean neighbourhoods
 - % people who think their neighbourhood is clean
 - incidences of fly-tipping
- healthy people
 - % people taking part in physical activity
 - avoidable hospital admissions amongst over 65s

...live in thriving communities

We want to see

- people getting involved
 - % people belonging to one or more group
 - % volunteer regularly
- people getting on well together
 - % people who get on well together
 - % people who know their neighbours
- accessible local amenities
 - % communities with a minimum number of amenities
 - measure of accessibility to transport

Our role in achieving these outcomes

Ultimately, achieving these quality of life outcomes requires an understanding of local needs and a collective effort working with our partners. To do this we need sufficient capacity to not only secure a strong future for critical public services that are responsive to local need but also to be a champion for local issues and seek the best for West Norfolk as a place to live and work. It is also essential to retain a powerful democratic voice to speak on behalf of the residents and businesses of West Norfolk and represent the needs of West Norfolk and its people not only within Norfolk but also on regional, national and international stages.

Our resources

We will seek to ensure that we secure maximum value and impact from the resources at our disposal, not just financial but also in terms of our people, our councillors and our assets.

We will...

- reduce costs and increase income wherever possible
 - total levels of net savings achieved
- develop our staff
 - employee satisfaction levels
 - sickness absence rates
- retain a democratic voice for West Norfolk
 - % people who feel like they can influence decisions

The rest of this business plan sets out our work and our achievements against the five outcomes and in respect of our use of resources.

People in West Norfolk benefit from a growing economy

Economic growth is a top priority for Government and also for the Borough Council. An economy that is growing will generate more job opportunities for local people and is more likely to attract people to the area to work. All of this will put more money in people's pockets, boost spending in the area and support the provision of a full range of services. West Norfolk has proved relatively resilient to the worst of the recession due in part to the important role played by King's Lynn as a commercial centre within the region, but we must work to ensure that the area is well-positioned for growth when the economy starts to pick up.

What do we know?

The regional centres of Peterborough, Cambridge and Norwich are over 40 miles away which creates a unique role for King's Lynn as a service centre and economic driver to a sub-region serving a population of more than 200,000. As a result, King's Lynn is more than a market town – it also has a strong manufacturing base, a retail base, a college and a general hospital. The borough is now home to world-leading businesses in pharmaceuticals, precision and aerospace engineering and advanced manufacturing sectors including commercial refrigeration, robotics, electronics and specialist chemicals.

- There are approximately 5,200 businesses in West Norfolk of which 4,685 are VAT registered. The number of VAT-registered businesses has grown faster than the national average (3.6% against 1.6%), and the number of businesses per thousand people is also higher. Self-employment rates are significantly above Norfolk and national averages. Between 2006 and 2008 the number of employees in West Norfolk increased by 5.9%, relatively strong and above average growth by national standards.
- From 2011 we are collecting data on the growth in business rates collected and this will be monitored as an indicator of overall business growth.
- King's Lynn town centre was bucking national trends for footfall levels during 2010; these figures continue to fluctuate seasonally and 2012 levels remain similar to 2011.
- Nearly 2,000m² of employment floorspace has been added across West Norfolk since 2006/07, however 70% of that is accounted for by Palm Paper and British Sugar. Of the total floorspace, 70% is on previously developed land.

This is important to the council because...

We have been working hard to stimulate and support the economic growth of the area, not just in King's Lynn, but also in our market towns and rural areas. This is in part because we are in a unique position to convene and co-ordinate actions from across the public and private sectors that have a reasonable chance of driving economic growth.

A number of our services support this work whilst other services will see demand and income grow on the back of a growing economy. Fewer people out of work will also reduce demand on some of our core welfare and support services.

The council is also a major employer in the area with significant local spend, which is an important factor within the economy.

Following the Government's move to partially localise National Non Domestic Rates there is a powerful financial incentive for the Borough Council to boost the growth in new employment floorspace.

We want to see...

- business growth and investment

- vibrant town centres
- better infrastructure

We want to see	Our work programme	Headline indicators
business growth and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support new and growing businesses and promote business successes • Ensure local business need and priorities are reflected in the sub-regional economic strategies prepared by the two Local Economic Partnerships covering West Norfolk • Promote West Norfolk as an area to invest in • Promote and support our tourism offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • growth in business rates in West Norfolk • number of new business start-ups
vibrant town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support events and programmes to attract people into our town centres • Help our town centres adapt successfully to changing retail, cultural and leisure trends • Work with partners to redevelop King's Lynn town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • footfall numbers in King's Lynn town centre • town centre vacancy rates
better infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent West Norfolk's needs for road and rail infrastructure improvements • Influence broadband provision in West Norfolk • Promote greater use of technology to access our services • Ensure an adequate supply of land and premises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of employment land • broadband internet access

Actions completed

- Infrastructure built to open-up the Hardwick and Campbell's Meadow industrial estates
- Supported a range of business start-up initiatives
- Implemented a targeted marketing plan to promote tourism to the Borough
- Supported the work of the King's Lynn Town Centre partnership and the Chambers of Trade in Downham Market and Hunstanton
- Established a business forum to engage with local businesses and hold the inaugural meeting
- Infrastructure on King's Lynn Lorry Park completed resulting in the sale of the site for development

Actions underway

- Review options for using the Council's markets to support local enterprise and business growth including the 'Test the Market' initiative
- Develop new partnership arrangements to promote the Borough's tourism offer
- Work with the private sector to implement proposals to redevelop King's Lynn town centre
- Work with the county council and other members of the A47 alliance to promote improvements to the A47 trunk road

- Work with other partners to press the business case for the early implementation of improvements to the King's Lynn – Cambridge – London King's Cross rail service (including the Ely North junction)
- Market the availability of employment sites on the Nar-Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA) and launch the new inward investment website for West Norfolk.
- Negotiate with Local Economic Partnership / Norfolk and Waveney Enterprise Services for the build of an Enterprise and Innovation Centre on the NORA site
- Enterprise Norfolk

Actions planned

- Build an Enterprise and Innovation Centre (KLIC) on the NORA site
- Establish a Member Task Group to explore future priority actions under this theme
- Support the establishment of the King's Lynn Business Improvements District
- Complete the sale of land for the expanded Tesco site in Hunstanton
- Implement key phases of the Hunstanton Regeneration Programme.

People in West Norfolk live in a quality environment

The majority of West Norfolk is sparsely-populated across over 100 villages and communities, each with its own distinctive character and needs, where buildings of historic importance and the quality and diversity of the local environment form major attractions in the area. We need to work together to make sure that it remains that way whilst we continue to encourage sensitive development that supports economic and housing growth.

What do we know?

An increase in the population of King's Lynn in the region of 25% is needed in order to gain the critical mass necessary to underpin the wider development of West Norfolk and sustain its position as an important town in the region. It is planned that the population of the urban area of King's Lynn will grow to over 50,000 by 2026 and will accommodate 7,425 of the 16,500 new houses earmarked for the borough. The remainder of this growth is planned to take place in strategic growth locations across the borough.

Despite the recent stagnation in the housing market, the increase in house prices and rents over the past decade has pushed the price out of the reach of many local people who are dependant on local earnings, which remain low by county and national standards.

To complement this increase in population we have a programme of development to regenerate King's Lynn, focusing on the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area, the town centre and our industrial estates, and parts of Hunstanton. It is also important that the benefits of this growth and improvements to the built environment are realised across the borough including our more rural communities.

Management of flood risk and future housing development policy will have an impact on the overall sustainability of the area. Increasing public awareness of the reality of climate change and its risks is also important. In West Norfolk CO² emissions are high due to the extent of the drained fens which reveals peat; this is a carbon store which is released as the land is worked. West Norfolk is renowned for its wildlife and natural resources across a diverse landscape. This is reflected in the wealth of nationally and internationally-designated sites protecting habitats and species.

- The proportion of people saying their neighbourhood has improved over the last two years increased from 12% in 2007 to 14% in 2009 to 17% in 2011. We are also developing a measure to track the quality of new development in the borough.
- The proportion of household waste collected by the local authority that was recycled was 24.29% in 2010/11, a figure that has hovered around the 24% mark since 2006.
- The number of new homes built in West Norfolk peaked at 1,100 in 2008 and by 2010 had fallen by nearly ¾ to 314. The proceeding eight years averaged 726 new homes. Residential property sales peaked in Q4 of 2006 and most recent figures for Q1 of 2011/12 show 385 completions. The lowest recorded number of completions since the first quarter of 2005 was 260 in Q1 of 2009.
- Figures for October 2011 show there are 1,115 empty properties with a further 1,714 that have been empty for over six months. On top of this there are 3,115 second homes across the borough.

This is important to the council because...

As a significant land-owner, the council has a core role in planning for growth, balancing the competing demands of regeneration within urban areas and the need for economic and strategic housing growth with the need to safeguard our natural

environment. These are complex issues which also impact on community cohesion, the nature of service provision, health and community safety. Getting this right supports the development of West Norfolk into a better place. Creating quality environments is therefore of significant importance for the council.

We want to see...

- regenerated urban areas
- an enhanced natural environment
- affordable housing

We want to see	Our work programme	Headline indicators
regenerated urban areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a strategic role in co-ordinating future development in King's Lynn and across West Norfolk • Support the preservation and enhancement of our historic and built heritage • Lead actions to improve derelict land and buildings in the Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people saying their neighbourhood has improved over the last two years • Number of sites of derelict land and buildings
an enhanced natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage people and businesses to deal with their waste appropriately and substantially increase recycling levels • Work with other agencies to effectively manage our shoreline and flood risks • Preserve and enhance the quality of our natural assets and biodiversity • Resist developments which will detract from the environmental character of the Borough (including plans for a mass-burn waste incinerator in King's Lynn) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of household waste recycled • Measure of bio-diversity
affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the provision of decent and affordable housing for current and future needs • Support activity that helps us meet our housing growth targets in King's Lynn and across West Norfolk • Support a range of initiatives to bring empty homes in the Borough back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new homes built • Number of unoccupied properties

Actions completed

- Completed land remediation, demolition works, landscaping and site clearance on the NORA site
- Established a Joint Venture with Norfolk County Council to build new homes

Actions underway

- Increase the number of sites effectively tackled by the derelict land and building group
- Strongly articulate the concerns our residents have in opposition to the plan for an incinerator in South Lynn

- Examine the potential for innovative options for the recycling of waste
- Develop action plans for air quality management areas in King's Lynn
- Work with stakeholders in Snettisham, Heacham and Hunstanton areas which are affected by coastal flooding issues to develop options for flood prevention works
- Prepare for and publicise the new refuse and recycling contract
- Prioritise work to encourage empty home re-use including use of enforcement powers
- Deliver Phase 1 of the planned residential development of 55 homes on the NORA site
- Consider available options for improving access to housing for first time buyers
- Support Freebridge's work in redeveloping Hillington Square to improve the living conditions and environment of King's Lynn's only deck-access estate
- Prepare a scheme to enhance the Tuesday Market Place and commence consultation
- Secure funding for improvement works to the Town Hall
- Commence a joint project with the Maison de la Culture in Amiens to create permanent art works and several landscaped areas within the Borough

Actions planned

- Progress proposals for a public/private Joint Venture approach to bringing forward a major housing scheme to the borough
- Implement a scheme to enhance the Tuesday Market Place
- Submit a proposal for funding through the Townscape Heritage initiative
- Increase recycling through the procurement of a new County wide Material Recycling Facility Tender and recycling black bin waste
- Implement the new refuse and recycling contract
- Local Development Framework – Commencement of consultation on preferred options

People in West Norfolk maximise their potential

Aspirations, skills and attainment remain the highest priority for West Norfolk which continues to lag behind most other areas in terms of formal educational attainment. There are still substantial numbers of people with minimum or no qualifications, a key barrier to participation in employment. Higher levels of skills and qualifications in the workforce drives a virtuous cycle of investment and growth within the economy, making the area more attractive to do business in, leading to raised aspirations within families and communities, helping to reduce inequality and generate social cohesion.

What do we know?

A legacy of the agricultural economy is a low-wage, low skilled economy with generally low aspirations. This starts with educational attendance and attainment which is poor compared with Norfolk, regional and national levels. Improving the skills and knowledge base in West Norfolk is key to shaping a positive future for the area by attracting and retaining businesses in growth sectors and retaining skills.

Isolation and deprivation are real issues. Whilst they are concentrated in some estates within King's Lynn there are pockets of deprivation in some of the more isolated rural parts of the borough, and these often don't stand out in the statistics. West Norfolk ranks in the worst-performing 20% of all districts on measures of long-term unemployment and incapacity benefit claimants. As a result the area faces some of the most pronounced challenges of inequality in the country.

- 4.3% of children are persistently away from school which is a contributing factor to low attainment rates where only 46% of pupils achieved five or more A* to C GCSEs (including Maths and English) compared with the Norfolk average of 55%.
- The latest figures (August 2012) show that 6.2% % of 16-18 year olds are not in work, education or training which is above the Norfolk and national averages.
- The proportion of working age residents with an NVQ Level 3 + or equivalent qualification has decreased from 40.6% in 2010 to 39.1% in 2011, now standing well below the Norfolk average of 47.8%.
- The job-seekers claimant rate shows increasing levels of people out of work particularly in the 18-24 year age group.

This is important to the council because...

The council's plans for housing and economic growth are centred on attracting business to the area. But businesses need a skilled local workforce. In a national economy increasingly based on high skills, those workers with low skills – and the areas where they are concentrated – fall behind.

Many young people still fail to acquire any adequate level of skill and are faced with restricted employment opportunities and the prospect of a poor quality job. There is clear evidence that poorer areas with lower family incomes drive up demand for council and other public services and experience an intensification of many social issues which the council is often required to help resolve.

We want to see...

- young people succeed
- a skilled workforce
- people in work

We want to see	Our work programme	Headline indicators
young people succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support education establishments to improve the attainment levels of young people • Improve awareness of work and training opportunities for young people through education and business partnerships • Encourage young people to secure apprenticeships and more businesses to offer apprenticeship opportunities • Provide support and positive activities for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of pupils achieving five or more A* to C GCSEs (including Maths and English) • Proportion of young people not in employment, education or training
a skilled workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the growth of local employment opportunities • Encourage the provision of post-16 training and education • Work with businesses to establish current and future skill needs • Influence local training provision to meet identified business needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of the population reaching NVQ level 3 or above • Proportion of the population with no qualifications
people in work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with our partners to support people into work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job seekers allowance claimant rate • Proportion of the working age population in employment

Actions completed

- Undertook works to Lynnsport to enable the College of West Anglia to relocate its sports and recreation teaching whilst refurbishment works are underway on the college campus
- Accommodated Leisure and Uniform Services courses for COWA at Lynnsport on a permanent basis
- Delivered the Opportunities West Norfolk programme working with our partners
- Invested £1.5 capital to support the redevelopment of the College of West Anglia and help them retain their future education provision in the town
- Secured district-level attainment data and used this to launch a programme of work to help improve attainment levels at all ages in West Norfolk
- Ran a 'back to work' seminar in conjunction with the Job Centre to help long-term unemployed

Actions underway

- Further developing our local efforts to drive up attainment levels to the Norfolk averages by 2014
- Use our local business intelligence to influence local training provision that meets employer's needs (monitored through the annual business survey)

- Actively encourage and promote additional apprenticeship opportunities including creation of opportunities within the Borough Council
- Ensure appropriate skills training and mentoring is provided to complement the provision of physical start-up facilities and help new businesses be successful
- Establish a Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Actions planned

- Work with Anglian Ruskin University and College of West Anglia to raise the profile of higher education opportunities in West Norfolk
- Implement a Local Council Tax Support Scheme
- Work with COWA to develop sound proposals for a dedicated university centre within the college campus

People in West Norfolk lead safe and healthy lives

West Norfolk remains a very clean and safe place to live and this is reflected in our low crime rates. Our health is key to our quality of life. People in West Norfolk generally have good health but in some areas the negative effects of many other quality of life issues (such as a low income, poor housing, social isolation, poor diet, lack of exercise) ultimately show up as personal health issues. Preventing the onset of physical or mental ill health is preferable to treating disease at a later stage.

What do we know?

The impact of poverty on people's lives is well documented; its effects can be devastating, leading to increases in anxiety, mental health problems and overall health problems. Conditions known to cause poor health within West Norfolk include depression, diabetes, coronary heart disease, and stroke. There is much money spent on treating these conditions which could be prevented if people made positive lifestyle choices. Choosing up to four healthy behaviours such as exercising, eating healthily, not smoking and drinking alcohol sensibly, can increase survival by up to 14 years and make significant improvements to a person's health and wellbeing.

Not only is the proportion of older people above average in West Norfolk, one of the key challenges is the rate at which the older population and their needs are changing. By 2017, 10% of residents will be aged over 75 years. The ageing population places demands on services, particularly in the housing, health and social care sectors.

- Crime rates reduced by almost 23% between 2006-09, and the quality of life survey records the proportion of people who feel very safe in their neighbourhood has decreased from 86% in 2009 to 75% in 2011.
- Incidences of fly-tipping in West Norfolk have averaged just over 1,800 a year since 2005/06, with 1640 recorded in 2010/11.
- The proportion of people who think their neighbourhood is clean, green with no litter has increased significantly from 70% in 2007 to 74% in 2009 and then to 81% in 2011.
- Participation rates of people undertaking regular physical sporting activity have remained just under 14% over the period 2009/10 and 2010/11 and is consistently slightly less than the Norfolk average.

This is important to the council because...

Public health was one of the driving issues behind the formation of modern local government over 100 years ago and it remains a core function for the council. There is a high cost to the public and private sectors of ill-health and the council has a role in terms of helping people make healthy lifestyle choices and providing access to key services. It is also important that the needs of the aging population are taken into consideration as we plan our services for the future. We work with the police and other agencies locally to ensure that people can go about their daily lives safely and free from harm. Living somewhere that is clean and free from litter, graffiti and other symptoms of neglect is an important part of feeling safe. The breakdown in social cohesion seen in many parts of the country over the summer of 2011 is a sign that these issues need continuous attention from public services. This is core business for the council.

We want to see...

- low levels of crime
- clean neighbourhoods
- healthy people

We want to see	Our work programme	Headline indicators
Low levels of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join up our efforts with our partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and fear of crime • Work with others to ensure that people can go about their daily lives safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people who feel safe in their neighbourhood • Anti-social behaviour rate
Clean neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local communities to ensure our neighbourhoods are clean, well-maintained and attractive • Promote pride of place in our neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of incidences of fly tipping • The proportion of people who think their neighbourhood is clean
Healthy people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local health improvement initiatives • Promote a range of opportunities for people to undertake activities and be more active • Join-up services that enable older people to remain active in their own homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people taking part in regular physical activity • Avoidable hospital admissions amongst the over-65s

Actions completed

- Ran a programme of events that help more people take up physical activities linking to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics
- Developed closer integration of police, community safety and neighbourhood teams to resolve anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood issues quickly and effectively
- Worked with our partners to increase the safety of those participating in, or influenced by, the night-time economy
- Supported local communities to run their own 'In Bloom' initiatives
- Launched the 'Scores on the Doors' initiative

Actions underway

- Implement an integrated service for older people project that brings together local health and social services – planning stage completed
- Deliver the Do Something Different lifestyle change programme
- Work with schools, rural communities and sports organisations to encourage young people to take part in sport and physical activity
- Refurbish the Lynnsport fitness suite and indoor bowls hall

Actions planned

- Support the development of the West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group and work with health sector partners to influence the priorities of the Health and Well Being Board for Norfolk

People in West Norfolk live in thriving communities

Our population continues to change in West Norfolk with new arrivals from both outside the UK and from within it, with more people in particular choosing to retire here. It is important that we understand the needs of all members of our community and work to ensure that everyone feels they can play an active role in their community. With national priorities around community empowerment - the 'big society' and localism –we must help people to be active in their communities. It is increasingly important that new development and housing growth is sensitively planned and helps to create cohesive, vibrant communities.

What do we know?

Throughout its history the borough has benefited from the migration of different groups of people. The importance of King's Lynn's links with various towns and cities across central and northern Europe as part of the Hanseatic heritage of the area led to the development and prosperity of West Norfolk during the medieval period. Over the past decade West Norfolk has again experienced an influx of economic migrants, particularly from eastern Europe and the Baltic states in particular.

The level of housing growth planned for the period to 2025 will need to be managed so that the infrastructure needed to support sustainable neighbourhoods is put in place. It will be difficult to attract higher level, better paid jobs to the area if the cultural and leisure facilities, the schools and local services are not of a good enough standard to meet people's expectations. There is an increasing need to engage with local people to tackle the issues that can lead to people feeling isolated from the communities in which they live and which lead to a negative impact on people's quality of life.

- The proportion of people who think they can influence decisions in their locality has decreased from 49% in 2007 to 36% in 2009 to 32% in 2011.
- Membership of clubs, groups and associations. It has been found that participation in community events – perhaps as active members of clubs, groups & associations – has significant benefits for people.
- In 2009 only 16% of the population took part in formal volunteering in West Norfolk, down from 20% in 2007. This has decreased again to 15% in 2011.
- The proportion of residents who think people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood has increased from 73% in 2007 to 86% in 2009 with a slight decrease in 2011 to 82%

This is important to the council because...

The council works to reduce inequality, to help people deal with social change and to ensure that growth plans for the area bring higher wages and an improved quality of life. We must ensure that a core infrastructure of services is provided to support our communities and that growth is seen to be more than the provision of new housing. With a population spread across such a broad, sparsely-populated and diverse area we must address the very real issues of social cohesion, rural isolation and deprivation. The accessibility of our services and consequent logistics of service delivery are important issues.

We want to see...

- people getting involved
- people getting on well together
- accessible local amenities

We want to see	Our work programme	Headline indicators
people getting involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help create conditions in which community groups, clubs and associations can thrive • Help increase levels of volunteering • Help people get involved in local decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people who are members of local clubs, groups and associations • The proportion of people who volunteer regularly
people getting on well together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver initiatives that support and strengthen our communities • Preserve and enhance the cultural and historical heritage of the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of residents who think that people from different backgrounds get on well together • The proportion of people who know their neighbours
accessible local amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure community amenities are planned into new developments • Help communities preserve or acquire key community assets • Help people access community amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of communities with a minimum number of facilities • Measure of accessibility to transport

Actions completed

- Completed an initial review of the council's financial assistance grants scheme and Service Level Agreements scheme
- Supported the St Margaret's and St Nicholas Community First initiative
- Transferred the Council's visual arts service to the new Arts Centre Trust
- Supported a range of initiatives that help improve community cohesion
- Refurbished the old St Michael's school in South Lynn and re-open as a community centre run through a community stewardship scheme

Actions underway

- Support local engagement in Safer Neighbourhood Action Panels as a means of raising and resolving local issues
- Secure the old Clackclose school and re-open as a community-based youth programme in Downham Market
- Engage local people and businesses in their community through the Time Credits scheme
- Develop our historic and cultural links with other countries within the Hanseatic league
- Transfer the Hunstanton Community Centre to Hunstanton Town Council

Actions planned

- Implement a Trust for South Lynn Community Centre
- Work with the Cabinet Office pilot to encourage more young people to register to vote and engage with the democratic process
- Examine the options for local level representation within the unparished area of the Borough
- Review financial assistance scheme and service-level agreements

Our role in improving local quality of life

It is of fundamental importance that there continues to be a democratically-based means of fighting for local interests. Issues of importance to local people and businesses need to be effectively tackled and promoted not only locally or at a county level and regional level but also nationally and internationally. We believe West Norfolk would be a poorer place without the council performing this role. We will therefore work with our partners to champion local issues and seek the best for West Norfolk as a place to live and work.

Sense of place

West Norfolk already benefits from a strong sense of local identity, our task as part of 'West Norfolk plc', is to strengthen the brand to aid us in competing for scarce resources e.g. private sector investment 'high end' recruitment etc; linked closely to the marketing of the area. As a consequence there is an immediate and on-going need to strengthen and deepen our relationships with other West Norfolk based public, private and voluntary sector institutions and organisations including:

- West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- 'Localised' Adult Social Services
- College of West Anglia / Anglia Ruskin University
- Opportunity West Norfolk secondary schools cluster
- Internal Drainage Board
- RAF Marham
- Norfolk Police
- Freebridge Community Housing

Our role

We will act in a more commercial manner in areas of our work and seek to secure external work and income generation to support an organisation with sufficient critical mass to be a champion of place and of local quality of life. The council will perform a range of important roles locally and will increasingly differentiate between

- corporate/statutory functions required to ensure the council can successfully engage with its residents, communities and partners and facilitate action that tackles local issues;
- commercial services, where opportunities exist to generate income or efficiencies of scale by providing services across a wider area than just West Norfolk and/or across the wider public sector;
- support services, which facilitate the smooth operation of our organisation as well as, where possible, of our partners, too. Also supporting the local democratic process.

Why this is important...

It provides the capacity within the organisation to

- deliver on members' agenda, and address major issues in the Borough such as regeneration, skills, the economy, external 'threats'
- represent the authentic 'voice' of West Norfolk on important issues of concern locally (current issues, skills, educational attainment, town centres etc).
- respond positively and effectively to the agenda of the government of the day

Our Resources

It is more important than ever that we look for new and innovative ways of maximising our resources to deliver our work programme. We must ensure essential public services reach those who need them most whilst responding to unprecedented financial challenges. These are exacerbated by the sheer pace of technological, social and policy change. Meeting these challenges means working more efficiently and effectively not only within our own operations but also with local organisations, businesses and residents in West Norfolk.

What do we know?

As early as 2003/04 we undertook a thorough cost reduction exercise that looked at efficiency, commercialisation and procurement. This helped us keep tight control over budgets and staffing levels during this period. As a result the Council has been at the forefront of keeping costs low whilst continuing to provide quality services.

This organisational restructuring was followed by the Government's review of local government structures in Norfolk which provided uncertainty and a significant distraction to the council and its staff between 2007 and 2010. Whilst it ultimately resulted in no change it did mean that for over two years there was the very real prospect of the council being abolished: not a stable operating environment for staff.

We have achieved a balanced budget for each year of our corporate business plan to date and are well on the way to achieving the savings required for future years. The Council's expenditure reduction programme has to date identified £5.7m of savings that are incorporated in the 2013/14 budget. Further work continues which includes a combination of measures including shared services, a leisure company / trust, efficiency reviews and procurement savings on external contracts.

- Our government grant has been reduced by 16.5% over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15
- We anticipated funding cuts and started a series of fundamental service reviews in 2010/11 that would look at every service area and take out £5.7m of costs. This resulted in a reduction of over 90 posts
- Council tax increases have remained at or below inflation since 2003/04
- The Financial Plan 2012-2016 projects council tax increases over 11 years from 2005/06 (to 2015/16) for a Band D property to be 3% - from £108.67 to £111.97. This is bettered by very few Councils across the country.

This is important to the council because...

In a period of diminishing resources it is imperative that the funding which remains is utilised to maximum effect in order to enable the council to deliver the challenging programme outlined in this corporate business plan.

We will...

- provide cost-effective services
- retain a local democratic voice for West Norfolk
- develop our staff

We will	Our work programme	Headline indicators
provide cost-effective services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with a comprehensive expenditure reduction programme • Work in partnership and/or provided contracted services and facilities with other councils or locally-based public sector organisations where it makes financial and operational sense to do so • Share our operational buildings with other public bodies • Explore new public-private equity funding models • Utilise alternative models of service delivery such as Social Enterprises, Charitable Trusts and Local Authority Companies where it is financially advantageous to do so • Explore opportunities presented through new public financing initiatives eg Tax Incremental Financing, Community Infrastructure Levy, New Homes Bonus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total level of net savings achieved
retain a local democratic voice for West Norfolk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up on behalf of our residents and businesses on major issues • Help more people get involved in local civic and democratic life • Review arrangements for the unparished areas of the Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % people who feel they can influence local decisions
develop our staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of employee training and development programmes • Workplace health and wellbeing initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee satisfaction levels • Sickness absence rates

Actions completed

- Achieved of £5.7m savings over 3 years to accommodate reducing grant levels and frozen Council Tax
- Completed two pilot zero-based budgeting reviews
- Established management development programmes for middle managers / supervisors (run in 2012/13)
- Rationalised space in King's Court and other Council facilities to enable use by other public sector partners
- Reduced CO₂ emissions and utility costs, including installation of solar panels at Lynnsport and Kings Court
- Expanded the provision of car parking services
- The Financial Plan 2012/16 sets out budgets for services with council tax maintained at current levels of £111.97 for a Band D property

Actions underway

- Explore new opportunities to market and promote commercial services to reduce service subsidy and costs

- Examine the potential to establish a trust and local authority controlled company to operate our leisure facilities
- Ensure staff affected by new delivery mechanisms receive appropriate training and support
- Establish a shared revenues and benefits service with North Norfolk District Council to secure savings by 2013/14
- Review the operation of CNC to achieve additional savings
- Undertake a full Health and Safety audit
- Identify opportunities to share posts/services where this is financially beneficial
- Seek to reduce the costs of recycling/increase income from recycling via the new MURF contract

Actions planned

- Prepare plans for the next Comprehensive Spending Review period 2015/2016 onwards
- Have plans in place to achieve a balanced budget for 2016/17 by March 2015
- Undertake a review of Council facilities
- Let spare office accommodation at Kings Court
- Extend and expand the range of services provided on behalf of other organisations
- Review our Treasury Management Strategy to extend the range of investment opportunities
- Explore the potential to create a Local Authority Company to invest in residential property
- Undertake a review of procurement practices and arrangements

Appendix A: Contextual Indicators

These provide additional supporting information for each outcome.

Headline Indicators	Contextual Indicators
People in West Norfolk benefit from a growing economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The growth in business rates in West Norfolk • The number of new business start-ups • Footfall numbers in King's Lynn town centre • Development of employment land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross Value-Added per head • Business survival rate • Self-employment rate • Proportion of industrial and town centre units let • Total number of jobs in the local economy • Planning applications received • The proportion of the population with broadband internet access
People in West Norfolk live in a quality environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people who think their neighbourhood has got better over the last two years • The proportion of waste recycled, reused or composted • The number of new homes built • Number of empty properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of development meeting building for life quality standards • Reduction in derelict land and buildings • The proportion of development on previously developed land • Environmental designations • Residential property sales • House prices • Numbers of rough sleepers and people presenting as homeless • Affordable homes built • Reduce the proportion of approved buildings at risk of flooding
People in West Norfolk maximise their potential	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSE attainment rates • Proportion of young people not in employment, education or training • Proportion of the population reaching NVQ level 3 or above • Proportion of people unemployed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rate of persistent absence of children from school • SAT scores at primary school age 7 • Number of children claiming free school meals • Under 18 conception rate • Average gross weekly earnings • Proportion of people qualified at NVQ4 and above • Proportion of people qualified at NVQ1 and below • Youth unemployment rate • Take-up of apprenticeships

Indicators	Contextual Indicators
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People in West Norfolk lead safe and healthy lives	
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- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people who feel safe in their neighbourhood • The proportion of people who think their neighbourhood is clean and green with no litter • Proportion of people taking part in regular physical activity • avoidable hospital admissions amongst over 65s | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of people admitted to hospital with alcohol related injuries • Number of anti-social behaviour incidents • Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents • Number of incidences of fly tipping • The number of all types of crime per 1,000 population • Proportion of the population who smoke • The proportion of children classed as overweight and obese • The number of falls and accidents in the home amongst over 75s |
|--|--|

People in West Norfolk live in thriving communities	
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- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people who are active members of local clubs, groups and associations • The proportion of residents who think that people from different backgrounds get on well together • The proportion of people who know their neighbours • Access to community facilities (in development) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proportion of people who think they can influence decisions in their locality • The proportion of the population taking part in formal volunteering at least once a month • The proportion of people who feel like they belong to their neighbourhood • Measure of sports / arts participation • Measure of community facilities • Proportion of second homes • Proportion of parish elections contested • voter registration and turn-out |
|---|---|

Appendix B: National Policy

Any strategy needs to give consideration to the wider environment in which the council works. So this plan reflects the changing national policy landscape that influences what we do. The coalition government have announced a raft of policy initiatives many of which impact on the Council and the public sector locally. The following summarises the themes that underpin these changes and which will shape the future for local councils.

In January 2011 the Prime Minister set out the coalition Government's priorities for modernising public service, published in more detail in the Open Public Services white paper:

- **Free professionals from top-down control and bureaucracy.** Shown in the abolition of the audit commission, inspection regime, performance indicators, plan requirements and local area agreements
- **Give choice to service users.** Shown in establishment of free schools, use of open data / web technologies, participatory budgeting
- **Encourage competition between suppliers.** Shown in the tendering of services on a regional scale for delivery of the Work programme, certain probation services etc
- **Pay by results wherever appropriate.** Shown in the work programme, based on people being in work for a period of time, or probation service, payment on actual compared to predicted reconviction rates
- **Publish information everywhere you can.** Shown in local crime mapping initiatives www.maps.police.uk and publication of all council spend over £500: www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=25883
- **Make public service professions answerable to people.** As opposed to the government machine. Shown in the transparency agenda, locally-published data supporting 'arm-chair auditors', etc.

In this document the Government identifies three different types of services:

- **Individual services**
These are personal services – for example in education, skills training, adult social care, childcare, housing support and individual healthcare – that are used by people on an individual basis. The Government intends to put power in the hands of the people who use them.
- **Neighbourhood services**
These are services provided very locally and on a collective, rather than an individual basis – such as maintenance of the local public realm, leisure and recreation facilities, and community safety. The Government intends to put power in the hands of elected councils, at the neighbourhood level if that is what communities choose.
- **Commissioned services**
These are local and national services that cannot be devolved to individuals or communities, such as tax collection, prisons, emergency healthcare or welfare to work. The Government intends to open up and, where appropriate, decentralise commissioning to ensure greater quality and diversity.

This white paper summarises a significant shift in the national policy agenda, which is supported by a range of legislation and initiatives being taken forwards in each major policy area – from education and health to community safety and the environment. These all in turn shape our operating environment and influence our work.

The following is an extract from the Open Public Services White Paper:

Strong local government is at the heart of our reforms. Councils will need to adapt and develop new capabilities to make the most of the new opportunities, which include:

- *much greater freedom from central government control* – local authorities will have a general power of competence, fewer restrictions on funding, less regulation and performance management from Whitehall, and new opportunities to raise revenue (e.g. via tax increment financing);
- *devolution of national and regional functions* – this already includes key aspects of public health, economic development and early years. There is the potential for further devolution as set out in this White Paper;
- *funding following individual choice* – the funding for individual services (in adult care, education and housing) will follow the decisions of individuals about the service they want and its provider. This includes the majority of local authority spending. Local authorities will have a major role in the transition to individual control (e.g. in personal budgets and direct payments in adult social care). But more important still is the future role of local authorities in ensuring that individuals in their area have well-informed, fair access to a diverse range of quality providers, so that choice can be meaningful;
- *giving power and control to neighbourhoods* – this will, over time, create a new relationship between local authorities and their communities. It will require local authorities to empower, inspire and support their neighbourhoods as they do more for themselves;
- *more local democracy* – including the direct election of Police and Crime Commissioners and mayors, referenda on spending and growing requirements for transparency;
- *Community Budgets* – every place being able to use a Community Budget to pool funding at the local level in order to break open funding silos and give councils and their partners the freedom to redesign services and pool funding in order to tackle complex social problems; and
- *commissioning* – local authorities will continue their shift from self-sufficient providers to commissioners of services from a diverse range of suppliers in different sectors, including helping their own staff to set up new independent enterprises.

We will engage with local authorities to develop a shared vision about the new opportunities and possibilities for stronger local government created by this open public services agenda. As part of this engagement, we will want to explore the opportunities for local authorities to:

- be the people's champions for all public services in their area, irrespective of whether they are directly accountable for those services. This will focus on their potential to secure fair and open access to a choice of quality services in the local area;
- be empowered to shape their local area through greater local freedoms on planning, finance, regulatory powers and infrastructure;
- be as financially self-sufficient as possible;
- be able to integrate the full range of public resources to solve complex social, economic or environment issues, such as the needs of people on housing estates who have multiple disadvantages;

- benefit from the maximum possible decentralisation of central government services to the local level;
- champion direct democracy and transparency of public data;
- act as the principal representatives for their communities;
- actively decentralise power to individuals and neighbourhoods and inspire successful responses to these new opportunities;
- be excellent and open commissioners of those services which cannot be devolved to individuals and communities; and
- combine forces with neighbouring local authorities and lower-tier councils within their area to improve the success of the wider area.

