

Norfolk County Council highlights for 2019/20

Norfolk Statistics

- Population – 903,680
- 37,000 Businesses
- 447,000 people economically active
- 6,200 miles of highway
- 98.7% of highway inspections completed within timescale
- 41,570 Adult Social Care Assessments for 18,925 people
- 13,150 young people with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)
- 1,121 Looked After Children (LAC) – 67.3 per 10,000 (0-17yrs population)
- 53 Libraries (47 static, 6 mobile)

The 2020/21 Budget

£430.4 million spending plans, which **boosts children's and adults' services** and a Council Tax rise of 3.99 per cent has been agreed by Norfolk County Council, to address key cost pressures in Adults and Children's social care, which represents 70% of overall spend.

Norfolk County Council also agreed a **£543m capital budget**, which pays for investment in infrastructure, property and equipment.

Examples of investment include: **£120m for new special educational needs schools** and units in mainstream schools, **£4.5m for home to school transport**, **£887,000 Fire Service investment** to support the proposal in the integrated risk management plan and **£350,000 to support the environmental policy** over two years.

Investment in fragile care market by above inflation rate to raise standards in the private care market has been approved to ensure people receive a high quality of care.

The Council's strategy includes:

- A proactive inspection programme
- Work to tackle recruitment and retention issues in the care market, supported by a joint bid with Suffolk for £8 million of European funding
- Establishing a care association for Norfolk and staging a quality summit with the regulator, the Care Quality Commission

- Increasing the supply of extra care housing – independent accommodation, with social care support on site – through the council’s Homes for Norfolk programme

During Carers week (10-16 June 2019) Norfolk County Council held a special event to celebrate and support the thousands of unpaid carers across Norfolk.

The event highlighted the challenges unpaid carers face and recognised the contribution they make to families and communities across Norfolk.

A new Life Opportunities Framework will support those with learning disabilities to develop life skills and, if possible, find work.

This new framework will have three levels, known as pathways:

Wellbeing – providing meaningful activity, social support and care for those with the most complex needs

Promoting Independence – supporting people to develop life skills and access community provision and services

Skills and Employment – supporting people to obtain paid work

Having previously been piloted in 2019, the Skills and Employment pathway will be put out to tender, whilst the Wellbeing and Promoting Independence pathways will be piloted in 2020.

Ofsted praises ‘Good’ Adult Learning service for addressing social needs. Their overall comment was about the ‘effective curriculum that meets the needs of the local community and employers well.’

The Norfolk Early Childhood Community £250,000 fund launched to support early years groups with projects supporting children aged 0-5 to achieve their developmental milestones and ensure children and their parents or carers aren’t lonely or isolated.

Groups are able to include music, creative, arts or physical play to encourage parents/carers to play alongside their child and give opportunities to make new friends close to home.

New school places for children with Special Educational Needs to be created in Norfolk as part of Norfolk County Council’s £120m investment in special educational needs education to create 500 additional school places across the County. The first one is the former Alderman Swindell Site in Great Yarmouth. Schools have also been invited to submit bids to create new specialist resource bases for children with learning difficulties across the County.

Last June the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service was judged to require improvement, although there are key areas judged to be good, including our response to fires and incidents. The service is aiming for 'Good' when it is re-inspected later this year.

Residential social landlords across Norfolk were invited to learn more about how they can support and advise their tenants to stay safe in their homes.

Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) offered training sessions to residential social landlords across the county to educate staff around fire safety and community safety.

£13.5m plans to restore Norwich Castle to how it looked as a medieval palace moved forward, with work due to be complete by Easter 2021.

Once complete, it will be the most accessible grade one-listed medieval castle in Europe, boosting the county's economy, with 300,000 visitors per year.

The first ever Norfolk Creativity and Wellbeing Week showcased how different organisations are working together to make arts and culture accessible to all, offering the chance for residents and visitors of all ages to join activities, talks, workshops, open days and performances across the county.

New Year Honour for dedicated curriculum manager, who has helped thousands of people across Norfolk gain vital skills has received an award in the Queen's New Year Honours list.

Amanda Reeve will receive the British Empire Medal (BEM) for services to Education after her successful work with disadvantaged families in Great Yarmouth was recognised during a Department for Education visit to the service just under two years ago.

Norfolk County Council moves to green energy and other measures, to reduce environmental impact. Examples of measures include replacing single use paper cups at County Hall's coffee outlets with ceramic cups, using only recycled paper in photocopiers and investigating the future use of electric pool cars.

Ambitious 2030 net zero carbon target proposed for Norfolk County Council, with steps to be taken to do detailed work to identify actions on the ground to help reduce our environmental impact.

£40m Great Yarmouth flood defence upgrade, upgrading the level of protection from tidal flooding to more than 4,500 homes and businesses in the area. The funding included a contribution of £950k from Norfolk County Council.

Preferred route for Norwich Western Link has been agreed, which would significantly improve travel between the A47 and Broadland Northway west of Norwich.

The Norwich Western Link is one of the County Council's key infrastructure priorities and is needed to reduce traffic congestion, rat-running and delays to journeys on minor roads to the west of Norwich. There is strong support from the public, the business community, emergency services, local councils and MPs for a link road to be created.

Transformation of travel in Greater Norwich has been proposed in a substantial funding bid to central government, which has the potential to transform travel in Greater Norwich.

The Transport for Norwich partnership is seeking an overall investment in the region of £100m through the Department for Transport's (DfT) Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), which aims to make it easier for people to access jobs, training and retail, and responds to issues around carbon reduction and improving local air quality, with a strong focus on increasing use of public transport, walking and cycling.

Futureproof broadband in Norwich, after the city was named amongst 29 new locations to benefit from Openreach's nationwide investment programme.

The upgrades will complement the ongoing broadband upgrades across the county by the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme, a partnership between Norfolk County Council, UK Government and Openreach, working with providers to improve mobile coverage across the County.

Full fibre or ultrafast broadband provides more reliable, resilient and future-proof connectivity; fewer faults; more predictable, consistent speeds and the ability to upgrade easily to meet the demands of future technology.

More than 600 homes are to be developed by the County Council's development company Repton Property Developments Ltd, over the next 5 years, with the first phase of sites to include locations in Acle, Hopton on Sea and two sites in Attleborough.

Norfolk Housing Estate to undergo major revamp as part of collaborative urban regeneration work between Flagship Housing, Norfolk County Council and Breckland District Council to improve the Abbey Estate in Thetford and forge a better future for this estate.

Greater Norwich Development plan out to consultation until 16th March 2020. This builds on long established joint working, seeking to deliver new homes, jobs and the protection of the environment, along with promoting sustainability and the effective functioning of the area.

Together for Norfolk was launched in May 2019, focusing on growing the economy, regeneration, developing skills and employment opportunities, as well as protecting Norfolk's unique environment and creating strong communities.