



action plan 2012/13

small government
big society



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Introduction

North Norfolk District Council's new Corporate Plan 2012-15: small government, big society, sets out the council's priorities for the next four years. It will guide business decisions to ensure that the council is well-run and able to meet its objectives. And in line with the Coalition Government's localism agenda, NNDC intends to put the interests of local communities at the heart of everything it does – local decisions and local actions for the benefit of local communities.

The Corporate Plan is a strategic document, listing the priorities for council actions for the period 2012-2015, giving our shared vision and our values and listing the priority areas on which the council intends to concentrate its efforts:

- jobs and the local economy;
- housing and infrastructure;
- coast, countryside and built heritage;
- localism,
- alongside the proposed means of delivering the vision.

These priorities have been drawn up following two years of consultation and discussions with members of the local community and reflect the concerns and ambitions raised over that period. Success in meeting these aims will involve making some difficult choices. We must ensure that our spending is focussed on the things that really matter to local people and businesses. The Corporate Plan 2012-15 is available for online viewing.

This document is the first Annual Action Plan, giving detail of how the priorities in the Corporate Plan will be realised over the forthcoming 12 months from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. The plan is designed to deliver change that will meet the needs and aspirations of all the people of North Norfolk including issues facing young people and older persons. This Plan is being drawn up in consultation with Parish and Town Councils and other local bodies so as to ensure that local communities are involved and engaged with District Council actions.

February 2012

What we want to achieve A district with a thriving economy offering better jobs and prospects for local people

What we are going to do and how we will achieve it

A

By increasing the number of new businesses and supporting the growth and expansion of existing businesses

1. We will support businesses investing in the district through the provision of comprehensive advice about District Council support and signpost to other agencies as appropriate.
2. We will work with partners to develop and deliver a programme of business start up support.
3. Working in partnership we will maximise the opportunities for investment in the district through the development of allocated town centre retail sites.
4. We will seek to maximise the opportunities for the district to benefit from investment in renewable energy developments off the North Norfolk Coast.
5. We will work with regional partners to realise the benefits of Rural Growth Network status for North Norfolk.
6. We will support the North Norfolk Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) in delivering projects from the £2.4 million funding secured for the fishing sector.
7. We will actively pursue all options in order to ensure the future development and operation of an Enterprise Hub for North Norfolk as a platform for improving levels of business start up and enterprise.

B

Improving the job prospects of our residents by developing a skilled and adaptable workforce that is matched to business growth and development

1. Through the Council's Learning for Everyone (L4E) Team we will provide information, advice and guidance to local people wishing to enter employment or improve their levels of skills and raise aspiration.
2. The L4E team will offer bespoke programmes of advice and support to people faced with redundancy from local companies as and when such events occur.
3. The L4E team will also engage with existing and new employers in the district to understand their future workforce requirements and co-ordinate provision of relevant training courses to secure employment within the district.
4. We will explore opportunities to work with local businesses and identify funding to support the provision of apprenticeships, training and work experience schemes with the aim of increasing the employment opportunities of young people in the district.

C

Reduce burdens to business by removing unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy at the local level

1. We will develop a comprehensive package of support and provide information to simplify the process for businesses looking to invest in North Norfolk.
2. We will ask users of our training, business support and advice services for their feedback and improve future service delivery to meet business needs.

3. We will review our procurement policies to maximise the opportunities to source goods and services locally.
4. We will work with partners to roll out BDUK's £60m Norfolk Broadband Initiative across North Norfolk.
5. We will review all of our business regulatory functions to ensure we are focused on local business need.

D

Promote a positive image of North Norfolk as a premier visitor destination

1. We will develop and implement new marketing initiatives which use digital and remote technology to promote North Norfolk to visitors and tourists.
2. We will support and facilitate the establishment of a private sector led Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for the North Norfolk coast, broads and countryside to maintain the profile of the district as a leading tourist destination within the UK boosting levels of employment and income for the district.

E

Improve access to funding for businesses

1. We will support the roll-out of the Coastal Pathfinder and Fishing Sector Business Loan and Grant Schemes and consider the opportunities of extending these programmes across a larger area.
2. Working with the North Norfolk Business Forum, other representative local groups, regional partners and financial services companies we will seek to ensure that small and medium sized enterprises have improved access to investment finance to support business growth and development across the district.

What we want to achieve Everyone in North Norfolk should have the opportunity to buy or rent a decent home at a price they can afford, in a community where they want to live and work

What we are going to do and how we will achieve it

A

Engage constructively with landowners and developers of sites allocated for future development to ensure the timely delivery of well-planned new residential developments

1. We will bring forward detailed proposals on allocated sites by better engagement with developers.
2. We will produce development briefs on 4 of the allocated sites.
3. We will seek to increase the number of new homes built of all tenures to 250.

B

Introduce more flexibility around the Council's requirement for affordable housing to ensure the viability of residential developments

1. We will undertake a complete review of our housing strategy to ensure that we take full advantage of opportunities within the Localism Act and are maximising our influence over housing growth.
2. We will evaluate our approach to viability assessments to maximise development opportunities.

C

Respond to emerging legislation that will empower local communities to promote additional development should they so wish and work with those communities to ensure that they share in the benefits of growth

1. We will encourage the development of neighbourhood planning by supporting Holt Town Council in a pilot scheme to produce a neighbourhood plan.
2. We will encourage further neighbourhood plans to be developed by holding a neighbourhood planning seminar for town and parish councils.

D

Create a charging framework for infrastructure development to secure the investment required to balance population growth with the provision of high quality local services

1. We will consult and then obtain agreement on a charging schedule to achieve investment in new infrastructure.

E

Reduce the number of empty homes in the district

1. We will undertake and evaluate a pilot Compulsory Purchase Order project to bring long term empty homes back into use.
2. We will support owners to bring at least 40 empty homes back into use and provide opportunities to do so through advertising of private rented properties and the Empty Homes matching service. Where owners are reluctant to bring properties back into use, take enforcement action as required.

What we want to achieve A district where the beautiful natural environment and built heritage is valued and protected for future generations and where the coastline is defended against erosion wherever practicable.

What we are going to do and how we will achieve it

A

Maintain the integrity of special landscape designations and balance the development of housing and economic activity with the need to preserve the character and quality of the District's countryside and built heritage

1. We will assess and implement requirements for a new Green Flag award at Sadlers Wood, North Walsham and work to retain the Green Flag status of Holt Country Park.
2. We will promote the Graham Allen Award and monitor the number of applications received.
3. We will complete or review four Conservation Area plans, in Cromer, Sheringham, Walsingham and Wells.
4. We will work with other agencies to retain all of the District's Blue Flag beach status
5. We will achieve zero defaults in our waste contract for cleanliness.
6. We will ensure all reported fly-tips are responded to within two working days.

B

Design a more cohesive framework for coastline management

1. We will define the Coastal Zone (ICZM) and agree consultation mechanisms with partners.
2. We will identify specific ICZM projects and identify the means of funding.

C

Continue to defend coastal settlements against erosion wherever practicable

1. We will commission design works for the Cromer Defence Scheme.
2. We will develop and adopt a prioritised programme for future 'Selected' Coastal Defence Work schemes.
3. We will identify Coastal funding opportunities to support the prioritised programme.

What we want to achieve To embrace the Government's localism agenda to empower individuals and communities to take more responsibility for their own futures and to build a stronger civic society

What we are going to do and how we will achieve it

A

Recognise the important role that Town and Parish Councils have as the democratic embodiment of their communities

1. We will establish a protocol and put in place the means to respond positively to requests from Town and Parish Councils to take over the running of services within their area/communities to ensure that they share in the benefits of growth.
2. We will establish a regular dialogue with Town and Parish Councils and hold workshops for training and development in particular to encourage wide community participation in the democratic process.
3. We will work with Town and Parish Councils, local organisations and community and voluntary groups to improve health and wellbeing consistent with the aims of the Health and Wellbeing board.

B

Encourage communities to develop their own vision for their future and help them to deliver it

1. We will encourage the development of neighbourhood plans by taking the Holt Neighbourhood Plan as a model including holding a seminar on neighbourhood planning for town and parish councils (See also action to deliver Housing and Infrastructure).
2. We will commission work through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) for community planning and for community and voluntary sector capacity building.
3. Subject to guidance, we will assess expressions of interest from voluntary or community groups who wish to take over the running of a service and / or community asset, and complete the initial assessment within three months of receiving the request.
4. We will work with the key organisations with an interest in North Walsham to implement the actions and interventions identified through the 'Leadership of Place' project.
5. We will utilise our resources, statutory powers and influence to realise opportunities for North Walsham town centre.
6. We will respond positively to communities wishing to undertake projects locally.
7. We will work with communities to identify the current and future social, economic and environmental needs of their resident population and support them to identify and implement local, innovative and creative solutions.
8. We will draft and consult on a communication and engagement framework.

C

Encourage the growth of The Big Society within communities

1. We will review services and ensure that the Council's activities are not competing inappropriately with or stifling alternative provision.
2. We will launch and monitor a community investment fund, to be known as The Big Society Fund to invest £450,000 in local communities, strengthen civic society, and establish the process for determining priorities for expenditure.
3. We will ensure that work with statutory, voluntary and community organisations contributes to the aims of the Big Society agenda.

What we want to achieve We will make the Council more efficient so that we can deliver our priorities and offer value for money for local taxpayers

What we are going to do and how we will achieve it

A

Ensure our governance arrangements are robust and fit for purpose

1. The Audit Committee will oversee a review programme to ensure that audit coverage reflects the risks facing the Council and produce a revised annual audit plan for 2013/14 onwards.
2. We will set and achieve 100% compliance with deadlines agreed with Internal Audit for recommendations rated as Medium and High.
3. We will implement the revised performance management framework.
4. We will review and update the Council's constitution.

B

Ensure that effective communications exist

1. We will make Outlook cost neutral.
2. We will identify the means of optimising media coverage of Council activities and initiatives and place the WEB at the heart of all we do.
3. We will develop a Customer Access Strategy to ensure that the most economic, efficient and accessible forms of contact are in place for all our customers.

C

Delivering strong and proportionate organisational management in the Council

1. Deliver revised / streamlined management arrangements.

D

Prioritise Services and Functions in line with the wishes of our communities and to deliver our corporate objectives

1. We will prioritise services and redirect resources in line with those priorities by completing fundamental reviews of services that residents have identified as the least important and that the Council does not consider to be a priority.
2. We will consult with the residents through a Place Survey.

E

Deliver year-on-year improvements in efficiency

1. We will support the implementation of the cost saving Revenues and Benefits shared services project.
2. We will identify potential partnership working opportunities and produce business cases.
3. We will devise and implement budgets to deliver a zero increase in the District Council's part of the Council Tax charge and ensure spend is contained within budgeted allocations.
4. We will review the reward structures to encourage and reward staff, for finding innovative new ways to deliver higher quality services more efficiently.

NOTES

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