

A very Happy New Year

Always a reset in January to look at issues for the new year.

The largest is the imminent budget and the public consultation finishes shortly.



The budget must take into account spending in the previous year and particularly where we have had unexpected expenses.

Children's Services and Adult services are the largest and most difficult to predict

This year the storms we had at the end of last year are going to significantly affect our next budget!

The flooding caused by the storms will require cleaning, repairs, and restoration over the start of this year adding to budget pressures.

#### Riparian rights

Given the extent of the storms we will also have to look at the capacity for retaining water. We had started to do that last year by reminding people of their riparian rights in relation to ditches.

#### **County Deal for Norfolk update**

At a full council meeting on 12 December 2023, Councillors accepted a £600 million devolution deal for Norfolk. The deal will also mean that decisions can be taken in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

The council voted to accept a county deal devolution agreement with the Government to transfer significant funding, powers and decisions to Norfolk.

Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer if councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a leader in May 2025.

The full council agreed the following recommendations:

Council:

- Recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year.
- Commends the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and resolves that the Deal should be accepted.
- Agrees that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate.
- Agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date.



When the temperature dips it can put vulnerable people in your community at risk. Check in on older or vulnerable people living nearby to make sure they're ok.

<https://orlo.uk/lbZmb>

#### Schools, Every Child in Norfolk to Flourish

Schools are run by either a governing Body or an Academy Trust but there are some areas that are within NCC remit.

NCC must provide sufficient places for ages 4 to 16. We have just reviewed our School Sufficiency Plan. This is a very difficult task with the urban and rural mix and the key data and demographics. Pupil numbers are also on decline and have been since 2019.

#### Schools: Parental Choice.

Now parents have a 1,2,3 preference choice but in the last intake some parents did not get any of their 3 choices. It has been agreed for 2025 that parents will be given 4 choices.

#### Voter ID - Voter authority certificate awareness update

Last May was the first time in England that voters were required to produce a valid photo ID or a voter authority certificate to be issued a ballot paper. The Electoral Commission found that awareness of the certificate stood at 57% in May 2023, and only 25,000 certificates were used as a form of ID on polling day.

Government agrees that everything possible should be done to make everybody who is in a position to vote aware, first, of the need for registration, and, secondly, of the possibility of applying for a certificate if they do not have other forms of photographic identification. He also said he was focusing on how he could get the awareness figure closer to 80% - 90%. Will be an election this year!

#### National Vaccination Strategy

NHS England, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Care, the UK Health Security Agency and other partners, has developed a strategic direction for the delivery of vaccination services, focussed on improving uptake and coverage of all vaccinations across the whole population whilst reducing disparities of uptake in under-served communities. To do so the [Vaccination Strategy](#), published on 13 December, aims to:

simplify and streamline access to vaccinations, including extending online booking capability.

improve access for people who are currently underserved by offering vaccination through community-based, targeted approaches.

deliver vaccination through flexible, integrated, neighbourhood teams that can deliver other preventative interventions alongside vaccination.

The strategy proposes that Integrated Care Boards have the responsibility and flexibility to deliver these aims through local vaccination delivery networks that are tailored to the needs of local people.

#### **Waste centres**

Norfolk residents will be able to dispose of small amounts of DIY waste at Norfolk's Recycling Centres free of charge from 31 December following changes made by Norfolk County Council.

The change applies to small-scale projects carried out by householders on their own home, allowing them to bring a maximum 100 litres (must fit into 2 x 50l bags) for free or one single item (maximum size of 200cm x 70cm x 75cm). Each household is allowed four free visits with DIY waste every four weeks. Anything beyond this will still be charged at normal rates.

"From 31 December, the Government has set out the limits to household DIY waste which can be taken free of charge, but our Pay As You Throw service will remain in place as a convenient way to get rid of larger amounts. It's important that people are encouraged to dispose of their waste responsibly.

"In 2022/23 the County Council's Recycling Centres handled more than 60,000 tonnes of waste and 72% of this was diverted from disposal. We hope this change to legislation will be a further boost to householders to recycle as much as they can.

The change in policy follows Government abolishing charges for the disposal of limited amounts and types of DIY waste at recycling centres across the UK.

Prior to 31 December, customers with DIY-type construction and demolition waste will continue to be directed to the 'Pay as you throw service' which is available at all centres.

Traders must continue to pay for DIY waste.

For more information visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste)

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1736703165016248352>

#### **Adult learning**

Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning has been rated as 'Good' following their latest Ofsted inspection.

The inspection report praised the ambition of the service, which provides community-based and online learning for around 6,000 adults a year. The service achieved a 'Good' rating across all six areas that were inspected, alongside the overall 'Good' rating.

"We are proud of the positive impact that our courses have on the lives and careers of our learners. Adult Learning is an essential tool in upskilling Norfolk's work force and provides a clear boost to our local economy."

"I was pleased to see that the inspectors recognised the high quality of teaching and the inclusive approach that Adult Learning offers. It is important that we support those who face barriers to education, such as mobility, social isolation and financial hardship so they can reach their potential."

Inspectors commented that learners are 'highly motivated' and committed to their studies. They praised the number of people who have a 'clear plan' for their future careers and that they want to improve their economic prospects.

In particular, inspectors highlighted the work with residents of retirement homes who have increased their confidence, self-care and resilience after completing courses in basic cookery. They commented how, following the course, learners felt less isolated and 'excited to prepare and eat their own meals'.

It was also recognised that the service has responded effectively to the growing demand for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses.

There was praise for the work with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service apprentices. The inspectors saw how the course helps them to work safely while learning about the importance of health and nutrition. The report concluded that the 'apprenticeship is well matched to the needs of the fire service.'

This inspection result comes on the back of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning being named 'Further or Higher Education Provider of the Year' at this year's Norfolk Education Awards. This followed national recognition in 2021 where the service was named adult and community learning provider of the year at the TES Further Education Awards.

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning offers a wide range of courses for adults of all levels and interests. Whether you want to change your career, improve your skills, or pursue your passion.

#### Local

Beryl stands well underway. Will ask someone to come to PC to explain the workings of the system and how residents can use the bikes and scooters.

Increasing the hard standing area by the gate to the common has been agreed to increase the safe standing area particularly due to push chairs often being used. Designs being been drawn up.

- [Scam Alert - Fake parcel delivery emails and text messages](#)
- [Scam Alert - Scam callers claiming to be Police Officers](#)
- [Scam Alert - Fake 'Royal Mail' websites selling stamps](#)
- [Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold callers selling household products](#)
- [Information Alert - Bluetongue confirmed in cattle on a premises near Cantley](#)
- [News Alert - Norfolk Police granted closure order on shop selling illegal vapes in Dereham](#)
- [Recall Alert - Tesco is recalling their 'Tesco Finest Apple & Cranberry Stuffing Mix because of the possible presence of moths](#)
- [Safety Alert - River Island is recalling their 'Baby Boys Blue Quilted Snowsuit product number 458872' sold between August 2023 & November 2023 due to a possible choking hazard](#)
- [Information Alert - Citizens Advice Consumer Service Christmas & New Year opening hours and Consumer Alert Emails](#)
- [Scam Alert - Consumer website Which? warns drivers to avoid search engines when downloading parking apps](#)
- [Scam Alert - Automated telephone cold calls claiming to be from Visa](#)

- [Information Alert - Stay safe from Loan Sharks](#)
- [Safety Alert - Gas Hob Elbow Joints Corrective Action Programme continues](#)
- [Recall Alert - Refresco Beverages UK Limited is recalling various Calypso & Asda branded 150ml juice drinks because the straws may be contaminated with metal, making them unsafe](#)
- [Recall Alert - Princes Group is recalling a number of Asda, Branston, Sainsburys and Tesco branded canned bean products because they may contain small rubber balls, making them unsafe to eat](#)
- [Recall Alert - Nomoy Pet Reptile Heat Lamps are being recalled as the dimensions of the plug face are non-compliant meaning they present a serious risk of electric shock](#)
- [Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold callers selling household products](#)
- [Scam Alert - Emails claiming to be from the National Crime Agency](#)
- [Cold Calling Alert - Telephone cold calls regarding loft insulation](#)
- [Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold caller claiming issues with properties' roof](#)
- [Scam Alert - Investment scams and fake cryptocurrency exchanges](#)
- [Cold Calling Alert - Doorstep cold callers in the Downham Market area](#)

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