

FRANSHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 6.30pm on Tuesday 17th May 2022 in the Village Hall.

The Chairman of the Parish Council was present, together District & County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris, with four parish councillors and the Clerk. There were no members of the public present.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were received from Cllr Russell James and PC Gilluley.

2. To accept the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021.

The minutes of the meeting held in 2021 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

3. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Chairman's report is attached. Cllr Sheringham took this opportunity to thank the Chairman for everything he did for the parish.

4. To receive a report from the County Councillor.

The report, as presented by C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris, is attached.

5. To receive a report from the District Councillor.

The report, as presented by D/Cllr Kiddle-Morris, is attached.

6. To receive a report from the Church Representative.

The report, as presented by Mr James Sheringham, is attached.

7. To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.

The report, as presented by Mr James Sheringham, is attached.

8. To receive a report from the Fransham in Relief Charity.

The report, as presented by Mr James Sheringham, is attached.

9. To receive a report from the Norfolk Constabulary.

The report, as presented by the Chairman on behalf of PC Gilluley, is attached.

10. To receive a report from Necton Church of England Primary School.

No report from the Necton School was received.

11. Open Forum - an opportunity for residents of the parish to express their views on matters of interest or concern relating to the village and to suggest ideas for the future.

There were no members of the public present and no matters were raised.

12. To note the date of the next Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 16th May 2023.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.08pm.

Fransham Parish Council – Chairman’s Report for 2021/22

As a new chair, I would firstly like to thank the clerk and vice-chair for their support and advice which has been invaluable during the year.

Following the relaxation in the Covid restrictions, it has been a more normal year for the council with more face-to-face meetings. We have also been able to enjoy more interaction with public members attending the meetings for various reasons. As a Council we encourage the members of the community we represent to have their say. We are pleased that we have been able to action requests that are within the power of the council, mainly with positive outcomes.

The regular meeting location for the council is the Village Hall, however, with extensive building work being undertaken the hall has not been available for our use. We have been very fortunate in the use of Curds Hall Barn and would like to thank Councillor Sheringham for this.

The council has implemented regular documented checks on the council’s assets. This includes, assessing their condition and reporting the results at each meeting. The system has shown its value as it has already highlighted an issue with one of the benches that wasn’t reported to the council. Since the report, and with considerable personal effort of a member of the council, the bench is now in great condition. Thank you Councillor Taylor. The efforts of some of the members of the council putting aside their free time should also be recognised with the procurement, storage and planting of some trees in different locations of the villages mainly in commemoration of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. We also acquired enough plants to repair the damaged hedge next to the bus shelter that was replaced. Thank you to those involved.

The council has nearly completed the necessary steps to achieve acceptance in the Local Quality Council Award Scheme, it is a structure which will assist the council to improve performance and confidence, with policies in place to ensure continuous development and drive a high standard of operation. Once again, this is only being achieved by the dedication of individuals within the council and assisted significantly by the clerk.

The council are continuing to try and reduce the use of smaller roads as unnecessary thoroughfares by HGV’s, it is proving to be a challenge, but we will endeavour to improve the safety our villages.

Planning is a constant item on the agenda of the meetings and the last twelve months have proved no different. As a council we are able to add a comment on the application and indeed we often put forward any views presented by either the council or members of the public. The comments are considered in the next stage of the planning application process and we are confident that our comments are considered.

The trod is mentioned at every meeting and although progress with repairs of minor damage and drainage has been made, as a council we are still sure that the overall quality can be improved, we will continue to seek that improvement.

Our remit only goes so far but if we can help, we will. If it is outside the scope of the parish council, we will endeavour to pass on your concern to the correct agency.

Finally, I would like to reinforce the point that we are representatives of the community. We all give freely our time to ensure the community has a voice. It is your views, comments, and questions that we are here to listen to and act upon.

Richard Watts
Chairman

Church Report 2021

Both Great and Little Fransham Churches have remained open throughout the Pandemic and services resumed when allowed. The dates, times and nature of the services are in the monthly Magazine.

With limited services and fund raising stopped the Parochial Church Council are again indebted to the Parish Council in the cutting of the churchyards, they have looked a credit to the village.

The Reverent Miriam Fife has now been installed as team rector of the Upper Nar Group of parishes which includes the Franshams and she is living in the rectory at Great Dunham.

Village Hall 2021

Thanks to kind donations, a Covid grant and some Covid payments for loss of income the Village Hall Committee has been able to:

- Treat and cure the floor and wall damp problems and improve the ventilation Install a new soak away and clear rainwater drains.
- Install new flooring in the kitchen, storeroom and lavatory's Improve the facilities in the lavatory's.
- Renew and bring the electricals up to current regulations Decorate inside and outside.
- A new fitted kitchen has been purchased and is being installed. This will enable all the kitchen goods and crockery etc to be stored there, to free up the storeroom to be utilized for other purposes perhaps bar or serving area.

Thank you for the Parish Council for organizing the trees to start the orchard, and ongoing work is going on to tidy up outside and around the Hall.

The Village Hall will now be suitable for renting out again soon. Huge thanks for everyone concerned especially the Spratt, Taylor, Long, Lake and Sheringham families.

Fransham in Relief Charity 2021

The Fransham Relief in Need Charity distributed 14 grants to beneficiaries and helped with funeral costs to parishioners of Great and Little Fransham. This is made possible from rent received from arable land within the parish.



NORFOLK
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NORFOLK CONSTABULARY REPORT

Norfolk Constabulary

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Commercial Road
Dereham
Norfolk NR19 1AE

Tel: 101
Mobile: 07766990802
Email: paula.gilluley@norfolk.pnn.police.uk

www.norfolk.police.uk
Non-Emergency Tel: 101

Fransham Parish Council

10 May 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your invitation for me to join you at the Fransham Annual Parish Meeting on 17th May 2022. I am unfortunately unable to attend in person but would like to offer the below annual report from Police.

We have recently had some officer moves, with Inspector Shaun Baker now in post as the Local Policing Command Inspector for Breckland North and PC Charlotte Anderson has joined PC Roger Benton as a Beat Manager for Dereham and its associated parishes.

We have also had a new Community Policing Team formed, made up of a Sergeant and 6 PCs. This team are based out of Dereham Police Station and its aim is to support local policing teams with neighbourhood issues and problems that require increased visibility, increased community engagement and increased enforcement by utilising the additional resources and specialist skills that the officers within the team have. This is all part of Chief Constable Paul Sandford's pledge that Norfolk Constabulary will be building on its strong foundations of protecting communities from harm with renewed focus on local Policing with officers becoming more visible in their communities.

Your Local Policing Team have always enjoyed a very close working relationship with the community and while we are still planning our community meetings carefully with emphasis on remaining safe, we are looking forward to more and more in-person meetings and social events. Our Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel Priority Setting Meetings have been booked for the remainder of 2022 with meetings scheduled for 13th July and 12th October, all starting at 7pm in the Breckland District Council Offices and online for those who cannot attend in person. If you would like to join us online please email me at EOBreckland@norfolk.pnn.police.uk and I will send you a link. We really hope you and your parishioners can join us.

Our officers are carrying out foot patrols across the area, targeting both high footfall areas where we can engage with our communities and Street Safe patrols; locations highlighted by the public as being areas where they feel unsafe using the StreetSafe/Police.uk website.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Fransham Parish Council, local community and businesses for their understanding and support during what has been undoubtedly a very difficult couple of years for everyone and we look forward to meeting with you in the coming months.

Very kind regards

Paula Gilluley, Kings Lynn & Breckland Community Engagement Officer

County Councillor for Necton and Launditch Division Report for 2021/2022

Overview 2021/22

- 70% of Norfolk streetlights converted, or work underway to convert to LED
- 96.7% of highways inspections completed within timescale
- 99.6% of dangerous highway defects dealt with within timescales set out in the Transport Asset Management Plan
- 94% of Looked after Children (LAC) with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan
- Completed 51,000 Adult Social Care Assessments for 20,700 people.

Highways: Maintenance of Norfolk's 9000km of roads and associated infrastructure was allocated £42m (revenue and capital) in the budget set in February 2021. The backlog of maintenance has largely been addressed by the team led by the local highway engineer. This has allowed for quicker resolution of defects, especially those which are urgent.

The public examination of the Development Consent Order (DCO) for the dualling of the A47 between Tuddenham and Easton concluded in February. The Planning Inspectorate will submit a report, with recommendations, to the Secretary of State (SoS) within 3 months. The SoS will then determine the DCO. If approved the scheme will relieve the daily congestion between Dereham and Norwich and allow sustainable economic growth and development.

Norfolk County Council has continued to work towards building a new road between the A47 (hopefully dualled) and the A1067 near Taverham at the junction with the Broadland Northway. This will stop the "rat running" through the villages between the 2 roads and reduce the traffic levels (especially HGVs) using the B1145 to access Kings Lynn.

Broadband: Hard to reach premises in Norfolk are to receive between £115m and £195m of funding as part of the Government's Project Gigabit to provide 1GB per second broadband to up to 119,000 premises. Contracts will be awarded from February 2022.

Rural homes and businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk will get next-generation gigabit broadband brought to them under a £5 billion plan to level up internet access across the UK. It means families no longer having to battle over bandwidth and will give people in rural areas the freedom to live and work more flexibly, with the speed and reliability needed to start and run businesses.

Flooding: A new single point of contact for flooding in Norfolk has been launched, allowing residents to report any sort of flooding quickly and efficiently. In the event of flooding residents can call 0344 800 8013 to report it. Alternatively, residents can continue to report flooding on NCCs website. The new number gives residents a single point of contact and allows reports to be made swiftly.

Different agencies respond to different types of flooding, which has historically made reporting a flood by telephone more complicated when and where it is not possible to ascertain the source of floodwaters. Where there is a potential risk to life from flooding people should still call 999 immediately.

Norfolk's Cabinet considered the allocation of the council's £1.5m Flood Reserve Fund to support urgent works, repairs and to enable recommendations from flood investigation reports. The Reserve Fund was set up in the annual budget for 2021/22 agreed by the County Council in their budget meeting in February.

The Cabinet meeting, held on 6th September, discussed the proposed allocation of the funding, including £695k for additional highway and ditch maintenance and £365k for drainage asset improvements. This funding will be used for work on the 285,864 metres of drainage grips and 31,037 metres of kerb drains on Norfolk's highways, as well as operations to clear some of the county's 145,305 gullies that help drain rainwater.

The Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance (NSFA), under the Chairmanship of General Lord Dannatt, has formally adopted an overall Strategy, designed to enable county wide responses to flooding across all agencies involved.

The Strategy, which lays out the NSFA's vision, objectives, approach and structure, is a major milestone in the development of the Alliance, which was founded earlier this year by the Council to bring together all agencies and partners involved in planning for and responding to flooding in Norfolk.

Adult Social Care: Plans to support Adult Social Services with the expected "winter pressures" have been unveiled.

A report was heard by Norfolk County Council's Cabinet in December saying that Adult Social Services across the country are facing unprecedented challenges. However, here in Norfolk practical solutions are being put in place.

The report said: 'Norfolk Adult Social Services face a level of unprecedented challenge in 2021/22 as a result of the pandemic, with national and local workforce shortages, rising demand in hospitals and the community and the continued infection risk posed by COVID-19 as well

as other recurring respiratory viruses such as flu. Adult Social Services received 20,279 calls for support between April and October this year – an increase of 9,400 over four years.

Action taken by the Council includes:

- Expanding action to support people at home or, where appropriate, in short term residential settings
- Stepping up the council's care recruitment campaign, to tackle staff shortages
- Providing wrap-around support for care settings
- Providing assistive technology, with 100 video phones sent out to homes
- Improving capacity in the Norfolk First Response service
- Supporting mental health services, with three new services

Norfolk County Council is taking a step closer to establishing a new integrated approach to health and care by agreeing their support for new local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships, putting local communities at the heart of health and care in their area. Under the new Health and Care Bill, Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are being established in all areas of the country to drive changes that are intended to lead to better, more joined-up care for the population. Much of the activity to deliver integrated health and care and improve the population's health will happen more locally in the places where people live and work, meaning the new Health and Wellbeing Partnerships will play a key role in driving forward this activity.

Schools and Children's Services: More than a dozen new primary schools could be needed in Norfolk in the next decade, to cater for growing pupil numbers in areas of development. A report to Norfolk County Council's Cabinet highlighted the scale of school development that is likely to be needed to support Norfolk's growing communities. It addresses both demographic changes and population growth from new housing. The report, discussed by members on 31st January, provided a snapshot of the council's plans to ensure there are sufficient school places for Norfolk children aged four to 16. Alongside district councils, the County Council expects to secure nearly £100m in developer contributions for the proposed new and extended schools but if all the places are needed, a further £191m would need to be found. Some of this will be met by Community Infrastructure Levy and government grant contributions. Most children in care in Norfolk are well looked after and receive good support for their emotional and mental health and education, Ofsted inspectors have found. A team of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited Norfolk County Council in October for a two-day focused visit of the council's services for children in its care. In a letter detailing their findings, inspectors said that social workers know their children well,

listen to them and help them to understand their experiences. Ofsted's visit follows a similar focused visit in 2019, which looked at how the council responds to child safeguarding calls and referrals. Following that visit, inspectors described the quality of decision making as "consistently strong".

The 2022/23 Budget: Council tax was set at the meeting of Council in February and was increased by 2.99%; 1.99% increase in the general rate and a 1% increase in the adult social care budget.

Adult social services will see an additional £35.4m of investment against savings of £10.5m. Children's services will receive a further £23.2m, with a further £10m this year for the SEND school programme.

Community and Environmental Services will receive an additional £11.2m; there will be a £10m pothole fund, new recycling centres across the county, £5m on library upkeep and extension of services and £12m on the Better Broadband project.

The councilors personal budget of £10k will continue for 22/23.

Your County Councilor: The Necton and Launditch division covers around 80 square miles of rural Norfolk and is the 3rd largest division in the county. It consists of 22 parishes which have between them 19 parish councils, 2 parish meetings and one parish administered by the district councilor.

As well as attending as many parish council meetings in the evening as I am able, I also attend meetings at County Hall and other informal meetings from home using Teams. At County Hall I attend meetings of full Council, and am a member of the Scrutiny Committee, the People and Communities Select Committee and the Audit Committee. Additionally, I am Chair of the Councils Standards Committee and Chair of the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Sub Panel. I am also a substitute member of the Planning (Regulatory) Committee. Using Teams, I attend the Adult Social Care Performance Review Panel and regularly have conference calls with officers and other members to discuss matters affecting my division.

Mark Kiddle-Morris,

Member for Necton and Launditch Division.
Norfolk County Council.

Breckland Council

Achievement highlights 2021/22



Overview

Breckland Council is an organisation that cares, listens, and supports people and businesses within our district. We are working for everyone in our area, especially those who need our help the most.

We are proud of our area, and through driving investment and enabling opportunities, we can maximise its full potential. We want to inspire aspiration to live, work, visit, or do business here: we want our district to be one of choice.

Our Corporate Plan brings together our strategic priorities the coming years and outlines what we'll do to make a difference in Breckland to ensure it is a place where people and businesses can thrive.

This document outlines some of the projects we have delivered in 2021-22 against our overarching commitments and priorities.

These priorities are grouped across four key themes:

Inspiring Communities

We want to build on the many strengths of our local communities so that people can lead happy, healthy, fulfilling lives here. Working collaboratively with our partners, as part of a community-led approach, we will work to address vulnerability in Breckland. Covid-19 has left a lasting effect on our communities, and we are committed to supporting our residents and businesses to recover from the pandemic and support them in adjusting to life with covid in the longer term.

- *Thriving Places*

Each of our five town centres are different. We will lead and enable strategic and focused action within each of them and their hinterlands, working with key stakeholders and partners to drive investment and change that will help the towns thrive now and in the future.

- *Breckland 2035*

We will lead by example as an organisation taking action to reduce our own impact and achieving net zero emissions by 2035. We recognise that we cannot achieve this alone. Therefore, we will use our resources and regulatory powers to create an environment in which our residents and other key stakeholders are enabled to act for themselves in contributing to this agenda.

- *Working Smarter*

As a performance-led organisation, we will use data to strengthen our organisational intelligence to inform our decisions, so we make the right choices at the right times. We are evolving our approach to delivering services to become a modern organisation which is set up to best meet the changing needs of our

customers. Adopting an agile working approach will enable us to break down the barriers of site-specific working and empower officers and members to work at the location and time that meets business demand and best supports the delivery of high-quality services.

Finally, we are excited to share our **Breckland Cares** programme for the first time, which is made up of seven campaigns delivered over a rolling 12-month programme. The campaign will shine a light on several passions of ours, including mental health, diversity and inclusion, and climate change.



Inspiring Communities

Breckland Council will help our residents to live safe and healthy lives by playing an active part in local communities. We will do this by providing and enabling excellent services that understand and support the needs of our residents and local areas, enhancing the quality of life for all.

What we've delivered in 2021/22:

- Invested £1.8m in the creation of a brand-new **temporary accommodation facility in Thetford** (Elm House) to help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. And have now begun work in partnership with Broadland Housing to provide five new units of 'move-on' accommodation, with intensive support, for people who have been sleeping rough.
- Commissioned by Mid-Norfolk Primary Care Network to deliver **social prescribing services**, helping over 300 residents through holistic support to improve their health and wellbeing.
- 30 community groups are now able to offer enhanced services to their communities through the **Inspiring Communities match funding scheme**, leveraging in over £250,000 to the district.
- Introduced **Breckland Mobile Food Store**, launching in April 2022, providing subsidised food to those most in need, with additional support mechanisms in place to address wider wellbeing issues such as social isolation and loneliness
- Created the **Early Intervention Fund** to provide financial support to individuals in extreme financial hardship to prevent them reaching crisis point.
- Boosted our **mental health** offer by **training 100 mental health champions** as part of our Mental Health Community Partnership scheme and continue to arrange and deliver mental health training across the district with partners including MIND, YANA and NSFT.
- Worked with partners such as the **Daisy** project to support survivors of **domestic abuse** and sexual violence and to help raise awareness.
- Developed a new and exciting partnership with Creative Arts East to

transform the delivery of our popular **Silver Social programme**, extending the offer in local communities

- Established a Grants and Adaptations Team to work with residents who require **adaptations** to enable them to stay in their own homes. So far, they have delivered 24 projects with a further 246 ongoing.
- Continued to offer residents a high level of service from the **Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)** team who received praise for their work with one resident who suffers from Motor Neurone Disease. This resulted in the team's work being praised on BBC breakfast.
- Supported **Breckland Youth Advisory Board (YAB)**, to deliver **mental health support** to Breckland families with young people aged 11 to 18 who are awaiting treatment or at risk or not attending school due to their mental health through the Cup-O-T Service.
- Played a key role in **responding to the pandemic**, including recruiting a team of Covid Support Officers to engage with businesses and members of the public to ensure compliance with national guidance and offer advice. Also engaging with partners to set up and operate district **asymptomatic testing** (walk in lateral flow tests), supported vaccination centres, promoted vaccination availability, engaged with major employers to manage **infection control** risks and **investigated Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)** to ensure that there was no threat to public safety.
- Continued our **crackdown on littering, fly tipping, and abandoned cars**, raising awareness of our no-tolerance approach and resulting in a significant number of fixed penalty notices being issued to deter others from offending in the future



Thrivng Places

Breckland Council will play an active role in creating the right conditions for new and existing local businesses to thrive. We will continue to support growth in the local economy, bringing forward and shaping large-scale projects and activities, which will unlock significant employment and housing opportunities.

What we've delivered in 2021/22:

- Began construction work of a new **£3.5m electricity substation in Snetterton**, which will enable businesses to grow at Snetterton Heath, protecting and creating jobs in the district
- Supported Homes England to hold public engagement events on the **Attleborough SUE**, with a design code, structure plan, and strategies now being developed to deliver quality housing
- Transformed old waste ground in Dereham into a beautiful new community

space called **EllenorFenn Garden**.

- Improved the local area by overseeing the purchase and removal of an unsightly **boat from Thetford river**, a move supported by local businesses and communities.
- Determined 89% of minor or major **planning applications** within our specified timescales.
- Increased the housing stock for local residents with **two new housing developments** in Attleborough and Mileham.
- Engaged with over 20,000 residents as part of the **Future Breckland** project, to identify significant projects that can be delivered for our five market towns to help them bounce back from the challenges of covid-19 and build a strong and sustainable economy for the future.
- Supported over 300 local businesses to achieve **covid Safe Scheme accreditation**. The scheme recognises businesses in the district which have put measures in place to help protect their staff and customers from coronavirus and provide reassurance to local residents and visitors that they can shop safely.
- Supported 45 enterprises through the **Breckland Business Start-up Scheme**, helping them with funding and support to set up and begin a business because of covid.
- Created an innovative **Spring Back Programme** which has supported over 1360 businesses and provided over £4.5m of investment into the most vulnerable and in need areas of the economy.
- Applied for round one of the **Levelling up Fund** - a highly commended bid was made for £17m of investment in Phase 1. No issues were identified by Civil Servants in their analysis, and its strong logic and excellent value for money (Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) were commended.
- Worked with the council's leisure provider to help **leisure centres recover** post-covid lockdowns and enable ongoing services for the wellbeing of local residents.
- Better equipped businesses to reach customers that are declining in numbers on the high streets and across the district by improving their digital platforms through the **Digital Breckland Fund**.
 - Launched a new **Commercial Waste Service** and have already launched over 200 bins, providing a flexible, cost-effective service whilst also generating an income.
 - Invested in our resources for animal licensing, with Breckland taking a lead role on investigating welfare standards, tackling 'puppy farms' etc.
 - Supported our commercial tenants through difficult times during covid with **rent deferrals and lease variations**

Breckland 2035

Breckland Council has recognised that there is a climate emergency that needs our urgent attention. As a result we have created our 'Breckland 2035' Sustainability Strategy, which sets out the direction of how we play an active role in mitigating its impact.

What we've delivered in 2021/22:

- Launched our **Sustainability Strategy** setting out how we will work with residents, businesses and partners to effect positive behavioural change that will lead to Breckland becoming a sustainable rural district in the country.
- Grown our **garden waste service**, which now covers nearly 25,000 residents.
- To keep our streets safe and save energy costs, we have supported the replacement of 133 streetlights within the district with more energy efficient **LED bulbs**.
- Released around £100k through our **Community Green Grants** scheme. The fund was set up to support communities in Breckland to take action for themselves and promote environmental sustainability, create behavioural change in response to climate change, and encourage communities to take positive action. Some of the projects funded include:
 - Croxton Parish Council to install EV charging points at their site
 - Purchase of battery storage for solar power at a village hall
 - Charles Burrell Centre replace lights with LED to reduce impact and cost
 - A water management scheme in Blo Norton, including a pond and reed bed filtration system
 - Several schools to create wildlife gardens and/or allotments
 - A variety of organisations including parish councils, community groups to install bat and bird boxes.
 - The community trust at Elm House (our new temporary accommodation facility) enabled to **create vegetable gardens** to help residents at sites to grow their own food
 - Harris Hardware in Dereham to carry out a **re-use and repair scheme** for residents
 - Kickstart Norfolk to buy **five electric mopeds** to provide young people with transport
- Worked with the leisure centre provider to **install environmentally-friendly measures**, such as LED lighting and pool covers to retain heat. These are due to installation imminently.
- Developed plans to **plant hundreds of trees** in the district as part of our commitment to protect and enhance the Breckland environment, as well as support the national green canopy initiative for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Working Smarter

We put our residents and businesses at the heart of everything we do. Prior to the pandemic, Breckland Council committed to a significant transformation programme to change the way its members and officers undertake their respective roles. The outcome will allow us to continually improve the delivery of services, make better use of space and resources, and future-proof the organisation - enabling us to operate as a modern council. Ultimately, this will make the organisation more efficient and effective while continuing to operate within our established budget.

What we've delivered in 2021/22:

- Worked in partnership with councils in north and west Norfolk to deliver a **new waste and recycling collection service**, along with street cleansing and grounds maintenance.
- Launched an **online chatbot** to allow residents a fully automated and 24-hour way of interacting with the Council and its services. The impact of this is already being seen with 80% of our live chat interactions now being automated allowing us to focus on calls.
- Successfully delivered and implemented the **Agile Working Policy** - fundamentally changing the council's approach to how and where we work.
- Continued to increase **mental health awareness** and support within the organisation through awareness sessions for managers and increasing the number of mental health first aiders within the organisation.
- Made our **website more accessible** than ever and are now ranked 14th out of 406 local authorities and public bodies in terms of accessibility. We are ensuring there are no barriers that prevent interaction with us due to a disability, bandwidth or speed.
- Added more **digital forms** to our website to make it easier and more efficient to contact us. We've received around 35,000 completed forms in the past 12 months.
- **Reviewed our Customer, Housing, Communities, Finance, Human Resources and Environmental Health teams** to ensure that they can offer the best possible service to residents within the district.
- Re-written our **Recruitment Policy** to include the Armed Forces Covenant and to make us a better disability employer. This is so we continue to be a diverse hiring organisation and that can attract all candidates.
- Re-established governance procedures to operate as a single council after **ending our partnership with South Holland District Council**, including establishing practices needed to ensure that the council could continue to operate democratically as a single organisation.
- Expanded our **Contracts and Procurement Team** and now offer expert procurement and contract support to a total of five Councils within Norfolk

and Lincolnshire.

- Successfully held the district's **first major election** since the start of the pandemic, which saw the adoption of new health and safety measures whilst also continuing to deliver a fair and transparent election for residents across the district.
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