

Great Yarmouth Borough Council continues to seek to support and improve the life chances and aspirations of everyone who lives and works in the borough.

It does this via four strategic priorities:

- A strong and growing Economy
- Improved Housing and strong communities
- A quality and sustainable environment
- An efficient and effective council

Working with key partners, businesses, business improvement districts and individuals across its communities, Great Yarmouth Borough Council continues to lead positive change towards its goals of producing a dynamic, vibrant economy and capitalising on the drive towards clean growth and net-zero economy.

The council has successfully secured a Town Deal of £20.1m Government investment to deliver an exciting £60m vision supporting economic regeneration, recovery, jobs and growth across the borough's main urban areas.

This will be bolstered by the news received at the end of 2023 that the Government – as part of its focus on towns - has allocated the council an additional £20m of funding for work in the borough.

Plans to regenerate the North Quay continue after a successful Levelling Up Fund bid for £20m for the area. The ambition is the funding will help the council extend, amplify and build on other major projects already planned or underway.

The exciting vision to revitalise the town centre is focused around re-introducing more residential use, making better use of cultural heritage and historic buildings - highlighted by the work underway to create a stunning new £17m university campus and learning centre in the former Palmers department store in Great Yarmouth market place, in partnership with the University of Suffolk, East Coast College and Norfolk County Council.

The learning centre will complement the successful delivery of the innovative £6.3m new, greener covered market, operating at capacity with 29 stalls, activities space and events to drive town centre footfall coupled with major work to revamp and revitalise public space around the market.

The High Street Heritage Action Zone is now starting to show the benefits of innovative investments in the borough's heritage and tourism economy, with the regeneration of 15 listed buildings and 30 heritage assets.

Planning permission has also been secured and £12m of National Lottery Heritage Fund finance announced to create an £18m package to transform the historic Grade II\* listed Winter Gardens on Great Yarmouth seafront into a "people's palace" predicted to increase visitor numbers by 300,000 a year in a nationally significant project.

And on the Golden Mile, the new £26m Marina Centre wellbeing and fitness centre is operating successfully for residents and visitors.

The council continues to demonstrate the power of working collaboratively, with close partnerships with central Government, the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Norfolk County Council bringing a total of £240m of investment to the borough, including the third river crossing - the Herring Bridge - which opened early in 2024, and an offshore operation and maintenance campus that will confirm the borough as a natural base for the burgeoning offshore wind sector.

The Town Deal Board and its vision for the borough's 'Our Place is Your Stage' continues to strengthen the collective energy that exists across all our partners, from statutory agencies to voluntary, community and social enterprises, and businesses from global players to local start-ups.

The council continues to deepen strong relationships with health and social care partners including Norfolk Public Health, the NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Partnership, Great Yarmouth & Waveney Place Board and the Great Yarmouth Health and Wellbeing Partnership. The council is additionally supporting the James Paget University Hospital with its new state-of-the-art build and intends to maximise new opportunities through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and a potential County Deal for Norfolk.

The council has a balanced budget, working tirelessly and creatively to find £1.7m of savings for 2024/25 while delivering a £300m investment programme. And it has in-sourced waste and street scene services into a wholly owned LATCo, delivering efficiencies alongside investment in a £2m green fleet strategy and roll out of Norfolk's first electric refuse collection vehicle.

All of this strengthens Great Yarmouth Borough Council's ability to work strategically while continuing to deliver high-quality services for residents.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Cllr James Bensly