

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
NORFOLK INVESTMENT
FRAMEWORK
May 2022



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Foreword

The Norfolk Investment Framework is the result of collaboration with a wide range of organisations who I would like to thank for their contributions and their continued support.

This is a significant piece of work which seeks to achieve a step-change in pay, productivity and skills, to drive sustainable growth in the county over the medium to long term.

At its heart is a new, comprehensive evidence base for the Norfolk economy – analysis of which has led to the identification of four of the most significant challenges the county faces today.

By focussing our investments in a few key areas, rather than spreading our efforts too thinly, we can maximise Norfolk’s potential.

In the Framework, the four challenges are broken down into the types of practical interventions we could take - so that it’s clear what success would look like.

Graham Plant

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Growing the Economy, Norfolk County Council

Chair of the NIF Steering Committee

Purpose of the Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF)

The NIF will allow Norfolk to self-determine long-term investment priorities and ensure the collective benefits of those investments are shared by all residents.

Norfolk has a very successful track record in bidding for and securing large-scale grant funding. The County Council, Norfolk's seven districts, the New Anglia LEP, our universities, research institutes, skills partners and voluntary organisations have all punched above their weight and secured significant grant funding from the UK Government and European Union.

However, government grant funding packages often come with short-term, politically steered objectives, pre-determined project outcomes and tight delivery deadlines; or are assessed by very specific criteria that can sometimes limit the ambitions of projects. This can stymie innovation.

Norfolk's challenges and opportunities are multifaceted and require long-term, steady investment, alongside short bursts of grant funding.

If our collective efforts could be coalesced around a small number of medium-term priorities, and steady investment secured, we believe the benefits to the County could be transformative.

The NIF sets out medium-term investment priorities which reflect Norfolk's unique economic, social, spatial and environmental dynamics. By establishing these priorities, committing to them through the NIF and communicating them widely, we hope:

- A wider range of potential project sponsors from across the private and public sector will be inspired to work on innovative projects for the good of Norfolk
- By establishing our priorities and committing to them, investment in development time for more complex projects will be de-risked
- Multi-disciplinary and innovative projects will become more common as traditional policy silos for funding are broken
- New sources of private investment capital will be drawn to Norfolk as innovative practical solutions are trialled and Norfolk's reputation for public service innovation becomes more widely known.

How the NIF was developed

Over 50 organisations helped us to shape the NIF. They include small and large businesses, infrastructure owners, utilities, digital incubators, research parks, universities, FE colleges, voluntary sector organisations and cultural bodies.

The creation of the NIF has been a collective effort. The framework and priorities within have been shaped thanks to input from a wide cross-section of the Norfolk community.

Our starting point was the establishment of a robust evidence base of qualitative and quantitative data that assessed Norfolk against its peers and unpicked economic and socioeconomic dynamics in the County.

We followed that with a series of collaborative workshops to debate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Norfolk from an array of perspectives.

Alongside this, over 30 individual consultations were held with individuals from across the public, private, voluntary, education and charitable sectors.

A Steering Committee oversaw the development of the NIF, and will continue to champion, monitor and lead calls for projects going forward. The Steering Committee is committed to unlocking transformative investment for Norfolk.

NIF Steering Group Members

- Alan Hopley, Voluntary Norfolk
- Andrew Dernie, Norwich Town Deal Board
- Chris Sargisson, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce
- CJ Green, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- Claire Cullens, Norfolk Community Foundation
- Cllr Blunt, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Council
- Cllr Claussen, Breckland Council
- Cllr Copplestone, South Norfolk and Broadland Council
- Cllr Kershaw, North Norfolk Council
- Cllr Plant, Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council
- Cllr Stonard, Norwich City Council
- Corrienne Peasgood, City College Norwich
- David Pomfret, College of West Anglia
- Dr Nick Goodwin, Norwich Research Park
- Duncan Baker, MP for North Norfolk
- Helen Wilson, New Anglia Cultural Board
- Henry Cator, Great Yarmouth Town Deal Board
- James Bullion, Norfolk County Council - Adult Services
- Julia Nix, Department for Work and Pensions
- Keith Moore, Environment Agency
- Martin Dronfield, All Energy Industry Council
- Pete Waters, Visit East Anglia
- Prof Fiona Lettice, University of East Anglia
- Prof Simon Ofield-Kerr, Norwich University of the Arts
- Sara Tough, Norfolk County Council - Children's Services
- Steve Miller, Norfolk County Council - Community, Culture and Heritage
- Tim Robinson, Tech East
- Vicky Ethridge, King's Lynn Town Deal Board

Overview of Norfolk today

An area of great opportunity with some deeply rooted challenges.

Norfolk covers an area of 5,400 square kilometres and is home to over 900,000 people. It is the fifth largest county in England on spatial terms but ranks 25th largest by population. It is a largely rural county with market towns, beautiful coastline and the city of Norwich, which has been going through a resurgence in recent years.

The County's foundational economy was built on agriculture and manufacturing. While both remain important sectors there has been significant diversification into clean energy, financial services, biology-led research and production, and culture and the arts. Today the economy generates £19bn of GVA per annum.

For many years, the area was a magnet for people retiring and moving out of large cities, primarily London and the Southeast. Lower relative house prices and the high quality of life were a compelling draw and continue to be so. Since the pandemic, this pattern has accelerated; however, Norfolk's new residents are younger in age, with many continuing to work remotely or setting up new businesses.

The area track record in drawing in major private capital investment is under-recognised. In recent years, billions of private capital has been invested in projects, infrastructure and businesses across the county.

These include off-shore wind farms and on-shore operations, residential fibre broadband, expanded quays at the Port of Great Yarmouth, expansion of Norfolk Research Park and investment into its onsite businesses, creation of new research facilities including the Smart Emerging Technology Institute and Digi Tech Factory as well as expanded Norwich-based operations by large firms like Aviva. The Norwich to Cambridge Tech corridor will stimulate further investment in the area.



Economy

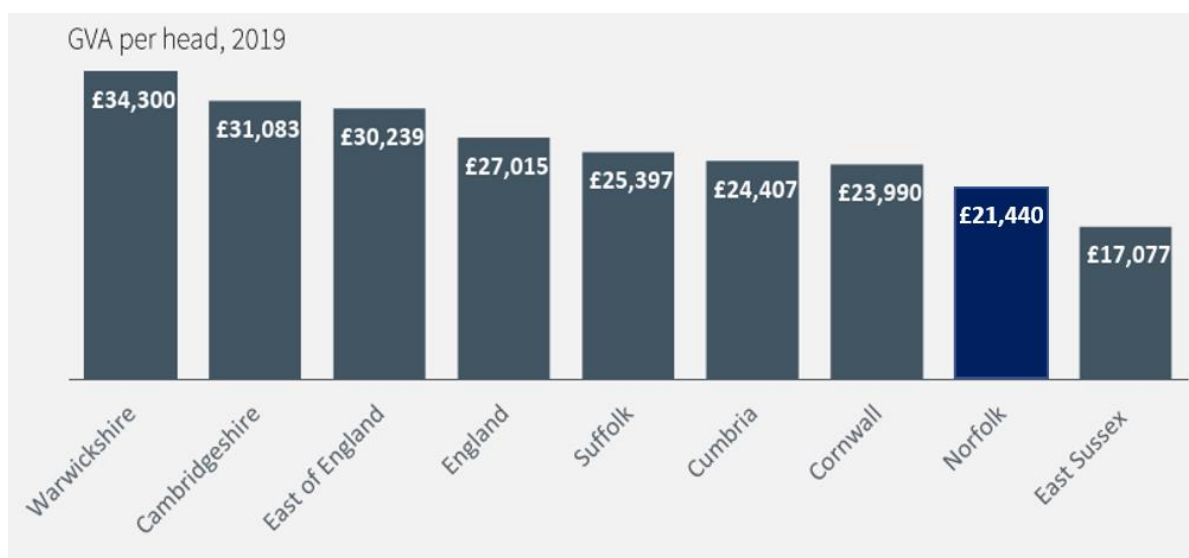
A large economy at £19bn with potential to expand.

Norfolk's economy is sizeable, however its per capita GVA is much lower at £21k when compared to similar regions and the national average of £27k. This is explained by the legacy strength of lower-GVA generating sectors, such as manufacturing and agriculture, that have suffered productivity declines over the last decade. It is also explained by the fact that Norfolk's resident-to-job ratio is low at 0.4 meaning there is an insufficient number of jobs to sustain the population. This will become more problematic as the population grows.

Norfolk's rates of business and job creation lag behind national average at 13% for business creation (against 29% nationally) and 9% for job creation (against 14%). These county-level statistics mask significant regional variation.

Thanks to the booming offshore wind cluster, Great Yarmouth, a relatively deprived coastal town, generates £1.8bn of GVA. Meanwhile Norwich is becoming an extremely competitive city with a burgeoning data science cluster, fin-tech start-ups, research institute and an array of cultural and arts attractions. 20% of Norfolk's GVA is generated in Norwich alone.

If this current momentum is built on, and Norfolk's GVA per capita approaches the England average, the economy could generate a net additional £5bn per year, a 25% increase. This would require multi-pronged effort to create new businesses and jobs, attract more large companies into Norfolk, smartly leverage major investments like offshore wind, and above all, support Norfolk's residents to upskill and take advantage of these opportunities. Success will not be achieved just with a net increase in GVA, but when the new opportunities are accessible by all residents.



Place

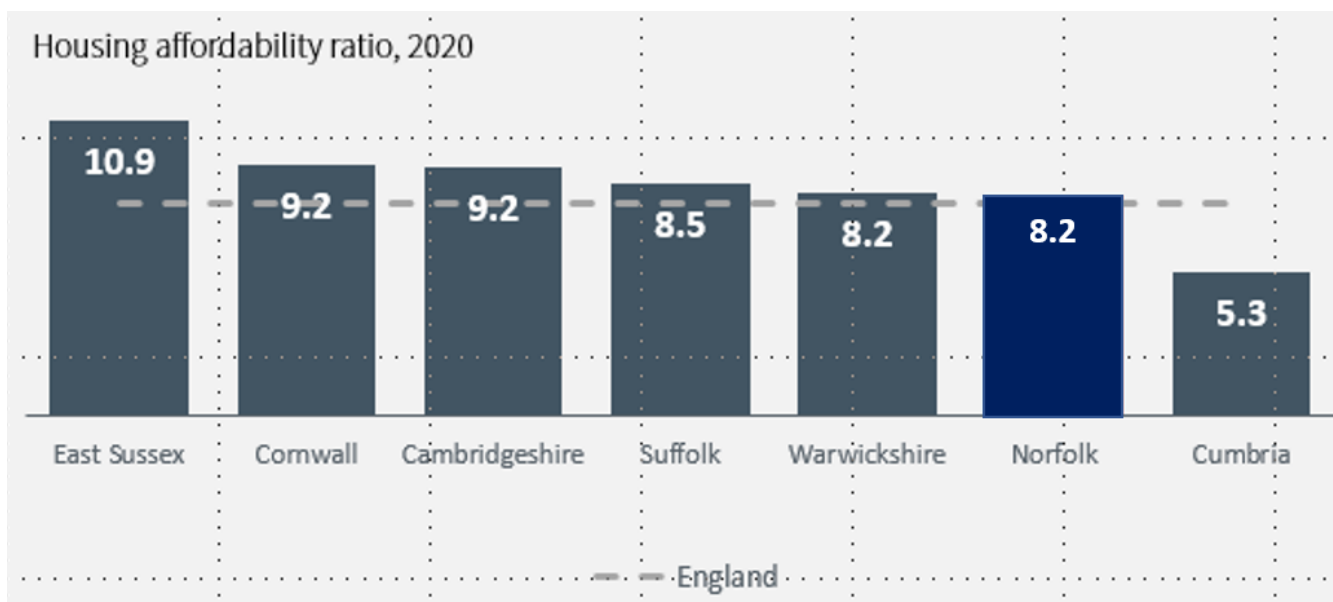
A diversity of communities that offer a high quality of life.

Norfolk is a large county with spatially distant villages, market towns and the city of Norwich. It is this variety that makes it a popular place to live with high life satisfaction scores by residents. Students that come from out-of-county to Norfolk's universities have higher retention rates than many other universities.

One of the benefits is the lower relative cost of housing. The median house price in Norfolk is £240k against the England average of £250k. However, the lower wages earned by many residents means that the ratio of median house-price to median earnings (house-price affordability ratio) is higher in Norfolk than other regions – and is higher than the England average. Yet another reason why it is so important to support residents to increase average earnings.

Like many other semi-rural parts of the UK, there has been a systematic lack of investment in infrastructure including public transport, digital connectivity and roads. Some of these are being tackled and fibre is being rolled out across the county.

However, issues remain with water and energy services on development sites. The County is also more vulnerable to climate-related events, in particular fluvial and coastal flooding. It is this vulnerability that has motivated the County to declare a 2030 target to become net zero.



Overview of the NIF

Our NIF is based around four Grand Challenges. Norfolk's Grand Challenges are difficult but important problems, framed to convene cross-disciplinary collaborations and interconnected solutions. The Grand Challenges were shaped through the extensive Evidence Base and consultation. They are interrelated and interdependent, so the convergence of related solutions and innovative approaches can have cascading and compounding effects over time.

Norfolk's four Grand Challenges are:

1. To create **new opportunities for Norfolk's residents** by increasing skills and labour market dynamism
2. Provide **effective and efficient public services** to a spatially dispersed population
3. Strengthen and future-proof **business clusters** to grow the economy
4. Protect Norfolk's economic and natural assets from **climate change**

In the NIF, two Thematic Objectives are established for each Grand Challenge. These frame Norfolk's short to medium-term objectives for each Grand Challenge. The Thematic Objectives are intended to signal areas of interest and project types to future project sponsors, well in advance of specific calls for projects. Investment Criteria will be set by the individual grant/funding programmes, as has always been the case.

Grand Challenge 1: Skills Aspirations

Create **new opportunities** for residents by **increasing skills** and **labour market dynamism**



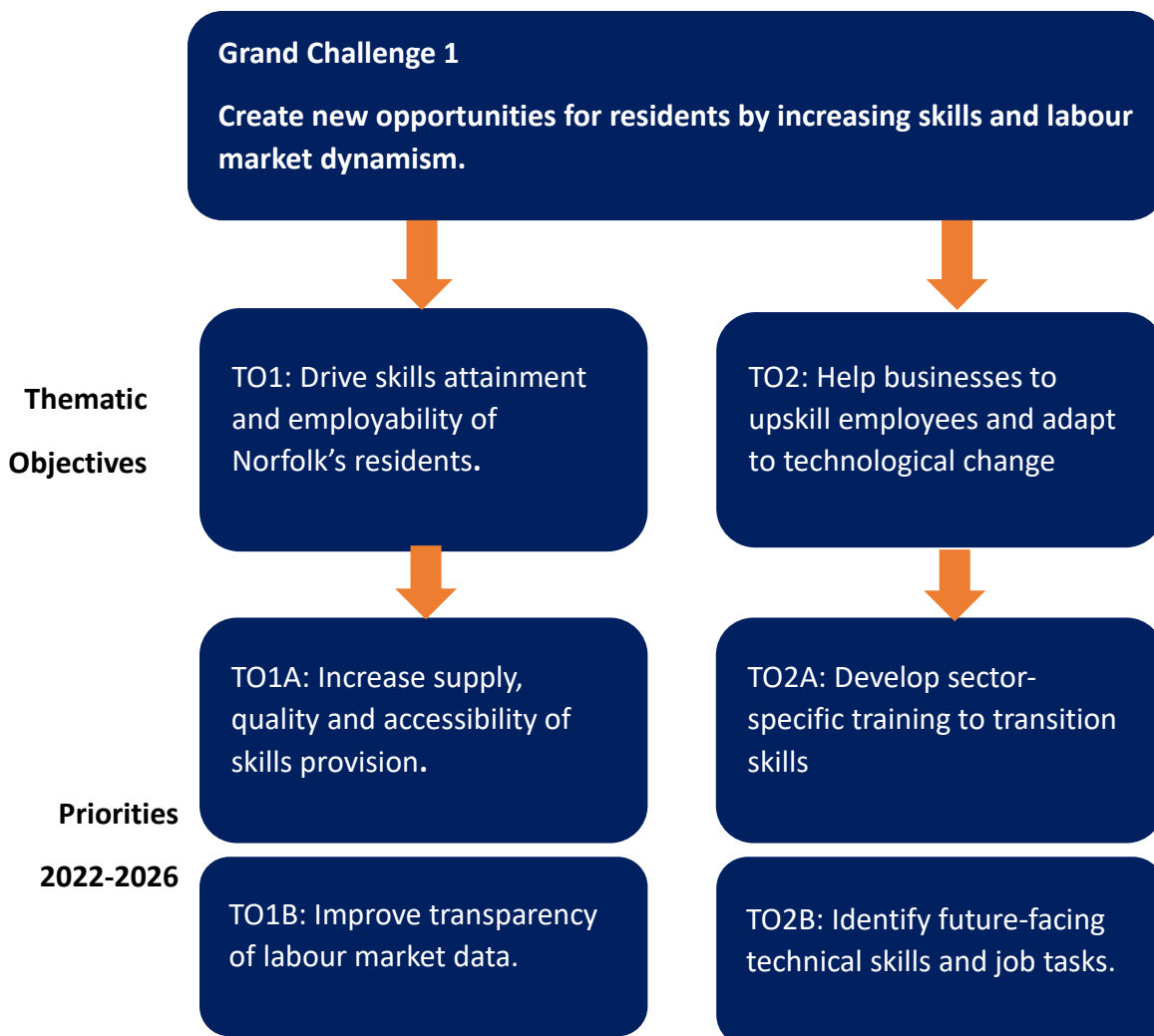
The Skills Grand Challenge

We seek innovative approaches and projects for investment that support Norfolk’s residents to increase skills, from formal educational attainment (with a particular emphasis on NVQ4+), to industry-specific micro-courses in coding and data science.

Norfolk has strong higher and further education institutions that serve the community well. We will continue to support HE and FE expansion of programmes and outreach through the NIF. However, we understand the way people learn is becoming more flexible and adaptive to individual needs. We also understand that in a predominantly rural county, it can be difficult for people to attend institutions in person and there is need for flexible and online learning.

Our mission is to fund approaches and programmes that will help our residents expand their skills in areas that open opportunities in new sectors and jobs and increase wages. We also want to align those skills with the requirements of Norfolk’s current and future businesses, for instance in areas such as green collar jobs and computational data design.

To achieve this, we will be focused on two Thematic Objectives.



Thematic Objective 1: Drive skills attainment and employability of Norfolk's residents

TO1A. Increase supply, quality and accessibility of skills provision

We seek projects that increase the supply, quality or accessibility of skills provision. This includes innovative delivery mechanisms to upskill and re-skill in-work and out of work adults.

Illustrative examples

- Innovative approaches to life-long learning, targeted at Norfolk's adults, in economically important skills areas
- Creation of flexible apprenticeships that allow part-time work
- Training offer to support employees who are carers (1 in 5 people) and employers (family/carer-friendly policies)
- Projects that aim to unlock the skills of migrants and refugees
- Projects that scale-up adult literacy training via volunteers

TO1B. Improve transparency of labour market data

We seek projects that increase or improve the availability of transparent labour market information. An individual's decision to invest in skills can be aided by transparent information on job opportunities and future earnings potential.

Illustrative examples

- Digital job matching platform to create a Norfolk-wide jobs matching engine for full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs
- Career development skills platform, linking courses to the higher value jobs they can lead to
- Pre-employment support package (eg myth-busting about sectors, experience days for employers etc)
- Availability of median salary information for current and new-economy jobs

Thematic Objective 2: Help businesses to upskill employees and adapt to technological change

TO2A. Sector-wide transition skills

We seek projects that will work with businesses on a sector-basis to upskill employees, transition skills and future-proof jobs and businesses.

Illustrative examples

- Sector-based programmes run on behalf of groups of employers on adoption of new technologies and skills
- Support for workers to transition skills and secure better paying jobs where automation is a risk

TO2B. Identify future-facing technical skills and jobs

We seek projects that will work with Norfolk's leading businesses and research institutes to identify future-facing technical skills and jobs. As new clusters and ways of working emerge, there will be a host of new skills required of future workers.

Illustrative examples

- Research on the new skills and jobs required to support green-collar jobs
- Development of skills training programmes for jobs of tomorrow (e.g., biological materials)

Grand Challenge 2: Public Services

Provide effective and efficient **public services** to a spatially dispersed population



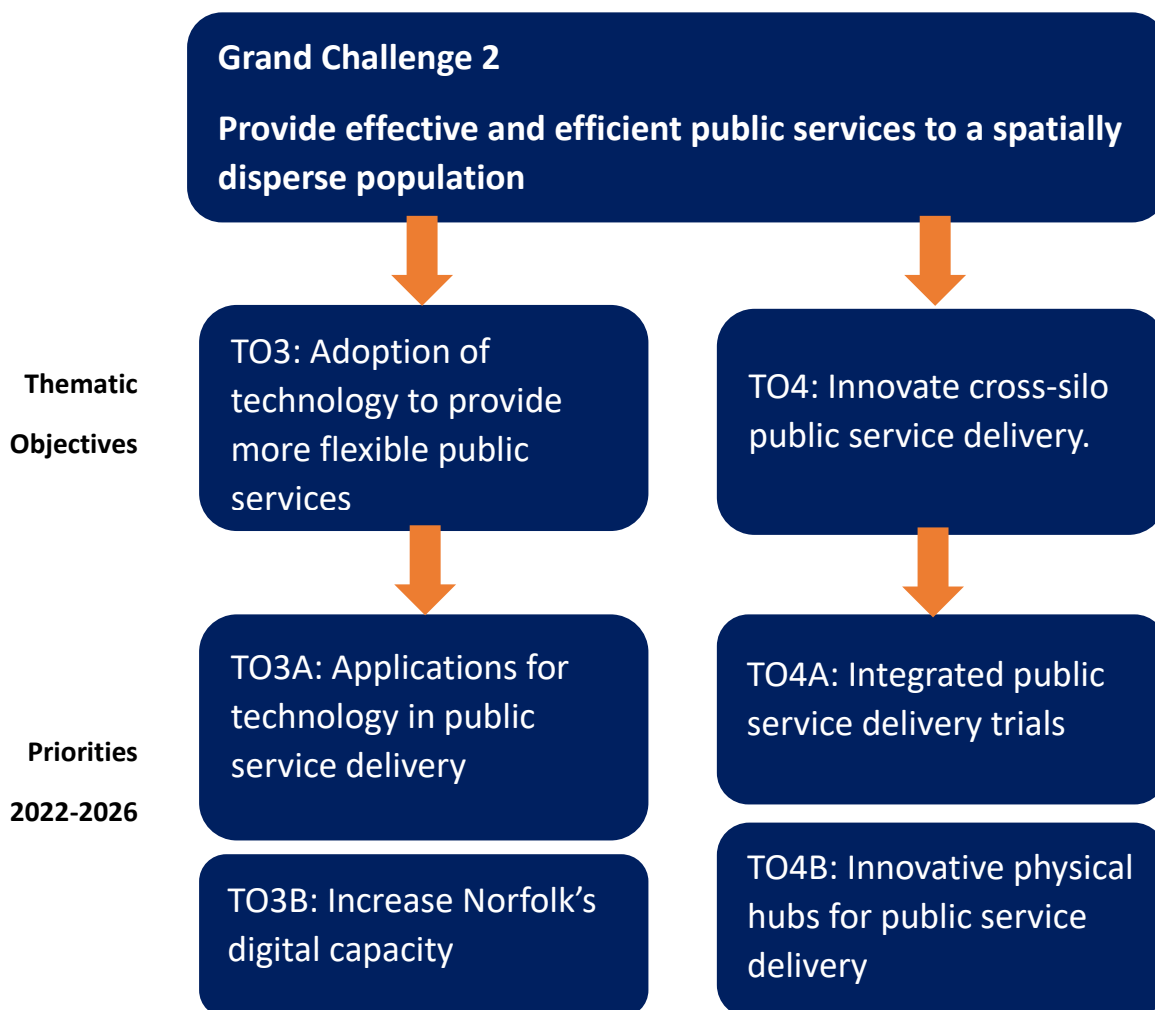
The Public Services Grand Challenge

We seek innovative approaches and projects for investment that support Norfolk to provide public services to our residents in more flexible and responsive ways. Public services refer to all services provided by public sector agencies including social care, education, health and council services.

Over the next ten years, the population of Norfolk is forecast to grow by 14%, which is significantly higher than the England median forecast growth rate of 5%. This means that the volume of public services required to support the population will increase at a time when central government budgetary allocations are unlikely to grow at a proportionate rate. Norfolk will be under greater pressure to do more with limited resources.

This provides an opportunity to consider how technologies designed for other domains can be applied to public services and provide better flexibility to end-users, enable the creation of new, proactive public services and support Norfolk's residents and public service workers to live a good quality of life.

To achieve this, we will be focused on two



Thematic Objective 3: Adoption of technology to provide greater flexibility in delivery of public services

TO3A. Applications for use of technology in public service delivery

We seek projects that strengthen public service delivery for residents (in circumstances where it is appropriate) through use of new technologies, many of which will be digital based. The use of digital and remote devices should augment or improve public service delivery and not simply replace human interfaces.

Illustrative examples

- Use of technology to overcome communication barriers, such as hearing impairment, and language barriers
- Supply of and orientation on digital devices that enable older and vulnerable residents to remain independent
- Provision of support groups, and targeted support, through online meeting platforms

TO3B. Increase Norfolk's digital capacity

We seek projects that improve Norfolk's underlying digital infrastructure and capacity. This includes increasing broadband speeds, connecting rural households and businesses, and improving the capacity of Norfolk's residents and businesses to make use of the infrastructure.

Illustrative examples

- Using the public estate to enable fibre connectivity in more rural locations
- Introduction of public Wi-Fi on high streets and public buildings to create area-wide hotspot
- Launching accessible learning for non-digital native residents and businesses to promote their services and products online

Thematic Objective 4: Innovate cross-silo public service delivery tailored to target groups

TO4A. Integrated public service delivery trials

We seek projects that support the integration of public services delivery across policy domains and client group silos, to provide more holistic and proactive support to residents.

Illustrative examples

- Explore new approaches to co-commissioning and co-design with specific public service user groups
- Use of on-demand transport alternatives to public transport modes to transport people to appointments
- Innovative approaches to using data on a county-wide basis to assess availability of resources against client need

TO4B. Innovative physical hubs for public services

We seek projects that establish innovative physical hubs for public service delivery, by creatively using community and high street space. Ideally, hubs should be designed for target client groups and offer a range of public and non-public services, curated for client groups.

Illustrative examples

- Establish community hubs to deliver a range of public and private services for older residents (e.g., diabetic clinic with podiatry, nutritionist)
- Use of flexible retail models to provide a rolling schedule of services in more rural locations

Grand Challenge 3: Business Growth

Strengthen and future-proof **business clusters** to grow the economy

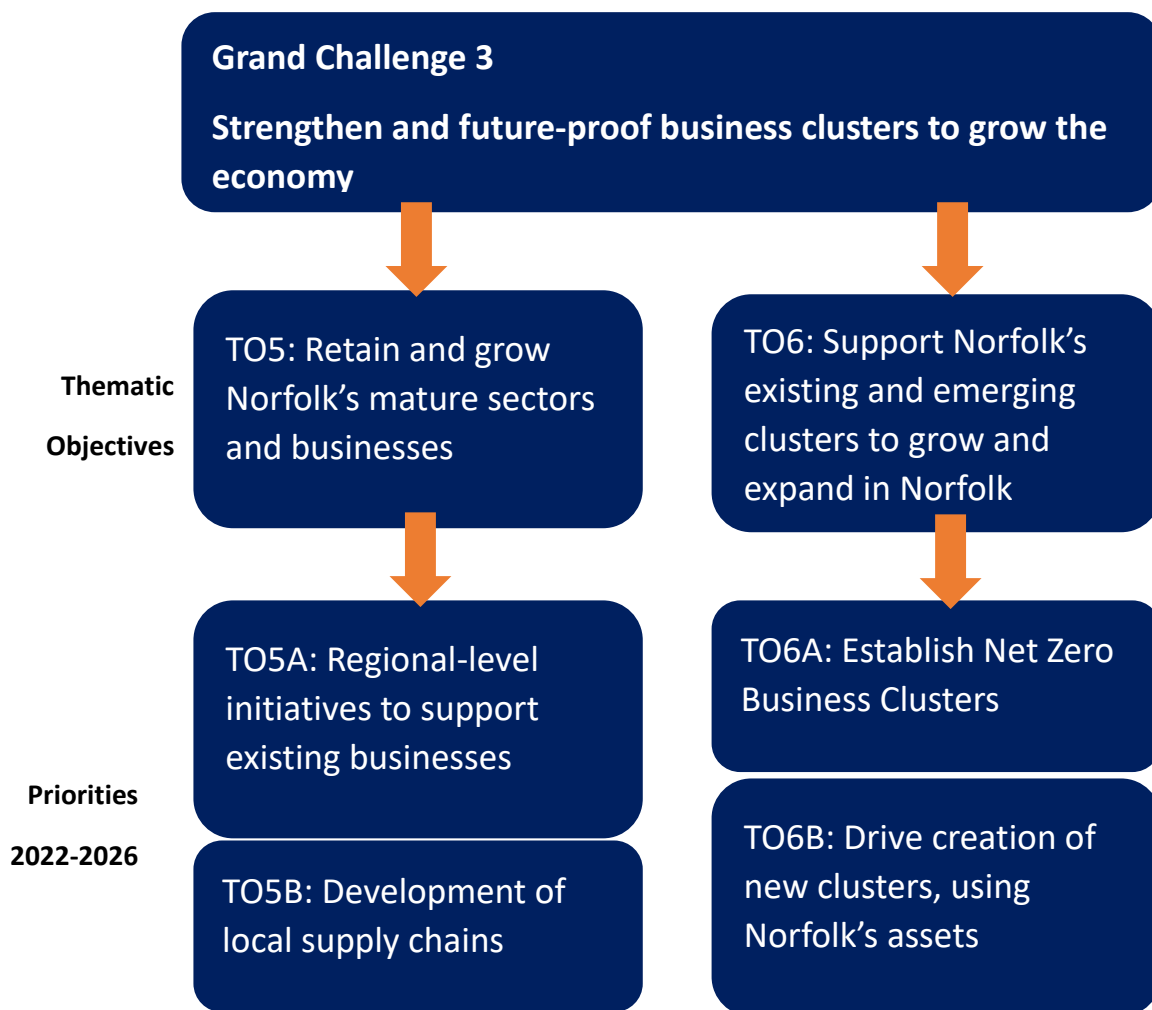


The Business Grand Challenge

We seek innovative approaches and projects for investment that support Norfolk’s businesses to grow and compete as the economy evolves. Norfolk’s strong foundational sectors face a decade of change as businesses adopt wider automation. It is estimated that 15% of Norfolk’s jobs are at risk of being replaced by automated or machine-learning technologies.

This presents both a risk and an opportunity. Businesses that don’t adapt and change will find it difficult to compete. However, it also provides an opportunity for Norfolk to establish new clusters to absorb displaced labour (e.g., through the creation of green collar jobs) and establish Norfolk as a base for innovative businesses developing automation technologies. Norfolk’s strengths in data science and fin-tech provides a strong base off to build, alongside its national strengths agri-biotech and genetics.

To accelerate and further support growth, we will be focused on two Thematic Objectives.



Thematic Objective 5: Retain and grow Norfolk's mature sectors and businesses

TO5A. Regional-level initiatives to support existing businesses

We seek projects that support our growing industrial and professional services sectors by strengthening Norfolk as an environment for business. Projects should enable all businesses (regardless of sector) and help make Norfolk a competitive location to base a business.

Illustrative examples

- Mapping employees' residences and places of work to ensure public transport mirrors people flows
- Programme where Norfolk's major businesses attend secondary schools to explain upcoming trends and operations and inspire more young people to pursue NVQ4+ training
- Work with education providers to offer specialist skills (e.g., coding) for adults and young adults, whether in work, or not in work

TO5B. Development of Local Supply Chains

We seek projects that encourage the development of local supply chains for existing sectors, including renewable energy (offshore wind and nuclear) and advanced manufacturing.

Illustrative examples

- Development of industrial/commercial site for co-location of supply chains
- Expand the capacity and capability of regional ports to support offshore wind
- Encouraging existing businesses to diversify vertically into supply chain delivery for emerging industries, such as offshore wind

Thematic Objective 6: Support Norfolk's existing and emerging clusters to grow and expand in Norfolk

TO6A. Establish Net Zero business clusters

We seek projects that draw on the County's industrial strengths to develop new net zero-related business clusters and help Norfolk to become net-zero by 2030.

Illustrative examples

- Innovative approaches to increasing design efficiency, materials reuse and retrofit of buildings at scale
- Establishment of a Hydrogen Energy Hub to undertake research and prototype testing of thermal and electrolytical process for generation
- Creation of a 'Norfolk Award' given to an international applied researcher, or post-doctoral student on a specific research area, with industrial potential for net zero

TO6B. Drive creation of new clusters, using Norfolk's assets

We seek projects that use Norfolk's existing industrial assets and infrastructure to catalyse the creation of new or wider clusters. Projects may include prototype development, research trials or creation of shared investment assets.

Illustrative examples

- Using the expansion of Sizewell C nuclear plant to develop a more established nuclear supply chain cluster in Suffolk and Norfolk
- Using the Norfolk Boreas and East Anglia Hub offshore wind project to drive a nationally significant cluster
- Leveraging Norwich's financial services strengths to create an R&D cluster, for instance in machine learning

Grand Challenge 4: Climate Change

Protect Norfolk's economic and natural assets from climate change



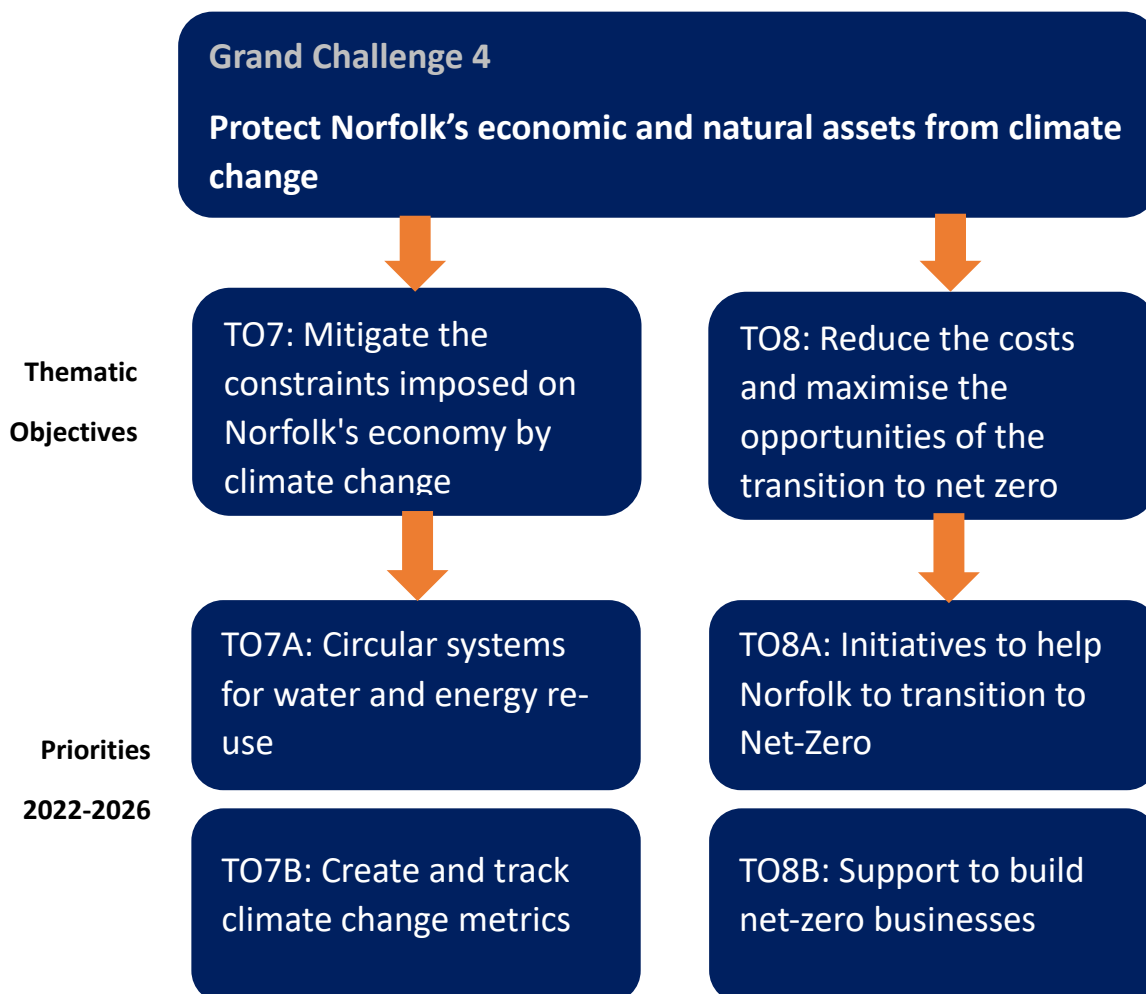
The Climate Change Challenge

We seek innovative approaches and projects for investment that support Norfolk to protect its economy and natural assets from climate change. Norfolk County Council has committed to reduce carbon emissions from 11.6 million tonnes per year to zero by 2030.

Norfolk's commitment to tackling climate change is not just a moral imperative. Norfolk is the most 'at risk' county in mainland UK with coastal erosion, flooding and lack of rainfall all impacting on our natural assets and economic base today.

To safeguard the future of our County, we seek to invest in practicable projects and initiatives that trial innovative solutions to these challenges. At the same time, we seek to leverage Norfolk's unique position at the climate change front-line to develop technologies, solutions and policies that can be adopted by others over the coming years.

To achieve this, we will be focused on two Thematic Objectives.



Thematic Objective 7: Mitigate the constraints imposed on Norfolk's economy by climate change

TO7A. Circular systems for water and energy re-use

We seek projects that create innovative circular systems for water and energy re-use. Projects may seek to capture resources for reuse or as a by-product to increase the County's resilience.

This could be through:

- Nature-based solutions to improving drainage in areas prone to flooding
- Nature-based solutions to capturing fluvial flooding for use in agriculture
- Renewable energy creation in high-usage areas, such as industrial parks

TO7B. Create and track climate change metrics

We seek projects that will establish innovative approaches to raising awareness of and tracking climate-change related metrics across Norfolk. The metrics should be of use by businesses, residents and other institutions.

This could be through:

- Norfolk-wide real-time energy consumption platform where residents can gage their consumption against peers and track county-level usage
- Adoption of smart LED lampposts that integrate pollution and CO2 monitoring
- County-wide secondary school competitions to develop net zero measurement prototypes

Thematic Objective 8: Reduce the costs and maximise the opportunities of the transition to net zero

TO8A. Initiatives to help Norfolk to transition to Net-Zero

By reducing the cost burden to businesses (and residents) of **transitioning to net-zero** to retain competitiveness.

This could be through:

- Supporting investment in smarter technology to reduce energy demand
- Developing enabling infrastructure for the supply and distribution of clean hydrogen
- Retrofitting commercial buildings to reduce energy demand
- Improving public transport to offset the increased cost of fuel / Battery Electric Vehicles

TO8B. Support to build net-zero businesses

Supporting new and existing businesses in Norfolk to develop products that enable others to reduce their emissions.

This could be through:

- Encouraging local oil & gas businesses with offshore expertise to support the development of new wind power
- Train construction firms/workers to design, install and build low emission buildings
- EV infrastructure that works for regional residents

Grand Challenges + Thematic Objectives Summary

Grand Challenge 1

Create new opportunities for residents by increasing skills and labour market dynamism.

Grand Challenge 2

Provide effective and efficient public services to a spatially disperse population

Grand Challenge 3

Strengthen and future-proof business clusters to grow the economy

Grand Challenge 4

Protect Norfolk's economic and natural assets from climate change

TO1: Drive skills attainment and employability of Norfolk's residents.

TO3: Adopt technology to provide more flexible public services

TO5: Retain and grow Norfolk's mature sectors and businesses

TO7: Mitigate the constraints imposed on Norfolk's economy by climate change

TO2: Help businesses to upskill employees and adapt to technological change

TO4: Innovate cross-silo public service delivery.

TO6: Support Norfolk's existing and emerging clusters to grow and expand in Norfolk

TO8: Reduce the costs and maximise the opportunities of the transition to net zero

Governance and Monitoring



Governance and Monitoring

The Investment Framework Steering Group has an agreed term of reference, which will be regularly reviewed, as the Framework moves from development into implementation.

Both the evidence and the Framework are being published on the County Council's website.

The Steering Group will consider and make recommendations to Norfolk County Council on the commissioning of work required to progress the development and delivery of the Norfolk Investment Framework – for example, establishing project sub-groups to focus developing projects to address each of the four grand challenges.

The secretariat for the Steering Group is provided by the County Council.

Transparent and comprehensive stakeholder engagement will continue to characterise our approach to implementing the framework.

Monitoring processes overseen by the Steering Group include the development of an evaluation plan – which will establish whether the objectives of the Framework have been achieved by 2026.

The terms of reference also allow for appropriate reporting to Norfolk County Council.

At the time of publication of the Framework, no specific funding has been allocated or secured for its delivery. As and when funding is secured, to address the challenges outlined in the Framework, appropriate reporting will be made to Norfolk County Council, as the accountable body for the Framework.