

North Norfolk District Council

Organisational Assessment (Summary version)

Dated 9 December 2009



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for an independent overview
of local public services

North Norfolk District Council

Overall, North Norfolk District Council performs adequately

Managing performance	2 out of 4
Use of resources	3 out of 4
Managing finances	3 out of 4
Governing the business	2 out of 4
Managing resources	3 out of 4

Description of scores:

1. An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements, Performs Poorly
2. An organisation that meets only minimum requirements, Performs Adequately
3. An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Well
4. An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Excellently

Summary

North Norfolk District Council performs adequately overall. It is committed to helping local people enjoy a high quality of life and to looking after the beautiful North Norfolk environment. It is effectively tackling most of the issues that are important to local people, but it is failing in the provision of housing, which is one of its main priorities. The Council is generally well organised and councillors and staff work well together. There are some good quality services, such as waste and recycling and adequate value for money is being achieved overall.

There is a difference between the scores for managing performance and use of resources. We decided that the overall score should be that North Norfolk District Council performs adequately because, while it generally provides good services, it is failing in the important priority of making sure that there are enough homes, especially affordable ones for local people. This is a top priority for the Council. The high number of second homes has made housing unaffordable for many local people. This is why it is so important for the Council to be doing everything possible to find local people somewhere affordable to live. Staff capacity is stretched and made worse by comparatively high sickness absence. This makes it hard for the Council to meet all the demands on its services, while also making sure services are provided in the most efficient way and that its contracts and partnerships are performing well.

The Council scores 2 out of 4 for managing performance. It is committed to making sure that the district has active and sustainable communities and that the environment is protected, as these are the main priorities for local people. It is generally doing well in these areas. The district is clean, attractive and

safe. Residents' satisfaction with the value for money they get from the Council is higher than the national average. They generally enjoy a good quality of life in friendly communities. Effective support is being provided to the local economy. The needs of the important tourism industry are carefully balanced against making sure that the environment is protected. The Council has taken a strong local and national lead in highlighting and tackling problems caused by coastal erosion. However, it is failing in the key area of ensuring that there are enough homes, particularly affordable ones, to meet local needs now and in the future. It has been slow at getting empty homes back into use. People who need changes made to their homes to help them to live more independently have to wait too long. Some services, such as recreation and leisure, are affected by comparatively low levels of staffing. This has been made worse by the high levels of staff sickness, although this is now improving.

The Council scores 3 out of 4 for Use of Resources. This is because it effectively manages the money it has to spend to deliver its services. Information about its finances can be viewed by the public. Budgets are carefully monitored and enough money is held in reserve. But the Council needs to do more to compare the costs of its services to those of other councils to make sure it is getting good value for money for local people.

The Council is generally well organised, although it needs to make sure that the information it produces is accurate. It also needs to strengthen the management of the contracts through which it purchases goods and services, It is looking at its partnerships to make sure that they are working effectively.

Staff are well trained and the Council has no difficulty in recruiting, Staff surveys show that staff feel happy with the information they receive and that they understand the reasons for change. The vast majority of staff also see the Council as an equal opportunities employer and do not feel disadvantaged or discriminated against. However, capacity is stretched and there are still comparatively high levels of absence due to sickness. But this is decreasing.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

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