

City College Norwich



Accountability Agreement for 2023/24

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Dated July 2023

Introduction

<p>The Governing Body of City College Norwich has responded positively to a wide number of challenges over recent years, most notably stepping in to support Paston and Easton Colleges. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that Norfolk continues to have the breadth of educational offer it requires and we are proud to have maintained key specialist provision which was at risk of disappearing from our county.</p> <p>This accountability agreement reconfirms our commitments to the communities we serve and demonstrates the considerable impact we have on the learning of young people, adult students and apprentices of all ages.</p> <p>We know there is always more to do and are committed to playing an active role in the educational ecosystem of our county and region. I believe this document evidences that commitment and we look forward to working with partners of all kinds to enhance the educational outcomes for our students and apprentices.</p> 	<p>Our College continues to play a critical role in the educational landscape of our city, county and region. As the largest college in East Anglia, we have a wide ranging set of responsibilities to serve our community by ensuring educational opportunities are provided for young people and for lifelong learning.</p> <p>The current environment in which we do this is challenging, with the further and higher education sectors under significant pressures caused by a decade of under-investment and more recently cost pressures out of our control. However, the College remains a vibrant and diverse learning community and we are committed to ensuring that we continue to rise to the challenges ahead of us. We do this because we know that our city and county need us and our students and apprentices require our support to realise their potential.</p> <p>I hope by reading this accountability agreement you get a good sense of the work of the College and how we contribute to key priorities.</p> 
<p>Andrew Barnes, Chair of the Corporation</p>	<p>Jerry White, Principal and CEO</p>

Purpose

The College's mission statement is: **Challenging minds, inspiring success, securing futures.**

This represents our core purpose to deliver high quality teaching and learning that leads to the strong achievement of learning goals and qualifications and which provides a springboard for progression into further study or work.

The College operates from 3 main campuses with two further additional sites (see Figure 1). This structure has changed considerably in the last 5 years due to City College Norwich merging twice. Firstly, as a result of a recommendation from the Area Review process, City College Norwich and Paston Sixth Form College merged. Secondly, as a result of an FE Commissioner led Strategic Prospect Review, City College Norwich merged with the Easton campus of Easton and Otley College in January 2020.

As a result of these mergers there was expansion in the number of operational sites of the College but also a significant increase the responsibility that the College had for post 16 learning and skills in Norfolk. As an example of that, the College now educates around 1/3 of all of Norfolk 16-18 years olds who are studying in colleges and schools.

Figure 1 – City College Norwich campuses and sites



The College operates a strategic framework within which the College structures its activities and develops key aims and annual priorities. The 2021-2026 strategic framework is presented as Table 1 on the next page.

Table 1 CCN Strategic Framework 2021-2026

Culture of Excellence Pillar
Maintain a qualified and skilled workforce with outstanding impact on student's experience, achievement, and progression and on service delivery
Have an unwavering focus on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the student experience
Have a culture of high expectations of ourselves, each other and our students and be intolerant of complacency
Uphold our Ways of Working, collective accountability, and teamwork as key tenets of our organisational culture
Place value on every individual's academic, vocational, technical, personal, or professional success
Responsibly invest in excellence across all curriculum areas
Students Pillar
Embrace student learning, achievement, and progression as our core purpose
Deliver programmes which inspire, engage, and challenge our current and prospective students and secure their progression
Prepare our students for the future with the resilience needed to support their mental well-being and the skills to protect themselves and others from harm
Ensure staff and students have the skills and infrastructure to enable learning anytime, anywhere
Provide careers advice and the right opportunities to encourage people to learn, upskill and reskill throughout their lives
Play a strong role in the systems leadership, nationally and regionally to the benefit of our students and community
Sustainability Pillar
Deliver a curriculum which supports and responds to our region's changing economic development needs
Formulate a curriculum offer and business model which balances inclusion and financial factors
Find sustainable ways to do what Norfolk and our region needs us to do
Work with partners who add value to, or complement our capacity and expertise
Foster a culture to generate higher levels of profitable income, within risk appetite, in order to support our financial and strategic objectives
Pursue opportunities to respond to the climate emergency and advance sustainability.
Community, Employers and Stakeholders Pillar
Deliver a curriculum which enables our students to become valuable members of society
Value the diversity of our students, staff, and the communities we are part of
Work with key LEP, industry and skills groups to ensure our curriculum offer meets regional economic needs
Provide programmes that support under-represented groups and communities, particularly the most disadvantaged
Take pride in being a College where learning and working have been designed with each of us in mind
Build strong, mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders to meet our strategic aims

Context and place

City College Norwich is a key anchor institution within Norfolk. The three campuses combined (City College Norwich, Easton College and Paston College) have served the county with educational provision for a combined total of 621 years (City College Norwich was founded in 1891, Easton College was founded in 1951 and Paston College was founded in 1604). The geography of Norfolk as a large rural county with its capital city of Norwich broadly centrally placed, means that the College is the only Further Education college serving the large rural area of central Norfolk from Cromer on the North Norfolk coast to Thetford in the south.

The recruitment area for the College is predominantly from Norfolk and North Suffolk. For some key specialist programmes such as those in land-based curriculum areas at Easton College and our Aviation Engineering degree at the International Aviation Academy Norwich (IAAN) regional and occasional national recruitment is seen. Given the rural context of the county, long and sometimes difficult public transport journeys are common for students and apprentices attending the College.

Within Norfolk, the College is:

- the largest educational provider to young people aged 16-18 in 5 of the 7 district council areas (Breckland, Broadland, North Norfolk, Norwich and South Norfolk)
- the largest apprenticeship provider to Norfolk apprentices and employers
- the second largest provider of adult learning
- the third largest provider of Higher Education

Figure 2 presents the College's profiles of learners from the 2021/22 academic year (excluding HE students). Compared to regional and national averages, the College has a higher proportion of 16-18 students within its student body and a smaller proportion of adult students. The recent mergers have predominantly brought 16-18 provision to the College, contributing to a profile of learners different to sector and regional norms.

Within Higher Education, the College plays a key role in widening participation to HE in a region where Level 4+ skills are seen as a key priority. We know that our HE students:

- are older than average (47% classified as "mature" i.e. aged 21 and over)
- come from areas where HE is not a normal destination in greater proportions than is the norm
- have higher prevalence of disabilities and difficulties than the sector average (27% report a Learning Difficulty or Disability)

The College works closely with its validating university, UEA, and the other Norfolk university, NUA, to contribute to our combined civic roles in supporting higher-level skills in our region.

Norfolk is a complex county to serve, with wards of high levels of economic prosperity and educational attainment situated next door to wards within the 10% most deprived in the country. The rurality of the county can mask rural deprivation, and the pleasant environment of Norwich (often cited as one of the top 10 places to live in the UK) masks a lack of social mobility in some communities which led it to be identified as one of the 6 key Opportunity Areas for additional governmental investment (and more recently to be named as an Education Investment Area). However, neither of these DfE funded initiatives have focussed support on post-16 provision in the area.

The nature of the county also presents challenges in the key area of staff recruitment. With only 3 geographically dispersed FE colleges in the region and limited inward migration, attracting and

securing the highly skilled dual professional teachers and other specialist staff required by the College is often challenging.

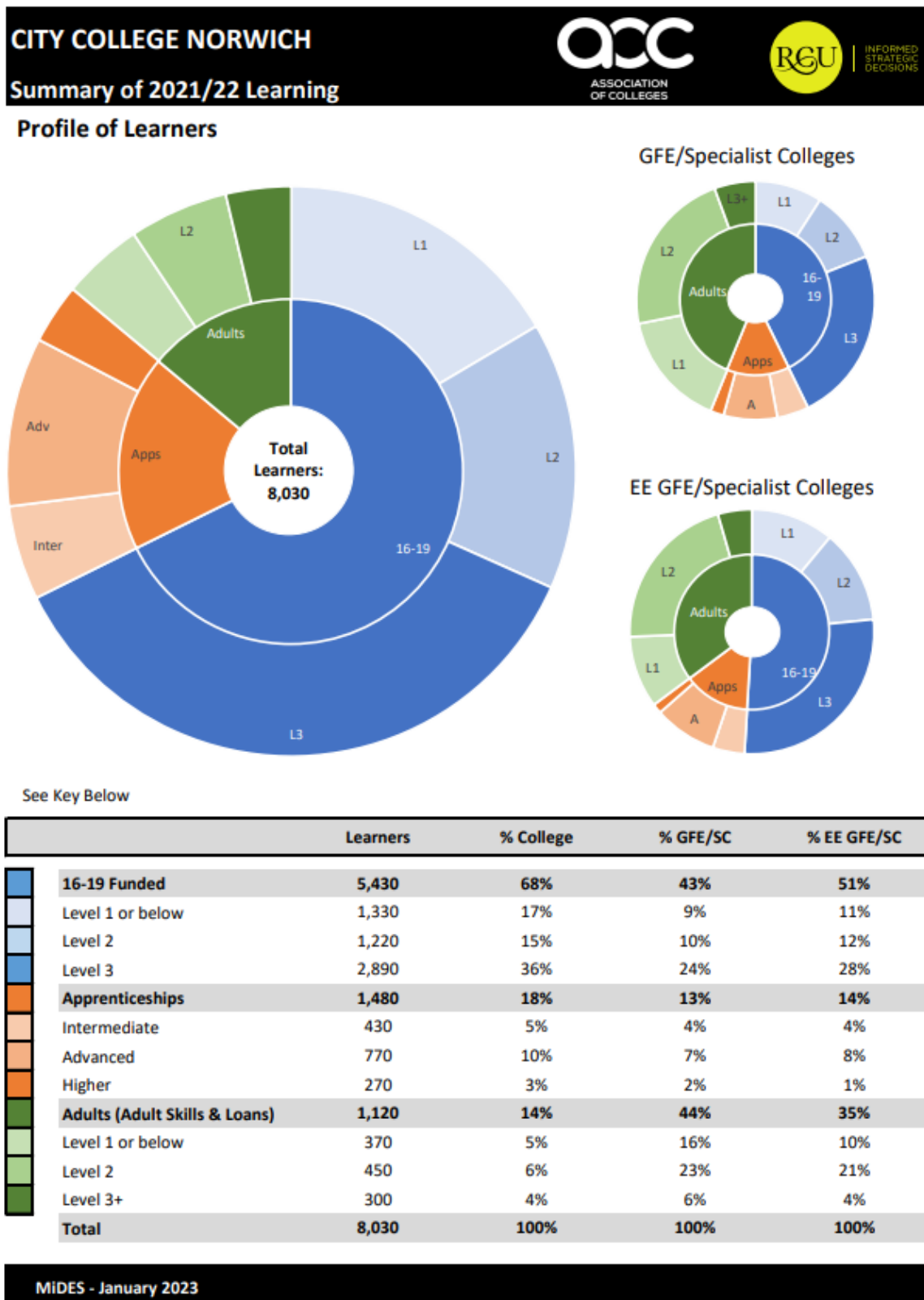
Demographically, we are serving a growing and increasingly ethnically diverse city and a rural county which by contrast has areas such as North Norfolk with an increasingly aging population, very low birth rates and limited ethnic and cultural diversity. These contrasts can be seen in the emerging 2021 census data. Whilst Norwich has 14.9% of its population aged over 65, North Norfolk has over a third (33.5%). Norwich has 17.6% of its population born outside of the UK and North Norfolk just 4.6%.

The College has strong relationships with key local government and economic development stakeholders. Norfolk continues to have two-tier local government, with County and District Councils, and the College considers that its contribution to the work of these bodies is significant. For example, the College has contributed significantly to the development of the Norfolk Investment Framework. A prospective “county deal” could shift the responsibilities of these local government bodies, with direct impact on areas such as Adult Skills and the College is already in dialogue preparing for any changes and opportunities. The College has benefitted from Levelling up funding via Norwich City Council in the completion of two major estate developments, the Digi-Tech Factory supporting the digital industries and the Advanced Construction and Engineering (ACE) Centre.

The size of the College’s catchment area also provides for considerable political engagement with Members of Parliament. The College is the main post-16 education and skills provider in the constituencies of 7 MPs and many have an active engagement with the College on areas of mutual interest.

To date, the Local Enterprise Partnership (New Anglia) and the subsequent Local Skills Improvement Plan have been constituted on a Norfolk and Suffolk basis. The impending county deals will refocus such structures on the individual counties and for a College such as ours, there could be complexities in engaging with two structures rather than one. With around 5% of our 16-18 year old students being Suffolk residents, the importance of maintaining discussions with Suffolk can be illustrated.

Figure 2 – City College Norwich profile of learners (compared to other General Further Education [GFE] colleges nationally and regionally [EE = East of England])



NB: data in Figure 2 excludes HE students

Approach to developing the annual accountability agreement

For this first year of developing our Accountability Agreement, we have utilised pre-existing stakeholder forums and mechanisms to inform us and specifically our targets. We will reflect for future years whether a different approach will be necessary.

Alongside the development of the Accountability Agreement, the College has been engaged in a number of key stakeholder mechanisms, which include:

- Working with our local employer representative body, the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, to support the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.
- Working with the 4 other FE colleges in Norfolk and Suffolk (East Coast College, Suffolk New College, The College of West Anglia and West Suffolk College) to begin the collaborative work to review our curriculum offer.
- Continued work with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership including functions such as the Skills Advisory Panel and sectors specific groups such as the Agri-food Industry Council.
- Specific planning work with Norfolk County Council and the other FE and adult and community learning providers in Norfolk to consider the implications of the County Deal for Adult Learning and economic development priorities.
- Engagement with local authorities with specific reference to the “levelling up agenda” with membership of planning boards for the Towns Deal funding and Shared Prosperity fund.
- Membership of the Norfolk Investment Framework steering group, creating the overarching framework to drive the counties economic development priorities for the coming decade.
- Contributing to specific local government strategic developments, such as Norwich City Council’s 2040 vision group.
- Working alongside our local HE partners, including formal representation on the Senate and Learning and Teaching Committee of the UEA.
- Strong involvement in the work of Norfolk County Council’s Childrens Services department, including through leading FE representation on the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership and through specific groups supporting vulnerable groups such as SEND.
- Individual employer discussions with partner employers who support a range of College activities from T Level industry Placements to HE course developments.

Such engagements have allowed the Senior Team to develop targets that are congruent with key priorities for other bodies and which allow for the College to play a meaningful and impactful role in the future of the county that we serve.

Governors were involved in the development of the Accountability Agreement firstly by discussing the process and nature of the document in the January 2023 Governor Strategy Day. Further discussion were held in May and July 2023 prior to the submission of the document.

The College Leadership Team had undertaken a number of exercises through the 2022/23 academic year to identify and commence work on some emerging strategic improvement actions. This approach was shared with Governors and ratified and formed the creation of a series of “Darwin Projects” that the College is undertaking. In some cases, these improvement actions (and the projects they have created) have informed our Accountability Agreement and the targets we are proposing.

Contributions to national, regional and local priorities

This section attempts to succinctly identify key areas in which the College currently responds to the DfE National Skills Priorities and outlines our targets for the coming year.

Priority sector	Current City College Norwich contributions
Construction	54% of 16-18 year old students in Norfolk (n=520). Largest provider of Construction apprentices in Norfolk (28%; n=400). T Level provider. Further expansion through successful Post 16 Capacity Fund bid planned from September 2024. Recently opened £3m Advanced Construction and Engineering Centre enhances facilities for technical construction.
Manufacturing	31% of 16-18 year old Engineering and Manufacturing students in Norfolk (n=180). T Level provider. Largest provider of Engineering and Manufacturing apprentices in Norfolk (21%; n=240). Recently opened £3m Advanced Construction and Engineering Centre enhances facilities.
Digital and Technology	38% of 16-18 year old students in Norfolk (n=110). Largest provider of Digital apprentices in Norfolk (15%; n=50). T Level provider. £11m award winning Digi-Tech Factory building opened in October 2022.
Health and Social Care	40% of 16-18 year old students in Norfolk (n=320). T Level provider. 2 nd Largest provider of Health apprentices in Norfolk (13%; n=160). New Health Wing facility opening in June 2023 to support T level provision.
Haulage and Logistics	This is not a sector that the College provision currently directly addresses.
Engineering	31% of 16-18 year old Engineering and Manufacturing students in Norfolk (n=180). T Level provider. Largest provider of Engineering and Manufacturing apprentices in Norfolk (21%; n=240). Recently opened £3m Advanced Construction and Engineering Centre enhances facilities.
Science and Mathematics	Over 200 students studying at least 1 science and maths A level. T Level programmes in Laboratory Sciences. Over 1400 students studying GCSE / Functional Skills maths (c1200 aged 16-18; c200 aged 19+). Partner in Norfolk Multiply scheme.

Priority programme types	Current City College Norwich contributions	Construction	Manufacturing	Digital and Technology	Health and social Care	Haulage and Logistics	Engineering	Science and Mathematics
T levels	Largest T level provider in Norfolk. Provision in Education and Childcare, Engineering and Manufacturing, Digital, Construction, Health, Business and Management, Science. Future growth anticipated in Hospitality, Creative Industries, Hair and Beauty and Agriculture. T Level transition provider. Staff have contributed to ETF and DfE best practice sessions and hosted provider visits here at the College.	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
Apprenticeships	Largest apprenticeship provider in Norfolk (n=1340). Over 200 higher and degree apprentices. The largest sectors include Construction, Health, Engineering and Manufacturing, and Agriculture and Animal Care.	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	
Free Courses for Jobs	Small but growing offer in this provision type, with expansion plans for 23/24. Current offer predominantly in Accountancy.							
Skills Bootcamps	To date this is not a provision type we have engaged with. Considering plans for 23/24.							
Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)	Longstanding commitment to HE at levels 4 and 5 (Foundation degrees though our partnership with UEA and national awarding organisation qualifications such as HNC/HNDs). First HTQ approved in Construction and further plans for Health programmes. HTQs feature heavily in emerging HE strategy for the College.	✔			✔			

The following are the key targets for the College in 2023/24

Proposed Outcome Target	Links to national and/or local skills priorities	How we will do this	How we will know that it has been achieved
In response to the LSIP findings, to develop and implement enhanced programmes for 16-18 year old students that support the development of “soft skills”.	Response to LSIP findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of new refreshed Personal Development framework to young students. • Utilise Local Skills Investment Fund (LSIF) funding to target activity in this area. • Run overseas trips for young people funded by the Turning Scheme. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student focus groups feedback positively on sessions. 2. Increased involvement of employers / VSC colleagues in supporting personal development activity noted. 3. Turing scheme trips successfully completed.
Deliver growth in the number of 19+ students engaged in skills programmes in 2023/24.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free courses for jobs. • Skills Bootcamps. • HTQs. • Key priority sectors such as Construction, Digital and Health and Social Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch expanded adult offer via new Head of School post. • Specifically tailor additional marketing and PR activities to emphasise the College’s adult learning offer. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10% growth in student numbers for 2022/23 total.
Launch our new higher education strategy to inform curriculum development and recruitment for 2024/25 academic year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HTQs. • Higher / Degree Apprenticeships. • Key priority sectors such as Construction, Digital, Engineering and Manufacturing, and Health and Social Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out within the College of a new strategy, leading to curriculum review. • Engage with key stakeholders such as the UEA and LEP / Local Authorities to describe our revised strategy. • Seek opportunities to commence new higher technical courses in 2023/24 and 2024/25. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth in applications for 2024/25 academic year (compared to those received for 2023/24).

Proposed Outcome Target	Links to national and/or local skills priorities	How we will do this	How we will know that it has been achieved
Further develop and embed our curriculum costing and efficiency processes, to ensure 2024/25 course programme contributes strongly to the financial sustainability of the College.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the 4cast software system to review 23/24 enrolment and plan 24/25 course offer • Engage with FE Commissioner via their Curriculum efficiency and financial sustainability support (CEFSS) process. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance performance achieved on key metrics of efficiency for 2024/25 academic year (metrics to be developed via FEC work).
Fully implement significant system improvements in our applicant journey for 2024/25 entry, leading to higher enrolment levels for 16-18 year olds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T levels • Key priority sectors such as Construction, Digital, Engineering and Manufacturing and Health and Social Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement developments to our EBS system that creates an applicant app and improves communications for 24/25 entry • Continue to develop our communication protocols for applicant interaction 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve conversion of applicant to enrolment for 16-18 students by 3% from 2023/24 baseline (baseline to be determined in October 2023).
Maintain the financial sustainability of the College against the backdrop of inflationary pressures, including energy costs.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a financial recovery plan by October 2023 to return the College to a stable financial footing by 2025/26 academic year. • Operationalise the financial recovery plan with key strands of activity being appropriately managed, monitored and reported. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCN sets as balanced budget in July 2025 for the 2025/26 academic year.

Corporation statement

On behalf of City College Norwich, it is hereby confirmed that the College plan, as set out above, reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the corporation at their meeting on July 11th 2023

The plan will be published on the College's website within three months of the start of the new academic year and can be accessed from the following link:

<https://www.ccn.ac.uk/our-college/city-college-norwich-strategy/>

Andrew Barnes

Chair of the Governing Body of City College Norwich

Supporting documentation

- College information
 - Annual financial accounts and other Governance related documents can be found here: <https://www.ccn.ac.uk/our-college/city-college-norwich-corporation-and-governance/city-college-norwich-corporation-documents/>
 - The College's Ofsted reports can be found as follows:
 - FE and Skills: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50174993>
 - FE Residential: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50167909>
 - Teacher Training: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50221406>
 - Nursery: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/2770445>
- Relevant supporting information
 - The latest information on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Norfolk and Suffolk pages can be found here: <https://www.norfolkchamber.co.uk/homepage/norfolk-and-suffolk-lsip/>
 - The New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) Economic Strategy for the region can be found here: <https://newanglia.co.uk/economic-strategy/>
 - The Norfolk County Council Norfolk Economic Intelligence Reports are found here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/business-services/norfolk-economic-intelligence-report>
 - The Norfolk Investment Framework can be found here: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/business-policies/norfolk-investment-framework>
 - Norwich City Council's 2040 City vision can be found here: https://www.norwich.gov.uk/info/20324/norwich_2040_city_vision