

Report from Cllr Justine Thomas

Norfolk County Councillor for Acle Division

Cantley Parish Council | September 2026

Dear Chairman and Members,

September has been another busy month, both locally and at County Hall. Alongside my responsibilities as Cabinet Member: Chief Whip & Budget Responsibility, I have continued representing Acle Division and have been closely involved in the Council's budget and wider corporate work.

County Council Update

Local Government Reorganisation

There has been a significant development since my previous report, with the Government's proposed Local Government Reorganisation for Norfolk no longer proceeding. Norfolk County Council had opposed the proposed reorganisation and challenged the process through legal action.

The ending of the proposal removes a considerable degree of uncertainty and means attention and resources can instead remain focused on delivering services, managing the Council's finances and addressing the operational challenges ahead. The Council will also continue to consider the financial consequences of the work already undertaken in preparation for reorganisation.

Cabinet sets out new priorities

Cabinet has set out new priorities for Norfolk County Council, with a strong emphasis on securing value for money for residents, improving performance and ensuring the authority remains focused on the services that matter most to Norfolk communities.

This includes examining how services are delivered, identifying opportunities to improve productivity and efficiency, and making sure taxpayers' money is used effectively. This work will increasingly feed into both the Council's financial planning and the way services are reviewed over the coming months.

2027/28 Budget

Work on the Council's 2027/28 budget is continuing and is now a significant part of my Cabinet workload. The financial pressures facing local government remain substantial, particularly across demand-led services such as adult social care, children's services and SEND.

As Cabinet Member: Chief Whip & Budget Responsibility, I have been closely involved in the budget challenge process with Cabinet colleagues and officers. The work is not simply about identifying savings; it also involves challenging costs, productivity, contracts, income opportunities and service performance to make sure the Council is obtaining the best possible value from the money it spends.

This work will continue through the autumn before formal budget proposals move through the Council's scrutiny and decision-making process.

Norfolk Updates

Have your say on policing in Norfolk

Norfolk's Police and Crime Commissioner is consulting residents on priorities for the new Police and Crime Plan and on the police budget for 2027/28. The consultation is particularly relevant to rural communities, where issues such as neighbourhood policing, rural crime, visibility and access to services remain important.

The consultation closes at 5pm on 9 October 2026. [Take part in the Police and Crime Plan consultation.](#)

Recycling centre survey

Norfolk County Council is seeking residents' views on its recycling centres as part of a review of the service. Importantly, the Council wants to hear from people who do not currently use recycling centres as well as those who do, so that it can better understand how residents use the service and what barriers may exist. The survey remains open until 18 October 2026.

Environmental Delivery Plan consultation

Residents also have an opportunity to comment on Norfolk County Council's developing Environmental Delivery Plan. The consultation covers the Council's proposed approach to environmental issues and delivery over the coming years and includes matters relevant to the Bure and Yare Broads and Marshes. The consultation remains open until 27 October 2026.

School admissions

Applications for secondary school places for September 2027 opened in September. The deadline for on-time applications is 31 October 2026. Applications for children starting Reception in September 2027 are also now open, with an on-time application deadline of 15 January 2027.

[School admissions information is available from Norfolk County Council.](#)

Trading Standards and scam awareness

Norfolk Trading Standards continues to provide alerts and advice about scams and rogue trading. Residents should be particularly cautious about unexpected telephone calls, text messages or emails claiming to relate to council tax refunds or other payments and asking for personal or banking information.

Trading Standards is also continuing its work with partner agencies to tackle the sale of illicit tobacco and vapes across Norfolk. Information from members of the public remains an important part of that enforcement work. Suspected illegal sales of cigarettes, tobacco or vapes can be reported through the Citizens Advice consumer service on 0808 223 1133.

Flu vaccinations

The seasonal flu vaccination programme is under way, with some eligible groups able to receive vaccinations from September and most eligible adults from 1 October. Residents who are unsure whether they are eligible should check the latest NHS guidance and booking arrangements.

[NHS flu vaccination information.](#)

Support for workers affected by the Cantley proposal

Norfolk County Council's Redundancy Support Service continues to be available to employees affected by British Sugar's proposal concerning beet processing at Cantley. The service can provide support with finding work, retraining, CVs, applications and interviews, alongside benefits and wellbeing advice.

Looking Ahead

The coming months will be particularly busy at County Hall as detailed work on the Council's budget continues and proposals begin moving through the formal scrutiny and decision-making process.

I will continue to keep the Parish Council updated on significant County Council matters and, as always, if there is a County Council issue affecting the parish or its residents that you would like me to look into, please do get in touch.

Kind regards,

Cllr Justine Thomas

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