## November County Councillor’s Report

## Advice for bird keepers in

## Norfolk amid avian influenza (Bird Flu) outbreaks

14 October 2022

There have been several outbreaks of the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 virus in Norfolk. Mandatory housing measures for all poultry and captive birds in Norfolk, Suffolk and parts of Essex are to be introduced from 00:01 on 12 October 2022, following a decision by the UKs Chief Veterinary Officer.   The housing order legally requires all bird keepers in these hotspots to keep their birds indoors and to follow stringent biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the disease, regardless of type or size.   Norfolk Trading Standards will be working with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to support businesses and minimise the risk of disease spreading further.   The UK Health Security Agency has said that avian influenza is primarily a disease of birds and the risk to the general public’s health is very low.   The Food Standards Agency has said that avian influenza poses a very low food safety risk, and that properly cooked poultry and poultry products, such as eggs, are safe to eat.   The measures that APHA require people keeping birds to take to reduce the risk of spreading the disease are:

* Housing all poultry and captive birds (including birds kept as pets)
* Cleanse and disinfect clothing, footwear, equipment, and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds – if practical, use disposable protective clothing
* Reduce the movement of people, vehicles, or equipment to and from areas where poultry and captive birds are kept, to minimise contamination from litter, manure, slurry, and other products, and use effective vermin control
* Keep records of all deaths, movement of poultry and poultry products and any changes in production
* Thoroughly cleanse and disinfect housing on a regular basis
* Keep fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all farm and poultry housing entry and exit points. Foot dips should be covered to stop disinfectant getting diluted
* Minimise direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds
* Prevent access by poultry to ponds and watercourses and ensure that birds are kept in fenced or enclosed areas

The public are advised to keep to designated footpaths, not to feed wild birds, and keep dogs on leads. Don’t touch sick or dead birds, their feathers, or their droppings. If you see a dead bird, please report it to Defra’s helpline on 03459 335577. Sick birds should be reported RSPCA (0300 1234 999) who, dependent on the situation, may be able to offer

# Have your say on tax and spending plans

People can have their say on the county council’s Council Tax and spending proposals, until 16 December 2022.

Norfolk County Council wants to hear people’s views on the level of general Council Tax, plus the adult social care precept, for 2023-24.

You can have your say at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/budget) and paper copies of the consultation can be requested via email at haveyoursay@norfolk.gov.

The council is consulting on:

* A proposed total increase of 2.99 per cent - 1.99 per cent for general Council Tax and one per cent for the adult social care precept – in line with the current budget planning and the expected level which will be set by the Government.
* People’s view on a rise of 4.10 per cent, as the council has set in previous years, and 10.1 per cent - in line with inflation - which would require a referendum.

The other savings proposals the council is consulting on include:

* Reducing the opening hours of the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) from 28 hours a week to 22.5 hours a week.
* Reducing weed spraying activities on the highway from twice a year to once a year.
* Reducing summer opening hours at Norfolk’s recycling centres and closing all recycling centres on Wednesdays.

The consultation will run from 21 October 2022 to 16 December. Findings will be considered by the cabinet on 30 January, before the full council finalises the budget on 21 February, 2023.