



EXECUTIVE

5.30 p.m. – 7.10 p.m.

15 October 2008

Present: Councillors Morrey (Vice Chair) (in the Chair), Arthur, Blakeway, Bremner, Sands and Waters

Also present: Councillors Lubbock and Ramsay

Apologies: Councillors Morphew (Chair) and Brociek-Coulton

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2008.

2. NORTHERN CITY CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN

The Planning Team Leader - Policy introduced the report which reflected the vision and priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Norwich and said that the Plan would help to achieve the wider spatial aspirations of the City's communities.

The comments made by the Local Development Framework Working Party on 6 October 2008 were circulated at the meeting and members considered their recommendations.

In response to issues raised by Councillor Ramsay, the Planning Team Leader said that the energy efficiency policies would be dealt with by Joint Core Strategy. Following questions from Councillors Bremner and Ramsay, on the river bus and cycling on Magpie Road, the Planning Team Leader said he would make enquires and respond to the Councillors individually. He also confirmed there had been a positive feed-back to the public consultation and the solution had been based on the consultation.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) endorse the recommendations made by the Local Development Framework Working Party on 6 October 2008;
- (2) recommend the Council to approve the Northern City Centre Area Action Plan as amended to reflect the comments of the Local Development Framework Working Party for consultation and subsequent submission of the draft Plan to the Secretary of State;

- (3) delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Development to make further minor changes to the Northern City Centre Area Action Plan prior to consultation.

3. NORWICH CITY COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY 2008-2010

The Director of Transformation presented the report and circulated the comments made by the Scrutiny Committee on 9 October 2008. He paid tribute to the work of the Environmental Strategy Manager, in moving the strategy forward during the short time he had been employed by the Council.

Councillor Lubbock expressed disappointment that there was not more in the Strategy about cycling. The Deputy Chief Executive said cycling for staff was being looked at within the budget constraints. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that Scrutiny Committee was working on an in depth piece of work on cycling.

During discussion the Director of Transformation suggested that in order to monitor the implementation of the Strategy the Climate Change Panel should continue beyond 2010, with meeting 3 or 4 times a year. The Recognition of Achievement and Remarkable Service (ROARS) new category for the environment would raise awareness of environmental issues at the workplace. There had been a lot of interest by staff on environmental and energy issues.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) endorse the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee held on 9 October;
- (2) approve and adopt the draft Environmental Strategy 2008-2010 subject to the amendments recommended by the Scrutiny Committee;
- (3) extend the life of the Climate Change Panel to monitor the extensive environmental and sustainability work programme;
- (4) welcome the proposal for a new ROARS category for the Environment ;
- (5) support the draft Norfolk Climate Change Strategy

4. NORWICH COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICES (NCAS)

The Tenancy Support Manager presented the report and answered members' questions. Members were advised that this was a highly regarded 'flagship service' and was a victim of its own success. He pointed out that over the years there had been no substantial investment and this had stretched the service. The staffing structure needed to change for the service to remain viable and to enable Managers to market the service.

Councillor Arthur said NCAS provided a first class service and was a cost effective way of making sure people remained independent at home for as long as possible. She praised the staff for delivering an excellent service not only for the people but the Council.

Councillor Blakeway referred to the need for charges to be reviewed on a more regular basis. The Deputy Chief Executive said they would in future be reviewed annually under the budget review process.

During discussion members considered Option 1 as their preferred option subject to minor amendments suggested by Councillor Arthur at the meeting.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) approve the retention and development of NCAS;
- (2) restructure the service as outlined in paragraphs 13-15 of the report, with effect from 1 November 2008 and note that based on the proposed ratio split between the HRA (66%) and GF (34%) this would mean an additional cost of £71,194 to the HRA and £36,676 to the General Fund in 2009/10.
- (3) reduce the level of subsidy for the service by adopting revised charges for the dispersed alarm units, as listed below:-

	Current DAU charges	Current number of connections	Current income	Increase pence per week	Proposed DAU increase charge	Additional income
Option1						
NCC Residents-full rate	£2.15	666	£74,458	25 pence	£2.40	£8,658
NCC Residents-subsidised	£1.08	796	£44,703	12 pence	£1.20	£4,967
Others – full rate	£2.37	260	£32,042	23 pence	£2.60	£3,110
Total income			£151,203			£16,735

5. PRIVATELY RENTED ACCOMODATION: CHARGES FOR ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LANDLORDS

The Head of Strategic Housing Services presented the report and explained that whilst landlords had a responsibility for ensuring their properties met certain standards, there was little incentive for them to install energy efficiency measures. The 'Warm Let' grants would encourage landlords to make improvements to their properties. A condition of the grant would be that applicants joined the Landlord Accreditation Scheme.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) offer financial incentives to landlords in the private rented sector to carry out home energy efficiency improvements on the basis set out in the report;
- (2) charge landlords of sub-standard accommodation where it has been necessary to take formal enforcement action.

6. IMPROVING ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN EXISTING CITY HOMES

The Head of Strategic Housing Services presented the report and answered questions. The Chair recommended Option A as this addressed carbon reduction and fuel poverty.

RESOLVED to approve financial assistance to vulnerable households to replace old and inefficient boilers (Option A) subject to sufficient capital funding be made available in the 2009/10 and 2010/11 Non-Housing Capital Programmes.

CHAIR