



## CABINET

5.30 pm to 7.05 pm

9 October 2013

Present: Councillors Arthur (chair), Waters (vice chair), Bremner, Kendrick, Sands (M) and Stonard

Also present: Councillor Little

### 1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS / PETITIONS

The chair said that one public question had been received from Mr Richard Southwood.

**Richard Southwood to the cabinet member for environment, development and transport:**

“Could the cabinet advise me as to the expected impact of the Mountergate car park development on the community garden situated on land leased from the council adjacent to the existing car park off St Johns Street, and whether any plans are in discussion or in place to protect this community venture / space?”

**Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport’s response:**

“Phase 1 of the Mountergate area regeneration (ie, the multi-storey car park) will have no impact on the community garden, as it is centred on land to the east towards the junction of Mountergate with Rose Lane.

As with phase 1, detailed proposals for the area currently in use as surface parking will be based upon the recently completed South Centre Plan. The plan notes that there is very little publicly accessible green space in the area and presumes that the community gardens will be retained.”

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Sands declared an other interest in item 5, below, Norwich and HCA strategic partnership business plan 2013-14, in that he was a resident of Bowthorpe and would benefit from improvements to its infrastructure.

## **3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2013.

## **4. NORWICH AND HCA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP – BUSINESS PLAN 2013-14**

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council, presented the report. In response to a member's question she explained that there was only a small amount of funding left in the HCA partnership budget and that this was earmarked for work focussing on Bowthorpe. The partnership would no longer be a source of funding for retro-fitting properties; although it was stressed that there was an element of funding available for this in the housing capital programme.

**RESOLVED** to approve the business plan for the Norwich and HCA Strategic Partnership 2013-14.

## **5. RENEWAL OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT WITH NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:-

- (1) endorse revisions to the Highways Agency Agreement between Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council as set out in the report; and
- (2) agree to the renewal of the Highways Agency Agreement with Norfolk County Council with effect from 1 April 2014 for five years based on the proposed revisions.

## **6. GREEN DEAL**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport, presented the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Little, Councillor Stonard said that the timing of this report represented the first opportunity for the council to become fully

involved in the green deal as the arrangements at central government's original launch had been problematic and there had been uncertainty about its viability.

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) take on a partner role in the application of the Green Deal in Norwich and delegate authority to the executive head of strategy, people and democracy in liaison with the portfolio holder for environment, development and transport to procure a suitable Green Deal delivery partner;
- (2) not allow applications from council tenants for Green Deal measures that they will receive in the future through the rollout of the council's Norwich Standard or planned energy company obligations funded housing improvement works;
- (3) delegate authority to the head of housing to consider applications from council tenants for other Green Deal measures not covered by the Norwich Standard or planned energy company obligations funded housing improvement works on a case by case basis in line with the council's role as a landlord but on the presumption that any agreed would be delivered via either the council's chosen Green Deal delivery partner or ECO funded housing insulation supplier (Fosters);
- (4) delegate authority to the executive head of strategy, people and democracy in liaison with the cabinet member for environment, development and transport and the chief finance officer to sign up to the government grant should the funding application be successful; and
- (5) agree if a government grant is received to recommend to council the inclusion of the capital funding in the council's capital programme.

**7. ALTERNATIVE GIVING: A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO BEGGING IN NORWICH**

Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for housing, presented the report.

Cheryl O'Sullivan, community services manager with St Martin's Housing Trust, explained that the team she manages perform an essential engagement service with the homeless. She stated that Norwich had seen an increase in begging and that this was likely to be due, in part, to the generous nature of those who live and work in the city; however there was a proven disconnect between begging and homelessness. Reports had shown that begging in Norwich was done primarily to fund drug and alcohol addictions. As such, the alternative giving scheme represented a real opportunity to divert people's donations towards agencies working to help those with alcohol and substance abuse issues. By cutting the supply of

direct funding for their habits, it was hoped that people would seek assistance from the services receiving the diverted monies.

**RESOLVED** to approve an 'alternative giving' scheme in Norwich, which would:

- (1) discourage people from giving directly to beggars – using posters, publicity, and the support of the media;
- (2) encourage people to give to or support a group of charities – by providing links to link to websites and quick response (QR) codes; and
- (3) highlight what we and other agencies already do to support people who are homeless and struggle with drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

## **8. NEW HOMES BONUS CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to endorse the response to the consultation.

## **9. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources, presented the report.

Councillor Little asked what proportion of the proposed cuts to services would be included in the public consultation. The executive head of strategy, people and democracy replied that the consultation would be about the overall impact on the council's services with a series of bullet points setting out clearly what the savings would be.

**RESOLVED**, having considered the updated medium term financial strategy (annex A) to agree:

- (1) that further work is carried out to progress the list of proposed savings and income options set out in annexes B and C (Annex C is exempt from publication, paragraphs 1 and 3, and was considered later in the meeting at item \*19, below);
- (2) the proposed approach to the public consultation on the development of the council's budget for 2014-15 and delegate authority to the executive head of strategy, people and democracy in consultation with the leader of the council to finalise the consultation document.

## **10. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2013-14 – PERIOD 04**

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources presented the report.

During discussion Councillor Little referred to the underspends in the general fund and housing revenue account. The deputy chief executive (operations) said that the details of investments were more positive than indicated in the figures.

**RESOLVED** to note the financial position as at 31 July 2014 and the forecast outturn 2013-14.

## **11. PROPOSED CAR PARK FEES AND CHARGES**

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources presented the report. The Norwich Highways Agency committee had endorsed the proposals at its meeting held on 19 September 2013.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) approve the revised fees and charges as set out in appendices C and D of the report, to take effect from 18 November 2013;
- (2) authorise the head of law and governance to undertake the necessary statutory procedures to introduce the new fees and charges, by means of a variation under Section 35C of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **12. GREATER FLEXIBILITIES FOR CHANGE OF USE – RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport, presented the report. The sustainable development panel at its meeting on 25 September 2013 had endorsed the draft response to the government consultation.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) endorse the proposed council response to the CLG consultation on greater flexibilities for change of use, as set out in appendix 1 and delegate authority to the deputy chief executive (operations) in conjunction with the cabinet member for environment and development to make minor amendments before submission;
- (2) agree the letter from the cabinet member for environment and development, as set out in appendix 2, be sent to the planning minister to accompany the response, pointing out that in addition to considering greater flexibilities within the use classes order, a more balanced view of

the operation of the order should be taken, to enable local communities to influence the development of their retail areas and neighbourhood facilities; and

- (3) delegate authority to the deputy chief executive (operations) in consultation with the cabinet member for environment and development to submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act to protect pubs in accordance with the resolution agreed at council on 24 September 2013.

### **13. BOWTHORPE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to approve:

- (1) as planning policy guidance, the conservation area appraisal and management and enhancement plans for Bowthorpe Conservation Area.
- (2) boundary changes to the conservation areas as detailed in appendix 1 (of the report);
- (3) the addition of the Bowthorpe Worship Centre and the Old Forge Building (prayer cell) to the local list of buildings of architectural or historic interest.

### **14. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR REPLACEMENT PVCU WINDOWS AND COMPOSITE DOORS**

Councillor Bremmer, cabinet member for housing, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the award of a framework contract to three suppliers:
  - (a) Anglian Building Products Ltd;
  - (b) Ashford Commercial Ltd;
  - (c) Wrekin Windows Ltd;under the Eastern Procurement Ltd framework for replacement PVCu windows and composite doors for an initial four year period with an option to extend for a further one year;
- (2) commit to spend up to £2.5m for 2013/14 through this contract from within existing Housing Capital Programme budget forecasts; and,
- (3) delegate to the deputy chief executive (operations) in consultation with the portfolio holder for housing authority to approve the award of a contract or contracts under this framework for the duration of the framework contract.

## **15. EXTENSION OF EXISTING CONTRACT FOR HOUSING GAS SERVICING AND REPAIRS**

Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for housing, presented the report.

In reply to a question from Councillor Little, the head of property services (NPS Norwich Ltd) confirmed that all properties with a gas supply would receive an annual inspection, even if there were no appliances in the house, to avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or damage to the gas supply system to the property.

**RESOLVED** to approve:

- (1) the extension of the housing gas servicing and repairs contract for a period of three years commencing 1 April 2014;
- (2) the commitment to spend an anticipated £5.4m from the housing revenue account over the extended three year period.

## **16. PHASE 2 (HOUSING) DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTERGATE WEST SITE**

(The chair agreed that discussion on this item would be held in public. A revised version of the report was circulated at the meeting. The appendices to the report are exempt from publication (paragraph 3) and were considered at item \*21 below).

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport, presented the report.

In reply to a question from Councillor Little regarding the viability of the car park, Councillor Stonard and the head of citywide development explained that the proposal was part of a wider strategy of growth for the city as a whole and that as such there would be a lower amount of parking spaces per head.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) agree to the principle of developing housing on the Mountergate West phase 2 site for policy compliant housing.
- (2) recommend to council to include Mountergate West phase 2 in the Capital Plan and the Capital Programme 2014-15 to undertake enabling work and subsequent development of the site.
- (3) note that the proposed social housing allocation can currently be funded from approximately £3.3m of the HRA new build provision already approved, subject to an operational decision on deployment of the headroom available.

## **17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items \*18 to \*22 below on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of schedule 12a of the local government act 1972 (as amended).

## **\*18. MANAGING ASSETS (PARAGRAPH 3)**

Councillor Waters, deputy leader and cabinet member for resources presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) approve option 2 as set out in the report;
- (2) delegate to the deputy chief executive (operations) in consultation with head of law and governance (solicitor to the council) and the chief finance officer, authority to agree the final terms related to the offer.

## **\*19. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME (ANNEX C DRAFT TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME PROPOSED INCOME AND SAVINGS OPTIONS FOR 2014-15) (PARAGRAPHS 1 AND 3)**

(The cabinet had considered the main report at item 9, above.)

The executive head of strategy, people and democracy referred to annex C and said that proposals A39 and A53 were under further review and would be unlikely to go forward as a proposal.

**RESOLVED** note the draft transformation programme proposed income and savings options for 2014-15.

## **\*20. MANAGING ASSETS (HOUSING) (PARAGRAPH 3)**

Councillor Bremner, cabinet member for housing, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) approve the option to dispose of the freehold interest in the asset on the open market; the method of disposal being delegated to the Head of City Development Services;
- (2) agree that the capital receipt from the disposal be reinvested in the housing capital program for improving, repairing and maintaining our housing stock or for enabling new affordable housing; and,
- (3) delegate to the deputy chief executive (operations) authority to take all necessary and ancillary steps to achieve the above, including, if necessary,



an application, to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for consent to the disposal of the asset.

**\*21. PHASE 2 (HOUSING) DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTERGATE, WEST SITE (PARAGRAPH 3)**

(The cabinet had considered a main report at item 16 above.)

**RESOLVED** to note the appendices to the report.

**\*22. STRATEGIC SITE – NEXT STEPS (PARAGRAPH 3)**

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to agree:

- (1) on the basis of the revised offer, that the council does not proceed with a contract for phase 1;
- (2) to procure a contractor via the East Anglian Highways Alliance to deliver the infrastructure to serve the whole development, with infrastructure needed for the housing with care facility being completed before end of March 2015, on the basis of the requirements set out in the report by Pell Frischmann;
- (3) to recommend that the council be asked to agree the inclusion of the construction of the Threescore Infrastructure into its capital plan and the capital programme 2013-14 and 2014-15 to fully fund the infrastructure;
- (4) to delegate the selection of the company to provide the design and build of the Threescore infrastructure to the deputy chief executive (operations) in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources.

CHAIR