



MINUTES

COUNCIL

7.30pm – 10.30pm

22 July 2014

Present: Councillor Maxwell (Deputy Lord Mayor in the Chair), Councillors Ackroyd, Arthur, Barker, Blunt, Bogelein, Boswell, Bradford, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Button, Carlo, Driver, Galvin, Gayton, Gahawi, Grahame, Harris, Haynes, Henderson, Herries, Howard, Jackson, Jones, Kendrick, Little, Manning, Neale, Packer, Price, Ryan, Sands (M), Sands (S), Stammers, Stonard, Waters, Woollard and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Lubbock (Lord Mayor) and Mr Armstrong (Sheriff)

1. LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Lord Mayor said that since the AGM the Lord Mayor had attended over 40 events which included the Lord Mayor's Street Procession weekend and fireworks display. The Deputy Lord Mayor said that this had been a wonderful event which showed what a good job the council did when organising such big public events.

The Deputy Lord Mayor invited Dr Andrew Lerner of the Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE) to address the meeting. Dr Lerner said that he was pleased to attend the meeting to present the council with the iESE award for council of the year, 2014. He said that this had been awarded by the council's peer local authorities and was recognition for the significant journey of improvement the council had made. He congratulated the council on its achievements and presented the award to Councillors Arthur, Boswell and Wright, the leaders of the three political groups on the council.

At the invitation of the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Arthur, leader of the council, outlined the administration's plans for the forthcoming civic year (attached at Appendix A).

The leader of the council then commented on the important contribution made to the work of the council by Jerry Massey, deputy chief executive, who would be leaving the council shortly. The council showed its appreciation in the usual way.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Lord Mayor said that three questions had been received from members of the public.

Question 1

Margaret Todd to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety:

“Norwich Allotment Association (NAA) was formed to provide a voice for allotment tenants across the city. We believe that allotments are an important part of access to healthy food and exercise for citizens as well as better mental health. They provide green spaces and environmental benefits such as greater biodiversity in the urban area. Allotments are now attracting more young families rather than providing a traditional escape from home life. We believe that the way allotments are managed should encourage these positive benefits and reflect what people are looking for from their plot, without losing sight of the original purpose to grow food. We recognise that resources for all council services are under enormous pressure but believe that the council can act now to support the future viability of the allotment service in Norwich.

NAA came about because of three major changes that have taken place in the running of the allotments without an overview by the City Council, or at least one that has been communicated to tenants.

Firstly, in October 2013 allotment rents were more than doubled.

Secondly, the council has moved from a management regime of benign neglect, where if the rent was paid and a serious breach of rules was not obvious, the tenant was left to get on with it more or less as they thought fit. In 2013, an active inspection and enforcement regime was introduced, which for example, in April 2013 saw 1 in 13 tenants being sent a notice compared with nil the previous year. Over the last two years a sizeable proportion of tenants have been given notice. This sudden change of enforcement practice has caused much disquiet especially because it was not always clear which rule had been breached and from the tenants' point of view, this all came out of the blue.

Thirdly, without a formalised decision, all plots are now offered to new tenants at half the full size of 250 square metres. While this is a good plan for new tenants, we would not want the 'normal' size to be a half plot by default. Although there are assurances that new tenants can apply for another half, we ask for this to be a commitment.

While these three changes have led to a higher turnover and a reduction in the very long waiting list, we are concerned that a growing number of tenants are losing heart and giving up because the allotment regime is becoming too restrictive. Many feel their allotment is no longer a peaceful retreat when they are fearful of an inspection. Now, there is a consultation taking place on amendments to rules which does not give reasonable access to all tenants because it has been conducted by e mail, excluding many older ones, both in

length of tenancy and age. Tenants have not been told that if you want to be consulted on amendments to rules you need to provide an e mail address. We are all reeling from the changes to the inspection and enforcement regime and now new rules have been published, not just about cultivation and waste as headlined, but about anti-social behaviour or going onto your plot after dark. While some of the new rules will clarify the grounds for the issuing of notices making it clearer how tenants' plots are judged, without the context of a positive commitment to allotments by the council, these rule changes appear negative, unnecessarily restrictive, pedantic and largely unenforceable. So, although there have been some welcome changes such as the aim to appoint site reps for every site, as yet they are faced with a difficult job and need more considered support to be effective.

Will the council carry out a review of the policy and management of the allotment service with the involvement of tenants and associations, to produce a positive framework for the future success of the allotment service, including keeping rent increases to the level of inflation and maintaining the full plot size of 250 square metres as standard?"

Councillor Driver, the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:

"Before answering your direct question about reviewing the policy and management I would like to answer some of the points you have raised.

In 2011 the council undertook a citywide consultation on a number of proposed changes to the delivery of services, which included increasing the cost of renting an allotment plot. This came at a time when council budgets were, and still are, under great pressure to reduce expenditure whilst maintaining the many excellent services we provide as a council and, along with my fellow cabinet members, have to prioritise the resources we have available

The rent increased by 11p from 17p to 28p per square metre per year. This still represented good value with the cost of renting a standard plot being £1.34 per week for those paying the full price, or £0.67 per week for those qualifying for a Go4Less card. Since then the rent has increased only with inflation and will do so for next year as well.

The council undertook a major allotment rule review in 2009 as a result of ongoing complaints from tenants and neighbouring residents primarily around the lack of action taken by the council to ensure allotment sites were being used properly. The new rules were introduced in 2010 enabling the council to deal with problems more effectively. This has improved the quality of the sites along with the experience for the majority of tenants who work their plots with due consideration for their fellow tenants. The council has received compliments from other tenants welcoming the stance the council has taken.

The "normal size" of a plot is 250 sq metres and will remain so for the future. I can assure you that those tenants who want to apply for a further half plot are welcome to do so. Giving tenants a half plot to start with has enabled more people to participate in growing their own produce along with all the associated benefits. It also means that a plot is more manageable for new tenants, who

may not be aware of the work required to maintain it in good condition. This does reduce the amount of notices served and ultimately terminations, which is good for the tenant and also the site.

With regard to the consultation this is a clarification of expectations around cultivation and waste, along with the introduction of a section on criminal activity and safeguarding. Much of this is to expand and clarify the rules where tenants have told the council they feel there is a lack of guidance and information within the existing rules. Tenants do not need to e-mail in their comments and are welcome to contact us by any route they wish. To date 20 responses have been received. Five are positive about the changes, 3 negative and 12 have just made a comment. I would welcome any other comments people may have and can assure you that any comments received this week will be included in the consultation. I am also pleased to announce that I am going to extend the consultation period for a further 4 weeks.

The council is fully committed to our allotment service. This is reflected in the resources dedicated to it. In recent years an officer has been given overall responsibility for all the sites to ensure that they are managed consistently. Financial resources have been invested in improving security, track improvements and water supplies – some of which have been long standing issues for many years. We are keen to develop the use of site representatives as a link between tenants and the council. This is in its infancy and the council is working with them to develop the role and provide any necessary support. We do see the site allotment associations and the Norwich Allotment Association as integral to the development of the service and, as such, I can provide a commitment to work with all representatives to build a positive framework to ensure the service provided continues to improve.

Taking into account all of the above I do not consider there is a requirement for a review of the policy and management of the allotment service. I do thank you for coming to council to highlight your concerns.”

Margaret Todd asked, as a supplementary question, if the cabinet member would be willing to meet with representatives of the Norwich Allotment Association to discuss their concerns. **Councillor Driver** said that he would be glad to meet with anyone to discuss matters within his portfolio and would be pleased to talk to members of the association.

Question 2

Rochelle Wilson to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety.

“On behalf of the residents of St. Philips Road, I ask the council to replant street trees on St Philips Road three of which have been cut down recently and not replaced. Others have been lost in recent years and a number are diseased and dying having reached the end of their lifespan. This road is a rare city avenue of trees and provides a haven for wildlife and a much-appreciated amenity for residents of the street and passers-by.

The situation is urgent and we know other areas would like trees too. We understand there are financial pressures that the council is under however we would like to know how we can work with the council to keep Norwich a healthy, leafy city.

Our question to cabinet members is: What plans does the council have to replace the trees? We understand there are funds left over from the replanting which is going on in conservation areas, and that this money can be spent in non-conservation areas. How is the council prioritising where this is spent? Can it be spent on St Philips Road?"

Councillor Driver, the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:

"Thank you for raising with the council your concerns about providing replacement trees. I am pleased to announce that the council has looked into this issue and will be planting trees according to need. The approved tree planting budget of £35,000 for this year will be used to replace trees addressing the following aspects legal, landscape, community, biodiversity and streetscene. All replacement trees including St Phillips Road will be assessed against this set criteria and prioritised accordingly. We will publicise where trees are to be replaced once the list has been finalised.

Please note the budget for tree planting for last year was fully spent with no money left over. I am grateful for the offer to work with the council and have asked officers to contact you to explore what can be done. One option being finalised are proposals for a tree sponsorship scheme which will allow residents to contribute to the local street amenity. This will be launched in time for the autumn planting season. Other opportunities for street tree planting will include the works for "Push the Pedal Ways" and highway schemes to introduce more 20mph zones. I am committed to sustaining the biodiversity and keeping Norwich a healthy city. I have asked officers to explore other funding that may be available outside of council budgets so that our city remains green and leafy."

Rochelle Wilson asked, as a supplementary question if, because of the special nature of St. Philips Road, the cabinet member would make it a priority to allocate funding by next year. **Councillor Driver** said it was not possible to prioritise one road against another. Prioritisation decisions would be based on the criteria he had outlined earlier.

Question 3

Alan Cabbage to leader of the council.

"Friends of Train Wood welcomes the fact that Norwich City Council recently - and seemingly at the eleventh hour - allocated £60,000 to Marriott's Way (city end) for 'green infrastructure' and listed the work as ready to commence for 2014/15.

I am chairman of Friends of Train Wood which, as you know, is an active community group which has lobbied extensively for the site as well as looking after it. We are actively engaged on improving it and securing its healthy future for the people of the city. We were not informed of this allocation of funds and

despite recent and repeated requests to city and county councils, we have not been able to find out who is leading on this work or even any details of what it is.”

Please could the cabinet member explain what the plans are, who is leading on them and when they will start? And at what stage were the council planning to involve us in this project, which we are keen to aid, influence and make successful?”

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council’s response:

“This is a long standing proposal which has been supported by both the City and county councils for a number of years as it forms part of National cycle route number 1, is a key element of the Norwich Area transportation plan and now forms part of the Red Pedalway. This is the first opportunity to allocate funds as part of a wider project to improve Marriott’s Way and is a collaborative project across district council boundaries working with Norfolk County council. This recognises the importance of Marriott’s Way as a strategic connection for walking and cycling from areas of growth to the city centre and the need for improvements to upgrade the surface of the route in places and to make it safer and increase its use. The next step is to seek approval for the funds: the Norwich Annual Business plan is on the agenda of tonight’s council meeting and if approved, the project will form part of the Greater Norwich growth programme which will be presented to the Council for approval in September. Once the funding is approved full engagement can take place with all relevant interested parties”.

In reply to a supplementary question from **Alan Cubbage**, **Councillor Arthur** said that this would be part of a number of infrastructure projects funded through the community infrastructure levy. The city council’s proposals for use of this money included Marriot’s Way and a number of other green areas and she understood that South Norfolk District Council also supported the use of pooled funds for Marriots Way.

4. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED, unanimously, to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2014 and the annual general meeting held on 10 June 2014.

6. QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The deputy lord mayor advised that 20 questions had been received from members of the council to cabinet members at which notice had been received in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 1 of the council’s constitution and the questions were as follows:-

Question 1 Councillor Little to the cabinet member for resources on local government finance

Question 2 Councillor Grahame to the cabinet member for resources

on participation in the democratic process for mothers breast feeding babies

- Question 3** Councillor Jackson to the cabinet member for environment, development and transport on early day motion 57 on fracking
- Question 4** Councillor Boswell to the leader of the council on bidding for HRA funding
- Question 5** Councillor Jones to the cabinet member for housing on housing plans for Three Score, Bowthorpe
- Question 6** Councillor Price to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety on allotments
- Question 7** Councillor Neale to the cabinet member for resources on programmed works at Suffolk Square
- Question 8** Councillor Howard to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety on skateboarding consultation
- Question 9** Councillor Galvin to the cabinet member for environment, development and transport on community infrastructure levy funded projects
- Question 10** Councillor Bogelein to the leader of the council on the use of community infrastructure levy funds
- Question 11** Councillor Henderson to the cabinet member for customer services on cumulative impact licensing policy
- Question 12** Councillor Carlo to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety on budgets for street trees
- Question 13** Councillor Ryan to the leader of the council on the impact of the bedroom tax
- Question 14** Councillor Manning to the cabinet member for resources on the local authority mortgage scheme
- Question 15** Councillor Harris to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety skateboarding
- Question 16** Councillor Woollard to the cabinet member for housing on the private scheme to install solar panels on council housing
- Question 17** Councillor Gayton to the portfolio holder for housing on the redevelopment of the Mile Cross neighbourhood housing office
- Question 18** Councillor Button to the cabinet member for neighbourhoods and community safety on the new cooking oil recycling scheme
- Question 19** Councillor Barker to the cabinet member for housing on the

LetNCC scheme

Question 20

Councillor Packer to the cabinet member for environment, development and transport on the city council's recycling rates

(Details of the questions and replies, together with any supplementary questions and replies, are attached as Appendix B to these minutes).

7. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Manning seconded the recommendations in the annexed report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to adopt an amendment to the council and committee procedure rules (Appendix 1 of the council's constitution) to include a rule to require that amendments to the policy and budget framework at annual council meetings be received by 10am three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

8. APPOINTMENT OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER (CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER)

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Arthur seconded the recommendations in the annexed report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to appoint Justine Hartley as the council's section 151 officer (chief finance officer).

9. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2013 – 2014

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor Manning seconded the recommendations in the annexed report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to receive the annual review of the scrutiny committee 2013 – 2014.

10. TREASURY MANAGEMENT FULL YEAR REVIEW 2013 – 14

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Bremner seconded the recommendations in the annexed report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to note the report and the treasury activity for 2013 – 14.

11. NORWICH ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2014 – 15 FOR STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Councillor Arthur moved and Councillor Herries seconded the recommendations in the annexed report.

RESOLVED, unanimously, to –

- 1) approve the annual business plan for 2014 – 15 for strategic infrastructure projects to support plan to grow in Norwich
- 2) present the business plan for 2014 – 15 to the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) to form the Norwich element of the Greater Norwich Delivery Plan.

12. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2014 – 15

RESOLVED, unanimously, to –

- 1) make appointments to outside bodies for 2014 – 15 as set out in the Appendix to the report;
- 2) devolve authority to the executive head of strategy, people and democracy in consultation with the leaders of the political groups, to agree nominations to any outstanding vacancies together with any vacancies arising during the year.

13. MOTION – YES TO HOMES

Councillor Bremner moved and Councillor Woollard seconded the motion as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED, unanimously, that –

Rising house prices mean home ownership is beyond the reach of many; the size of the mortgage deposit stops many would be first time buyers from getting on the housing ladder. More people are pushed into the private rented sector and as demand rises there, so do rents.

Council **RESOLVES** to :-

- 1) support the cabinet's commitment in its housing strategy to ensure an adequate supply of good quality homes across all tenures, especially social housing and by helping to build more houses at the right place, at the right price.
- 2) support the "yes to homes" campaign.
- 3) work with the "yes to homes" supporters, local groups and organisations to actively make the case for new homes and explain the benefits of new homes for the whole community.

(Two hours having passed since the start of the meeting the chair asked if any of the remaining matters could be taken as unopposed business. However, all were opposed).

14. MOTION

Councillor Grahame moved and Councillor Henderson seconded the following

MINS 2014-07-2

motion :-

“If the planned transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP) goes ahead, there are concerns that it could reduce the council’s options for providing public services in the interests of Norwich residents.

Council resolves to call upon the leader of the council to write to all Norwich MPs and MEPs and to the government , asking them to reject the transatlantic trade and investment partnership (TTIP)”.

Councillor Gayton moved and Councillor Ryan seconded that this matter be referred to cabinet.

RESOLVED, with 25 voting in favour, 2 against and 7 abstentions, to refer consideration of this motion to cabinet.

15. MOTION – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Neale moved and Councillor Boswell seconded the following motion –

“Council passed a motion in June 2012 calling on the Constitution working party to report to full council on new governance arrangements including moving to a committee system. When the working party considered this in March 2013, the request of full council was rejected on the votes of 5 of the 10 members present.

In the light of the fact that since this decision, Norfolk County Council has completed the cost neutral move to a committee system and an increasing number of councils around the country are changing government’s arrangements, council once more:-

Resolves to ask the constitution working party to make recommendations to council on future governance arrangements from May 2015 onwards, including consideration of the:-

- 1) impact of a committee system and other possible governance arrangements on value for money, quality of decision making, accountability, openness and transparency;
- 2) preparation and overseeing of a programme of transition to any new arrangements;
- 3) training needs for councillors and officers that may arise and
- 4) future scrutiny arrangements”

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Arthur seconded that the matter be now put.

RESOLVED, with 22 voting in favour, 14 against and 2 abstentions to move to the vote.

With 15 voting in favour, 23 against and 0 abstentions, the motion was **declared lost**.

16. MOTION – PEOPLE PREMIUM ELIGIBILITY

Councillor Wright moved and Councillor Ackroyd seconded the motion as set out on the agenda.

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Harris seconded that the procedural rule in paragraph 14.7 in Appendix 1 of the constitution be suspended to allow wider amendments.

RESOLVED, with 23 voting in favour, 8 against and 5 abstentions, to approve the procedural motion.

Councillor Waters moved and Councillor Arthur seconded, the following amendment –

“To add 1) after to write to and then to add the following at end :-

2) the secretary of state for work and pensions asking the government to restore services which make a “whole family approach” to assessing and supporting adult and young carers effectively including :-

i) restoring council budgets for adult social care which have been cut by £2.7bn since 2010;

ii) abolishing the bedroom tax which has forced disable people and families from their homes and help break up the homes, communities of support and stability young carers need;

iii) reinstating child benefit, child tax credit, child tax benefit and working tax credits which help lift families and young carers out of poverty.

RESOLVED, with 21 voting in favour, 2 against and 11 abstentions to approve the amendment.

Councillor Wright moved, and Councillor Ackroyd seconded the following amendment:-

“Resolution 3) be added after 2) as follows :-

3) write to the appropriate government ministers to inform them that this council:-

i) supports the introduction of universal free school meals for every year 1 and year 2 pupil to ensure that every pupil receives one hot, nutritious meal every day;

ii) welcomes the coalition government’s provision of £2.63 million for Norfolk schools to prepare for the introduction of universal infant free school meals;

iii) congratulates Norwich schools on their efforts to ensure that the policy will be ready for implementation at the beginning of the new academic year in September;

- iv) welcomes the Labour party's recent announcement that it supports the coalition government's policy of universal free school meals for all infant school children.

The Deputy Lord Mayor said that, as Councillor Wright had moved an amendment to his own motion, if no other member objected this would be automatically become part of the substantive motion. No member objected.

RESOLVED that –

Norwich has benefited significantly from Pupil Premium funding of £1,300 p.a. per primary pupil and £935 p.a. per secondary pupil with schools in the Norwich parliamentary areas estimated to receive over £7.5m extra funding this year alone.

According to the Carers Trust, 27% of secondary age young carers experience educational difficulties or miss school; 68% experience bullying; they have a significantly lower attainment level at GCSE and are twice as likely to be NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

The trust advocates using Pupil Premium to support young carers, which would enable Norwich schools to provide additional support to these young people.

Council **RESOLVES** –

- 1) unanimously, to ask the chief executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education, the Minister of State for Schools and Dr John Dunford OBE, the national Pupil Premium Champion, asking the government to widen the eligibility for Pupil Premiums to include young carers.
- 2) with 27 voting in favour, 1 against and 7 abstentions, to ask the chief executive to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions asking the government to restore services which make a “whole family approach” to assessing and supporting adults and young carers effectively including:-
 - i) restoring council budgets for adult social care which have been cut by £2.7bn since 2010;
 - ii) abolishing the Bedroom Tax which has forced disabled people and families from their homes and helped break up the homes, communities of support and stability young carers need;
 - iii) reinstating Child Benefit, Child Tax credit, council Tax Benefit and Working Tax Credits which help lift families and young carers out of poverty.
- 3) with 26 voting in favour, 1 against and 8 abstentions, to ask the chief executive to write to the appropriate government ministers to inform them that the council:-

- i) supports the introduction of universal Free School Meals for every Year 1 and 2 pupil to ensure that every pupil receives one hot, nutritious meal every day;
- ii) welcomes the Coalition Government's provision of £2.63m for Norfolk schools to prepare the introduction of universal Infant Free School Meals;
- iii) congratulates Norwich schools on their efforts to ensure that the policy will be ready for implementation at the beginning of the new academic year in September;
- iv) welcomes the Labour Party's recent announcement that it supports the Coalition Government's policy of Universal Free School Meals for all infant school children.

CHAIR

APPENDIX A

Leader of the council's aims and objections for the forthcoming year.

My aspirations for the coming year are as ever based upon the administrations values of fairness, justice, belief in our communities and good quality public service.

We are an ambitious authority and, as such, I want us to deliver more homes, new jobs, regenerate our communities and make the city a fairer place to live during these tough times. As we have found over the past few years we achieve more when we collaborate with others and this is a feature of our work I would want to continue. However, despite support from our partners and increased efficiency within the organisation I believe the year ahead will have its challenges and so I would like us to focus our energies on ensuring we continue to raise the quality of our services still putting the residents of Norwich at the heart of work which we do and on a discreet number of initiatives.

In terms of **housing** the focus should be on:-

- Continuing to build more council homes.
- Improving and upgrading our existing stock.
- Reducing the number of hazardous, poorly managed and sub-standard privately rented homes through enforcement.
- Continuing to tackle and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping.
- Looking to limit the percentage of houses that can be houses of multiple-occupancy.
- Expanding the supply of all types of affordable housing.
- Promoting independent living through the provision of information, disabled facilities grants, discretionary loans and adaptations of council homes.

Looking to **jobs and growth** we should:-

- Build on our successful City Deal and use the resources to accelerate development and skills training opportunities.
- Use our resources to lever new investment into the city prioritising investment in projects with the greatest potential to drive sustainable jobs growth.
- Continue to work with the Business Improvement District to boost retail in the city centre and ensure Norwich remains in the top shopping destinations.
- Develop our current work with the universities, and other partners to promote Norwich as a global centre for research, engineering, sustainable energy, science, digital businesses and art and design.

Being serious about **community safety** has been a cornerstone of the administrations delivery since 2006. To build on this in the coming year we should:

- Continue our effective working relationship with our antisocial behaviour team and the police.
- Implement our 12 point plan to make the night time economy safer for those using it and less anti social for those living in areas near to it.
- Continue to improve the enforcement of littering, dog fouling, fly-tipping and graffiti.
- Adopt firmer policies to control premises selling alcohol and introduce more rigorous inspections for off licences.
- Steward our green spaces, parks and trees responsibly.

Norwich has an impressive record in terms of **recycling** and we need to build upon this and the success of our environmental manager and manager of the year. To this end, we should:

- Continue to reduce the disposal of waste to landfill and increase recycling together with reducing the consumption of paper and fuel in council activities.
- Maintain and develop our switch and save scheme which has helped thousands of Norwich residents address their fuel poverty.
- Work with the county council for a citywide 20mph residential, school area and shopping centre speed limit.
- Ensure increased energy efficiency in council-owned properties and also promote domestic energy efficiency.
- Improve recycling information especially to transient residents, such as students and those living in houses of multiple-occupancy.

The city remains a special place because people have made it a **creative, cultural and active place** in which to live and work. In these constrained times our policies should seek to maintain, protect and enhance this reputation. As such I want us to:

- Continue to provide a range of free events to promote participation and engagement. While many of these will be in the city centre I would like to see some out in our neighbourhood communities.
- Aim to attract at least one major national event to Norwich.
- Celebrate the work of volunteers, sports clubs and community coaches.
- Increase the availability of tourist information through the development of our website and linking this with Visit Norwich, The Forum and Discover Norwich websites.
- Work to improve customer satisfaction levels for St Andrews and Blackfriars Halls, the Riverside sports complex and the Norman Centre.

Our work for a **fairer more just city** has grown over the past years in response to changes welfare reforms and other national policies which have put significant

pressure on large sectors of our communities. In the year ahead we must continue to develop our work to reach out to all those who need help. So we must:

- Provide more training for officers and councillors advising on welfare changes
- Ensure that the council's money advice team continues to provide high quality debt and money advice to council tenants and that our pre tenancy courses focus on financial capability.
- Continue to work with the voluntary sector so that residents of all ages can access free independent advice.
- Work with the private housing sector to enable owners to access home improvement loans.
- Work alongside credit unions and highlight the dangers of using unlicensed loan providers, loan sharks or high charging companies.
- Meet the requirements of being a Living Wage council by working with our contractors and promote the Living Wage campaign across the city.
- Support existing residents' and communities groups and encourage the creation of new groups where needed.

As central government money is increasingly channelled through the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and as our central grants are reduced we clearly have to generate more income if we are to continue to deliver the services we believe the people of Norwich deserve. To this end I want us to:

- Continue to use our assets to our best advantage.
- Look for investment opportunities especially ones which are linked to providing more job opportunities in Norwich.
- Investigate sharing services with other authorities
- Look at what services we provide which might be sold to others perhaps through initiative, such as Coastshare.
- Continue to develop our joint ventures including NP Law, Norwich NPS, CNC.
- Work with LGSS to ensure we maximise the benefit we have from that relationship.

In addition, as we continue to deliver our transformation programme, it is imperative that our residents and customers are able to access information about our services and how they can influence our work.

Finally, as we look to the year ahead we will be shaping the Corporate Plan for the five years from 2015 and we have discussed ways in which we can involve all councillors as well as partners and our residents in shaping this. I look forward to this exciting piece of work which must reflect our belief in the value of local government and its ability to use its local knowledge to deliver good quality services. We have demonstrated very powerfully how the role of civic leader can galvanise successful initiatives in a city. We must build on this to ensure Norwich is well positioned to face a changing environment.

Question 1

Councillor Little to ask the portfolio holder for resources:

"The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chartered Institute for Public Finance (CIPFA) have said that "Governments of all persuasions have let the public down with their refusal to reform" the way that local government is financed in England. Does the council agree and, if so, does it intend to submit its views to the recently launched Independent Commission on Local Government Finance?"

Councillor Waters, portfolio holder for resources response:

"I agree with the thrust of Councillor Little's question, particularly in relation to the tightening grip central government has over the funding of local government. In this context I would commend the Local Government Innovation Taskforce publication - *People Powered Public Services* – commissioned for Labour's policy review, which argues for the devolution of power and resources to local government and which will be contained in Labour's manifesto for the 2015 General Election. This may be a new departure from the centralising tendencies of the past 30 years.

We will, of course, make representations to the Independent Commission on Local Government Finance. I cannot think of a time when we haven't been making representations about a 'fair deal' for Norwich and adding our voice to the need to re-establish greater financial autonomy for local government."

Councillor Little asked as a supplementary question, whether there would be opportunities for others to input into the council's response to the independent commission on local government finance. **Councillor Waters** said the council had a number of cross party working groups including one that looked at the public consultation on budgets and funding options and views could be discussed there.

Question 2

Councillor Grahame to ask the portfolio holder for resources:

"Council is committed to equality, therefore what provision will it make to overcome barriers to full participation in the democratic process for mothers of breast-feeding babies?"

Councillor Waters, portfolio holder for resources response:

"Pregnancy and maternity is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act (2010) and breastfeeding in public places is specifically protected, as it would be sex discrimination to treat a woman unfavourably if she is breastfeeding. If a woman is happy to breastfeed whilst participating in a council meeting they are entitled to do so.

If a woman attending a meeting, whether a councillor or a member of the public, decided themselves that they would prefer to breastfeed away from the debate but didn't want to miss a particular part of the meeting, I would expect the chair and

officers to look into ways of accommodating her such as looking at the timing of agenda items; changing the order of business etc. It is the responsibility of the chair to balance the need for the democratic business to be undertaken appropriately according to access to information rules/regulatory requirements etc whilst also taking any reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of individuals who wish to participate.”

Councillor Grahame said that two councillor colleagues had been asked not to attend the council AGM with babies and asked, as a supplementary question, if the cabinet member would ensure this did not happen again. **Councillor Waters** said that you will need to substantiate this suggestion. I do not believe this could have happened so I would expect you to be able to verify that and you and I should therefore have a discussion after the council meeting.

Question 4

Councillor Boswell to ask the leader of the council:

“Please explain the decision making process that was carried out, and what the key reasons were, when the council recently decided not to bid for some of the £300m additional borrowing under the government's bidding round to raise the HRA budget ceiling.”

Councillor Arthur, leader of the council's response:

“The council has commenced a programme to build new council homes and we plan to deliver 250 homes by 2018. However, as all members are aware, this level of new provision is significantly below what is needed in the city. For this reason the council has consistently argued that the government imposed cap on housing revenue account debt is a major barrier to us delivering a much more ambitious house building programme to meet local needs. In this context the council has taken every opportunity to lobby the government to lift the borrowing limit/cap on the HRA. Members will recall that as part of the city deal process we made a very convincing submission to the cabinet office to bring forward a programme to build over 1000 new homes. I was bitterly disappointed when this proposal failed to attract the support of the Treasury because of concerns about the wider implications of the potential impact on the national debt.

Therefore I was delighted when in April 2014 the government signalled a change of approach and announced a Local Growth Fund to increase HRA borrowing to deliver an additional 10,000 new affordable homes. The government identified £150m available in 2015/16 and a similar sum in 2016/17 and invited bids from local authorities. The government has recently announced the outcome of the bidding process and only 20% of the additional borrowing headroom has been allocated to 15 local authorities to deliver just over 1000 dwellings – which is way below the governments' expectations. We did not submit a bid and it is clear that most other Housing Authorities took a similar decision.

The offer from the government was reviewed in some detail by officers and this work included prior discussions with Department of Communities and Local Government officials and a joint working group of the six local authorities with a managed housing stock in Norfolk and Suffolk. After extensive work officers prepared a detailed financial model in accordance with the prospectus and this highlighted some major

concerns over the financial viability of the proposal. For example there was an assumption in the prospectus that in addition to the increased borrowing approval (set at an indicative level of £30,000 per dwelling) local housing authorities would need to use income from other asset disposals (i.e. right-to-buy receipts and land and property sales) and there was also encouragement to explore other funding (for example cross subsidy from private house sales in mixed tenure schemes). The aim of the government was to maximise the number of houses delivered but at the same time constrain the amount funded by borrowing. In this context officers prepared an evaluation that concluded that it was not financially viable to submit a proposal under the current guidelines but that this position would be reviewed if the government changed the prospectus for the second round of bidding. In view of our commitment to increase the level of house building in the city it was with considerable reluctance that the portfolio holder and I agreed with this advice.

However we will have another opportunity. In view of the lack of take-up suggesting that like us other authorities felt the scheme was not viable the government have announced a second round of bidding and a new prospectus is awaited. It is clear that some of the funding barriers identified in round one will be removed or relaxed and this means that we should be in a position to submit a proposal. I am extremely optimistic that we can do this and officers have commenced work on drafting a financially sustainable proposal.

You will understand that as an authority we are presented frequently with opportunities to bid for funds. Our general approach is to look at the feasibility of the offer and then decide whether to proceed.”

Councillor Boswell asked, as a supplementary question, when members would be likely to receive more information on any bid. **Councillor Arthur** said that the council continued to lobby to remove the potential barriers to enable the council to access the funding required to deliver more homes. If the council was successful then the proposals for how we spent that money would be considered by cabinet.

Question 6

Councillor Price to ask the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety:

“When new allotment rules were produced in September 2010, 1,277 allotment holders were written to for consultation. In the *Norwich allotment rules*, section 1.4 states: “We may need to amend these rules from time to time. If we plan to do so, we will consult allotment users in accordance with our consultation policy at the time before making changes”

I have searched the NCC website for details of the consultation policy but could not find it anywhere. The council recently consulted a tiny focus group of allotment holders, and also the newly created role of site representatives, on developing new cultivation rules. Many allotment tenants do not use the internet, creating the potential to exclude up to 50% from this process, when these are likely to be older or more disadvantaged than those who have email. Why has the council not made the effort to write to allotment holders in advance of this process to inform them of how to contact their site representatives so that they could engage with the initial formation of the cultivation rules?”

Councillor Driver, portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:

"The level of consultation undertaken for any piece of work is proportionate to the project to avoid wasting resources whilst still providing an opportunity for tenants to be involved. A first draft of the rules based on experience of issues which had been raised under the existing rules was presented to a focus group of association members, site representatives and interested tenants. A second draft of the rules was discussed at a further meeting with site representatives. Following this a third draft was sent via e-mail to 830 tenants. As well as e-mail alerts posters have been displayed on every site noticeboard telling allotment holders about the planned changes and urging them to contact us either by e-mail, letter or telephone. The draft rules have also been displayed on the noticeboards asking tenants for their comments. To date 20 responses have been received. Five are positive about the changes, 3 negative and 12 have just made a comment.

At the close of the consultation, all comments will be reviewed and appropriate amendments made which will then be incorporated into the allotment rules."

In reply to a supplementary question from **Councillor Price**, **Councillor Driver** said that there was no legal requirement to consult but the council always wanted to. It was not sensible to stop the current consultation so this would continue.

Question 7

Councillor Neale to ask the portfolio holder for resources:

"After much lobbying by myself last year and welcome assistance from Cllr Mike Sands, NPS gave written approval to provide disabled access and estate aesthetics to council-owned commercial premises in Suffolk Square, programmed to be delivered in the 2014-2015 budget year. After several emails to NPS this year asking when the program would start, I finally received half an answer on 20 May to say it has been postponed and may be done in 2015-16. This will cause much disappointment with the local residents who welcomed this agreement. I asked NPS on 6 June 2014 and again on 4 July 2014 who made this U turn and to reconsider, but as yet have not had a reply. Could you provide an explanation as to why an agreed programme has been indefinitely postponed and whether you find it acceptable for the council's agents to ignore councillors' genuine requests for information?"

Councillor Waters, the portfolio holder for resources response:

"Programming of the works referred to by Councillor Neale was originally earmarked for 2014/15 and I apologise if he has not been kept up to date with the development of this programme.

As well as at Suffolk Square, similar concerns regarding the condition of some of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) shops and shopping parades have also been identified. Whereas many of these issues are the tenants' responsibility – such as disabled access into premises – it is acknowledged that it may be more efficient and effective if such matters are dealt with as a whole and by the council itself. So for example it may be appropriate to invest in new shop fronts and/or the common areas in front of shops – which would both improve the local environment and make such shops easier to let.

To best address these matters, a revised approach has been adopted for the management of HRA shopping parades and individual shops, which seeks to maximise the effectiveness of expenditure from the shop refurbishment and maintenance and estate aesthetics budgets. In particular rather than piecemeal investment such as improved disabled access in one year and a new shop front in the following, the approach is to try to do all of the work required at the same time. With limited budgets a consequence of this is potential delay to works that might have otherwise been picked up as part of a more piecemeal approach. However the overall cost is much reduced and once the investment is made a more complete improvement will be in place.

Alongside Suffolk Square there is also a requirement to undertake investment at the Earlham West Centre. With this work more advanced it was decided to undertake the integrated approach referred to during 2014/15. With insufficient budget to also undertake the works at Suffolk Square these are now programmed for 2015/16. As I mentioned above I am sorry if this has not been adequately communicated to you and officers and NPS Norwich are taking steps to avoid this in future. I hope you will nonetheless welcome the investment at Suffolk Square which as well as dealing with more immediate issues, will also see new shop fronts and improvements to the paved/landscaped areas in front of the shops."

Councillor Neale said that he had eventually received the information from NPS that the cabinet member had put in his response, the only difference being that NPS had informed him that the works would be indefinitely postponed. He asked, as a supplementary question, if the second part of his original question could be answered. Is the cabinet member happy with the NPS response? **Councillor Waters** said that he had acknowledged the lack of communication on this matter. He said that there was a Liaison Board which Green Councillor Blunt was a member of and Councillor Neale would be welcome to attend.

Question 8

Councillor Howard to ask the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety:

"Following approval by full council, the proposed bye-law on skateboarding will be subject to a four week consultation. Could you explain the practicalities of how the council intends to reach out to and consult with key, hard-to-reach stakeholders (such as the skateboarders themselves), and how the results of the consultation may impact the final byelaw?"

Councillor Driver, the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety's response:

"I would be happy to. In terms of the skateboarders, we are taking the advice of the skateboarding community on how best to consult. However, skateboarders are just one part of the community affected by skateboarding. We need to consider the impact on everyone including local businesses, organisations representing our veterans, other users of the open space and the general public. As far as the consultation is concerned we are currently looking at how best to consult with these

stakeholders I am sure you will appreciate that I would not want to second guess how the outcome would impact on the final byelaw. I want to keep an open mind.”

Councillor Howard asked, as a supplementary question, how the consultation would be publicised and the responses weighted. **Councillor Driver** said that the council would welcome input from as many people as possible into this and there would be plenty of time for councillors to discuss the matter and provide their input.

Question 9

Leader of the Council to ask the portfolio holder for environment, development and transport:

“I understand 30% of the pooled community infrastructure levy income is to be spent directly as 'neighbourhood funding' after a 'process of engagement with local communities in the autumn'. Could the cabinet member please detail the process, including timescales, criteria and projected funds available, so communities can become involved?

Councillor Arthur, Leader of the Council’s response:

“15% of CIL income (or 25% in areas where there is a neighbourhood plan) is required (through the CIL amendment regulations 2013) to be used as neighbourhood funding to be spent following engagement with local communities. To avoid confusion about the percentage figures, either 20 or 30% of CIL funding will be retained by the council depending on whether there is a neighbourhood plan in existence and to allow for 5% to cover the council’s administrative costs. The remainder (i.e. 70 or 80%) will be pooled across greater Norwich to pay for strategic infrastructure.

The process for engaging with local communities was approved by cabinet in February 2014. This set out that engagement would take place in the early autumn each year and would use existing community engagement mechanisms such as walkabouts, neighbourhood events, ward councillor meetings, engagement with residents groups etc. to inform the spending of the neighbourhood element. This will be based on the work of the neighbourhood teams and be proportionate to the amount of funds to be spent. Cabinet also agreed the following selection criteria:

- Impact (the outcomes that will be achieved from the proposed project);
- Deliverability (are there any constraints to implementing the project in the proposed timescale); and,
- Funding (availability of other funds, appropriateness of use of CIL).

Following consultation, council officers will consider the options put forward by local people against these criteria and present recommendations to cabinet and council for approval and inclusion in the capital programme in February 2015 for expenditure in 2015/6. The process allows for full feedback to local communities about the basis on which decisions have been made and involvement of local ward members.

Initial work by the council's neighbourhood teams to determine how best to engage with local people to identify projects for inclusion in the council's capital programme for 2015/6 has already commenced.

The CIL neighbourhood funding received in Norwich in 2013/4 (based on 15% of total CIL income) was £2,000 and the latest forecast suggest a further £124,000 may be received by the end of 2014/5. Of course these forecasts may not be precise as CIL is payable when development commences, which is in the hands of the developer."

Councillor Galvin asked, as a supplementary question, what publicity on the consultation had been undertaken so far and what method of evaluation would be used to ensure that communities views were taken into account. **Councillor Arthur** said that neighbourhood officers had already started to talk to local councillors and this would soon be broadcast more widely to other areas. As always, the council will look at all ways possible to reach out to people to give everyone the opportunity to influence the budget setting process.

Question 11

Councillor Henderson to ask the portfolio holder for customer services:

"With reference to the Late Night Activity Zone, can the cabinet member please confirm that every effort will be made to expedite the delivery of the long overdue legislation on cumulative impact to give the licensing committee more influence over the increase of clubs and the extensions of licensing hours? At present the committee has very limited power over this area which impacts greatly on the residents of my ward in particular, and I would ask that this matter be brought before the licensing committee at the earliest opportunity so that we can then send it out for consultation and let the public have some influence on this issue."

Councillor Harris, the portfolio holder for customer services response:

"The statutory guidance issued to licensing authorities confirms that a decision to include a special cumulative impact policy (CIP) within the council's statement of licensing policy has to be made on an evidential basis. The guidance sets out the steps to adopting a CIP, which include:

- Considering whether there is good evidence that crime and disorder or nuisance are occurring;
- Identify the boundaries of the area where problems are occurring.

An initial CIP proposal received from the police was reviewed in June and areas that required amending were identified, which primarily related to updating statistical information. This work is currently being undertaken by the police and should be completed shortly. Subject to the revised proposal satisfying the steps contained in the statutory guidance, a report will be brought before the licensing committee seeking authorisation to carry out the necessary consultation.

The proposed cumulative impact policy is only one measure within a package of measures we are bringing in. We recently approved a 12 point action plan to mitigate the impacts of the night time economy in the city centre on residents, businesses and visitors to the area. Work is progressing on all points raised and in particular around improvements to CCTV, taxi marshalling, traffic regulation orders, working with the clubs to give greater access to toilet provision and recognition from the police to provide improved cover to the area.”

Councillor Henderson asked, as a supplementary question, what progress was being made on the 12 point action plan including the CCTV and road closures.

Councillor Harris said that the process of improving the CCTV points took 8 weeks. The cameras were ready and as soon as the points were finished teams were on standby to install the cameras. On the road closures, **Councillor Stonnard** said that this was a matter for the Norwich Highways Agency Committee. Formal consultation had been commenced and it would then come back to the committee for consideration.

Question 12

Councillor Carlo to ask the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety:

“Diseased street trees continue to be removed and not replanted. Six trees have been recently been cut down on Dereham, Connaught and St Philips Roads with a further two placed under watch. Long sections of College Road no longer have any street trees. Diverting small sums of money left over from the tree budget for conservation areas and looking at the possibility of tree sponsorship by local residents are not long term solutions for replacing the city’s diminishing stock of street trees. How does the City Council intend addressing this serious problem? When can the public expect the city council to re-instate the budget for re-planting street trees outside of conservation areas?”

Councillor Driver, the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety’s response:

“I am pleased to announce that the council has looked into this issue and will be planting trees according to need. The approved tree planting budget of £35,000 for this year will be used to replace trees, addressing the following aspects: legal, landscape, community, biodiversity and street scene. All replacement trees will be assessed against this set criteria and prioritised accordingly. The council does not just rely on the set budget. We will be enhancing our street tree planting through other schemes such as Push the Pedal Ways, specific highway improvement projects and 20 mph zones. Details will be released as each scheme comes on line.

You will recall that at the time the budget was reduced it was, and still remains, the intention to address this issue once the economic climate of the council is more favourable. We are under great pressure to reduce expenditure whilst maintaining the many excellent services we provide as a council and, along with my fellow cabinet members, have to prioritise the resources we have available.”

In reply to a supplementary question from **Councillor Carlo, Councillor Driver** confirmed that trees would cost £250 each and the officers would determine the appropriate trees to place in the appropriate place.

Question 18

Councillor Button to ask the portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety:

“Can the cabinet member update council on the new cooking oil recycling scheme to safely dispose of cooking oil and fats at six new oil recycling banks across Norwich?”

Councillor Driver, portfolio holder for neighbourhoods and community safety’s response:

“In June 2014, Norwich City Council introduced a recycling service for cooking oil and fats at existing bring bank sites in the city. When poured down the drain, oils and fats can regularly cause blockages within the pipes and can lead to other problems with odour. We are pleased to announce we are working with Anglian Water by providing residents with a chance to recycle their cooking oil and fats into renewably resourced car fuel. Oil banks can now be found at the following sites

- Waitrose, Eaton Centre
- Sainsburys, Queens road,
- Morrisons, Albion way,
- Tuckswood shops, Tuckswood centre,
- St Saviours car park, St Saviours Lane,
- Enfield Road, near the shops”

In reply to a supplementary question from **Councillor Button, Councillor Driver** said that the provision for oil recycling was an excellent scheme and it would accept any types of oil including vegetable oil, cooking oil, lard and butter etc.

Question 20

Councillor Packer to ask the portfolio holder for environment, development and transport:

“Can the cabinet member update council on our current recycling rates and how they compare to other local authorities?”

Councillor Driver, portfolio holder for environment, development and transport’s response:

“I am very pleased to confirm this Labour administration’s excellent record in making impressive improvements to the city’s recycling rates and moving our performance from worst to best in the county.

In 2005-06, before Labour controlled the city council, Norwich's recycling rate was a paltry 16% - the worst of any council in Norfolk and only half as much as both the best performing council in the county and the East of England average. By 2009-10 we had more than doubled this rate and have continued to make further improvements, despite a modest generalised fall in recycling rates nationally, related to the period of austerity, improvements in product packaging, and changes in consumer preference. Nonetheless, Norwich City Council's improved performance remains impressive at around 35% in 2013.

However, recycling is of course only a means to an end; what matters far more, and the key measure, is that we are sending less household waste to landfill and, in that regard, Norwich City Council's performance has been even more impressive. In 2005-06, before Labour was in control, Norwich City Council was the worst performing council in the county, sending 702 kg of residual household waste to land fill in that year, and it also was the worst performer amongst its national 'family' peer group of comparable councils.

However, under Labour's direction, by 2011-12 we were sending only 396 kg to landfill, making us the best performing council in the county (having almost halved our level residual waste) and the best performer amongst our national peer group. This performance also was well above the East of England and England Average. We also had moved from worst to best performer in our national 'family' peer group of comparator councils.

Recycling is an important part of our drive to reduce levels of residual waste sent to land fill and this Labour administration is now spearheading further significant improvements such as the new mixed dry recycling contract, which comes on stream in October of this year, which will hugely increase the range of household waste products that may be recycled. For the first time this will include plastic bags, yoghurt pots, margarine tubs and foil, and the new system also will make it easier for people to recycle because it will not require glass to be separated into separate bins. This will support the Labour administrations ambitious but realistic target to further improve Norwich's recycling rate to 50%.

This is just one part of this Labour administration's commitment to environmental improvement across the City. Over the period since 2008 we have reduced the City Council's carbon emissions by 29%, while the closest performing Norfolk District council achieved only 40% of our reduction and the worst only 13% of our reduction. We now plan to achieve a further reduction in carbon emissions of over 10% over the next five years.

Labour's 'Push the Pedalways' project will inject over £5m into a major improvement in the pink pedalway, a high quality cycle route which crosses the city on an eight mile route from west to east. This scheme is part of our ambition to double the level of cycling in the city within ten years, supporting our plans to reduce car usage and to encourage more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and of course walking.

These achievements are something of which this Labour administration can be justifiably proud but we are not resting on our laurels and as can be seen we are working hard to ensure the city council makes further significant improvements to our city's environment."

Councillor Packer said he understood how this council's recycling rates compared to other local and peer group councils but asked, as a supplementary question, how our recycle rates compared to other high achieving/highly ambitious councils.

Councillor Stonard said that the best example he could refer to was Brighton and Hove. The current recycling rate was 25% which was a third of that which was suggested in its ruling green group's election manifesto and was 16% lower than before they took office. He suggested that this showed the wisdom of the city council's approach and he was proud of our record.