



NORWICH
City Council

Council

24 November 2020

Questions to cabinet members or chairs of committees

Question 1

Councillor Wright to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“During a discussion about Norwich Regeneration Limited at the council meeting of 23 June 2020, the leader of the council told the meeting that “most recently we have appointed two non-executive directors”.

Governance of the company has been a cause for concern, so this news of the appointment of non-executive directors (NEDs) offered some comfort.

However, as of 29 October 2020 when the company filed its most recent ‘confirmation statement’, no such additional directors are listed.

Could the leader of the council please shed some light on this apparent discrepancy?”

Councillor Waters, the leader’s response:

“Work has been taken forward this year to strengthen the governance of NRL. Two non-executive directors have been recruited and joined the Board of the company on 14 September 2020. The two new non-executive directors have extensive experience in housing development and have made a significant contribution already. Their appointments have been registered with Companies House and this can be viewed under officers. Their appointments will show in future NRL statements. In addition, in order to further strengthen the governance and maintain close links to the council, the city council’s director of resources and director of place also attend NRL board meetings as participating observers”

Question 2

Councillor Lubbock to ask the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment the following question:

“In October I received an email from a young man resident in Norwich. He told me that he had been in hospital again for a week with another exacerbation of his lung disease and that he was now on intravenous antibiotics for another week. In the past his problems have been exacerbated by air pollution from traffic but this time it was the rise in wood burning in his area in recent weeks that had caused him to become ill.

He knows because he constantly monitors the air pollution with a personal device and the particulate matter he recorded in the 10 days before his admission to hospital was more typical of wood burning than traffic - plus the peaks did not match with rush hour traffic.

He goes on to say that there is a huge lack of awareness around just how polluting wood burning is. Recent research by the British Medical Journal indicates that a single wood burning stove can emit more highly toxic PM2.5 particles than 1000 petrol cars. In addition 38% of the UK's particulate matter air pollution is from domestic wood and coal burning. Yet there are only about 2.5 million open fires and stoves in the UK, while 40 million motor vehicles are responsible for just 12% of the same pollutant.

This council is responsible for monitoring air pollution and in the past I have been concerned that there be more effective monitoring outside schools that are heavily trafficked. However following this email I think there are further questions to be asked. Could the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment comment on what this council is doing to monitor dense residential areas, particularly in the evenings in the winter?”

Councillor Maguire, the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment's response:

“Thank you for your question on behalf of your constituent in relation to air quality in the city and for an update on the action the council is taking to monitor residential areas during the winter.

You ask a timely question on this matter as winter approaches, the temperature drops, people spend more time in their homes, and, in consequence, seek to heat their homes to the best of their ability and pocket. This is not just a Covid-related issue but Lockdown and increased working from home will have had an effect.

Your question flags up the relative contributions to pollution from traffic and from wood-burning. In the main, traffic produces nitrogen dioxide and wood burning produces fine particulate matter.

We are especially concerned with two sizes of particle; both of which have health effects: PM10 is particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter and

PM2.5 is particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter, the significance of the latter being that the lungs do not exhale 2.5 micron sized particles. This is why Norwich City Council monitors pollution from particulate matter at Castle Meadow “ground hog” unit, whilst Defra monitor the same at Lakenfields. Thus, there are 2 sites within Norwich which monitor PM10 & PM2.5. This, they do, automatically and continuously.

Between the two sites we measure two contrasting sources: heavy traffic (Castle Meadow) and mainly residential (Lakenfields). The Castle Meadow can be viewed in real time at:

https://www.norfolkairquality.net/Online.aspx?ST_ID=3;0 .

And Lakenfields at https://www.norfolkairquality.net/Online.aspx?ST_ID=2;0

For the last 2 years the annual mean PM2.5 levels at both sites have met the stringent WHO guideline level of 10µg/m3.

The site at Castle Meadow also measures real-time nitrogen dioxide levels and numerous diffusion tube sites across the city provide nitrogen dioxide monitoring data on a monthly basis. This year we began monitoring outside the school on Jessop Road: the nitrogen dioxide levels there are also well below the national objective level set by the government in statute.

It is worth noting that the county council also engages with schools on such matters for example school travel plans, discouraging parents from parking directly outside the school and encouraging modal shift from cars to walking and cycling.

You will be aware that the council also deals with air pollution from chimneys and bonfires through Statutory Nuisance legislation. All complaints the council receives are investigated and enforcement powers exercised where necessary and possible. Very few bonfire complaints are received; we attribute this to the greater recycling of waste which continues to increase.

Chimneys are designed to give adequate dispersion under favourable weather conditions; hence the council receives very few complaints from this source of pollution. Burning of wood on an open fire or in a wood burner, while not new, would appear to be increasing. Their use, however, is not always with the attendant knowledge and practice required which is why, for some time, Norwich City Council have provided some guidance on their website

(https://www.norwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/4278/open_fires_and_wood_burning_stoves_-_a_practical_guide)

If you would like to read a summary report each year of these data, the council submits an annual status report on air quality in the city to Defra each year. The reports go back many years are available on our website.

Thank you again for your timely raising of this important issue.”

Question 3

Councillor Youssef to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“The council has a tradition of supporting Black History Month in October, of which it can be proud. However, I’m sure the cabinet will agree that celebrating Black History should not be confined to a single month. With this in mind, will the council consider naming some new roads which are to be built after historical Black figures from Norwich? I would suggest Justin Fashanu as one such person who could be remembered in this way.”

Councillor Stonard, the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth’s response:

“Thank you for your question: you make a good suggestion.

The process for street naming new roads in the city is undertaken by the council’s address referencing officer who works in discussion with the developer. Sometimes the council suggests names, others the developers have their own ideas which we have to authorise. In particular we check with Royal Mail to ensure the proposed name will not create confusion as a postal address by way of it being too similar to an existing road name, but we also need to be sensitive to the views of living relatives if for example named after a person.

Through the engagement process we have with developers I will ask officers to make your suggestion to them so that they can consider it.

The council and its wholly-owned company, Norwich Regeneration Limited, are also developers. The name we choose for future roads that we might develop is in our control therefore. I will ask that proposals are put forward to celebrate local Black History in the way you suggest as part of this for one of our future developments.”

Question 4

Councillor Bogelein to ask the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing the following question:

“In August, a resident at Ebenezer Place reported human excrement being left in her stairwell - a regular occurrence - and was told that her block would be deep cleaned. Two and a half months later, that deep clean had still not been carried out and it was only through repeated emails and phone calls that it got done. What will it take for the council to make sure that its own housing is properly cleaned at this and other locations?”

Councillor Harris, the deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing’s response:

“By way of background the technical operations team at Norwich NORSE Environment (NNE) will attend sites to remove faeces (and needles, bodily fluids etc.). They would not provide a deep clean of an area as the service is initially limited to an emergency clean-up service. The NNE operative who attended on this occasion reported that there were no faeces to be found, neither did he find urine or any particular odour. Separately, a request to quote a ‘deep clean’ for the site was sent to NNE from a housing officer on 25 September. A quote was sent and was subsequently approved on 01 October. As this request was additional to the contractual service it had to be scheduled, with the works being planned for completion within the preceding month and in accordance with normal practice.

For information, Ebenezer Place is not on any contractual cleaning regime (for any service). We did arrange a deep clean of the area as a ‘one-off’ following discussions with other councillors and residents from the area. This was completed by 29 October 2020. For any new requests NNE have to schedule this into their normal allocated works. In this instance they carried out the deep clean as requested. The invoice for this is covered under a Housing budget. We do however acknowledge there is necessarily a delay from request to completion due to resourcing and work allocation of a one off deep clean. If there had been any residual significant hazard then this would have been prioritised.

In future and for any emergency occurrences the technical operatives will attend and will clean up and disinfect the area as standard. Residents need to continue to report should this and continue to report such requests via the Customer Contact Centre and/or our Out of Hours service.”

Question 5

Councillor Schmierer to ask the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth the following question:

“Other cities such as Leeds have in the last few years introduced a tall buildings policy which informs their planning decisions.

I am aware that this matter was discussed at the council's sustainable development committee in July, during which it was noted that the director of place was disinclined to take this forward given that Historic England had objected to four proposals for buildings of significant height in Norwich in recent years which he considered sat comfortably with the city's skyline and street scenes. However, the meeting was also told that “the Secretary of State's determination on Anglia Square was expected on 7 September and the Planning Inspector's report would be a useful tool for further discussions with Historic England on how to resolve the issue.”

Interestingly, the Secretary of State's and Planning Inspector's letters in response to Anglia Square both highlight the lack of policy on tall buildings in Norwich. Does the cabinet member agree that having a policy, which gives more clarification on which (if any) and where tall buildings are to be permitted in Norwich, especially in the city centre, would be useful going forward as a planning tool?”

Councillor Stonard, the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth's response:

“I am aware that some other cities have introduced tall buildings policies and Historic England generally support this. However, I remain to be convinced that this is the correct approach for Norwich. The current local plan policy framework augmented by the City Centre Conservation Appraisal provides a robust and appropriate framework for making decisions on tall buildings in Norwich.

The absence of a specific policy on tall buildings for Norwich did not prevent officers providing a thorough assessment of merits of the tall building proposed for Anglia Square. That analysis was generally commended by the inspector in his report but the secretary of state reached a difference conclusion on the merits. Both the Secretary of State and the planning inspector noted that there was nothing in policy that expressly supported or prevented a tall building at Anglia Square but neither highlighted this as a problem or called for a specific policy to be produced.

My view remains that an approach where more general policy documents provide the tools to evaluate the appropriate height and mass of buildings remains appropriate.

The council is intending to update the City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal in the coming year, subject to sufficient staff resources being available. This will present an opportunity to amend policies relating to

building height and views. The observations in the Anglia Square decision letter and inspectors report will be helpful because they contain some points of clarification where the secretary of state and inspector agree, such as on the subject of long range views from St James' Hill and the legitimacy of tall buildings having a residential use.

A further matter that is also being explored is the potential of acquiring and using a 3D model of the city centre to assist the formulation of policy and decision taking. We are seeking to engage with Historic England on these and other matters."

Question 6

Councillor Osborn to ask the chair of scrutiny committee the following question:

"I would like to ask the chair of the scrutiny committee what his opinion is regarding the decision by the scrutiny committee last month to discontinue the select committee on fly-tipping. The issue of fly-tipping had been raised by a member of the public more than 18 months previously and a select committee had been formed to deal with the issue in response to the member of the public's request. While I am sure that the chair of scrutiny shares my intense disappointment that this effort to find solutions to fly-tipping, which is of great concern to many people in Norwich, has been closed down by the vote to discontinue the select committee, can he comment on what is needed to ensure that the scrutiny committee is able to fulfil its purpose and act in the interests of the people of Norwich, and not just follow the edicts of the administration?"

Councillor Wright, the chair of scrutiny's response:

"Councillor Osborn is right to highlight the scourge of fly-tipping on our communities.

Scrutiny is at its best when it is non-partisan and able to deal with issues that are of concern to members of the public, and I would like to thank all members of the public who get in contact with the committee to suggest topics that we could look into. It is therefore important that we give these requests due consideration.

Ahead of the discontinuation of the select committee at the October meeting of the scrutiny committee, I had been given confirmation by council officers that capacity exists within the council to support a select committee to look at the issue of fly-tipping.

At every meeting of the committee, we look at our work programme, and I would encourage Councillor Osborn to ask the committee to reconsider the decision to discontinue."

Question 7

Councillor Price to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“At a council meeting in July 2020, the cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth deferred the car free city centre motion until the work around the ‘Liveable City’ as part of the 2040 City Vision had taken place. Councillor Stonard said this strand of the vision was ‘due this coming autumn’. As we are now nearing the end of November, it seemed appropriate to ask for an update.

The cabinet member said that the Liveable City strand of the 2040 City Vision was the place for strategic consideration of this motion in order for the ideas in it to 'come to fruition'.

Can the cabinet member share with me the work which he said would be done in the autumn as part of the Liveable City strand and demonstrate how the ideas proposed in the motion received proper consideration.”

Councillor Waters, the leader’s response:

“The reason why the motion was deferred, to be considered at a later date, was the requirement to include its aspiration for a car free city centre in the bigger context of a ‘Liveable City’, including carbon reduction, improved air quality and physical changes to the city centre. It requires a high level of partnership working to succeed. Currently some 15 groups are actively engaged as part of the City Vision C-19 Recovery Group. This has met on a regular basis through 2020. The challenge of making the city carbon neutral has been a particular focus of the Norwich Business Leaders Climate Change Group.

Let me give you a flavour of the points arising from that discussion at one of the recent meetings. One of the strong messages was that this is an opportunity to reset, rebuild and design in sustainability – cities and businesses need to lead transition. Social wellbeing needs to be very high on the agenda. There is lots we can do – shortening supply chains, fixing short term goals. Our choices are bound by society so a shift towards a low carbon society cannot happen by individual action alone.

For the December meeting. The discussion on how we become a sustainable city will continue. This will include an update on what organisations are currently doing in regard to the environmental sustainability agenda and relevant data and intelligence to inform the discussion.

The Labour Administration at city hall, as you may recall, published in August our latest five-year environmental strategy, comprising all major campaigns and priorities for the forthcoming period and highlighting recent progress. A new work programme and target to make the city council's operational carbon emissions net zero by 2030 are among the pathways introduced within the strategy to continue the council's positive trend of environmental improvement. The strategy will build on a string of recent successes for the city council, which have been recognised by a number of awards and

recommendations over recent years. These include the RIBA Stirling Prize and Edie Carbon Reduction Award in 2019 and a shortlisting for the Global Good Awards in 2020. The city council has also recently been recognised as one of the top performing councils in the country by Friends of the Earth, for our response to the climate change emergency.

Our successful 'Towns Deal' Bid, includes urban regeneration of the public realm – with planned investment to enhance the city centre public and urban spaces and improve connectivity and navigation.

Not forgetting the positive announcement of £32m govt funding of the Transforming Cities Fund programme providing a total of £58m further worth of sustainable transport investment over the next 4 years.

This I hope will provide you with the assurances you require.”

Question 8

Councillor Carlo to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“The scrutiny committee encourages Norwich citizens to submit issues they are concerned about for the committee’s consideration. Two recent topics submitted have been short stay lettings and fly-tipping. The cabinet rejected Scrutiny’s recommendations on short stay lettings on the grounds that the council doesn’t have the necessary resources, but moreover, that the cabinet didn’t consider it to be an issue of general importance. The work of the task and finish group and officers was wasted and the citizen’s hopes dashed that something would be done about the rising number of short stay lettings in the city centre. Thereafter, ruling party members on the scrutiny committee voted to postpone an investigation of fly-tipping on grounds of limited resources during Covid-19 despite the offer of several committee members to form a task and finish group, conduct research and write a report, with support agreed by officers. What message does the council’s attitude send to Norwich citizens about whether this council takes their concerns seriously?”

Councillor Waters, the leader’s response:

“Councillor Carlo, we all have particular interests that we wish to pursue as councillors, one of your interests is short stay lettings. The Cabinet carefully considered the recommendations of the working party set up by Scrutiny, but decided that this was not a priority for already fully committed resources. There are just under 500 properties in Norwich listed on Air BnB that is less than 1% of our total stock. By contrast, the private sector housing motion passed by council in September of this year, supported by you and other members of the Green Group, is aimed at supporting and protecting the 25% of Norwich residents who live in the private rented sector. This is a group who have insecure tenure, often live in poor quality accommodation and can be subject to irresponsible and exploitative landlords. Our private sector housing team are fully focused on addressing these issues.

On the issue of fly-tipping, significant resource has already been expended in responding to this problem which has been the subject of previous questions and answers in council. The recent interest by the Green Group in fly tipping was linked, to a motion about providing communal skips. These have been tried before, and they were popular, but the contents of every community skip ended up as landfill at a significant cost to the council. While data is showing that fly tipping is declining in the city, it remains a problem that requires Government to provide additional funding to councils, and a model built around the circular economy that includes giving end-of-life- manufacture and packaging a central place.

It is, I think, a misrepresentation of councillors who sit on the scrutiny committee and Cabinet to suggest that they are ignoring important issues. Fly-tipping and Airbnb/ short stay lettings are important but they necessarily have to compete, particularly at a time of national emergency and extreme pressure on budgets against other priorities. These are contained in Recovery Plan approved by council in June.

From regularly attending scrutiny committee I am aware that most councillors actually have priorities similar to that of their constituents which have enabled significant and valuable work to be undertaken in recent years around investigating such topics including homelessness, the gig economy, food poverty, social security, County Lines and other matters particularly pertaining to Norwich. On many important issues there is evidence of cross party agreement and the spirit of independent scrutiny. This has helped inform the work of cabinet in shaping council policy."

Question 9

Councillor Erin Fulton-McAlister to ask the cabinet member for resources the following question:

“In recent years we have witnessed several attempts by this government to make voting harder, with examples such as the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration, coming imposition of photographic identification and other measures which I believe are designed to suppress turnout. As we hopefully begin to come out of this awful pandemic next year I remain concerned that electors will be worried about voting at the polling station and for our staff and volunteers who oversee and ensure the democratic process is upheld. Can the cabinet member for resources comment on the recent campaign, led by this council, to encourage residents to vote using a safe, secure and simple postal vote?”

Councillor Kendrick, the cabinet member for resources’ response:

“Voting by post is a safe and secure way of voting. The electoral registration officer for Norwich is writing to all residents in the city who don’t currently have a postal vote. This letter will include a postal vote application and a return envelope.

Doing this now, also means that it mitigates any additional pressure on the elections team from having to process lots of potential new applications closer to the postal vote deadline in April.

However for those residents who do not choose to vote by post, they can be confident that polling stations will be as safe an environment as can be to vote and the returning officer is hard at work ensuring that all venues are ready for the elections on 6 May. The council will publicising its preparations to residents in the coming months.”

Question 10

Councillor Ryan to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“I was particularly pleased to hear that thanks to our hard work and leadership we have received confirmation that we will receive £25m from government from our Norwich Town’s Deal. Can the leader comment on the difference this capital funding will make towards further enhancing our city?”

Councillor Waters, the leader’s response:

“Thank you for your question Councillor Ryan.

The importance of our successful bid is a significant investment towards transformative regeneration and economic recovery in line with the objectives set out in the Norwich 2040 Vision and the council’s Economic Strategy. For ease of reference I have included a summary of the eight projects grouped in two themes (skills and enterprise infrastructure and urban regeneration).

This is a significant achievement and an example of what partnership working can deliver for the city as part of the Norwich 2040 Vision.”

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| <p>Skills and enterprise infrastructure</p> <p>This package of projects supports how we will grow the digital and creative economy and ensure our residents and businesses have the advanced skills in digital, construction and engineering they need to prosper.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital hub – a new city centre workspace with start-up and grow on space for digital businesses. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Halls – investment to update and refurbish the venue including the development of a state-of-the-art making space for collaboration and high value cross sector partnerships between culture, digital and tech. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digi-tech factory – a new skills facility providing digital tech, engineering and design courses. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced construction and engineering centre – a new technological advanced training facility, supporting the application of digital technology to construction, manufacturing and engineering sectors. |
| <p>Urban regeneration</p> <p>These projects offer opportunities for significant levels of housing growth and employment space creation to accommodate the needs of a growing city.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Norwich – investment to accelerate the development of a new high-quality urban quarter in east Norwich. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revolving fund – investment to unlock brownfield sites to deliver modern homes and workspaces for the growing economy. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public realm – investment to enhance the city centre public and urban spaces and improve connectivity and navigation. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding – communicating what the city has to offer by developing a commercial proposition for Norwich as the place for business and a city to live, learn and invest in. |

Question 11

Councillor Mike Sands to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“I still remember during the onset of this pandemic the government told councils that they would be fully compensated for the financial impacts of Covid-19. This council undertook significant work, together with partners, to protect our citizens and businesses during this national emergency. Yet eight months later, as we move through our second national lockdown, our council is being forced to take nearly £4m out of the budget which could risk the vital services so crucial to the wellbeing of our communities. Will the Leader again make the case to government for them to honour their pledge but also launch a campaign to save our city services so that the public and our partners recognise the risks these further central government cuts pose to Norwich?”

Councillor Waters, the leader's response:

“Councillor Sands, thank you for your timely question. It suggests that austerity for local government is set to continue, despite the Government's reliance on local government to be its most reliable partner, alongside the NHS in tackling the pandemic. We should live in hope that the Chancellor, on Wednesday, will make good the funding shortfall in meeting the costs of COVID that Robert Jenrick promised local councils in the Spring. That sum now stands at £4 billion. A modest sum compared to the funding that has gone to private contractors who have had less than a stellar record in running a national programme of trace and test.

If Government continues to fail local communities by putting vital services in jeopardy at a time of national crisis then we will have to continue and redouble our efforts to get a fair deal for the citizens of Norwich. Why should they be punished.”

Question 12

Councillor Maxwell to ask the cabinet member for health and wellbeing the following question:

“In a year where my constituents and our city have certainly appreciated Norwich’s parks more than ever before, I was particularly proud that two of the city’s green spaces, Mousehold Heath and Eaton Park have been recognised with national Green Flag awards. Will the cabinet member for health and wellbeing congratulate the staff and volunteers who have worked so hard to deliver these real victories and commit to our future plans to further enhance, protect and expand our treasured open and green spaces?”

Councillor Packer, the cabinet member for health and wellbeing’s response:

“Thank you for your question Councillor Maxwell a very timely one, when we are yet again seeing the importance of public green space to the mental and physical wellbeing of the city’s residents as we go through a second lockdown.

The parks and open spaces have provided an uninterrupted service, an essential service, since 23 March 2020. We have always been clear about our commitment to the provision of accessible quality green space for our residents prior to covid. The current situation has shown exactly why this is so important.

The Green Flag Award scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces. It sets the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

So I am very proud to see that Eaton Park retained its Green Flag for the 6th year in a row, and that Mousehold Heath, managed by the Mousehold Heath Conservators, and chaired by your good self also achieved this prestigious award.

Waterloo Park narrowly missed out on an award this year however, it should in no way detract from all the good work done by the Friends of Waterloo Park with officers. To be in a position to submit a management plan and application by the deadline was in itself an achievement. I have every confidence that officers working collaboratively with the ‘friends’ will be successful next time. I also hope that working with local communities further sites can achieve the award in the future.

Since 2008, the impact of austerity measures on the economy; the ongoing reduction in central government funding; and now a pandemic has made maintaining the provision of the city’s parks and open spaces challenging to say the least. To get through challenging times successfully requires a collective effort. People working together towards common goals. And hard work. Maintaining provision, and in many cases improving it throughout that period, has only been possible because of a collective effort.

On 14 October we lit city hall up green as part of a national initiative to recognise the work of everyone involved in the delivery of the nation's green spaces during the pandemic. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all the council's officers, every volunteer and our partners at NorwichNorse Environmental and NPS Norwich who have been involved in looking after and improving the spaces we treasure in this fine city"

Question 13

Councillor McCartney-Gray to ask the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment the following question:

“I was pleased to learn that thanks to the tremendous efforts of our housing services between 27 March and 31 July over 120 individuals were housed in emergency accommodation, following government instructions to all local authorities to get ‘everyone in’. Our record and rightful prioritisation of homelessness services for decades allowed us the capacity and skills to significantly deliver on this issue. Indeed, a vast majority of those people housed in temporary accommodation during the height of the pandemic have now been settled into more permanent accommodation, as is the aim of all our work with rough sleepers. The government, at present, has not issued an order to get ‘everyone in’ yet the public health situation is the same, if not worse than March. Does the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment know why the Government has not repeated their instruction to get everyone in so that they have a safe place to stay this winter, and in the absence of this can he update council on the good work we are undertaking to provide housing support to homeless people in our city?”

Councillor Maguire, the cabinet member for safe and sustainable city environment’s response:

“While we have no understanding of why the government has chosen not to reintroduce ‘Everybody In’, I can confirm that money has been made available to ensure that we capitalise on the COVID action and do everything in our power to help rough sleepers come permanently off the streets.

To achieve this, from 01 December, we are seeking to replicate the success of ‘Everybody In’ through the provision of nightly accommodation for rough sleepers through this winter.

Working with our partners at St Martins, each rough sleeper will be provided with a bed in their own self-contained room on a nightly basis to keep them off the streets. The accommodation will be ‘Covid safe’, with each client taking a Covid assessment and temperature test prior to placement. We have arranged for staff to be on hand overnight to address any issues which may arise and food will be provided through our partners at The Arc and The Feed.

We will use the opportunity to engage with clients and intensive, specialist support will be provided. Our rough sleeper co-ordinator will manage a weekly case meeting with providers and support agencies to seek bespoke accommodation solutions for each client. In this way we hope to repeat the successes of ‘Everybody In’, where 95% of rough sleepers that we helped were ultimately assisted to move on into settled accommodation.

Looking ahead, funding has been secured to improve our Housing First offer for rough sleepers and, through Pathways Norwich, employ resettlement workers to provide high intensity care for our clients with complex support needs. Through these means, we seek to break the cycle of homelessness for entrenched rough sleepers.

The steps that we are taking in Norwich to build on what has already been achieved demonstrate our ongoing commitment and determination, and that of our partners, to stem the tide of rough sleeping, provide sustainable solutions and deliver the best possible services to vulnerable clients in the city.”