



**Cabinet**

**17.30 – 18:35**

**8 June 2022**

**Present** Councillors Waters (chair), Harris (vice chair), Hampton, Jones, Kendrick, Oliver and Stonard.

**Apologies** Councillor Giles

**Also present** Councillor Galvin

**1. Declarations of interest**

Councillor Harris declared an interest in item \*11 below, as the Director of Norwich Preservation Trust and withdrew from the meeting for the item.

Councillor Jones declared an interest in item \*11 below as a board member of Norwich Preservation Trust and withdrew from the meeting for the item.

**2. Public questions/ petitions**

There were no public questions or petitions.

**3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 9 March 2022 and 6 April 2022.

**4. East Norwich Stage 2 Masterplan**

(Martyn Saunders, consultant from Avison Young, joined the meeting for this item)

Councillor Stonard, cabinet member for sustainable and inclusive growth, presented the report. He explained the development of the East Norwich sites represents a once in a generation opportunity for Norwich and would also deliver benefits to the wider region. The report provided an update on stage 1 of the masterplan and presented the stage 2 outputs, including a supplementary planning document, infrastructure delivery plan and project delivery plan. It detailed the next steps which would maintain the project momentum.

The site was complex and incorporated four different land owners. The masterplan would informed relevant planning policies and ensure a coordinated delivery of the infrastructure across the site. The East Norwich Partnership was the public private body which enabled partners to coherently develop the masterplan. Councillor

Stonard stressed that a new district of the city was being created and the council and its partners were working hard to ensure that it was right.

The chair considered that Homes England recognised the project as a major opportunity and that feedback from extensive conversations with residents was positive.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question, the executive director of development and city services observed that following the adoption of the Greater Norwich Local Plan, (GNLP), the intention was then to update the planning department's development management policies. However, the government had proposed an overhaul of the planning system and action had been delayed awaiting the outcome. It was still unclear what route government would take but once the GNLP was adopted a review could commence.

The consultant from Avison Young considered that the project pragmatically balanced the constraints of the site and that the delivery challenge was understood. Funding from Homes England equated to approximately £40,000 per dwelling which was commensurate with other schemes. The project was in a good position to begin the next phase of works as landowners and relevant partners were engaged.

**RESOLVED to:**

- 1) approve the Stage 2 illustrative masterplan (pages 5-6 of Stage 2 masterplan summary at Appendix 2) and essential infrastructure plan (pages 7-8 of Stage 2 masterplan summary);
- 2) endorse the Stage 2 outputs comprising the Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD at Appendix 3), recognising that this will be a material planning consideration for relevant planning applications, and the accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP, at Appendix 4) and Delivery Report (Appendix 5);
- 3) agree to participate in a Stage 3 exercise, led and funded by Homes England, with Norwich City Council providing project management and other inputs, to run from July to September/October 2022, with a Consultant Team to further assess infrastructure, phasing, funding, viability and related deliverability matters;
- 4) agree to delegate authority to the Executive director of development & city services, in consultation with the Cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth, to make further amendments to the Draft SPD prior to consultation; and
- 5) approve that statutory public consultation will be undertaken on the final draft of the SPD, with timing contingent on the GNLP process.

**5. An update on Health, Safety and Compliance in Council Homes and Buildings**

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, presented the report. The update was the second quarterly report to be presented to cabinet following the council self-reporting to the regulator for social housing in July 2021. The regulator considered that the council had breached homes standards and issued a regulatory notice. Councillor Harris emphasised that it was important to note the

regulator had confidence in the council's plans to remedy the problem and that no enforcement action had been taken.

The report detailed progress made to date and set out the program for compliance. She noted additional contractors were employed to do extra work where necessary. A full reinspection programme of fire risk in low risk buildings was conducted and explained the increase shown in inspection figures. Work was underway to map the response to high priority general fund assets.

Councillor Harris emphasised that the council was working closely with the social housing regulator and at regular monthly meetings the regulator was satisfied with the progress being made and the arrangements in place. She thanked officers for their hard work to date.

The interim housing operations director noted that since the last update on compliance in February 2022 to cabinet, good progress on immediate actions had been made. Gas safety and lift safety were fully compliant, all communal electrical safety checks had been conducted and good progress made on electrical tests and outstanding remedial works in domestic properties.

Fire risk assessments on all high risk residential properties had been completed with a small number of remedial works outstanding. Water hygiene testing in residential properties had commenced and progress was being made. Work on validating and checking data was ongoing and some figures had changed as a result of this work.

Fire risk assessments on general fund non housing properties had commenced and work was underway to identify compliance priority work on general fund non-housing assets.

The asset management compliance function had been transferred back to the council on 1 April 2022 and work on service improvement was underway, including a programme of training. Additional contractor capacity had been secured and would address remaining outstanding works. All compliance policies and procedures were to be reviewed to confirm that they were in accordance with best practice. Consultation with tenants and leaseholders continued.

The social housing regulator had suggested the council enter into a voluntary undertaking to confirm the steps it was planning to take to achieve compliance and this was expected to happen shortly.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question regarding the underspend on the housing compliance budget, the interim housing operations director it took time to build the compliance programme. Access to information was delayed as the service was outsourced, contractors had to be secured. Although this work took time there was now a strong foundation to build on.

Councillor Harris, deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing, was reassured that the regulator was satisfied with the council's progress. Work had been challenging, but the report highlighted how much work had been completed. There was also a new IT system in place which would assist with mapping the compliance the programme.

**RESOLVED** to note the update on Health, Safety and Compliance in Council Homes and Buildings

## **6. Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy**

Councillor Jones, cabinet member for safer, stronger, neighbourhoods presented the report. Norwich, like other cities, had a legacy of contaminated land due to former industries such as tanning and brewing. The strategy was largely prescribed by government guidance and detailed how sites would be tackled, grading them by risk.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question the head of planning and regulatory services highlighted that the strategy prioritised sites where there was a risk to human health. She was aware of sites where community groups had an interest but it may be that the remediation works on those sites would be prohibitive.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) agree to the public consultation on the draft Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy (CLIS) for Norwich; and
- 2) give delegated authority to the Executive Director – Development and City Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Safer, Stronger Neighbourhoods, to amend the strategy in the light of the consultation response and adopt it.

## **7. To award a contract for security services at the Council's Multi Storey Car Parks, Market and Mile Cross Depot**

(This report will be considered at a subsequent meeting of cabinet).

## **8. Levelling Up Fund bid preparation**

Councillor Waters, leader of the council presented the report. He noted that £4.8 billion had been set aside for Levelling Up projects and £1.6 billion had already been allocated. The government wanted to see significant impact for its investment. Local authorities could submit one bid per MP which meant Norwich City Council could submit two bids. There were considerable sums of funding to bid for but there were costs to putting a bid together and the timetable for submissions was tight.

Extra resources had been allocated to put in bids as these represented a major opportunity to drive regeneration, building on existing works and tied in with partnership working expressed through the Norwich 2040 city vision. The tight timetables favoured projects already in the pipeline and areas with strong partnerships in place.

The economic development manager stressed it was a fantastic opportunity but there was a need to manage expectations. The council was a priority 2 area, and in the first round of bidding, most money went to priority 1 areas. However, there were three potentially strong projects which hit the strategic themes.

In response to Councillor Galvin's question, the leader of the council provided reassurance that the stakeholder engagement element of the bid would be fully

scoped before it was submitted. The economic development manager emphasised that the timetable favoured projects which were already in the pipeline and that engagement on those in terms of stakeholder feedback, including from ward councillors, had already happened.

The executive director of development and city services added that if bids were successful there would be scope for further engagement on how schemes were developed, designed and shaped.

The leader of the council considered the council's bid was a reflection of the work which had been completed on Norwich 2040 city vision which had a wide network of stakeholders.

**RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the executive director of development and city services, in consultation with the leader of the council, to submit the Levelling Up Funding bid.

## **9. Exclusion of the public**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of items \*10 to \*12 (below) on the grounds contained in the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

### **\*10. Levelling Up Fund bid preparation – exempt appendix – (para 3)**

**RESOLVED** to note the exempt appendix to the report.

### **\*11. Norwich Preservation Trust and Eliza Pym Trust - (para 3)**

(Councillors Harris and Jones left the meeting at this point).

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to:

- 1) in its role as corporate trustee of the Eliza Pym Trust and with respect to Ninhams Court:
  - i. acknowledge the outcome of the public consultation relating to the disposal of Ninhams Court;
  - ii. approve the submission to the Charities Commission, to seek to obtain an express power of disposal, in order to transfer the object of the Eliza Pym Trust, namely 6-9 Ninhams Court, to the Norwich Preservation Trust; and
- 2) delegate authority to the executive director of corporate and commercial services in consultation with the cabinet member for resources to grant a short-term bridging loan to the Norwich Preservation Trust, subject to a suitable business case, in order to facilitate the renovation and subsequent sale of Ninham's Court.

### **\*12. Managing assets (non-Housing) – (para 3)**

(Councillors Harris and Jones returned to the meeting at this point).

Councillor Kendrick, cabinet member for resources, presented the report.

**RESOLVED** to approve the disposal of land identified in the report, commence the process to procure a selling agent and to delegate acceptance of the most advantageous offer, subject to achieving the minimum amount as set out in the report, to the executive director of development and city services in consultation with the cabinet member for resources.

CHAIR